

# Counseling/Advising with Deaf College-Age Students

Robb E. Adams, Ph.D., NCC

Anne Van Ginkel, M.S., NCC

NTID Department of  
Counseling Services

# Counseling Services to Mainstreamed Students

- Counselor assigned to mainstreamed students according to specific college/major
- Counselor is part of Support Department Team that supports the Deaf students in the college.
- Support Department consists of:
  - Chairperson
  - Advisors/tutors for specific majors/courses
  - Note taker coordinator
  - Counselor
- Counselor provides:
  - One to one personal counseling
  - Academic counseling
  - Career counseling (Career testing)
  - Direct instruction (Freshman Seminar, Career Decision Making)
- Counselor works with the instructors in the college to help support the student.

# Challenges faced by many mainstreamed students

- Identity issues
- Communication issues
- Becoming an active learner
- Academic readiness
- Social pressures
- Developing a support system
- Career concerns

# Identity

- Identity issues: Who am I?
  - Deaf? Hard of hearing? Oral?
- How do the hearing students view me?
  - Am I an individual or just another deaf student?
- How do the other deaf students view me?
  - Do they accept me and/or my communication mode?
- How does my instructor view me?
  - Equal expectations?

# Communication Issues

- Classroom:
  - Students sometimes feel segregated from hearing peers in the class.
  - Students would like to have mixed groups for group projects.
- Interpreting:
  - Students frustrated with not having enough interpreters to cover all classes.
  - Students really need interpreters who know the subject matter well
- Note-taking:
  - Students need good notes with specific vocabulary carefully recorded.

# Academic Readiness

- Some students have had a great deal of support from home and their schools.
- Many students arrive at college and expect that the same services will be available here.
- Because this is college and students are expected to be more independent, many students have problems with:
  - Knowing how to study
  - Knowing how to prioritize and organize
  - Knowing how to manage their time.

# Social life

- First year students can be overwhelmed by a social life they have never experienced at home.
- Some students will have a very difficult time balancing their social opportunities with their academic responsibilities.
- Students who have been mainstreamed at home may face challenges in learning how to deal with deaf culture.
- Some students may feel lonely and isolated even in a large group of deaf students.
  - May need some interpersonal skills training.
  - May need some one on one counseling
  - May need to be involved in a club or activity

# Passive to active learners: developing a support system

- Some students have not learned to be active learners.
  - Expectations of instructors
- Some students may need to develop skills to take responsibility for their learning:
  - Learn how to ask for help if not understanding what is going on in class
  - Learn how to access resources
  - How to use an interpreter effectively
  - How to approach and communicate with instructors.
  - How to problem solve...



# Career concerns

- Students can face the challenge of realizing that the major they thought they wanted is not what they really want.
- Sometimes this is due to unrealistic and unsophisticated expectations of the major
- Sometimes it is from a lack of preparation from their high school experiences.
- Some students can feel concerned about their career choices and what will happen to them after they graduate.
  - Will they be able to find employment?
  - Will the hearing world welcome them into careers?

Questions for us?