

**BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**Department of Exceptionality Programs**

**ASL/English Interpreting Program**

**Stakeholders Focus Group**

**In attendance:**

Alumni: Gina DiFiore-Ridolph, Maureen Hill, Theresa Whitebread, Ashley Roszkowski

Mentors: Alicia Pittman, Tess Fosse, Marybeth Bergen

Agency Representatives: Mark Hardway, Annie Hardway, Jody Longo

Deaf Community: Denise Brown, Grace Shirk Emmons, Jeff Yockey

Faculty: Jessica Bentley-Sassaman, Kristin Lazor, Leonard Granda, Jay Pittman, Tracy Knight

**Date:** June 3, 2017

**Minutes:**

The meeting began at 10:00 am with introductions of the stakeholders. Next Dr. Jessica Bentley-Sassaman gave a presentation on where the program was to where it is now. The courses that were offered back in 2001 to the courses the program now offers. The course offerings have increased by 10 courses. The stakeholders were introduced to the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education's (CCIE) standards and how the program is working towards meeting all the standards for CCIE accreditation.

Next the stakeholders were given a guided document to help them respond to questions about the program specifically related to the CCIE standards. The questions asked the stakeholders to reflect on what the program does well and areas where the program can improve. This was done independently.

After lunch the stakeholders were divided into groups: alumni, mentors, agency representatives and the Deaf community. The faculty jumped in where appropriate to listen and discuss ideas with the stakeholders. Notes were made by each group of the most important items they wanted to bring up for the program to consider. Those items are listed below in the table.

At the end of the meeting the stakeholders all added in some final comments which are listed at the bottom of the table. Each of the individual guided documents were collected to be reviewed by the faculty.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm

<p>Comments During Presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little Mexico Campground- Pig Roast first week in August. (Deaf Event)</li> <li>• PSAD camp- formerly shown as “silent camp” no spoken English allowed- if someone spoke they had to put a quarter in the jar. (Deaf Event)</li> <li>• Discussions related to sequencing of courses.</li> <li>• Question from Gina related to waiting list for students.</li> <li>• Questions were raised about working with Deaf-Blind not only tactile but close vision. (Interpreters not accepting the work.)</li> <li>• Questions about structured tutoring for students interpreting work.</li> <li>• Questions about mentoring programs if students have mentors.</li> <li>• Suggestion was made about remote labs for mentoring students based on where they live. Adding labs as we go along was suggested such as Allentown, York, Wilkes-Barre and/or possibly meeting with students via ZOOM or Skype.</li> <li>• PARID Mentoring group discussing mentoring needs for students and offered to support and coordinate. (Gina)</li> </ul>
<p>Comments During Focus Group Sessions</p>	<p><b><u>Mentors</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matching consumer, “not one size fits all”</li> <li>• Soft skills</li> <li>• Understanding discourse</li> <li>• Limited life experience and world knowledge.</li> <li>• Appropriate self-care (mental health specifically)</li> <li>• Teaming supports.</li> <li>• Authentic learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Commitment to professional development (in person or online).</li> <li>• Social justice &amp; understanding of social systems.</li> <li>• Altering message if cultural beliefs are different than the consumer.</li> <li>• Accepting constructive feedback and incorporating it in to future interpretations.</li> </ul>

- Act 57, NIC, EIPA requirements and what each means for the students.
- Improved lexicon and language use.
- Ability to adapt register based on context.
- Understand how to manage the flow of communication.
- Access to portfolio of potential mentees.
- Mentor guidelines and training.

### **Alumni**

- 5.3 & 5.4 Entrance processing (cognitive) exam.
- Possible exit re-test to monitor progress.
- 7.0 Interpreter tutors and personal networking opportunities.
- Start mentorship search in the fall with more chance for interpersonal matches & more times for meetings added to practicum seminar with mentor.
- More authentic situations/exposure- specifically Black culture, Asian culture, mannerisms, norms, and affect...
- 6.1 Mental and physical self-care; “vicarious trauma”- explaining processes and ways for students to deal with this in the future.
- Invite interpreters to come and speak about their personal experiences and how they handled vicarious trauma.
- 10 Encourage students to self edification both with skills/ experiences.
- Read about different topics, watch more shows and news.

### **Deaf Community:**

- Host by Interpreting Students and partner up with organizations i.e.; PSAD, DHCC, North Central (Williamsport),
- Deaf Trivia
- Fundraising
- Allow first-second year work with junior-senior into working creating deaf events in each areas is; Wilkes-Barre, Scranton, Williamsport, etc.
- Silent weekend with PSAD
- Deaf Awareness week is; each day (7 days) across campus by inviting different history/culture

- Develop pool of ASL tutors
- Re-create/modify Image Club to be more Improv style (comedy and include deaf performers)
- Dorney Park and Hershey Park need bring back Deaf Day with interpreters
- Family Learning Weekend for Deaf/Blind children in Hershey Park
- Diversity for interpreters to learn about LGBT
- Bring in regional signs from Philadelphia and Pittsburgh
- How to teach interpreters to wear appropriate clothing around deaf people
- Fingerspelling need increase speed: difference between conversational vs. interpreting
- English vocabulary (spelling needs to be advanced and clear)
- Use professional standard vocabulary to match deaf background (vocabulary builder)
- Academic and Social ASL
- Deaf-Heart in terms of attending to deaf events
- Interpreters need to know how to use their role in medical, legal, and other settings, It is not black/white or by the book, everyone needs to make proper judgments to make sure deaf needs rather do the “job” or for the “money”
- Field trip to Scranton School for the Deaf
- Be comfortable with touching deaf people without fear
- Graduates should know the difference between HIPPA and CPC how to answer questions to medical field workers.

**Agency**

- 5.6: need generalized knowledge, know current news/events i.e.; local, regional, national, world
- GEN X/Y/Z knowledge and old generation
- 6.1: grads have good “book knowledge” about interpreter theory, need more real-world practical application, and networking
- 6.2: Community involvement happens when they are students, need to continue after graduation, find formal and informal mentors, and boundary flexibility.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.3: Graduates seem to have good knowledge about multi-cultural communities and need to find ways to become familiar with sub-culture groups.</li> <li>• 6.4: Graduates have good knowledge of CPC, certifications, laws, etc., need to develop practical knowledge of implications and interpretations of principles, and ability to talk about the work.</li> <li>• 7.2: need the ability to understand meaning/intent of source language, always expand vocabulary, consult deaf community i.e.: new signs, and knowledge of signs among older deaf people/community</li> <li>• 7.3: they know the “jargons” and become comfortable seeking feedback from consumers/colleagues, avoid being devastated or over-inflicted.</li> </ul>
Wrap Up Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued learning and professional growth.</li> <li>• Generational gap and the need for having things instantly and the Deaf communities experiences.</li> <li>• Understanding variety within Deaf culture.</li> <li>• Understanding the Deaf communities perspective and expectations for greetings from the community.</li> <li>• Appearance of the interpreters and dress being aware of what is appropriate.</li> <li>• Understanding the norms of touch within the Deaf community and working with Deaf-Blind consumers.</li> </ul>