

Interpreter Training Technology

Fact Sheet

What is the Interpreter Training Technology program all about?

- The Interpreter Training Technology program (ITT) prepares individuals to facilitate communication between hearing and deaf people using sign language in a wide variety of community-based settings.
- Students must develop appropriate cross-cultural, social and linguistic skills.
- Learning takes place in the classroom as well as in the Deaf Community.

What does it take to be a Sign Language Interpreter?

- Sign Language interpreting requires rapid mental processing and above-average intellect
- Sign Language interpreting also requires maturity, emotional stability and the ability to deal with stress
- Sign Language interpreters must develop appropriate cross-cultural, social and linguistic skills.
- Sign Language interpreters must be fluent in both American Sign Language (ASL) as well as English.
- Sign Language interpreters must be comfortable in front of large audiences as well as in highly-sensitive, personal settings.
- Sign Language interpreters must be able to work with and around a variety of people.
- Sign Language interpreters must be able to follow a professional code of conduct.

What is American Sign Language (ASL)?

- ASL is the language of the Deaf in the United States.
- ASL is a complete language, just like English.
- ASL is not a shortened version of English, or a code for English.
- ASL is a visual language produced with the hands, head, face and body.

What type of activities are Interpreter Training students involved in?

- ITT students experience lecture and lab classes, using current technology to learn interpreting skills and language skills.
- ITT students will experience first hand interaction with the Deaf Community both in and out of the classroom.
- ITT students will have the opportunity to learn Deaf Culture as well as the language of the Deaf, American Sign Language.

What can I expect to gain in these two years if I apply myself and work hard?

- Students who work hard, apply themselves, and successfully complete the program can expect to gain a wealth of knowledge about the Deaf Community, ASL, the Role of the Interpreter, as well as many other topics.
- Students should be ready, if they have applied themselves and successfully completed the program, to sit for the Mississippi Quality Assurance Screening. This is a state level of screening for interpreters who wish to work in the state of Mississippi. It evaluates one's sign language and interpreting skills, as well as one's knowledge of the Professional Code of Conduct.

- Students should also, after successfully completing the program, be ready to sit for the National Interpreting Certification Written Exam. This written exam, successfully completed along with attaining a level on the Mississippi Quality Assessment Screening, enables students to enter the interpreting field.

What is the job market for interpreters?

- Sign language interpreting is a rapidly expanding field. Interpreters are employed by schools, government agencies, and private businesses.
- Part-time, full-time, freelance and salaried positions are available in the Jackson area, in Mississippi, and across the country.

What is the demand for interpreters?

- There is a strong need for qualified interpreters with credentials.
- Graduates can get jobs in the school systems where they receive a full-time salary and benefits.
- Others work with interpreter referral agencies as freelance interpreters. This offers them flexibility in hours and job settings, but may not provide 40 hours per week in assignments.
- In general, the demand for interpreters is in medium-to-large cities. The more mobile you are, the more likely you are to find an interpreting job.

Will Hinds Interpreter Training Technology Program prepare me to get my credentials?

- While you are not required to have a college degree at this time in order to take an assessment, the background, skills development and theory learned at Hinds Interpreter Training Technology Program are extremely beneficial in getting your national certification or state Quality Assurance Screening (QA).
- Upon completion of this program, most graduates should be able to pass the RID written exam.
- If you are active in the field and continue to upgrade your knowledge and skills, you should be able to pass the state QA within a year, and the national RID skills certification within three to five years.
- RID skills certification is in the process of requiring a college degree before sitting for certification.

What kind of salary can I expect to earn?

- Salaries will vary depending on many factors. These include a) geographical area (rural areas tend to pay less than urban areas), b) education, c) amount of experience, and d) credentials.
- Some interpreters work freelance and earn anywhere from a \$12-\$45/hour, but they may not be able to schedule a full forty hours per week. They do not get employee benefits.
- Other interpreters work for an agency, business, government organization or school system. Depending on many factors, these staff employees may earn anywhere between \$15,000-\$35,000+ per year.
- You may want to call interpreter referral agencies and school systems to get specific information about the area of interpreting that interests you.