

Access Beyond Academics: Athletics, Housing, Internships, and Campus Life for Deaf Students



Kate Lewandowski
Lore Kinast
Vanessa Molina

National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes

Access Check

We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

Access and Inclusion

And

Civility and Respect

... this week and in all aspects of our organization.



Land Acknowledgement



National Deaf Center



NDC works to improve postsecondary and employment outcomes for deaf students. By identifying barriers and partnering with institutions and states, we help create pathways that support enrollment, persistence, completion, and career success.



**Access is foundational to a
comprehensive and meaningful
college experience for deaf students.**

**Access opens the door to every opportunity
on campus.**

Access is more than accommodations.
Deaf students have a right to be included in **all**
aspects of campus setting.



The ADA and Section 504 require postsecondary institutions to ensure an opportunity for people with disabilities to access services and benefits, including all aspects of academic offerings and student life that is equal to the opportunity provided to others.



Beyond the classroom opportunities build networks and shared experiences that connect students to:

Belonging

A sense of identity and community that sustains degree completion.

Leadership

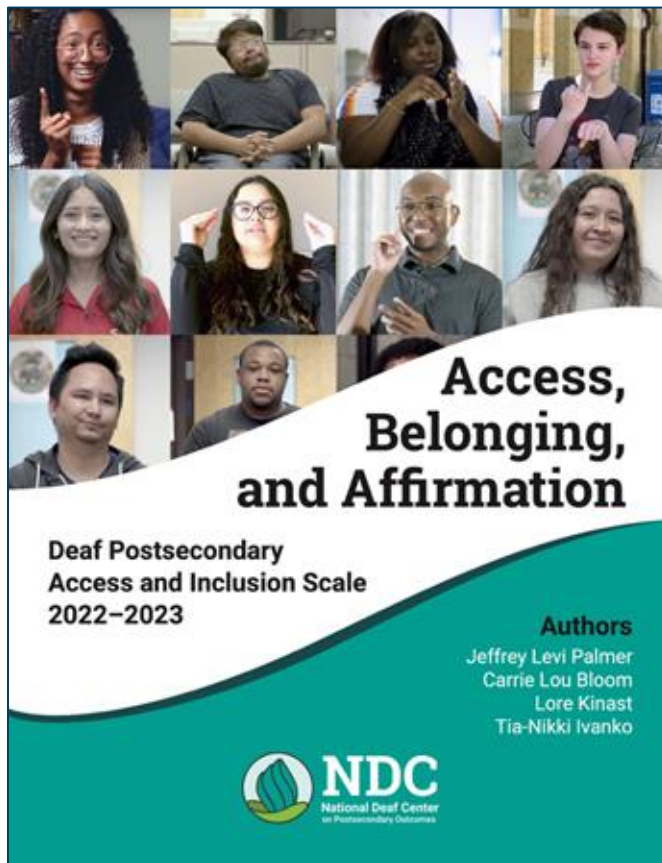
Opportunities to develop skills, expand knowledge, and grow as advocates.

Career Pathways

Professional networks and experiences that open doors after graduation.

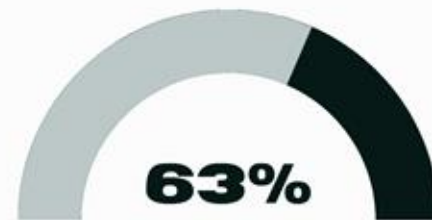


Deaf Postsecondary Access & Inclusion Scale (DPAIS)



DPAIS: Campus Connectedness

- 60% say they were likely to participate in campus student activities.
- 62% likely to call campus home.



CAMPUS CONNECTEDNESS



Understanding Barriers

- **Confusing or lack of policy or procedures**
- **Departments deflecting responsibility**
- **Unclear fiscal ownership of interpreting/captioning costs**
- **Inconsistent communication across units**
- **Reactive rather than proactive planning**



Deaf Students' Experience & Discussion

I wish that interpreters were provided for campus activities that are not necessarily tied to an academic class. For example, office of disability services does not provide interpreters for student organizations or campus events and many times organizations are small with limited funding.

What do deaf students have to figure out on their own when navigating requests processes like this?



Deaf Students' Experience & Discussion

I wish that interpreters were provided for campus activities that are not necessarily tied to an academic class. For example, office of disability services does not provide interpreters for student organizations or campus events and many times organizations are small with limited funding.

If this happens every time a deaf student tries to go to an event outside of the classroom over four years, what would it take to remove that burden?



Types of Requests



Internships



Athletics



Housing



Greek Life



Clubs



Theatre



Strategies

**Centralized
Funding**

**Decentralized
Funding**

**Centralized
Coordination**

**Department
Collaborations**

- Building relationships is essential to creating equitable access.
- Awareness/understanding of lived experiences of deaf students.
- Consistent and student-centered policies and practices.
- Effectively and efficiently allocated resources.
- Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- Agreement that access is a shared responsibility.



Example Practices

- **Clear, student-centered protocols**
 - Online request forms
- **Centralized scheduling for interpreters/CART**
 - Coordinate consistent providers
 - Best fit, Technical expertise
- **Transparent steps for requesting accommodations**
 - Event planning templates
- **Standardized access statements**
 - Access statements on webpages, information materials



Coordinating Access For Non-Academic Activities



- **Coordination among athletics, disability services, coaches, and access providers.**
 - **Educating coaches and teammates on effective communication practices.**
 - **Ensuring deaf athlete can participate fully in informal interactions and team bonding.**
- **Early identification of recurring athletic activities; flexibility for schedule changes due to weather, travel, or competition schedules.**



Athletics



Are there any other considerations with coordinating interpreting services for athletes?

- **Practice & Strength Training**
 - Daily, Mornings and Evenings
 - Outside (Heat/Cold)
 - Standing / Moving
- **Games**
 - Away (Local / Out of State)
 - Travel logistics
- **Team & Coach Meetings**
- **Injury Evals, Athletic Training Appts**
- **Media / Press Release Interviews**
- **Community/Outreach Events**



- Collaborate with the student, internship site and vocational rehabilitation to identify possible barriers before the internship begins and develop an individualized access plan.
 - Ensure responsibilities are clear!
- Schedule regular check-ins to gather student feedback on the effectiveness of accommodations.
- Modify supports as the student's needs or internship responsibilities evolve.



- **Length of Time**

- Semester-long, short term, extended/year-long
- Summer or during academic year



- **Location**

- Local, Out-of-State, Out-of-Country

What factors not yet mentioned has your campus encountered when coordinating interpreting services for internships/practicum/fieldwork?



Housing

- **Social Activities**
 - Evenings/Weekends
- **Meetings**
 - Roommate Conflicts
 - Violations
 - Sensitive situations
- **Orientation / Move-In Activities**



Share examples of how your campus coordinates interpreting services for Housing-related requests.



Key Takeaways & Action Items

- **Campus life is essential—not optional, for student success**
- **Access requires shared responsibility across units**
- **Centralized funding and clear procedures reduce barriers**
- **Proactive planning creates sustainable, equitable access**

Action Items:

- **Identify one action step you can implement immediately**
- **Identify one long-term improvement your department will commit to**
- **Identify one partnership to strengthen**



Improving outcomes for deaf students, starts with leadership and campus community who believe that systems need to be changed, not deaf people.



AHEAD Session Evaluation

tiny.cc/8zu1101

Thank you for attending!

Your feedback helps shape future programming.



Any questions?





Coordinating Services

- Managing Service Providers
- Scheduling Service Providers (In-house, Agency, or Both)



Building Belonging



DPAIS Access, Belonging, and Affirmation

Thank You!



Website: www.nationaldeafcenter.org

Email: help@nationaldeafcenter.org

The National Deaf Center is funded by the Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, and the US Department of Education via Cooperative Agreement #H326D21002

