

Columbia College Chicago  
Interpreting Services Department  
33 East Congress Blvd. (Rear of Writing Center)  
Ph 312-344-8295

General Information about Interpreters

- **The interpreters at Columbia College are *not* students.** They are hired professionals working as staff or contractors for the college. The interpreters follow a Code of Ethics (Code of Professional Conduct) established by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and are registered with the State of Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission (IDHHC). Information about interpreters and RID can be found at [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org). IDHHC information can be found at [www.idhhc.state.il.us](http://www.idhhc.state.il.us).
- **Most classes have a team of 2 interpreters assigned to them.** Interpreting requires physical/mental stamina and endurance. It is proven that an interpreter's "production" weakens after 20 minutes due to the challenging task of interpreting. Often times when using teams, they will work in 15 to 20 minute increments. The team of two interpreters is broken into the primary (seated near the front of the classroom) and supportive interpreter (seated off to the side). The primary interpreter is interpreting and the supporting interpreter is monitoring the overall setting, prompting the primary interpreter, and ensuring message transmission.
- **Interpreters are assigned to specific classes and should be in regular attendance.** Interpreting Services strives to maintain consistency to ensure the best possible outcome for the student(s) and instructor. There may be some instances where one of the interpreters must arrive late or leave early to accommodate the varying schedules of Deaf students on campus. The interpreter will communicate this to both the instructor and the student when and if this will happen. Interpreters should arrive promptly for the class, but they will not enter until the student arrives, except to briefly arrange seating. If the student is tardy, the interpreter will wait 15 minutes for every hour of the scheduled class (ex 3 hr class, the interpreter will wait up to 45 minutes for the student). If the student doesn't arrive within the established timeframe, the interpreters are authorized to leave.
- **Interpreters *should not* be encouraged to participate in classroom proceedings for any reason.** Interpreters are in the classroom for the purpose of facilitating communication and should not take part in classroom discussions, be used as models or to run errands for the instructor or student.
- **Please make any additional classroom related interpreting requests in a timely manner.** Requests with less than 3 business days notice may not be filled due to limited resources and the shortage of qualified interpreters.
- **Please note that the ASL-English Interpretation Department and the Interpreting Services Department are separate departments.** Any interpreting done for Deaf students at Columbia College should be handled through the Interpreting Services Department to ensure that we are not in violation of the Illinois Interpreter's for the Deaf Act (225 ILCS 442).

For further information please contact  
Shelley Engstrom-Kestel, Coordinator of Interpreting Services  
33 East Congress Blvd. (Rear of Writing Center)  
Ph 312-344-8295  
Email [sengstromkestel@colum.edu](mailto:sengstromkestel@colum.edu)