ACADEMIA IS INACCESSIBLE. LET'S CHANGE THAT.

Katie Healey, PhD, CPACC she/her

> SIMPLY, YOU CAN'T BE DOING DEI [DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION]
> WITHOUT ADDING THE A ONTO THE END FOR ACCESSIBILITY.
> YOU CAN'T BE DOING THAT KIND OF WORK WITHOUT DISABILITY.
>
> - Jim LeBrecht, director of *Crip Camp*

Using ASL Interpreters for Zoom Meetings

Hiring

You'll likely need to hire a team of **two** ASL interpreters depending on the duration of your meeting (usually for meetings longer than 60 minutes).

Why?

ASL interpreters typically switch off every 15 to 20 minutes to maintain accuracy and prevent fatigue (interpreters are at high risk for ergonomic injury). This ensures effective communication throughout the session.

There is often a two-hour minimum requirement for an assignment.

💲 Budget for **two interpreters** for a **minimum of two hours** and an additional **recording** fee.

Zoom has auto-captions… Do we need ASL interpreters?

Because of language deprivation, English literacy and comfort level varies across the Deaf community. Deaf people have a right to sign language interpretation to access information correctly, completely, and in their natural language.

Conversely, captioning should still be provided even if ASL interpreters are present. Not all deaf people are fluent in ASL, and many hearing folks also benefit from captions.

Reframe: ASL interpreters exist as much for non-Deaf people as they do for Deaf people. They enable hearing folks, who are usually **ASL-impaired**, to understand what's being communicated by ASL users.

Before Meeting

For interpreters:

- Request services
- Sign contract and confirm date/time
- Send **Zoom link**
- Have the meeting host set interpreters as **co-hosts**, or plan to at the start of the meeting
- Send or prepare a list of prospective **jargon and proper names** (speakers' names, research topics, location names, etc.)
- Send **presentation slides**

Why?

Sending materials early ensures that interpreters (and captioners, if used) can provide accurate spelling and information.

As **co-hosts**, interpreters have more control over their visibility and screen positioning, ensuring they remain easily accessible and viewable by Deaf participants. This is done through the **Spotlight** feature (note: Spotlighting affects the view of all participants and the recording; the **Pin** feature affects only your own local view and not others' or the recording).

For attendees:

- Inform attendees that ASL interpreters will be spotlighted in the meeting and instruct them to switch to **Gallery view** to see the other participants
- Request that everyone state their name before speaking; Deaf participants will be watching the interpreter or captions and might not see who said what
- Request that everyone spell out proper names and jargon when they speak
- Let folks know that, if they are ASL users and would like to ask a question or make a comment, they can get the interpreters' attention by sending them a private chat

For recording:

To ensure that the interpreters are visible in the recording and large enough to understand:

- Have the host log into Zoom and go to **Settings** at the bottom of the left menu bar
- Then, navigate to **Recording** along the top menu bar
- Check all 3 boxes (and 3 sub-boxes):
- Record active speaker with shared screen
- Record gallery view with shared screen
- Record active speaker, gallery view and shared screen separately

Left navigation: Profile, Meetings, Webinars, Personal Contacts, Personal Devices, Notes, Surveys, Recordings & Transcripts, Clips, Workspace Reservation, Scheduler, **Settings** (highlighted)

Cloud recording
Allow hosts to record the following to the cloud
☑ Zoom Meeting
☑ Zoom Webinar

Cloud recording setting
☑ Record active speaker with shared screen
☑ Record gallery view with shared screen ⓘ
☑ Record active speaker, gallery view and shared screen separately
   ☑ Active speaker
   ☑ Gallery view
   ☑ Shared screen
☑ Record audio-only files
   ☑ Record one audio file for all participants
   ☐ Record a separate audio file of each participant ⓘ
☑ Record the Interpretation
   ☑ Record sign language interpreter

Start of Meeting

- Enable captions and remind participants how to access them

- Ensure interpreters have co-host privileges

- Clarify the **Spotlight** protocol for the session
  - Will interpreters spotlight and un-spotlight themselves?

    Notes: You won't see the Spotlight option available until enough people join the meeting.

    You can't Spotlight someone if their camera is off (however, once Spotlighted, they'll remain so even if they turn off their camera).

- Remind meeting attendees to switch to **Gallery** view

- Remind ASL users that they can get the interpreters' attention to ask a question or make a comment by sending them a private chat

Best Practices

Speak to the Deaf person/ASL user directly rather than to the interpreter (e.g. "Maya, is there anything you'd like to add?" rather than "Can you ask Maya if she'd like to add anything?")

Quick Checklist

☐ Requested services, signed contract, and confirmed date/time

☐ Sent Zoom link

☐ Sent materials/slides and list of proper names and jargon

☐ Set recording settings

☐ Granted interpreters co-host privileges

☐ Enabled captions

☐ Clarified Spotlight protocol

☐ Communicated with participants about switching to Gallery view; accessing captions; stating their names before speaking; spelling proper names and jargon; and messaging interpreters

References and Resources:

National Association of the Deaf: [Language Deprivation](#)

National Technical Institute for the Deaf: [Zoom Classes: Deaf Tips](#)

Occupational Health and Safety: [Study: Sign Language Interpreters at Risk for Ergonomic Injuries](#)

Office of Disability Rights: [Guide to Using Sign Language Interpreters](#)