A Beginner’s Guide to eLearning: Creating Accessible Online Learning
Pepnet 2 is a 2011 - 2016 funded project of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), CFDA #84.326D, Postsecondary Education Center for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The contents of this document were developed under a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Education, #H326D110003. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Permission is granted to copy and disseminate this document for educational purposes, provided that pepnet 2, National Center on Deafness at California State University, Northridge is credited as the source and referenced appropriately on any such copies.

A Beginner’s Guide to eLearning: Creating Accessible Online Learning is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 License.
www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/
Table of Contents

About the Authors i

Overview of pn2 QuickClasses
  History of Online Learning 1
  Pepnet 2 and Online Learning 1
  QuickClass Goals 2
  eLearning Considerations 2
    QuickClass Platform 2
    Time Commitment 3
    Synchronous vs Asynchronous 3
    Benefits of Asynchronous Learning 4
  “Canned” Curriculum 5

QuickClass Content Development 5

QuickClass Components 6
  Discussion Questions (DQ) 6
  Activity 7
  Participation 7

Required Materials 9

Feedback 9

Credit 10

QuickClass Composition 10

QuickClass Facilitation 10

Role of the Facilitator 11

Learner-Centered 11

Strategies for Guiding Discussions 12
About the Authors

Cindy Camp
Cindy Camp has worked in postsecondary disability support services for over 25 years, with a focus on students who are deaf and hard of hearing. She holds a Master’s degree in English and is a nationally certified interpreter with additional certification in the field of mental health through the state of Alabama. She is a C-Print captionist and trainer. She regularly presents regionally and nationally on topics such as offline captioning, access services, and accessible online learning. She served as eLearning Director for pepnet 2 and created the QuickClass system. Currently she is the Marketing and Communications Specialist with the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP).

Mark Camp
Mark Camp is an IT Support Specialist in the Information Technology Department at Jacksonville State University (JSU) in Alabama. He began his career at JSU in Disability Support Services, before transferring to Distance Learning. While with Distance Learning he coordinated video conferencing classes, developed faculty training, and provided technical support for faculty and students creating multimedia. He spearheaded the creation of a campus-wide accessibility committee and promotes Universal Design for Learning in all his trainings. He developed and facilitated the pepnet 2 QuickClass, Making Online Classes Accessible.

Lisa Caringer
Lisa Caringer is an experienced professional in the disability services field. She has spent much of her 25-year career working to remove barriers and ensure access for students with disabilities, with a focus on the higher education environment. A certified Interpreter and trained Rehabilitation Counselor, Lisa has developed and facilitated many on-site and online learning opportunities for interpreters, disability services professionals, rehabilitation counselors, and educators. Most recently, she edited a legal compliance guide entitled Equitable Access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students: Understanding Legal Responsibilities for Students, a publication achieved by pepnet 2 at CSUN. She is currently the Assistive Technology & Learning Disability Services Coordinator at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.
Becky Morris

Becky Morris is a consultant providing workplace communication evaluations and has worked over 20 years in the field of assistive listening devices (ALD). She is an experienced online trainer and specializes in the compatibility issues related to hearing aids and cochlear implants with assistive listening devices, such as FM systems and stethoscopes. She has authored a book, several book chapters, and many articles dealing with ALDs and has been involved in over 100 presentations and training events for vocational rehabilitation counselors, hearing health professionals, and disability service providers. Her most recent contribution is the chapter on ALDs for the International Hearing Society’s Distance Learning for Professionals in Hearing Health Sciences course, which is the premier study program for those considering a career in the hearing healthcare field and preparing for competency exams.
Overview of pn2 QuickClasses

History of Online Learning
Distance education is nothing new. Its roots can be found in correspondence courses offered in Great Britain in the mid 1800’s (Hickery, 2014). Since that time, as technology has improved, the options for distance education have expanded. Today almost every university has some type of online learning program and there are some institutions with no physical campuses – only Internet-based classes.

The World Wide Web opened to the public in 1991 (History.com staff, 2010), which made online courses possible. In 1999 the first postsecondary institution received accreditation for online courses (Hickery, 2014). Now online education has progressed from a fringe novelty to a respectable method for earning a degree. It may be tempting to think that all the glitches have been worked out of online learning. However, it is important to remember that this form of learning is less than three decades old.

Although online education has become mainstream, not all online classes are created equal. The differences between online and face-to-face classes are more than just a delivery method. Yet, many instructors and students are mired in the traditional approach to learning. Instructors often try to take face-to-face lecture materials and simply make them available online. Students may feel they need a synchronous component to be able to fully interact with the professor and classmates. As more and more research is collected on distance learning, we are beginning to see that online learning and new educational strategies are leading to high quality educational opportunities. Online classes are no longer just a last resort for those who cannot attend traditional classes; they are an equivalent option and perhaps even a better choice for some.

Pepnet 2 and Online Learning
When pepnet 2 (pn2) was funded in 2011, one of their goals was: “To build the capacity of individuals, professionals, and organizations by providing personnel development.” Initially the plan was to do this through online training modules, webinars, and live presentations. However, the team quickly realized that new forms of eLearning were required to meet the changing needs of stakeholders.

The country had experienced an economic downturn, and professionals were dealing with increasing travel restrictions. A variety of large regional and national conferences saw a decrease in attendance because of organizational budget cuts, and many state agencies began to limit or deny out-of-state travel. Because of these trends, pn2 realized that providing traditional face-to-face training would not completely satisfy their goal. As staff began to research alternative training methods, the QuickClass (QC) concept was born.
The first QuickClasses launched during the summer of 2012 with 21 participants in two beta classes. At the end of the final round in 2016, over 2,400 participants had been served. Pepnet 2 was able to develop high quality content, train skilled facilitators, and provide 720,000 hours of training. QuickClass participants showed their appreciation of the classes by giving high marks on satisfaction surveys and referring colleagues to future classes. The popularity of this form of training became obvious as numerous professionals became repeat participants and many classes filled multiple sections the day registration opened.

**QuickClass Goals**
Attending face-to-face conferences serves two main purposes: 1) obtaining new knowledge, and 2) creating a network of peers. In developing online learning opportunities, pn2 planned to address both these components. The classes needed to be long enough to allow online relationships to develop but not so long that professionals would feel overwhelmed or lose interest. Additionally, they needed to provide sufficient time to internalize new information in manageable pieces. Most professionals do not have large amounts of time to focus on continuing education each week, and yet a certain amount of time is required to learn new material.

**eLearning Considerations**
Deciding on the structure of QuickClasses was not easy, as there were so many factors to consider such as: a platform, timing, and method of delivery to name a few. The QuickClass team researched current practices in online classes, effective strategies for working with adult learners, and principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). All this information was applied to the development of the QuickClass system. After implementation, each class and the overall system were regularly evaluated by the QuickClass team, facilitators, and participants. The feedback was then utilized to improve QuickClasses for all involved.

**QuickClass Platform**
In designing QuickClasses, pn2 staff looked at current online learning formats and platforms. We also reviewed research on eLearning to get a clearer picture of what was successful and why.

There are many learning management system (LMS) platforms available. Most are designed for academic applications. While QuickClasses provided a learning opportunity, they did not follow a traditional academic approach. Thus, there was a need to find a system that could be customized to meet this unique need. Pn2 contracted with an instructional design company for several online projects. They highly recommended using an open-source platform because those were often less expensive, more flexible, and more readily customized to fit specific
needs. Based on their recommendations, the pn2 staff decided to use Moodle as the QuickClass platform.

Because the “out of the box” version lacked the functionality and flexibility needed, the instructional design company began to heavily customize Moodle for QuickClass use. A custom registration system was developed and many modifications to the standard Moodle platform were implemented. The QuickClass team used feedback from facilitators and participants to discover areas that were deficient in the platform. Eventually the instructional design team was able to provide an acceptable eLearning environment. However, in retrospect it might have been easier to use an established learning management system (LMS) which would have been more familiar to those working in the postsecondary setting, and which would not have needed as much customization.

Before choosing a platform for eLearning it is important to do a lot of pre-planning. It is critical to consider the needs of the audience in terms of content and structure, but also in terms of technical aptitude. Learning management systems can come with many “bells and whistles.” However, if the audience is not comfortable with technology, more time than is effective may be required to someone how to use the extra features.

Pepnet 2 chose to keep QuickClasses simple in the beginning, using basic discussion boards, quizzes, and attachment-based assignments. The pn2 stakeholder pool was diverse and demonstrated a wide range of technology skills. By keeping things simple, some technology-related issues were prevented. Participants were given a basic “how to” guide at the beginning of class and most were able to navigate the LMS without problems. Although, facilitators still needed to be well-versed in basic technology and the QC platform to be able to assist participants when questions did arise.

**Time Commitment**

Pn2 staff decided to create online classes that would last for six weeks and require approximately five hours of work per week. The rationale behind this was that busy professionals do not have a lot of extra time during their day, but one hour a day during the workweek was reasonable. The length of six weeks was chosen to allow time for participants to develop a peer network — recognizing that relationships do develop more slowly in an online environment, but they do develop. Providing a total of 30 hours of training was enough time to introduce and reinforce new information while not being so long that it became overwhelming or cumbersome.

**Synchronous vs Asynchronous**

In developing QuickClasses, one of the first questions that arose was how the content would be delivered. Some staff felt that a traditional approach would be best, where instruction would be synchronous, requiring all participants to be online at the same time. Within the educational system and especially with sign language users, there is a strong pull towards face-
to-face communication. However, two major barriers presented themselves — timing and communication access.

Pn2 served all 50 states as well as Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific territories: American Samoa, Micronesia, Guam, Palau, Northern Mariana Islands, and the Marshall Islands. In addition to the four standard time zones Americans are accustomed to accommodating, Pn2’s stakeholders included some on the other side of the international date line. There was also the issue of disparate schedules. While it would be impossible to find one time that would accommodate all time zones, it was almost equally impossible to find one time that would meet the needs of so many busy professionals.

The second issue was one of communication access. Pn2’s stakeholder groups included individuals who were hearing, hard-of-hearing, deaf, deaf-blind, and those with other disabilities. Within in these groups a variety of communication styles and methods are used. Pn2’s policy of providing full communication access during live meetings also would apply to online learning. Thus, at a minimum, realtime speech-to-text and interpreters would need to be provided for any synchronous video interactions.

An additional consideration was the ability to provide realtime communication access through existing technology. While technology and Internet access has greatly improved in recent years, there are still limitations. Some rural areas have limited connectivity. Some universities, state agencies, and institutions may block certain types of Internet access, such as video, or limit bandwidth.

Malfunctioning technology can become the focus of synchronous meetings instead of the content. It can cause significant delays and multiple disruptions during a meeting. While technology improves significantly each year, there will always be glitches in the system. It is important to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of remote, synchronous components in online learning.

For all these reasons, pn2 chose an asynchronous delivery method as the logical approach, because it did not require participants to be online at any one time.

Benefits of Asynchronous Learning
There are many benefits to asynchronous classes. As discussed previously, flexibility in timing allows many to participate who might not be able to at a specific time and date. Participants can complete weekly discussions and activities at their own pace and within their preferred hours. This allows participants to work when their schedule allows and when they are most productive, whether that be at 6:00 p.m., midnight, 6:00 a.m., or noon.

Asynchronous discussions can lead to higher quality and quantity of participation. Because participants have time to consider their responses, they are able to more clearly articulate their
points and even include relevant resource links. Those who might not respond in a face-to-face class are more likely to participate in an online discussion (Morse, 2003).

The method of asynchronous participation in a discussion also supports the concepts of Universal Design for Learning. Not everyone is comfortable voicing an opinion or asking a question in a face-to-face training. However, posting a message in a discussion board can be less intimidating because a participant has time to consider a response and there is no time limit for replying.

“Canned” Curriculum

The next question that needed to be addressed was the teaching method. Pepnet 2 chose to create fully-developed courses, before each QuickClass was offered, which became “canned” curricula.

In traditional classes, an instructor would create a syllabus for the course. However, this is usually more of an outline rather than a complete course package. Instructors may have a general idea of what they will teach each week but do not usually create a full lesson plan until just before the class. Professionals regularly do the same thing when creating a live training. Often they are tweaking the presentation the night before. This was a challenging habit to confront.

The method pn2 employed was to separate content development from facilitation. By dividing the two tasks, they were able to capitalize on unique and individualized skills. Additionally, this method allowed time to ensure that materials could be made fully accessible.

Pn2 frequently contracted with professionals who had knowledge and expertise in specific content areas to develop each course. An online class was developed once all the materials were complete. Then class facilitators were chosen. Sometimes — but not always — the person(s) who developed the content would also facilitate the class. This approach allowed pn2 to take advantage of content experts who could develop a course but might not have time to facilitate it.

QuickClass Content Development

Content areas for the classes were chosen based on a variety of criteria. QC staff looked at requests for technical assistance, common questions/concerns on professional listservs, and areas of interest identified in the Pn2 Needs Assessment.

Once a topic was identified, the next step was to find a “content expert.” Sometimes the content expert was an individual or team within pn2, and sometimes external consultants were contracted for this role.

Choosing a “content expert” was not always as simple as it might sound. Obviously the person needed to know the material. However, they also needed to understand the difference
between face-to-face and online learning. Creating content for a QuickClass was different from creating content for a traditional class. Developers needed to be flexible and willing to follow the pn2 class format. They needed to be able to deliver information in a clear and succinct format.

The content expert worked closely with the QC coordinator in developing materials that matched the QC structure. Each QC course developer used common templates and a sample class as models to ensure continuity across the classes. However, content developers were not limited in their creativity or ability to guide the elements of the class.

Each content developer designed a complete curriculum which could then be facilitated by themselves or another professional with instructional knowledge of the class content. In addition to the standard course syllabus, content developers also created standardized feedback for weekly deliverables and supplemental materials for likely questions.

When the same person was both the content developer and facilitator, it could be challenging for some to understand the concept of a “canned” curriculum. Some wanted the flexibility of adding or modifying content throughout the course. But pepnet 2 was firm that content would not be revised during the class.

Another challenge was the need for developers to meet deadlines. Many professionals and trainers are accustomed to being able to “tweak” content until the last minute. Pn2 had strict deadlines in place to ensure that a class was complete, proofed, and online well before registration opened. If a developer could not meet deadlines, it could throw off many other aspects of the QuickClass process.

**QuickClass Components**

Pn2 decided to use a standardized format for the QCs. Each week participants were required to respond to an initial discussion question (DQ), complete an activity, participate in class discussion, and read weekly content materials. In general, the DQ response was due by Tuesday of each week and the activity was due by Saturday.

Discussion was an important part of the QC. Participants were required to post at least four discussion messages each week, in addition to responding to the initial DQ. This allowed participants to interact and learn from each other.

A few QCs deviated from the standard format in that sometimes there were two discussion questions or two activities in one week and the due dates could be changed. But all QCs contained the three main elements: discussion question, activity, and participation.

**Discussion Questions (DQ)**

The initial discussion question for each week was very important because it set the tone for the week. The question should be open-ended and promote discussion, not a simple answer to a
question. If the DQ asked for a “right or wrong” answer, then most participants would respond similarly and this would limit discussion. However, if the question asked for analysis and opinion, this would lead to a robust discussion of the topic.

For example, in a QC on offline captioning for the weekly topic of “Legal Issues,” the following DQ was used:

What are the common beliefs and attitudes about captioning accessibility at your institution? Do administrators/faculty support captioning? Do they think about accessibility when developing a class? Based on what you’ve learned this week do you feel your institution is on track or needs to change? What did you learn this week that you’d like to share with others at your institution?

This DQ invited each participant to consider the issue of offline captioning at their institution and reflect on what they had learned and how it could benefit their institution. Everyone had the opportunity to see what was happening at other institutions and find potential ways to improve access.

**Activity**
The weekly activity was meant to pull together ideas from the reading materials and discussion to allow participants to implement what they learned. The activity should be useful and applicable to their work.

In the QC on offline captioning during the final week, participants were asked to:

Create a PowerPoint presentation about the basics of post-production or offline captioning. This should be a presentation that you could use with those at your institution.

This activity allowed participants to consider what they had learned throughout the class and summarize the most important points for others at their institution. Many participants reported using their PowerPoint with administrators and faculty after the QC. Clearly, the activity was beneficial and relevant to their everyday work.

**Participation**
Because hearing loss is a low-incidence population, many professionals work in isolation. The ability to confer with colleagues across the country provided the opportunity to learn new techniques, strategies, and accommodations. Requiring participation in the discussion encouraged participants to make these connections and share information. Often participants shared resources, which later became part of future QuickClasses.

> I love the community I found through this class. I didn’t realize how badly I needed to connect with other new professionals. I appreciated the feedback and discussion sessions, and I always read with interest other's posts. I found that in many ways, I am not alone. And that counts for something.

-Speech-to-text provider
Each week participants were required to post at least four substantial participation messages. These were in addition to responding to the initial DQ. The purpose of participation was to build connections and increase understanding.

Posts were considered substantial when they contributed towards keeping the discussion going. Some suggested ways to do this were: 1) explain an idea in depth; 2) relate the conversation to personal examples; 3) connect the week's readings to the ongoing discussion; and/or 4) use a thought-provoking question to keep discussion moving. It was recommended that the post contain information that would help the whole class continue to think and learn about the topic at hand. Participants were asked to use correct grammar and spelling for the sake of clarity.

Here are a couple examples of insubstantial responses which would not receive participation credit:

- Julie – Your message was well thought out and on target. I've often experienced that same situation.

Participation was strongly encouraged because it was a critical part of the learning process. Adults bring many professional experiences to the table — both positive and negative. By sharing these experiences, perspectives, and questions with the class, everyone’s learning was enhanced. Sometimes the discussion might go off point. In some cases, though, this was positive because it allowed the facilitator to better understand the needs of the participants.

If a discussion went too far off topic, the facilitator would redirect the discussion and contact the individual to follow up with resources specific to their need. For example, the QC titled Hard of Hearing 101 was designed to address issues of non-signing individuals with hearing loss. Sometimes participants had more experience with individuals who were deaf and used sign language, thus wanting to focus the discussion on what they were familiar with. In this case, the facilitator would remind participants of the purpose of the class.

In the class, Post-Production or Offline Captions, participants sometimes confused realtime captioning with post-production captioning. While the purpose of the class was not to discuss realtime captioning, it was necessary to cover the topic when participants were confused about the two accommodations.

At times when a discussion seemed to be derailed, it became an opportunity for the facilitator to learn more about the participants and share additional information. QC's were designed for target audiences but sometimes participants might not have the requisite knowledge the curriculum assumed. In these cases, “off topic” discussions helped ensure everyone was on the same page.
Required Materials

Materials were posted each week to inform participants about the topic to be discussed. These could be outside sources, such as websites or scholarly articles. Sometimes the content developer would include materials they developed such as articles, PowerPoints, or videos. All materials, whether provided externally via a hyperlink or embedded in the course, were required to be accessible. Examples of accessible materials would include captioned videos, images with text descriptions, and websites that could be navigated by an individual using a screen reader. If a resource was not accessible, it was not used.

The goal each week was to include materials which would take approximately one hour to digest. One challenge was narrowing down the number of resources to be shared. On some topics, this meant making difficult choices. We recognized that if we overwhelmed the participants with too many materials, they were likely to ignore them all. By providing a limited amount, it was more manageable. Additional resources were listed separately as “recommended” but not “required.” This allowed participants to choose the topics they wished to learn more about.

Feedback

Because QuickClasses were not designed as academic classes, pn2 staff decided not to use a percentage-based grading system. Instead, participants received one (1) point for attempting an assignment and zero (0) points if nothing was turned in.

Along with the numeric value, each assignment received textual comments. If a participant satisfactorily completed a weekly activity, they would receive a standardized comment related to the activity and individualized feedback on their work. If a participant struggled with a weekly activity, they would receive coaching feedback. And if a participant did not complete a weekly activity, they would receive a reminder about the importance of completing all the required assignments. This system encouraged participants to fully engage in the class without the negative stigma of a standard A to F grading system. The goal was to provide a positive learning environment for busy professionals.

One benefit of offering facilitated learning opportunities is the feedback. Most people are encouraged and motivated by feedback. If work is submitted but not commented on, many people will assume that it is busy work and are less likely to continue putting effort into the work.

The content developer for each class also created standardized feedback comments for each deliverable. This provided facilitators a starting point each week in posting feedback. Facilitators could use the standardized remarks and then add customized comments.
Credit
As previously stated, the QuickClasses were not designed for academic credit. However, they were approved for continuing education units through Commission of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) and Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Pepnet 2’s largest groups of stakeholders held certification with CRCC and RID, so credit was pre-approved with these two organizations. While many stakeholders held certification with other organizations, pn2 was not able to provide CEUs for all organizations. As an alternative, we provided documentation in addition to a certificate of completion that participants could take to their credentialing body for credit.

QuickClass Composition
One benefit of QCs was that participants could meet others from around the country and share ideas. To achieve this learning objective, the class participants needed to represent a variety of roles and settings. A rule was established that no more than three participants from the same institution/organization could be in the same section of a class. This created a more productive class discussion. If more participants from a single institution did sign up, we would put them in different sections of the class, if multiple sections were offered. If not, some would be asked to wait and take the class at another time.

This guideline worked well. We received very positive feedback on the benefits of engaging with participants who had different backgrounds. For example, in a few classes specifically designed for vocational rehabilitation counselors, participants were excited to learn what counselors in other states were doing. Even though all the participants were from one general occupation, each state has different rules, regulations, and strategies. The participants overwhelmingly agreed that the diversity enhanced their learning experience.

One class not specifically designed for interpreters was still very popular with interpreters. As an experiment, we decided to create multiple sections — one for interpreters only and one for the target audience. The rationale behind this was that in a mixed class, the interpreters sometimes monopolized the conversations. We thought that by setting up a specialized class that the discussion could more easily be directed. However, we learned from this experience that the discussion was not as rich as when the groups were mixed. When interpreters were in a separate class, they did not have as much diverse experience to offer. While it could be challenging to facilitate a class with highly diverse participants, that diversity led to a more enriching experience for all. The key was to provide facilitators with the support and strategies to manage these situations.

QuickClass Facilitation
Facilitators were not teachers in the traditional sense. The QuickClass curriculum was developed on the theory of a learner-centered class and researched-based practices for adult
learners. The Socratic method was used to guide the discussion and not simply to “lecture.” Because participants were adults with professional experience, they had a lot to contribute to the discussion. Facilitators were expected to engage the participants and encourage them to build on their own experiences.

QC facilitators were required to be well-versed in their subject area and experienced in providing training. They were expected to facilitate a 6-week QuickClass. The actual time commitment was closer to 8 to 10 weeks, as there were a few pre- and post-class activities. Before leading a class, facilitators completed a 3-week online training to become familiar with the QC philosophy, technology, and format.

Facilitators used a pre-developed curriculum in the QuickClass. The facilitators spent time prior to the start of class becoming familiar with the weekly content and learning management system (LMS). Facilitators were expected to answer questions related to the syllabus content as well as provide basic support for the LMS. More complex technology questions were referred to pepnet 2 eLearning staff.

Role of the Facilitator
Facilitators received training and detailed requirements to fulfill their role. A more comprehensive list can be found the appendices. However, the following list was given as a brief overview to facilitators.

- Welcome all participants to class. (Week 1)
- Be active in the discussions and provide relevant resources and guidance. (All weeks)
- Provide quantitative and qualitative feedback on all required activities. Canned feedback comments will be provided and can be altered to meet individual needs. (All weeks)
- Coach reluctant or slow participants to be more active in the QC. (All weeks)
- Communicate on a regular basis with the QC coordinator.

Learner-Centered
We chose a learner-centered approach to QCs because research shows that it is effective, especially with adult learners (Henson, 2003). Traditional methods of teaching focus on the instructor imparting knowledge to the students. However, adult learners bring a wealth of knowledge and experience that they can share. Most adults prefer to arrive at answers themselves rather than being told what to think. That is why a Socratic questioning technique and interactive participation are important components of QCs (Merritts & Walter, 2006). This required those leading the QCs to facilitate by asking questions and guiding discussions rather than acting as teachers.

I find myself feeling like quite an expert regarding D/HH clients after taking this training. I could heartily recommend these trainings to anyone seeking professional development.

-VR Counselor
**Strategies for Guiding Discussions**

Facilitators for QuickClasses were asked to guide the discussion rather than control it. In many cases, this meant waiting to see how participants would respond to a weekly question before jumping in (Paul & Elder, 2007). Often a class discussion would progress smoothly with very little input from the facilitator. If the discussion began to go off track or if there were questions, the facilitator would provide guidance or additional information.

In a few cases, discussions did become heated and a bit adversarial. This was usually resolved by clarifying the issues, since the debate started due to misunderstandings of posted responses. The facilitator gently guided the participants to understanding each side of the issue. When this was not sufficient, the facilitator would explore the issue with the involved participants outside the class discussion.

Sometimes it was necessary for a facilitator to be a little more direct in class discussion if subtlety did not work. For example, in an ethics class for interpreters, one interpreter suggested a scenario that was inappropriate. Because the class was made up of mostly new interpreters, many soon began to agree that what had been suggested was acceptable. The facilitator tried a variety of tactics but finally had to say, “No, this is not professional behavior and this is why.” It is preferred that facilitators not be overly assertive, but sometimes it was necessary. Surprisingly, there were very few negative issues that arose within the QuickClasses.
Lessons Learned

QuickClasses began on a sound, research-based foundation. However, as with all projects, they evolved over time.

Customized Registration

Many customizations were added to the Moodle platform to make QCs more user-friendly for the participants and facilitators. A custom registration system was developed which permitted individualized registration forms for each class. This allowed the QC coordinator to work with facilitators to make sure necessary information was received on each participant.

The standard registration provided facilitators with the following information:

- Name
- Email
- Organization/institution
- Job Title
- What would you like to learn from this course?
- Have you taken a QC previously?
- If yes, what was the title? And when?
- Would you like to receive CRCC credit? RID CEUs?
- Disability Accommodations Request

However, some QCs had specific requirements so additional information was needed. For example, *Skill Building for Beginning C-Print Captionist: Part 1* required that a participant had completed the C-Print training prior to participating in the QC. *Mentoring Interpreters in the Postsecondary Environment* required a participant to be a seasoned interpreter and to hold national certification. Being able to customize registration for each QC increased efficiency and reduced the need for follow up with participants.

Sometimes participant responses would raise questions about their compatibility for a certain class. A common issue was a participant registering for the wrong section of a class as with our *Ethical Considerations* QCs. There were sections for four distinct professional groups: interpreters, speech-to-text providers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and disability service professionals. If a participant did not read carefully they might sign up for the wrong section.

Screening the registration forms ensured that participants met the criteria for a class and that the class met their learning goals. Before this system was implemented, time was wasted moving participants between classes when they registered for the wrong class or misunderstood the goals of a class.
Weekly Tips and Hints
QC staff created a “how to” guide for participants. It explained basic functions of the LMS and QC. However, not all participants took the time to read the guide. Facilitators found that they were answering many of the same questions every class. For this reason, a series of “tips and hints” were developed. QC staff worked with facilitators to create a list of the most frequently asked questions concerning QC navigation and operations. Then they developed clear, succinct messages to address the issue. These standardized messages were shared with facilitators as a new weekly component. Each week facilitators would post one of these messages under the title “Weekly Tips and Hints.” This greatly reduced the number of technical questions, and participants seemed pleased to be given helpful information in small chunks.

Reminders
QC staff quickly realized that some information can be overlooked when not specifically addressed. QC’s contained documents with all pertinent information about the class. However, some participants are not “read the directions” type learners. For this reason, a series of reminder messages were created. Each week facilitators would post reminder messages in the classroom forums about upcoming due dates. In general participants seemed to like this system. If they had already completed an assignment, they could ignore the post but most found the gentle reminder very helpful.

In conjunction with participant reminders, a system of facilitator reminders was also established. QC staff recognized that consistency was needed across the classes and that facilitators were also busy professionals. So at the start of each QC, email messages were set up to go out automatically to all facilitators throughout the class. If the facilitator was to post a standard message in the class, then that information was included in the email. Facilitators appreciated this system because it often saved them time from having to create individual reminders for themselves and in looking up which message to post.

Participant Agreement
When QCs began, a participant agreement was developed to ensure that participants understood what was required before committing their time. This allowed participants to back out before the class began and pn2 could fill the vacant seat. If participants did not withdraw until later in the course, the seat could not be filled and others might miss out on the learning opportunity.

Pn2 also added language to the agreement to ensure civil and professional behavior in the class.

Pn2 QC Participant Agreement
Participant requirements:
- Access to a high-speed internet connection
- Active e-mail address which is checked regularly
- Ability to commit at least 5 hours per week to working on this QuickClass

I agree:
- To inform the instructor if, at any time, I realize that I am unable to remain fully engaged in the course (e.g. meeting deadlines and posting responses to the discussion board).
- To inform the instructor of any technical and/or usability problems that I notice in the course.
- To complete both the Pre-assessment and Post-assessment.
- Not to use the QuickClass as a means of advertising or promoting a business or product.
- Not to reproduce, duplicate, copy, or sell any portion of this course, or materials and information provided by other participants in this course, without express written permission, as it may violate the copyright and intellectual property rights of the authors of those materials.
- To be respectful and professional in all communications with the facilitators and other participants.
- To allow pepnet 2 to use comments posted in the class for promotional and reporting purposes to further the mission of pepnet 2. I understand my name will not be used without my express written permission.

I have read the requirements listed above and agree that I possess the prerequisite knowledge, time, and technology resources to complete this QuickClass.

**Conflicts within QuickClasses**
As stated earlier, overall there were very few conflicts within classes. However, occasionally there were issues, and the participant agreement was helpful in resolving these.

**Example 1: Confrontational Participant**
In one class, a participant began discussions with a very confrontational tone. The facilitator used all the recommended facilitation strategies to bring the discussion back to a professional level. However, the participant became increasingly belligerent and aggressive. Several other participants contacted the facilitator and expressed their concern with the tone of the class and explained they did not want to participate in the discussion for fear of what this one participant might say.

At this point, the QC coordinator became involved and contacted the confrontational participant. After several attempts to defuse the situation, the facilitator and QC Coordinator decided to remove that participant from the class, as he refused to comply with the agreement statement, “To be respectful and professional in all communications with the facilitators and other participants.”
Example 2: Potential Plagiarism
In another instance, a participant in a skill building class for service providers requested copies of all the QC materials for her class. Participants can download and save materials, so the participant was questioned as to why she wanted everything neatly packaged for her. She admitted that she planned to take the content and provide training for other service providers on her campus. The request was denied in compliance with the statement in the participant agreement, “Not to reproduce, duplicate, copy, or sell any portion of this course, or materials and information provided by other participants in this course, without express written permission, as it may violate the copyright and intellectual property rights of the authors of those materials.”

While it is appropriate to share materials with colleagues, this participant, who was a novice service provider, felt that taking the class advanced her to trainer level. The QC staff did not want materials being misinterpreted or utilized incorrectly.

When creating a participant agreement, it is wise to consider all the possible conflicts that could arise, no matter how outlandish. Think of the warning on your hairdryer to not use it in the bathtub. For most people, that is an obvious statement but the warning is there because someone tried. In online classes, it is best to be proactive in order to prevent problems rather than try to clean them up.

Summary
The pn2 QuickClasses have been shown to be a positive learning experience for participants as well as facilitators. Although at times, it was a challenge to manage a new type of learning environment as well as shifting roles, this format provided a well-received forum for addressing real issues and practices.

Quotes from QuickClass Participants
Thank you for the encouragement on my week 4 activity! It's been a rough week and your feedback was just what I needed! After captioning that assignment, I wanted to give up. I have been and will continue working on my speed and I think it's beginning to get better. I like your suggestions for improvement. This week's assignment went better.
Thanks again you two, you're the best!!!
 - Speech-to-text provider

This class has certainly expanded my skills and knowledge!
 - Speech-to-text provider

One of my favorite parts of this class was just being hands on with the work. I’ve already convinced my department to look into our captioning process and reassess it because of this course. I’m hoping to work wonders with them due to this class! It’s been great!!
 - Disability Service Professional
Thank-you for a thoroughly enjoyable, informative and excellent class. I will be applying what I learned to my current and future mentoring.
- Sign Language Interpreter

The pepnet 2 classes *Hard of Hearing 101* and *Substance Abuse and Deafness* moved me into action. I started a group on Facebook, which sponsors a weekly support group for those in recovery from substance abuse. We’ve had several meetings and all have been successful so far. I guess one person can make a difference. I am excited to see what comes in the future.
- Sign Language Interpreter

I want to express my appreciation and gratitude to everyone involved in this course. The transparency in the Discussions and the sharing of Resources have been unexpected benefits. Because of these things, this course far exceeded my expectations--so hard to believe that it is offered for FREE!
- Executive Director of community agency

I work in a community college. This class has given me more knowledge and awareness of types of assistance and resource I can now provide if a student should need it. For example, on activity caused me to research resources in my area and I found several I was not previously aware of. I’m also more aware and sensitive to the types of struggles and challenges that people who are deaf and hard of hearing face.
- Disability Service Professional

I learned a lot this week. Sometimes the bare minimum is done to comply with the ADA but this is not enough and truly does not benefit the client. Seems to me that just doing the minimum can create more frustration for the client. Educating ourselves and doing something with that knowledge is the only way to truly benefit our clients.
- Workforce advisor with non-profit organization

I didn’t except to cover half of the information that we did. Like many have said, I thought it would be mostly technical information and tutorials. That being said, I’m so happy now that it *wasn’t* just typing and programs. I feel like what we got from this course is so much more valuable. If it was simply "how-to" tutorials, without knowing the legislation and standards involved, I probably would have "volunteered" to take on captioning for my school. I’d know just enough to be dangerous! I’m thankful this class helped lay the foundation for, hopefully, future involvement in captioning.
- Disability service professional

Thank you for offering this course and answering our questions. I especially enjoyed the discussion responses and discovered that we all share the same frustrations and situations in their institutions, when trying to serve D/HH students. We all want equal access for them!
- Disability service professional


QuickClass Syllabi

Pepnet 2 created a total of 22 QuickClasses on a variety of topics to meet the need of stakeholders. A complete list can be found in the appendices. Additionally, a three-week class was developed to train QC facilitators. A total of 183 classes were offered between June 2012 and November 2016.

In the following section, four QuickClasses are discussed. For each of these classes, the content developer and facilitator were the same individual. For each class, major components of the syllabus are included as well as additional commentary and insights from the developer and facilitator.
**Making Sense of Hearing Assistive Technology QuickClass**

**Background**
This class was originally developed for postsecondary disability service providers and vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors to provide a broad and thorough understanding of assistive listening and alerting technologies. The class discussions and activities were designed to help these professionals develop a deeper understanding of technology to better serve college students and adults in the workforce. The class eventually included itinerant teachers of the deaf and interpreters from the K-12 environment. Widening the scope of experiences was challenging because the level of technical information was not needed by all participants. However, the participation discussions became broader and richer for everyone.

**Course Description**
This course is designed for disability service professionals and VR counselors who would like to learn more about how assistive listening devices (especially FM systems) and alerting devices benefit individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.

This course will review traditional assistive technologies, introduce new technology, and will demonstrate the ways technology can link together to create the most beneficial listening environments. Participants will feel confident in choosing the most effective communication accommodations for individuals with hearing aids or cochlear implants.

**Course Outline**

**Week 1: Hearing loss and life experiences**
Our first week begins with the basics and a foundation from which to continue learning about Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs). Pepnet 2 has developed an informative and user-friendly elearning tool called *Access: The Fundamentals*. This resource will provide you with an overview of information about people who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as accommodations that can make education, employment, and other activities accessible.
Facilitator’s Goal
Participants had diverse backgrounds so we wanted to get everyone to have a similar starting point for the class. We used Pepnet 2’s Access: The Fundamentals online resource to begin with the basics and lay a foundation from which to continue learning about ALDs.

The discussion question helps the facilitator understand the class demographics and experience levels. It also helps to identify those with little experience who may feel overwhelmed the next two weeks and need extra encouragement. The activity allows participants at all experience levels to share something they learned that they could share within their own organization to begin building resources.

Discussion Question
• Describe your current knowledge of or experiences with individuals who are hard of hearing.

Activity
• Complete Access: The Fundamentals and upload the completion certificate.
• Share something you learned in the eLearning module you didn’t know and could share with a colleague who is not familiar with individuals with hearing loss.

Common themes from weekly discussion
• Self-advocacy skills should be taught to children and adults.
• It is difficult to know which brand of FM system is needed.
• Realtime captioning is as important as interpreters and FM systems.
• Participants’ personal experiences with individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing varied widely from those who have hearing loss themselves or have worked in the field for many years to those with very limited exposure.

Week 2: Assistive Listening Systems
This week provides information on the different types of assistive listening systems and why they can provide tremendous benefit. The objective this week is to provide information on traditional, universal FM systems, infrared systems, induction loops, digital processors and personal amplifiers so that you can understand the benefits and limitations of each type of communication system.
**Facilitator’s Goal**

The topic ‘Assistive Listening Systems’ is broken into 2 weeks because the ALD industry does not use consistent terminology which causes confusion for many students. The first week provides a grounding in all of the different technologies while the second week delves into hearing aids and specific ALD systems.

The objective this week is to provide information on traditional, universal FM systems, infrared systems, induction loops, digital processors and personal amplifiers so that participants can understand the benefits and limitations of each type of communication system. The discussion questions help the facilitator learn about the specific ALD systems available to participants and their comfort level with those systems. Talking about assistive technology and seeing others discuss their knowledge and experiences helps each person become more comfortable with technology they have access to.

The information is available in the resource materials to complete the chart for the activity.

*Note: The process for completing the activity is different from any other week. It was challenging for many students to master the steps to complete the upload. Changing this activity to match the formats of the other weeks would be a suggested improvement.*

**Discussion Question**

- What assistive listening technology do you currently have?
- Are you comfortable with the systems?

**Activity**

- Fill in the chart that compares how each ALD system transmits sound and list a benefit and drawback of each type of system.

**FAQs**

There are benefits and limitations of each type of communication system: traditional FM (and digital) systems, universal wireless FM systems, infrared systems and induction room loops. Some of the systems are designed for large areas while others are designed for personal use between the instructor and student. Room amplification systems, called Sound Field, are also mentioned but used primarily in K-12 environments.
Common themes from weekly discussion

- Those new to online classes began to struggle this week with the technology. Some had difficulties with the Moodle platform and others had problems with basic computer literacy skills; such as attaching a file. A lot of time was spent referring people back to the “QuickClass User Guide.”
- Interpreters are sometimes asked to trouble-shoot hearing aids or ALDs and they feel it is outside their experience base.
- Teachers are often tasked with trouble-shooting hearing aids and ALDs. Many do not have ready access to educational audiologists, while others do have that important access.
- Many disability service professionals are confused by all the technology and FM systems available. They recognize the need to build resources, especially with an audiologist.
- The Smartpen generated a lot of conversation and interest.

Week 3: Interfacing Hearing Aids and Cochlear Implants to ALDs

This week we will expand on ALDs and focus on the different ways to connect them to hearing aids and cochlear implants. New hearing aid accessories are changing the landscape for interfacing to hearing aids. This week we will expand on ALDs and focus on all the ways to interface, or interconnect, them.

How do you ensure the services are effective and adequate? This week’s discussion will provide resources from which to find the answers.

Facilitator’s Goal

Week 3 expands on ALDs and focuses on the different ways to connect them to hearing aids and cochlear implants. New hearing aid accessories are changing the landscape for interfacing to hearing aids. A clear understanding of telecoils is necessary to grasp the technical issues this week on how to interface hearing aids to ALDs.

Participant experience levels vary widely and the discussion this week builds on the basics covered last week. The discussion question explores actual student situations and helps personalize all the technical data provided in Week 3 materials.

This week’s conversations affirm the fact that accommodations are different for each individual and learning what factors and questions to consider for each person is necessary. The class materials should also help participants to better understand how ALDs connect to hearing aids and CIs. The activity shares several student profiles and allows those participants with limited real-life experiences to go deeper into understanding some of the issues surrounding successful ALD use.
**Discussion Question**

- Think of the last 2 students that you have worked with that used assistive listening devices. What was the listening option each chose to use? Did the system work well for them?

**Activity**


Using an ALD successfully, or any other services for that matter, relates more towards attitude and acceptance over the technology itself. Choose a student from the profiles and discuss how attitude may influence the use of an ALD and what you might do to enhance the experience. (Choose the one that closely matches issues you’ve already faced if you do have experience).

**FAQs**

Understanding how the telecoil works is vitally important to understanding universal access. The telecoil is a feature in a hearing aid or cochlear implant that looks for an electrical signal and converts it back into sound. The electrical signal comes from a loop of wire. The loop of wire can be part of a large room loop system or it can be a neckloop that plugs into a personal, portable FM system receiver.

A common misconception is that telecoils are ancient technology. Many audiologists and providers think telecoils are ‘old school.’ They see the newer technology as more advanced and mistakenly see no need for the telecoil. Not all hearing aids have telecoils because not all audiologists feel they are necessary and do not provide information on them. The telecoil is accessed through a program on the hearing aid that must be programmed by an audiologist. There used to be a visible physical switch on the hearing aid that identified it. It is true that new hearing aids and their accessories (including wireless FM receivers that attach directly to the hearing aid) provide significant improvement over telecoil technology. However, not all consumers can afford the high technology. The telecoil is most useful for those who cannot afford the most expensive technology but still need access.

The telecoil still provides that universal access. Many urban cities have multiple venues with hearing loops installed that provide access. Audiologists may recommend telecoils in these urban areas. Rural areas may not have any looped facilities; consequently, telecoils are not as useful for public venues in these areas.
Week 4: Alerting Systems for dorm, home and work

This week’s focus will be on alerting systems, especially the alerting needs of individuals with severe-to-profound hearing loss. We will look at how and when signaling systems can be effective on the job. This week’s activities will provide you with the resources you need to know what technologies are available.

Facilitator’s Goal

This week’s focus is on alerting systems, especially the alerting needs of individuals with severe-to-profound hearing loss. Participants will look at how and when signaling systems can be effective on the job. This week’s activities will provide resources needed to know what technologies are available.

We open the discussion on visual and audible alerting systems as well as the differences in safety procedures for young students. The discussion also includes how institutions deal with lock-downs and other emergency situations.

Discussion Question

• Employers and institutions are required to provide alerting systems. What are your policies for providing alerting systems? What campus wide emergency alerting is available to your students with hearing loss?

Activity

• Spend some time in the A-Z for Disabilities and Accommodations section of the JAN website for Hearing Loss Disability [http://askjan.org/]. Then look at “Accommodation Examples” and share something new you learned.

Common themes from weekly discussion

• The names of different alerting systems used on campuses were shared.
• The procedures followed by interpreters in primary grades were covered.
• Emergency alerting and lock-down procedures were discussed.

FAQs

Alerting systems and procedures vary widely across all facilities. Many participants had to ask what procedures were in place in their school.
Week 5: Phone Communications

Phone communication options change at a dizzying pace. It has become easier to connect to cell phones but there are still connectivity issues for work phones. This week we will review technology and compatibility issues so that you are aware of the different options available for home phones, work phones and cell phones. We will discuss the information you need to know in order to research solutions.

Facilitator’s Goal

Phone communication options change at a dizzying pace. There are options for video relay for ASL users, captioning services for non-ASL users and phone amplification systems for all levels of hearing loss. This week provides an overview of technology and compatibility issues.

After exploring different options, it is emphasized that phone interfaces are just as individualized as hearing aids and FM systems. There is no one-size-fits-all for any of the technologies. Technology for phone options will continue to change and develop so introducing the resources that help keep one up-to-date will be most helpful.

Discussion Question

- An individual is interested in a job where telephone use will be high. What is the number one option that could help ensure compatibility to any phone solution?

Activity

- Telephone technology is constantly changing so locating resources will help you provide timely services. What facts do you need so that you can make a recommendation for phone use? What resources could you use or share with an employer?

Common themes from weekly discussion

- Participants who deal primarily with individuals who are Deaf ASL-users are very familiar with video relay services. Amplification options for non-ASL consumers were less well known.
- Another active topic was captioned phone services.
- The conversations were liveliest when we were fortunate enough to have participants who were deaf and hard of hearing share their own experiences, preferences, and challenges.
- Sharing the resource for the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (https://www.ataporg.org/) allowed participants to find the resources within their own state.
- Phone apps were brought up in conversations but this class did not have resources listed for apps.
Week 6: How to Gather the Information Needed to Identify Accommodations

Assistive listening devices, alerting technology, and hearing aid technology change quickly. While the technologies change, the functional needs and compatibility issues remain the same. Gathering the needed information so that you can research solutions or work with a technology provider is the most effective process to follow. This week we will look at various tools you might use.

Facilitator’s Goal

Assistive listening and alerting technology and hearing aid technology change quickly, yet the functional needs and compatibility issues remain the same. Gathering the needed information so that you can research solutions or work with a technology provider is the most effective process to follow. This week we will look at various tools you might use.

This week’s session was not as helpful as others once the class demographic base widened. Half the class was not responsible for this job function and while there may be some information shared, it was not as detailed and supportive as compared to the other weeks.

Discussion Question

• Do you currently use an intake questionnaire when determining accommodations? How helpful has it been for the decisions you need to make?
• What areas present the most challenge when you work with technology?

Activity

• Read Jennifer’s story on pages 10-11 of *Hard of hearing students in postsecondary settings: A guide for service providers*. Jennifer has existing BTE hearing aids. She does not know if they have telecoils. Let us assume she DOES have telecoils. Develop a plan for accommodations, especially for a large auditorium, after-class study sessions and in basic classroom settings. Do you have those accommodations already in place? If not, what might you need?

Common themes from weekly discussion

• Many participants do not have authority to determine or purchase accommodations. It is done by the school. Two difficult areas of concern are convincing administration that accommodations are needed and supporting teachers to use the technology. Resources were shared from different websites and organizations.
• Discussion of forming an assistive technology (AT) group (consisting of but not limited to teachers of the deaf, speech pathologist, audiologist, and technical support). This AT group would use a questionnaire to identify student needs and make recommendations for environmental modifications and equipment for that individual student. This committee would organize, house, inventory and distribute the AT. When information and responsibility is shared, all knowledge is not lost by one person leaving the organization.
Summary
Technical issues such as learning to navigate and use the online class platform caused many people to feel overwhelmed at the start of class. This was the biggest hurdle at the start of every class. The requirement to participate in the class discussions each week was invaluable. This feedback supports and highlights the benefits of stimulating discussion topics and sums up the feelings shared by many in class:

“Just wanted to extend a quick thank you for facilitating this course for us. You are a wealth of knowledge! I do hope you continue to educate. Your teaching style is spot on with regards to drawing in interest and involvement, supporting ideas shared, facilitating continued conversations, suggesting other perspectives, and the depth of examples and knowledge to back it up. Again, thanks for making my first online course more enjoyable than I had imagined.”

Class Management Experiment
This class was developed originally for disability service providers and vocational rehabilitation counselors working with adults. Interpreters and teachers of the deaf became a larger part of the class participants and their experiences were with K-12 children.

We broke two classes out so that one group had only K-12 experiences while the other group worked with adults. We thought that the discussions could be more specific to the needs of children versus adults. We expected in-depth discussions for each group to be specific, supportive and helpful.

The experiment did not have the results we expected. The participation and depth of discussions were more one-dimensional and flat when the classes were specific to age group served. We found that the groups with mixed demographics provided life experiences that enriched the discussions and validated the efforts of each group of professionals.

Take-away
For providers who worked with adults, it was helpful to see the experiences that students/clients may have had as children. Likewise, listening to the challenges that adults faced after graduating high school gave better insights to the importance of teaching self-advocacy to children.

Resources:
Facilitator Commentary

The materials in this class cover a broad range of technologies and help lay a solid framework. The class discussions, however, are more important in that they bring the technologies to life and help highlight alternate approaches and experience. They bring forth resources available at local, state, and national levels to add to each participant’s ‘tool box.’ They also allow for questions and personal experiences in a protected and safe environment where venting is permissible when frustrated and support is offered by other class members.

The challenge for this class topic is the ever-evolving technologies. Hearing aid brands and models change almost yearly and apps are becoming more prevalent and easy to find. Perhaps the biggest challenge is how the lines become blurred with hearing aid accessories that use streaming or Bluetooth to connect to the hearing aids.

These technologies represent the newest and most advanced communication access but are not available to everyone because of cost. Many students have used some of this technology in K-12 when it is provided to them. They request the same technology after graduation because it has worked well. However, postsecondary institutions are covered under different laws than the K-12 system and may not provide students with the same technologies.

These newest technologies are undeniably the best available. However, much of this technology is hearing aid specific. The hearing aid accessories are brand dependent and not universal. (A Phonak streaming device cannot be used on non-Phonak hearing aids.) This creates an obstacle to colleges who need to invest in technology that can be used by more than one student, regardless of each individual hearing aid brand.

Effective communication access will always be a difficult topic to address because of the higher level of personal hearing technologies available. Identifying and building local resources will be even more important in the future.
Introduction to Accommodations 101 & Accommodations 102

The Accommodations 101 and 102 classes targeted disability service professionals working in postsecondary education settings. Individuals from this stakeholder group made frequent requests of pepnet 2 for information and technical assistance. These two classes were designed to increase the knowledge of novice disability service professionals and more experienced professionals new to working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Background and Content Development

In order to develop the content, staff gathered the necessary data on knowledge gaps which were found among disability service professionals in three ways. Though the developers were experienced disability service professionals, it was important to develop evidence-based content. First, the most frequently asked questions of the pn2Help team were reviewed. Second, the course designers reviewed the Pn2 Needs Assessment, identifying broad themes which indicated areas where disability service professionals may be lacking knowledge and experience—from their own perspective as well as from the perspective of students and parents. Lastly, the developers conducted interviews with stakeholders who had recently worked with a student who was deaf or hard of hearing for the first time. These stakeholders had received intensive technical assistance from the pn2Help team.

Accommodations 101 was taught first, before the development of Accommodations 102. Some questions asked in 101 made it clear that participants needed more in-depth discussions as they were dealing with more complex issues on their campuses. The 102 content developers drew upon these types of questions from 101, and again from the questions asked of the pn2Help team and the Pn2 Needs Assessment.

Technical Assistance Frequently Asked Questions

Commonly asked questions were related to where and how to arrange for accommodations, as well as how to determine if the requested accommodations were appropriate. Often stakeholders would need to be able to defend the expense of the accommodation to administrators. They frequently would ask questions like, “How do I know if interpreters are appropriate?” and “Why can’t the student just use a note taker?”

The pn2Help team also routinely received questions from stakeholders about how to work with service providers, how to deal with student complaints, and how to determine accommodations and academic adjustments for technical courses and settings. Many questions centered on procedure and policy development with regard to services and service providers, such as excessive student absence policies.
Stakeholder Interviews
The interviewer asked stakeholders to reflect on what they wish they had known from the start, how they found resources in their areas, and what they thought other novice professionals should know. It was clear that stakeholders were looking for resources and that in some areas it was difficult to find interpreters, captionists, and transcribers. Professionals often did not know where to turn.

What were some of your fears or questions when you first learned that you had an inquiry from a DHH student?
“I didn’t know how to communicate with him or what was needed to make sure communication was in place.”

“I think in the beginning I would have liked a resource manual of interpreters in my surrounding area. I had to call places and get referrals for services for my first deaf student. I would like to have had more knowledge about deafness than I had at that time, I have since tried to educate myself. I would like to have had a resource person that I could have called for support.”

How did you find resources in your area?
“It was hard, I called other institutions where they had interpreters.”

“I have a friend who works in deafness, I called her and she walked through some of the terminology and she told me about pepnet 2.”

What surprised you, or what were you not expecting that you think others should know to expect?
“The backlash from the effect on our budget for serving a student using interpreters.”

“I had been cautioning administration about the potential for this and warning them to be thinking where the money would come from. I was told it’s not in the budget and we can’t do it.”

“Coordinators should research the availability and cost as soon as possible and be able to offer administrators a comparison between interpreters or vendors.”

Review of Pn2 Needs Assessment
The Pn2 Needs Assessment identified the need for greater knowledge and awareness of evidence-based practices and strategies on the part of professionals. The Pn2 Needs Assessment revealed that students who are deaf and hard of hearing were receiving subpar accommodations, which may not effectively remove barriers to education. It also identified the need for new professionals to interact with more experienced professionals, which could result in more appropriate services to students who are deaf and hard of hearing.
Some students responding to the *Pn2 Needs Assessment* reported a delay in receiving services. Institutions reported they were not prepared to serve a low-incidence population. Using the *Pn2 Needs Assessment* helped to identify that professionals needed to be able to appropriately discuss accommodations with students, and implement them more effectively. The developers determined that teaching participants to do their own research about local resources and service providers would be an important skill to develop. Course activities reflected this discovery.
Accommodations 101: Providing Services for Students Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

QuickClass

Course Description
This course is designed for professionals who work in disability services but do not have specific training for working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing. It is also beneficial for those who need a refresher in working with this population.

Participants will learn the basics of providing accommodations to students who are deaf and hard of hearing and learn important elements to consider when choosing appropriate accommodations. Participants will have the opportunity to apply what they learn to practical scenarios that disability service professionals are likely to encounter. At the end of the course, participants will be prepared to implement effective accommodations and auxiliary services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Course Outline

Week 1: Hearing Loss and Life Experiences
Our first week begins with the basics and a foundation from which to continue learning about students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Pepnet 2 has developed an informative and user-friendly eLearning tool called Access: The Fundamentals. This resource will provide you with an overview of information about people who are deaf and hard of hearing as well as accommodations that can make education, employment, and other activities accessible.

Facilitator's Goals
Access: The Fundamentals was used to help participants understand how hearing loss may influence people’s life experiences, and to understand and respect the many different language and communication preferences of people who are deaf and hard of hearing. This allowed us to begin with the basics and lay a foundation from which to continue learning about accommodations at the postsecondary level. A “Getting Acquainted” activity helps participants develop a sense of community and trust.
Discussion Question

- What is your current knowledge of or experience working with individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing? What “burning” questions do you have about working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing?

Activity

- Complete the online training: Access: The Fundamentals
- Upload your Verification certificate as an attachment to the Week 1 activity thread.
- In your reply to the Week 1 activity thread, respond to the following questions.
- What did you learn from this training module that you didn’t know before?
- What one thing would you share with colleagues who are not familiar with students who are deaf and hard of hearing?
- Post your certificate and answers to the questions as a reply to Week 1 activity.

Common themes from weekly discussion

This first week was intended to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to get to know one another. This helped everyone to see that the class was a safe place to ask questions and share ideas.

- Participants asked about services available at the postsecondary level which are not commonly seen in the K-12 setting.
- Dealing with service providers and confidentiality with disability service professionals was a common area of misunderstanding for many participants.
- The transition which students face coming from the K-12 setting was discussed, as well as the new level of responsibility which students may not be ready to take on.
- Questions arose about the difference between ASL as a language, and signed English systems.

Week 2: The Intake Process

The intake process is important for establishing rapport and trust with students. When you meet with a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, you will want to be aware of possible barriers and have strategies in place to allow for effective communication. It is important to understand the diversity of needs within the population of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing and be prepared to discuss various accommodations for specific situations. This week you’ll be provided with practical information, tools, and resources to help you create an effective intake interview.
**Facilitator’s Goals**

This week is designed to help participants become more comfortable utilizing the interactive process with students and to recognize barriers to access which students may encounter. The relevant accommodations and auxiliary services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing are introduced as a foundation for further discussion in the following weeks. We want to help participants start off on the right foot with students by giving them strategies for a good first meeting.

**Discussion Question**

- Keeping in mind what you learned in *Access: The Fundamentals*, how would a student’s hearing loss impact his/her ability to access the content in a classroom setting? List a question or questions you could ask during the intake interview to begin a dialogue with the student about the access to classroom information.

**Activity**

- Review the student profiles found in the Weekly Materials folder. Select one of these students and respond to the following questions.
  - Which student did you choose?
  - What information are you able to identify about the student?
  - Use the sample intake questions provided and select three questions you would use for an intake interview with the student you selected. Share how those questions would help you in the accommodations process.

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- Participants wondered what kinds of accommodations are helpful. They wanted to know how to determine what accommodations are appropriate in a given environment.
- The importance of developing a backup plan for service provider absences was discussed.
- Participants’ perception of cost and lack of available service providers poses a barrier to accommodating a student.
- If coordinators cannot locate a service the student requests, how do they determine the appropriate steps to take at their institution?

**Week 3: Accommodations and Auxiliary Services**

This week we will focus our discussions around accommodations. For students who are deaf and hard of hearing, timely access to lectures and communication in the classroom is critical. Because of the diverse communication needs of these students, there is not a “one-size fits all” accommodation solution. After reviewing documentation and gathering information from the student, individual accommodations can be determined. The National Association of the Deaf notes:
The Office for Civil Rights has held that the three basic components of "effective" communication are timeliness of delivery, accuracy of the translation, and provision of communication in a manner and medium appropriate to the significance of the message and the abilities of the individual with the disability. (http://www.nad.org/issues/education/higher-education/private-colleges-and-other-post-secondary-institutions)

What does this mean for disability service professionals? How do you ensure the services are effective and adequate? This week’s discussion will provide resources from which to find the answers.

**Facilitator's Goals**

We want participants to learn how to research resources, possible accommodations, and auxiliary aids, starting with a better understanding of the various types of services students typically use. The activities are designed to help them develop skills in explaining the use of the selected accommodation or auxiliary aid in the higher education setting. This week we want to teach them to fish for information and to reach out to colleagues and other professionals for examples of how accommodations and auxiliary services are handled on other campuses. This is an important step which is often disregarded, but necessary in the process if a student asks for a service or accommodation the institution has not provided before.

**Discussion Question**

- What are key elements that come to mind when considering accommodations for students who are deaf and hard of hearing? What concerns do you have about providing accommodations? What challenges might you encounter at your institution in providing these accommodations?

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- There was some confusion over the assignment. Many participants seemed to have trepidations about asking the pn2Help team for information.
- There were several questions about the difference between FM loops and personal FM units.
- Some participants were nervous about determining what technology was needed for students and had never dealt with listening systems, speech-to-text systems, hearing aids, or captioning.
Activity

• Review the student profiles, select one student and identify a potential accommodation, like an assistive listening device (ALD), note taking, or captioning that would meet his/her needs.
  o Part A: Email the pepnet 2 Technical Assistance team (help@pepnet.org), disclose that you are a participant in this QuickClass, and request information or resources about the selected accommodation.
  o Part B: Using the information and resources you receive from the Technical Assistance team to draft an email you could send to an instructor to explain the accommodation.

Week 4: An Overview of Interpreting

This week’s focus will be on securing, implementing, and managing interpreting services. Whether your institution hires interpreters directly or contracts with an agency, disability service professionals are charged with ensuring ‘effective’ interpreting services are available, in a timely manner. This week’s activities will provide you with the resources you need to implement and manage interpreting services.

Facilitator’s Goals

Participants will learn about the various aspects of managing interpreting services. Through the activity, they will gain experience in developing a budget for interpreting expenses and are ready to advise administrators as to institutional responsibility to provide interpreting services without delay.
**Discussion Question**

- What institutional or attitudinal challenges have you encountered or do you anticipate encountering with employing interpreters at your institution? What technology or tools do you use, if any, to help manage/schedule the services?

**Activity**

- Scenario: You need to hire an interpreter for a student taking a biology class next semester. The class will consist of an hour and ten-minute lecture, followed by a two-hour lab.
- Research interpreting resources and expenses in your area.
- Use the Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) website to locate 2 interpreting resources in your area, agencies, individuals, or a combination.
  - Go to www.rid.org
  - On left in a purple box you’ll see “Search Tools.”
  - Use “Find an Interpreter/Member” to search for interpreters in your area. You do not need to fill in all the information, just a state is enough.
  - Use “Find Interpreter Agency/Referral Services” to search for interpreting agencies in your area.
- Use the 2009 PEPNet Postsecondary Interpreting and Speech-to-Text Survey Summary to project potential costs for interpreting services for the semester, for the course described above. (This document is in the Weekly Materials folder.)
- Draft a letter to an administrator at your institution outlining your plan for securing interpreters for this student and reiterate the institution’s responsibility to provide qualified interpreters per the ADA. Include information about the total projected cost and why two interpreters will be needed to cover this class and lab.

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- The questions that emerged were: “How can one know an interpreter is truly ‘qualified’ when they lack an extensive background in interpreting?” and “What tools can one use to be sure an interpreter is qualified for the job?”
- Participants wanted to know how to handle student complaints about interpreters when they themselves are not qualified to assess interpreter skills.
- We clarified what to look for in terms of professional interpreter behavior and how to handle those times when interpreters do not behave in a professional and appropriate manner.
Week 5: An Overview of Speech-to-Text Services

Speech-to-text or real-time captioning services may be the most appropriate accommodation or the preference for some students who are deaf and hard of hearing. This week we will focus on the different types of speech-to-text systems available and discuss how to implement these services on your campus.

Facilitator's Goals
The goal for participants this week is to find local speech-to-text resources and prepare a cost estimate of services. Through the activity, they gain an understanding of the important groundwork institutions must lay in order to be ready to provide hard to find auxiliary services when a student requests them.

Discussion Question
- How would you choose between verbatim and meaning-for-meaning real-time captioning services? Have you used speech-to-text on your campus in the past? Do you see a potential need for this accommodation on your campus?

Activity
- Institutions are mandated to provide appropriate and timely accommodations. The key to this is having a plan in place. This activity is designed to help you locate possible resources for speech-to-text services in your area.
  - These links can be used to identify a potential resource for securing speech-to-text providers (either verbatim or meaning for meaning) in your area.
    - CART providers: http://psl.ncra.org/
    - Typewell providers: http://typewell.com/agencies.html
    - C-Print providers’ listserv: CPRINT-CAPTION@listserver.rit.edu

Common themes from weekly discussion
- Some participants brought up concerns about students who may not have a reading level high enough to keep up with an in-class captionist or transcriber.
- Demonstrations of speech-to-text services can help students who have never used the accommodation make an informed decision.
- Some wondered about the process for streaming CART at public events for access, rather than waiting for accommodation requests.
- There was confusion over the term “meaning-for-meaning” in speech-to-text services. Some thought the use of meaning-for-meaning services would give students the unfair advantage of having content explained to them.
Use the speech-to-text services analysis document in the weekly materials folder to conduct an analysis of the cost and availability of services in your area. Use the 2009 PEPNet Postsecondary Interpreting and Speech-to-Text Survey Summary to assist you in completing the analysis. (This document is in the Weekly Materials Folder.) Post your chart as an attachment to the Week 5 activity forum. Discuss any additional questions or concerns you may have with the group.

**Week 6: Developing Sound Policies and Procedures**

Pepnet 2 conducted a comprehensive Pn2 Needs Assessment in 2012 which revealed that students who are deaf and hard of hearing felt clear procedures for requesting and utilizing accommodations were as important as the quality of those services. Institutions should clearly document the process for students to request accommodations, define the role of the service provider, and describe the student’s responsibilities. Sound policies and procedures provide the framework by which effective services can be implemented.

**Facilitator's Goals**

We want participants to understand that policies and procedures will often save many headaches and hassles if they are considered and implemented before questions and issues arise. Participants should be able to develop policies and procedures for implementing and using accommodations and auxiliary services.

**Discussion Question**

- What existing policies and procedures do you have, if any, at your institution for requesting communication access accommodations? How are these policies and procedures communicated to students? How do students learn about their responsibilities in requesting accommodations?

**Activity**

- Use the Interpreter / Speech-to-Text policy in the materials section to complete this activity. Review the existing policy and compose a policy statement to add on requesting services for extracurricular/non-classroom events. Consider the following points as you write:
  a. Amount of time needed for events.
  b. The type of event, i.e. guest lecture, theatrical, student organization, etc.
  c. Point of contact for the event.
Common themes from weekly discussion

- We spent time relating this week back to the intake or new student process and discussed when to cover these issues with students. It can be a lot to take in during one appointment, so we discussed strategies for communicating policies and procedures to students through multiple means.

- A good discussion ensued about setting a reasonable time frame for student requests for services to be completed. How late is too late? What can we do to show a good faith effort in all requests, even when they are late?
Accommodations 102: Providing Services for Students Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

QuickClass

Course Description
This course is designed for disability services coordinators and administrators working in the college and university setting who have some experience working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing, or those who have taken the previous QuickClass, Accommodations 101. Participants will have the opportunity to apply what they learn to practical scenarios that disability service professionals are likely to encounter. At the end of the course, participants will have knowledge, information, and resources to provide effective accommodations and auxiliary services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Course Outline

Week 1: Trained? Qualified? Certified? - What’s the difference?
Service providers play an essential role in provision of accommodations for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. However, interpreters and captionists are often in high demand and low supply. Add to this the fact that these services are not interchangeable and securing appropriate accommodations can be challenging.

The ADA states that institutions must provide “effective communication.” You can find more information on this topic in “ADA Requirements: Effective Communication.” (http://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm)

This week we’ll take a look at an institution’s responsibility to identify and provide a “qualified” service provider.

Facilitator’s Goals
Participants should learn the difference between a certified and a qualified interpreter and gain an understanding of how training, experience, credentials, and qualifications all intersect to provide a picture of a professional interpreter’s abilities. They should be able to discuss the qualifications, credentials and certifications that may apply for a speech-to-text provider as well. This is a more in-depth analysis of the topic than the introductory level presented in Accommodations 101. However, it is important to start here as a review and bring everyone along to the next level.
Discussion Question

- It is not always easy to know how to hire qualified service providers since credentialing varies depending on a number of issues. When you are selecting and hiring a service provider, you will want to know about their training, credentials, and content specific knowledge. Read the Week 1 Lecture document to learn more. Then respond to 1 of the questions below.
  - If you hire service providers directly, does your institution have hiring requirements for interpreters and/or real-time captionists? If yes, what are they? If no, what would you propose to your administration?
  - If you hire through an agency, what is the agency’s standards for hiring service providers? What assurance does the agency provide concerning quality of the service?

Common themes from weekly discussion

- Participants noted problems working with agencies and were unsure of how to trust the quality of interpreters.
- Service coordinators wondered how they could use interpreter evaluations and student feedback to ensure quality services.
- There was a discussion on the value of a bachelor’s degree for interpreters in postsecondary settings.
- Questions were asked about the differences between licensed (at the state level) and certified (national).
- Institutions often struggle with how to develop pay scales for interpreters based on training, qualifications and certifications.

Activity

- Choose one of the options listed below and write your response.
- Option 1: Direct Hires – Sometimes finding service providers may require you to advertise in the right place. Share or create a job description (f/t or p/t) appropriate for your institution and identify 2 places where you could post it to recruit service providers. Post your activity to the discussion thread.
- Option 2: Contracting with an Agency – For some institutions going to an agency prevails as the best option. Identify and compare two agencies (one local and one remote) that are able to provide services in your area. Draft a short email that would serve as your initial inquiry into what they can provide your institution and at what cost.
**Week 2: Managing Service Providers**

There is more to coordinating services than meeting the needs of the student and fulfilling the legal responsibilities of the institution. Beyond ensuring the ‘right’ professionals are hired for the job, monitoring the quality of the accommodations and services on an as needed basis contributes to improved access for students. In addition, having a solid framework for accommodation coordination and service delivery can protect both the student and the institution.

**Facilitator’s Goals**

We want participants to be able to identify the issues involved with service provider evaluation. They should gain experience by developing their own policies which may be needed when hiring and supervising interpreters and other service providers.

**Discussion Question**

- **Discussion Question #1** – Periodic evaluations of accommodations and services can be a valuable practice. How do you monitor and/or measure for quality and satisfaction of accommodations and services at your institution? Do you have a system for evaluating interpreters?

- **Discussion Question #2** – More often than not, college administrators have limited knowledge and understanding of the practices and industry standards for service providers. Read the materials provided in the weekly materials folder and consider the culture of your campus. What suggestions or recommendations could you employ that would support and ultimately retain quality service providers you have hired? How would you justify the implementation of these strategies with your administration?

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- Keeping staff and independent contractors happy can be difficult. It is important to treat them well so that professionals will have a pool from which to draw. Participants discussed creative ways to attract service providers to work at their institutions.
- It is important to be sure policies do not interfere with institution’s ability to provide effective communication.
- Institutions struggle with how to handle interpreter shortages to make sure classes are covered and requests are filled.
- Retaining speech-to-text providers can be tricky.
**Activity**

- Hiring qualified professionals and having a shared understanding of responsibilities enables service coordinators to shift time and attention to the needs of the student and institution. Getting on the same page should begin on day one. Providing service providers with clear expectations and an overview of disability service protocol abets the working relationship. Select a handbook from the options provided, or feel free to use your own. Review the policies and procedures outlined and identify 2 items (policies and/or procedures) that you would like to incorporate at your institution. Identify an action plan for implementing such policies.

**Week 3: Handling Complaints**

How do we handle situations where the student feels services are not adequate? There are a variety of reasons why a service might not be effective for a particular student or a particular situation.

Some students have limited experience with access services and will need time to learn to effectively use an accommodation. Some students have preferred service providers and are reluctant to try new ones. Sometimes the communication needs of a student simply don’t match the skills of a particular service provider. And sometimes a service provider may not be able to provide effective communication in a given situation.

For whatever reason, “one size” does not fit all when it comes to communication access. This week we’ll look at how to handle complaints when they do come up so that students do receive effective communication access.

**Facilitator’s Goals**

We want to help participants gain skills and understand options for evaluating the effectiveness of an accommodation for a specific student in a specific setting. Relevant settlement agreements concerning service provider complaints will be discussed. Participants identify procedures for handling complaints about service providers and demonstrate their ability to respond to a simulated complaint through developing their own process.
Discussion Question

- Achieving effective communication for students who are deaf and hard of hearing is a process that involves matching the student's communication preferences with the technical knowledge and skillset of the service providers. For example, students who use interpreters may find that the interpreter provided is not able to meet their communication needs. In this case, coordinators should be ready to discuss alternative arrangements and have an established process for students to express a concern about or request a change in the services provided.

Activity

- Read the Letter to Santa Ana College in the Week 3 Materials folder, paying particular attention to the Analysis section. Respond to the following: What is your “takeaway” after reading about this complaint? What can we learn from their experience? What challenges to responding to complaints do you face on your campus?
- Look at the sample, Student Procedure for Resolving Concerns about Service Providers in the weekly materials. Develop a similar procedure that is specific to your institution in terms of resources and personnel. Take into consideration the potential need to meet with the student, how you will evaluate the situation if you are not a qualified interpreter, and a reasonable length of time to respond to and resolve the issue.

Common themes from weekly discussion

- Analysis of the settlement agreement varied. Some were able to discuss issues in a thoughtful way; others struggled with reviewing it for the pertinent findings.
- Building trust with students is important; we discussed techniques for doing so.
- Adding newer interpreters to a team without sacrificing quality can be challenging.

Week 4: Essential Course Elements and Academic Adjustments

Academic courses often are not designed with the concept of Universal Design in mind. Some classes may include elements which are not easily accommodated. Additional challenges occur when a faculty member feels that an accommodation would “fundamentally alter the nature of the ... program...” (ADA) The Office of Civil Rights recommends institutions develop a process for resolving such issues. The process should include the student, the faculty member, the academic department, and the Disabilities Office to ensure a fair and appropriate resolution.
This week we will look at real-world examples of implementing accommodations and strategies for ensuring the focus remains on the academic requirements rather than the student’s perceived limitations.

**Facilitator’s Goals**
This week focuses on sharing ways to work with faculty to identify essential course elements and formulate appropriate adjustments as necessary. Getting into the academic adjustment process can be intimidating and faculty may become defensive about their course objectives. The decision-making process of academic adjustments and determining what is fundamental to the course must be a thoughtful and measured one. We want to give participants a chance to practice ways they could frame the conversation.

**Discussion Question**
- Does your campus have a process in place for determining accommodations when the essential requirements of the course or program are called into question? How have you handled these kinds of situations in the past? If you do not have a process in place, what do you see as the first step toward developing one?

**Activity**
- A student majoring in physics who does not need a foreign language class for credit wants to take Japanese for his own personal interest as an elective credit. This student is profoundly deaf, uses ASL interpreters, and does not use speech or speech reading to communicate.
- Compose an email to the faculty member to open a dialogue about accommodations for this student. Assume that the student is able to advocate for themselves but has asked you to coordinate a meeting. In your email to the faculty member, touch on the issues raised in the video and list two accommodations that the student is likely to need. Be sure to read “Foreign Language Accommodations” to aid you in this activity.

**Common themes from weekly discussion**
- Accommodations in unique classes and situations were discussed and participants shared their struggles and success stories.
- Several participants reported that they had no academic adjustment process on their campuses and would check into developing one.
- Successful working relationships with faculty are important.
**Week 5: Internships, practicum, or clinicals, Oh my!**

Field experiences offer direct and hands on learning opportunities that many students benefit from in their fields of study. However, coordinating accommodations for students requires proactive planning, open communication, and an all-around team effort. This week we will discuss the many facets of providing accommodations in field experience settings, as well as considerations for implementing them.

**Facilitator’s Goals**

Internships can be a difficult environment for students and institutions may think that they can simulate the work experience by providing fewer accommodation or reduced hours of accommodations, when in fact they are still responsible for providing accommodations at the internship site. Participants will gain an understanding of institutional responsibilities for providing services during internship experiences and learn strategies for responding to attitudinal barriers which many students may face in these settings.

**Discussion Question**

- Read the *Open Letter to Training Directors Regarding Accommodations for Deaf Interns* and respond to the questions provided:
  - What surprised you about the experience described?
  - What are the ‘take-aways’ from this experience?
  - What are the implications for your own practices?

**Activity**

- Select a scenario provided or summarize a field experience scenario of your own. Using the materials provided and the discussions from this class, share/post your impressions using the following prompts:
  - What was the crux of the concern for all parties involved? [Student, institution, site] What, if any, were the essential access violations?
  - How would you or did you navigate this circumstance? What is or was the resolution?
    - What resources would you need, or wish that you had?
- What have you learned from this experience? What, if anything, would you change about your practices?
Common themes from weekly discussion

- There was discussion of student experience with disclosure to the internship site and how coordinators can collaborate with faculty to assist in the process.
- It is paramount to ensure interpreters fully understand the context and setting before going to the internship site. Many recommended a meeting of site staff, the interpreter(s), and the student.
- Internships can feel like a high stakes situation for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, so it is important to be sensitive to that during the process of setting up accommodations.
- We discussed the role of the interpreter in such settings and how the professional and power relationships with students who are deaf and hard of hearing can be very dynamic and interpreters must adjust appropriately.
- Many stated the need to train program faculty well in advance of the start of the internship.

Week 6: Accommodations & online courses

The advent of online education has presented new opportunities for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, but has also created unique challenges for DSS offices. DSS offices can help to reduce barriers for online students by encouraging the institution to embrace a culture of accessibility that requires universal design principles be used in developing online courses. This week we will examine suggested strategies for establishing accessibility policies and procedures for online courses. We will also discuss the common formats for online classes and explore possible accommodations for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Facilitator’s Goals

Accommodations for students who are deaf and hard of hearing in online courses can be tough to implement. Remote technology may come into play, and video media may require captioning after the course has been built. This week’s discussion gives participants a chance to learn to analyze the online environment and identify the different types of online courses, and then be able to address the barriers an online course may pose for students.
**Discussion Question**

- Read “Providing access to technology doesn’t have to be mystery” located in the weekly materials section. What is your process for working with students taking online courses? How does it differ from working with students taking on campus classes, if at all? What do you see as the barriers, or what barriers have you overcome in arranging accommodations for students?

**Activity**

- Read the documents entitled “Synchronous vs Asynchronous Classes and First Timer’s Online Course Accommodations Checklist”
  - Option 1 – Look at the checklist and suppose that you are meeting with a student who is deaf or hard of hearing who has enrolled in an online course. Select one of the student communication preferences and fill in the checklist with accommodations you feel the student would need for an online course.
  - Option 2 – If you already have an online accessibility standard in place at your institution, you may share any relevant documents or checklists that have been created. Be sure to give a brief description of the process that you went through to bring about the accessibility procedures at your institution.

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- There are often issues with faculty refusing to replace course materials with accessible materials and media.
- Ways to accommodate in synchronous classes by using remote, on-demand services were explored.
- There was a good discussion about working with campus partners to create change.
- The importance of captioning quality was discussed.

**Resources**

Several Pepnet 2 resources were already available for the novice disability service professionals and those new to working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing. The class offered the participants information organized into bite-size pieces so that they could have time to digest and process new concepts before moving on to the next. The *Accommodation 102* class then thoughtfully moved on to applying broader concepts from the disability service field to working with students who are deaf and hard of hearing. We used materials from professional organizations and publications targeted toward all disability service professionals.
Resources - Accommodations 101

- “Fast Facts: Effective Communication,”
  https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/get-resources/current-resources/fast-facts-effective-communication
- “Fast Facts: Hiring Qualified Interpreters,”
- “Fast Facts: Speech-to-Text Hiring Qualified Providers,”
  https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/get-resources/current-resources/fast-facts-speech-text-services-hiring-qualified-providers
- “Fast Facts: Proactive Planning,”
  https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/get-resources/current-resources/fast-facts-proactive-planning
- “Fast Facts: Policies and Procedures Excessive Student Absences,”
- 2009 PEPNet Postsecondary Interpreting and Speech-to-Text Survey Summary
  https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/get-resources/current-resources/fast-facts-speech-text-services-overview-real-time-captioning
- Access: Realtime Speech-to-Text Module
- Pn2 Needs Assessment,

Resources - Accommodation 102

  http://rid.org/about-interpreting/standard-practice-papers/
- RID Code of Professional Conduct,
  http://rid.org/ethics/code-of-professional-conduct/
- OCR letter concerning complaint against University of Montana-Missoula,
- Synchronous vs. Asynchronous classes,
  https://www.elearners.com/education-resources/degrees-and-programs/synchronous-vs-asynchronous-classes/
Facilitator Commentary

The facilitators initially wanted to limit enrollment in these two courses to only disability service professionals. We were quickly inundated with many other individuals who wanted to participate. Interpreters, VR counselors, and educators requested entry. Though we balanced the number of these participants as much as possible, it was clear that they had much to offer the discussion. Questions ranging from the differences between K-12 and college accommodations to how to assist graduates with disclosure really added to the depth of discussion and gave professionals a new perspective. When a disability service professional would question how ASL is different from English and why it matters, an interpreter could give a concrete example and facilitators could suggest resources to expand the concepts conveyed.

These sorts of challenges with a mixed group quickly developed into opportunities to further explore concepts. Some sections had participants who needed more time to process some of the basic concepts, while others did not. Facilitators were able to tailor comments and build upon concepts as needed.

A common theme in building both courses was to teach professionals to “fish” for information themselves. This is a fundamental skill for disability service professionals, so assigning activities which forced participants to reach out in their local communities and surrounding geographic area for resources was intended to change their future behavior when determining accommodations for students. This was designed to serve a dual purpose. First, it would help professionals find resources or determine there were none available. Second, it allowed them to develop a contact list for resources and service providers (or formulate a plan for how to address the lack of service providers). The discussion during these activities allowed the facilitators to provide suggestions for finding resources or managing the existing ones. This would potentially result in students who are deaf and hard of hearing receiving more timely delivery and better quality services, which was identified as a need in the field. As student preferences, technology, and available services change, disability service professionals must be prepared to research new developments and legal decisions in order to effectively serve students. The major focus of these two courses was to give disability service professionals confidence in doing so.
Making Online Classes Accessible QuickClass

Background
This course was developed in response to the increasing number of online classes being offered at many universities. Often accessibility is not considered by staff and faculty until after a course is already online and an accommodation request has been made. Accessibility is easier and less expensive to add on the front end, so this class discusses how to make online classes ready for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. It was designed for postsecondary disability service professionals, instructors, and administrators. However, some high school and community professionals also took the course.

Course Description
This course was designed for administrators, disability services professionals, and instructors who want to learn how to make distance learning accessible to students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

This course will explore distance learning benefits and challenges for students with disabilities. We will look at various modes and methods of delivering course content and how each can be made accessible. Participants will gain knowledge of best practices in teaching through distance technologies and learn how to go beyond traditional teaching methods. We will also examine how incorporating Universal Design techniques can make distance learning more accessible for all students.

Course Outline

Week 1: Universal Design (UD)
This week we’ll be looking at the true meaning of accessibility. Does it mean that a student with a disability will be able to access 75% of the course material without difficulty? Does it mean a student with a disability will be able to access 99% of the course material but will need to put forth twice as much effort as his/her non-disabled peers? In the perfect world accessibility means that all students will have 100% equal access to all course materials without needing to ask for anything special.

Universal design is a concept that has gained prominence in the last decade. The basic principle is that what works well for a wide variety of people with various functional abilities works better for everyone. “Universal Design is the design of products, environments, and communication to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation
or specialized design.” [humancentereddesign.org/universal-design/history-universal-design](http://humancentereddesign.org/universal-design/history-universal-design). One common example is a ramp into a building instead of stairs. The ramp will allow a person in a wheelchair access but it also makes life easier for parents pushing strollers, delivery people with hand trucks, and professors moving AV carts.

**Facilitator’s Goal**
Participants will become acquainted with the basic principles of universal design and how they apply in an educational environment. This is known as Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This week an additional “Get Acquainted” assignment is given. This is meant to help participants acclimate to the learning environment and begin to develop a cordial relationship with peers.

**Discussion Question**
- After reviewing the materials on universal design name one thing you learned about accessibility that you didn’t know before. What universal design concept would you like to see implemented on your campus? Why do you think this would benefit your institution?

**Activity**
- Choose one of the following scenarios to respond to. Post your answer as a reply to the Week 1 activity Thread. Discuss your answers with your classmates.
  - Option 1: Have you had a student who is deaf or hard of hearing take an online course at your institution? If so, please describe the situations without disclosing confidential information about the student. What accommodations were requested? Were changes made to the class? Were the accommodations successful? What could have been done differently to improve the process?

**Common themes from weekly discussion**
- There is a difference between following the “letter of the law” and the “spirit of the law.” Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strives to make access available to the most people with the least amount of effort on the part of the individual.
- Training faculty and staff is critical to creating a UDL campus.
- It is less expensive and more efficient when classes are designed with UDL in mind, rather than trying to provide access after the fact.
- Some faculty and administrators are resistant to UDL principles because they think “access” is only for a small group of students with disabilities. They do not see that “accommodations” such as captions can benefit everyone.
Option 2: With the increase of online and distance learning courses it is likely that you will have requests to accommodate students who are deaf and hard of hearing at some point. Think about the systems that are in place at your institution such as: distance learning, disability services, IT, etc. What are three areas or issues you see as potential problems if a student who is deaf or hard of hearing enrolls in an online class? What suggestions would you make to proactively resolve these issues?

**Week 2: Making Audio Accessible**

When asked what makes online learning inaccessible to students who are deaf and hard of hearing the most common response is “audio and video files.” This can be a major barrier to an individual with a hearing loss. However, another barrier is the misunderstanding many people have about what constitutes “access” to a video file. Does providing a transcript mean equal access? Does a video with sloppy captions mean equal access?

This week we will be looking at how to make video files accessible through verbatim, time synced captions. We’ll also look at why “good enough” may not really be good enough or even provide the most basic access to the material.

**Facilitator’s Goals**

Participants will discuss various methods for making audio accessible. They will discuss common misperceptions about what makes audio accessible and how to identify them. Materials include the DCMP Captioning Key (http://www.captioningkey.org), which is a set of standards for the creation of captions, designed to take them from just words on the screen to fully accessible captions.

**Discussion Question**

- View the video titled “Keishia’s Apartment” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXCx-DYI4YY) on YouTube. This is a video where the transcript was time coded and uploaded by the owner. Then view the video titled “Keishia’s Apartment” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJf7_yDL_d0). This is the same video but without captions. Please turn on the automatic captions within YouTube. Click on the CC button at the bottom of the video screen. Then click on “English (automatic captions).”
- Compare the two sets of captions. Do you feel the second video provided full access to the information? Would you recommend this method for captioning videos? What additional steps would you recommend to make automated captions accessible?
Activity

- An instructor sends you three versions of a video file he wants to use in his upcoming online class. Review each file (found in the weekly materials folder). Then compose a response to the instructor explaining why each file is not fully accessible and how they can be made more accessible.

Common themes from weekly discussion

- Many instructors and administrators are unaware of the need for high quality captions for academic videos. They often assume that voice recognition technology, such as YouTube’s automatic captions, provides sufficient access.
- Captioning quality was discussed and the DCMP Captioning Key ([http://www.captioningkey.org/index.html](http://www.captioningkey.org/index.html)) was shared as the source for high quality captioning standards.
- Copyright law was a hot topic this week. Many people do not realize that the ADA and providing access does not overwrite a copyright. You need permission to add captions to a video you do not own.

Week 3: Written Language Requirements

Many people may assume that online classes are very accessible to students who are deaf and hard of hearing if they remain mostly text based. However, it is important to remember that many individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing often have language delays and many learn English as a second language. So even if a class is fully text-based, the instructor should consider the reading level at which information is presented and clearly define expectations for written responses.

Facilitator’s Goal

Students are encouraged to consider online classes with which they have had experience and look at the format, materials, presentation and other aspects of the class through the lens of accessibility. Was the information presented in a text format? Guided discussion should lead them to realize that there is far more to reading comprehension than just putting words on a page. We have all had someone “talk over our heads”. Even if English is your first language, some text can be so convoluted, disorganized or filled with jargon that it becomes incomprehensible.

The activity this week is designed to be a fun activity where the participants are presented with several obscure terms (colloquialisms, modern short-hand, idioms...etc.) and asked to guess what they mean. This is always a great exercise in how words without clear context can be misunderstood.
**Discussion Question**

- Have you experienced an online class as a student or instructor? Did you feel the materials were clear and accessible to you? To other students? Did you or anyone you know of experience difficulties understanding any of the materials? Please explain.

**Activity**

- Review the following idioms and answer these questions about each. Please answer from your own knowledge without looking up any information online. Where do you think the idiom comes from or what group of people is it associated with? What do you think it means? How did this exercise make you feel? Were there idioms you didn’t know?
  1) Sunday week
  2) Train gone
  3) imho
  4) mug-up

- Choose 3 colloquialisms or lesser known idioms. List the word or phrase, explain the origins, and the current meaning. At the end of the week I’ll post information on the 4 listed above.

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- Just because a class is online and text based does not make it accessible to everyone. Reading level and language content are rarely considered but are an important part of accessibility.
- Online classes need to be well organized and topics clearly labeled or they can be inaccessible to everyone.
- In a face-to-face class, an instructor can see if acronyms or technical jargon are confusing to students. In online classes, instructors need to anticipate what might be confusing and provide an explanation up front.

**Week 4: Accommodating Synchronous Classes**

Online teaching is a relatively new format and as such it is still evolving. Many instructors feel that the only way they can successfully impart content to students is through a standard lecture format. This translates to synchronous online classes, which means that students must attend classes at a specific time each week. While this method limits the flexibility many seek when taking online classes, it does maintain the traditional classroom feel of being able to interact with the instructor. This format can be very challenging when it comes to accommodations.
**Facilitator’s Goal**
We start by clarifying the terms synchronous and asynchronous. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of teaching online using each of these methods. The discussion often centers around the current synchronous tools being used and how each participant’s institution deals with the unique accessibility challenges they present.

**Discussion Question**
- **Option 1:** What synchronous tools/programs are used at your institution for online classes? What are the accessibility features of each?
- **Option 2:** If your institution does not utilize synchronous platforms, have you had any experience taking or using synchronous classes elsewhere? What do you feel the benefits of synchronous online classes are? What accommodation challenges do you foresee?

**Activity**
- Review the following two scenarios for synchronous online classes. Write a paragraph for each one with accommodation recommendations.
  - **Scenario 1**
    An instructor is reviewing with you an online class he will be teaching. He explains that he intends to use some a free online tool for live audio/video chat. He intends to use this for required live class meetings at 6:00 P.M. every Tuesday and Thursday night. (You are welcome to assume the tool being used is Skype). He plans to conduct the interactions from his private residence, using his laptop computer over his home Wi-Fi connection.
  - **Scenario 2**
    An instructor is reviewing with you an online class she will be teaching next semester. She explains that to bypass any problems with accessibility she will be conducting some of her lectures through live text chat using the tool that is built into the school’s learning management system. For other lectures she plans to use PowerPoint files with an embedded, synchronized audio lecture. To make this accessible she will also make the

**Common themes from weekly discussion**
Many instructors and institutions feel even online classes need a synchronous component. These can be difficult to make accessible.
- **Online classes should be organized with clear headings, concise verbiage, and easy to find materials. Otherwise they become inaccessible to all students.**
- **Instructors may assume their course is accessible without really knowing what that means.** We discussed ways to train instructors in the accessibility process and how to check their materials.
- **One of the most challenging aspects of online classes is creating a mindset of adding accessibility on the front end.**
PowerPoint slides available to the students and include a summary of the spoken lecture in the notes section.

**Week 5: Developing Sound Policies**

If the development of policies and appropriate accommodations were a science, we would not need this section. As policy creation can be something of an art form, it can take a while to develop the esthetic awareness necessary to construct good and effective policies. We will not focus on examples of policies but rather try to better understand each of the stakeholders involved in policy creation and implementation. The appropriate laws give us a solid anchor for creating policies. However, we should never forget that these policies will directly affect people, and that muddies the water a bit.

**Facilitator’s Goal**

There are still many college students who do not really understand the unique challenges of taking an online class. A well taught online class is often more rigorous than its traditional counterpart. Participants learn how to guide students through the decision-making process to decide if an online class is an appropriate modality for their unique needs.

Also, participants consider the policies and procedures on their campus for making online classes accessible. They learn how to communicate effectively with administrators about the need to be proactive in planning for access.

**Discussion Question**

- Consider a situation related to accommodating online classes, at your institution or an institution you know, that could benefit from having a policy in place. Describe the situation and the policy you are proposing to resolve the issue. Then explain how this new policy could be received by one or more of the major stakeholders: students, service providers, instructors, disability services, administrators.

**Activity**

- Many students choose online courses for convenience and flexible scheduling. However, not all students take into consideration all the requirements of online courses. While online courses can solve some accommodation issues they may create new ones. It is important to help students understand the benefits and challenges of online learning.
- Pretend a student who is deaf or hard of hearing came to you for advice about taking an online course. Create a checklist of questions the student should ask about themselves, about the institution offering the course, and the individual course before deciding to take
an online course. In the course materials folder for this week you’ll find two sample questionnaires to help students choose a college. You can use these as a guide to creating your questionnaire related to online classes.

**Common themes from weekly discussion**

- It can be difficult and time consuming to develop policies related to accommodations and online classes. However, consistency across the institution is essential to avoiding possible OCR complaints.
- Common policy issues were purchasing of accessible software, handling accommodation requests for online classes, denying purchase of uncaptioned media, and setting accessibility standards for web content.
- Access should not be the responsibility of a single person or department but a university wide endeavor. Developing clear procedures for supporting faculty and creating accessible content will make the process easier.

**Week 6: Following Best Practices**

Universal Design should be a major consideration in designing all classes but especially those taught online. There are many more variables involved with online classes than those taught in traditional classrooms. The institution must be prepared to deal with varying levels of technical knowledge from both students and instructors, multiple time zones, diverse learning styles and teaching methods, just to name a few. This week we’ll talk about the importance of planning ahead to incorporate accessibility rather than trying to retrofit after a request is made.

**Facilitator’s Goal**

Participants are asked to identify some areas where their institution does well and one or two areas where they could improve, in accommodating online classes. At this point in the class they should be ready to take a sober look at their institution and begin planning how they might approach influencing change.
Discussion Question

• What are two things your institution does well in relation to accommodating online courses? What are two things you think your institution should improve in relation to accommodating online courses?

Activity

• A rubric establishes a standard of performance or expectation. Many instructors are unaware of why their classes are inaccessible or what full accessibility really means. They need a set of criteria and standards to follow.
• This week you’ll develop an online class accessibly rubric. Begin with the template provided and fill in what areas need to be considered in making an online class accessible. Then develop guidelines for how each of the following is defined: inaccessible, adequate, and fully accessible.

Common themes from weekly discussion

• Faculty who teach online classes need training in accessibility but also in the differences between online and face-to-face instruction.
• Creating courses with UD principles in mind would save time and money.
• It is important to push for all online content to be accessible and that means adding captions to videos before a request is made.
• Institutions need staff who understand both disabilities and technology so that materials are really accessible, not just in theory.

Resources

• Application of Universal Design (Washington State DO-IT Center), http://www.washington.edu/doit/Resources/udesign.html
• Universal Design for Learning, http://accessproject.colostate.edu/udl/
• DCMP Captioning Key, http://www.captioningkey.org/index.html
Facilitator Commentary

The materials and activities were specifically designed to lead both novice and experienced disability service professionals, instructors, and service providers through a journey of discovery with regard to accommodating online classes. The facilitator, as the name suggests, is to be the guide for this but not really the teacher. The teachers and students are one in the same. The experienced participants will be providing much of the information and guidance while the novice would pose many of the questions. In actuality, most participants were somewhere in the middle and both sides ended up providing their share of questions and answers to each other.

With few exceptions, the participants quickly realized that accommodating a traditional class and an online class often present different challenges. This led to many discussions of the degree of difference between traditional and online classes.

The facilitator continually worked to guide the discussions in a lively and non-threatening direction. The result was a class culture that encouraged friendly disagreement and/or challenging discussions. Often, participants would post their own questions about real world
issues with which they were currently dealing. Other participants would offer suggestions, insights, and examples to help their colleagues.

The variety of differing perspectives – rural, urban, institution size and purpose, even local culture – were presented and considered by all participants. Overall, the class turned out to be a place where everyone gained a better understanding of just what it takes to make online classes accessible and just how that challenge varies with each person, institution, and piece of technology in the mix.
Appendices

Glossary of Terms

Assistive Listening Device (ALD) – Technology that amplifies sound and brings it directly to the ear reducing background noise.

Asynchronous Learning – “Asynchronous learning is a student-centered teaching method that uses online learning resources to facilitate information sharing outside the constraints of time and place among a network of people. Asynchronous learning is based on constructivist theory, a student-centered approach that emphasizes the importance of peer-to-peer interactions.”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asynchronous_learning

Commission of Rehabilitation Counselors Certification (CRCC) – “The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) is the world's largest rehabilitation counseling organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. CRCC sets the standard for competent delivery of quality rehabilitation counseling services through its nationally accredited and internationally recognized Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification program.”
https://www.crccertification.com/about-crcc

Disability Service Professional – In this document refers to administrators and others working in an office of disability services on a postsecondary campus.

eLearning – Pepnet 2 defined eLearning as any Internet based learning opportunity. Pn2 offered both facilitated learning through QuickClasses and self-directed learning through online modules.

Pepnet 2 (pn2) – Pepnet 2 was a federally-funded project (2011 – 2016) whose goal was to increase the education, career and lifetime choices available to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.

QuickClass (QC) – QuickClasses were training opportunities developed by pn2. They were fully online, six-week, asynchronous, facilitated learning opportunities that focused on specific topics. Participants earned 30 hours of continuing education credit while engaging in content discussion with colleagues from around the country. Skilled professionals acted as facilitators and guided participants through weekly discussions and activities.
**Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)** – “The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. a national membership organization, plays a leading role in advocating for excellence in the delivery of interpretation and transliteration services between people who use sign language and people who use spoken language.”
[http://rid.org/about-rid/](http://rid.org/about-rid/)

**Service Provider** – In this document the generic term “service provider” is used to refer to interpreters, C-Print captionists, TypeWell transcribers, and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) captioners.

**Speech-to-text** - Speech-to-text services is an umbrella term used to describe an accommodation where spoken communication and other auditory information are translated into text in realtime. A service provider types what is heard and the text appears on a screen for the consumer to read. Two methods of realtime speech-to-text are verbatim (CART) and meaning-for-meaning (C-Print and TypeWell).

**Synchronous Learning** – “Synchronous learning refers to a learning event in which a group of students are engaging in learning at the same time. A lecture is an example of synchronous learning in a face-to-face environment, because learners and teachers are all in the same place at the same time. Another example of a synchronous learning event would involve students watching a live web stream of a class, while simultaneously taking part in a discussion.”

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** – “Universal Design for Learning is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone—not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.”
[http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl](http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl)

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** – Vocational Rehabilitation is a state governmental service which assists those with qualifying disabilities to receive training and education with the goal of achieving gainful and sustainable employment. Some states may use different terms for this agency.
QuickClass Topics

Accommodations 101: Providing Services for DHH Students
This course is designed for professionals who work in disability services but do not have specific training for working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) as well as those who need a refresher in working with this population.

Participants will learn the basics of providing accommodations to students who are D/HH and learn important elements to consider when choosing appropriate accommodations. Participants will have the opportunity to apply what they learn to practical scenarios that disability service professionals are likely to encounter. At the end of the course, participants will be prepared to implement effective accommodations and auxiliary services for students who are D/HH.

Accommodations 102: Providing Services for DHH Students
This course is designed for disability services coordinators and administrators working in the college and university setting who have some experience working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those who have taken the previous QuickClass, Accommodations 101. Participants will have the opportunity to apply what they learn to practical scenarios that disability service professionals are likely to encounter. At the end of the course, participants will have knowledge, information, and resources to provide effective accommodations and auxiliary services for students are deaf or hard of hearing.

Prerequisites:
Participants must have at least 1 year experience working with deaf and hard of hearing students or have completed the Accommodations 101 QC.

Deaf / Hard of Hearing 101
This introductory course is designed for those who have little or no experience with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Participants in this class will learn about the physiology of hearing loss, gain a basic understanding of the range of communication methods available, as well as explore the issues of cultural affiliation and self-identity. Participants will examine different accommodations and ways of providing access for this population. They will also look at what it means to be deaf or hard of hearing in a hearing world.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumers with Additional Disabilities
This course is for professionals in vocational rehabilitation and non-profit settings who have some familiarity working with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. This course will address the additional service needs of consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing and who also have
another disability such as vision loss, mental health issues, addiction, and minimal language skills. During the course, participants will gain a working knowledge of the impact these additional disabilities place on individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, develop familiarity with testing/assessment issues, understand various technology options, and begin to identify resources to use with these populations.

**Ethical Considerations for Interpreters**

**Ethical Considerations for Speech-to-Text Providers**

**Ethical Considerations for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors**

**Ethical Considerations for Disability Service Professionals**

The course will examine the role of ethics in a professional setting. Participants will examine how ethics and professionalism are influenced by culture, workplace environment, and individual backgrounds. The class will explore how professional boundaries and dual relationships can affect the professional/consumer relationship. Participants will use a framework for ethical decision making to discuss sticky situations and arrive at professional solutions.

*Note: Several sections were developed with specific target audiences in mind. Discussions and resources were customized to draw from the experiences these stakeholders shared.*

**Hard of Hearing 101**

This course is an informational course for administrators, disability services professionals, counselors and interpreters who want to understand more about hearing loss and individuals who are hard of hearing.

The course will examine the physical mechanics of hearing and the types and degrees of hearing loss. The participants will identify various communication strategies and ways to support individuals with hearing loss. Participants will gain knowledge of the psychological, emotional and social impacts of hearing loss.

**Interpreting for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals with Additional Disabilities**

This course is for interpreters who have been working in the field for at least 2 years. This course will address the additional service needs of consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing and who also have another disability. The class will address vision loss, mental health issues, substance abuse, autism, and minimal language skills. During the course, participants will gain a
working knowledge of the impact these additional challenges place on individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, understand various communication options, and consider how the additional challenge impacts the role of the interpreter.

**Interpreting in the VR Setting**

This introductory course is designed for interpreters who are interested in learning more about working in the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) settings. Participants in this class will be introduced to VR as a system, explore the factors that make the system unique, meet the different professionals and consumers in VR, and address the particular ethical dilemmas that this setting poses. Participants will discuss the rewards of working in the VR system and learn more about the resources and supports that are available. Participants will be given an opportunity to assess their own suitability and attitudinal aptitude for working in this interesting and diverse environment.

Prerequisites:
Participants must have worked a minimum of six months as professional interpreters. Experienced interpreters who have NOT worked in a vocational rehabilitation setting are also welcome.

**Making Online Classes Accessible**

This course is for administrators, disability services professionals, and instructors who want to learn how to make distance learning accessible to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. This course will explore distance learning benefits and challenges for students with disabilities. We will look at various modes and methods of delivering course content and how each can be made accessible. Participants will gain knowledge of best practices in teaching through distance technologies and learn how to go beyond traditional teaching methods. We will also examine how incorporating Universal Design techniques can make distance learning more accessible for all students.

**Making Sense of Hearing Assistive Technology**

This course is designed for disability service professionals and VR counselors who would like to learn more about how assistive listening and alerting devices benefit deaf and hard of hearing individuals, especially FM systems. This course will review traditional assistive technologies, introduce new technology, and will demonstrate the ways technology can link together to create the most beneficial listening environments. Participants will feel confident in choosing the most effective communication accommodations for individuals with hearing aids or cochlear implants.
Making Your Campus Accessible
This course is designed for disability services professionals, administrators, and other college personnel who want to learn how to improve access for members of the campus community who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Participants will explore strategies for making a campus accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Topics will include legal and civil rights foundations, the use of technology, safety and emergency preparedness, policies and procedures, and collaboration strategies. The focus will be on campus environments outside the classroom.

Mentoring Interpreters in the Postsecondary Environment
This QuickClass is designed for seasoned, working interpreters who would like to take the next step in their professional development and become a mentor to a new (or student) interpreter. Many interpreters have experienced being a mentee sometime in their professional life. Sometimes that experience was extremely positive; sometimes not as effective as it could have been. Through a series of videotaped lectures, discussion boards and practice assignments, we will learn how to make a mentoring relationship as effective as possible. Participants will learn the basics of beginning a mentoring relationship, as well as how to run the mentoring meetings. This course is designed to introduce some theoretical frameworks and approaches that can serve as the foundation for development of one’s own personal style of mentoring.

Post Production or Offline Captioning: Part 1
This course is for administrators, disability services professionals, and instructors who want to learn how to make classroom and online materials accessible through captioning.

The course will examine various types of captions, standards for captions, captioning methods and software, as well as laws related to captioning and accessibility. We will discuss the pros and cons of outsourcing compared to captioning in-house. Participants will gain knowledge about the captioning process as well as be able to choose an appropriate option for their institution.

Post-Production or Offline Captioning: Part 2
This course is for administrators, disability services professionals, and instructors who want to learn how to make classroom and online materials accessible through captioning.

The course will examine various types of captions, standards for captions, captioning methods and software, as well as laws related to captioning and accessibility. We will discuss the pros and cons of outsourcing compared to captioning in-house. Participants will gain knowledge about the captioning process as well as be able to choose an appropriate option for their institution.
**Skill Building for New C-Print Captionists: Part 1**
This QuickClass is for beginning C-Print captionists, who have successfully completed their online training and have been captioning for less than two years.

Many captionists work in isolation and have little contact with their fellow professionals. There is also a lack of continuing education opportunities for captionists. For these reasons pepnet 2 has developed this QuickClass to help promote quality services for deaf and hard of hearing students. During the next six weeks you’ll discuss current issues with fellow captionists, complete skill building activities, and develop a network of peers to support you in your work.

**Skill Building for New C-Print Captionists: Part 2**
This course is for C-Print captionists who have been captioning for less than 2 years or on a limited basis. Participants must have completed the *Skill Building for New C-Print Captionists: Part 1* QuickClass. This is a continuation of the first QuickClass.

Captionists often work in isolation and have few opportunities for skill building and networking. Participants in this class will continue to work on increasing skills in captioning speed and accuracy. They will practice strategies for capturing content in more detail and with fewer errors. They practice self-evaluation and develop a detailed goal plan for the short term and long term.

**Skill Building for C-Print Captionists: Intermediate**
This course is designed for intermediate level captionists. This course will provide captionists with networking and skill building opportunities. Participants will take their captioning to the next level by learning techniques to infuse their transcripts with more clarity, visual emphasis, and speaker meaning and style. In addition, participants will discuss professionalism, ethics, and teaming.

Prerequisites:
- Must have complete C-Print online training.
- Must have access to a computer with current C-Print software for the duration of the class.
- Must be using C-Print Pro software 2.6 or higher.
- Should have at least 2 years of experience captioning.

**Skill Building for New TypeWell Transcribers**
This course is designed for TypeWell Transcribers who have successfully completed the Basic Skills Course and have been transcribing for less than one year. The course is designed to help new transcribers stabilize their chunking and abbreviation skills as they transition into the classroom, while also providing guidance and support for new service providers to interpret and apply the Code of Ethics, establish professional boundaries, and practice problem-solving skills.
in their new professional role. The format of the class will include online discussion, reading, and hands-on practice activities.

Prerequisites:
Have completed TypeWell Basic Skills Course
Have access to a computer with TypeWell software for the duration of the class

**Substance Abuse and Deafness**
This course is for professionals working with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing in various settings.

The course will assist participants to understand various aspects of substance use dependency and how it impacts individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, their family, and others around them. This class will review prevalence information, what signs/symptoms to look for, substance abuse terminology; various approaches and models used for assessment and treatment of substance use disorders; barriers that deaf/ hard of hearing individuals face and unique characteristics of the population. Materials will also include clinical approaches, relapse prevention, aftercare and self-help information that is part of the recovery process for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
Facilitation Requirements

Before class starts:

• Review all class materials. If there are any broken links or information that needs to be updated, contact QC coordinator immediately.
• If you have any questions about the course requirements or content contact QC coordinator.
• Review the Moodle system and be comfortable with the navigation.
• Put all due dates on your personal calendar and be prepared to provide feedback in a timely manner.
• Post your bio as a reply to the “Getting Acquainted” thread.
• Update your profile and include a headshot of yourself.
• When registration opens, review applications and accept, ask for more information, or decline within 3 business days.

During Week One:

• Respond to each participant’s introduction by Wednesday of the first week.
• Send reminders to any participants who are late posting their bio.
• Follow up with participants who seem slow to complete their work.
• Make everyone feel comfortable.
• Ask for questions related to technical issues.
• Help everyone navigate the system.
• Provide alternative ways to contact you and provide times when you can be reached for individual consultation if needed.
• Be active in the discussion by posting at least 2 guiding/informational messages on at least 4 days of the week. This is can be broken up in different way but you should be visible in the class throughout the week, not just one or two days.

Each week:

• Check in on the discussion every day or every other day.
• Be active in the discussion by posting at least 2 guiding/informational messages on at least 4 days of the week. This is can be broken up in different way but you should be visible in the class throughout the week, not just one or two days.
• Respond to questions in a timely manner, within 48 hours is preferred.
• Follow discussions and keep them of track. Correct any misinformation that participants may have about the topic.
• Provide weekly feedback on assignments. Send feedback within 5 days of the end of that week. Communicate with the participants about when they can expect feedback, don’t wait for them to ask. A message can be posted in the “Weekly Announcements and Questions” thread.
- DQs should be rated every 1 to 2 days. Prompt feedback will encourage the participants.
- Post a weekly activity reminder on the day before the activity is due. Post the message in the “Weekly Announcements and Questions” thread.
- Post weekly wrap-up messages in the “Weekly Announcements and Questions” thread.
- Send reminders to those who have not turned in work through regular email or the in class JMail system. Reminders should go out as you are posting weekly feedback, if not before.

**After class:**

- The class will remain open for several weeks. Check back frequently to see if there are any follow up questions or comments.
- Provide your Week 6 feedback within 5 days of the end of that week.
- Send a list of participants who successfully complete the QC to the QC coordinator, no later than 14 days after the class has ended. Participants must complete 75% of the QC requirements and the post-assessment in order to successfully complete the QC. If you have participants who do not meet these requirements send follow up reminders and encourage them to do so, even after the class has ended.