

# Can a Hearing Campus be Deaf-Friendly?

One University's Journey Toward  
Creating a More Inclusive Campus

Cheryl Fielitz, Maria Holloway, Dann Trainer  
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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# Agenda

- Introduction
- Theoretical Framework
- Creating a Deaf-Friendly Environment
- What Can You Do?

# INTRODUCTION

# Introduction

- Why are we here?
- Who are you?
- Workshop Format
- Communication Policy

# WARNING!!!

## This workshop is NOT meant to be:

- One size fits all
- A how-to guide
- The answer to all your questions

## This workshop IS meant to be:

- A starting point
- A snapshot of one school in one period of time
- Something to spark discussion at your home institutions
- *FUN & INTERACTIVE*...please stop us with questions or comments!

# Our Student “Panel”

- Erica Olson
  - University of MN-Duluth (2007-2008)
  - University of MN (2008-2012), BA Sociology
- Norb Biderman
  - U of MN (2005-2007)
  - RIT (2007-2010), BS Mechanical Engineering
  - SUNY College of Nanoscale Science & Engineering (2010-present), MS & PhD, Nanoscale Engineering

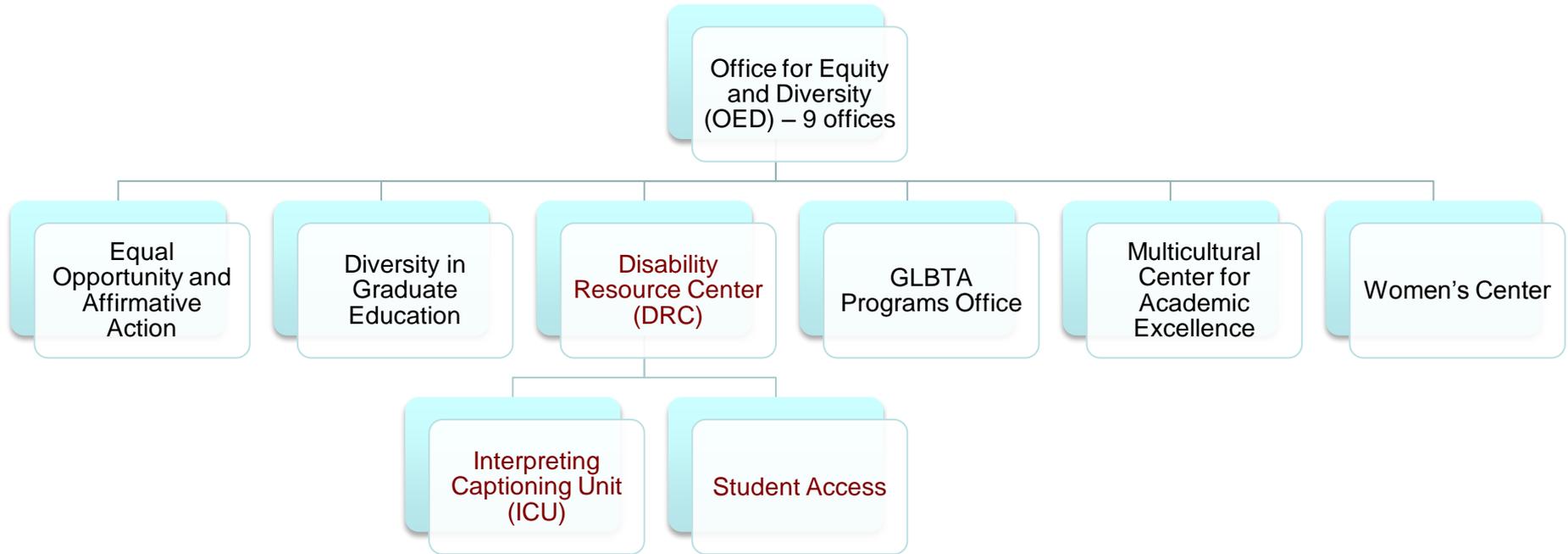
# Our Student “Panel”

- Eric Nooker
  - U of WI Madison (2005-2010)
  - U of MN (2011-2014), MS Land & Atmospheric Science
- Johanna Lucht
  - U of MN (2010-2014), BS Computer Science
- Kyle Johnson
  - U of MN (2013-present), undecided

# Our Student “Panel”

- Kaitlyn Mielke
  - CSUN (2005-2006), Boise State (2007)
  - U of MN (2007-2009), BA Individualized Studies
  - U of MN (2012-2014), MLS
- Justin Barlow
  - RIT (2006-2008)
  - U of MN (2010-2013), BS Mechanical Engineering

# Who Are We?



OED's Mission: *Leverage the transformative power of equity and diversity to advance excellence in teaching, research and community engagement at the University of Minnesota.*

# Disability Resource Center (DRC)

- Leadership Team
- Access Programs
- U Return
- Student Access
- Interpreting Captioning Unit (ICU)

DRC's Mission: *Advancing Access For Everyone*

# Student Access

- 13 Access Consultants (1 main D/HH Consultant), 3 Admin
- Is liaison between students and professors/departments
- Helps to determine and administer accommodations
- In 2013-13, total number of students with disabilities served = 2,211; total number of d/hh students served = 52

# Interpreting Captioning Unit (ICU)

- 12 Interpreters, 6 Captioners, 3 Admin, 1 Scheduler
- Provide direct interpreting and captioning services
- Serve D/HH students, staff, faculty, visitors
- Work on and off campus (internships, retreats, learning abroad, etc.)
- In 2012-13, ICU served: 20 staff/faculty, 20 graduate students, 18 undergrad students

Social Justice and Transformational Leadership

# **A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

# Social Justice

“The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.” (Bell, 1997, p.1)

Bell, 1997

# Social Justice

- Privilege
  - ...unearned entitlements members of dominant social groups receive that allow them to navigate society more smoothly than members of oppressed groups
  - Like blank checks in our knapsack
- Ally-ship
  - Members of the privileged group
  - Working with, not for, the oppressed group to dismantle the oppressive systems

Edwards, 2006

# Social Justice and the DRC

- Medical Model of Disability
  - Focus is on the impairment, not the person
  - We must fix the individual so they can function in society
- Social Model of Disability
  - The individual is different, not broken
  - Environments need to be altered to accommodate all individuals and their varying needs
  - Universal Design

# Transformational Leadership

- A leadership approach that is “able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work towards common goals.” (Wikipedia)
- Good of the group more than the individual
- Higher-order outcomes – more than “getting the job done”

Wikipedia, Bass (1997)

# Transformational Leadership and Service Provision – The Four I's

## Leadership Theory

- Individualized Consideration
  - Attends to followers' needs and strengths, individual development
- Intellectual Stimulation
  - Challenges assumptions, encourages followers to think creatively
- Inspirational Motivation
  - Articulates a vision for followers to invest in and strive for
- Idealized Influence
  - Role model of respect and ethical behavior

## Interpreting Practice/Service Provision

- Individualized Consideration
  - Analysis; meet needs of consumers, teams, and situations
- Intellectual Stimulation
  - Leverage our D/HH consumers knowledge to problem-solve, collaborate
- Inspirational Motivation
  - Articulate visions and share with others in the field in an optimistic manner
- Idealized Influence
  - Shape and achieve our vision

Bass, 1997; Coyne, 2013

# Transformational Leadership and the ICU/DRC

- In the past, work at the DRC/ICU was transactional
  - Student asked for services, those services were provided
- Service providers working with D/HH noticed a gap
  - There were several D/HH students on campus, but they did not know each other

# In Their Words...

- *When I entered college, I felt really overwhelmed. –Erica*
- *Despite the wonderful experiences I had at U of M, I needed to have more exposure to Deaf people. RIT provided that. -Norb*

# Transformational Leadership and the ICU

## ICU Mission

We advance and enrich the captioning and sign language interpreting professions, the University's mission, and the public good by:

- Providing exceptional captioning and sign language interpreting services to the University community,
- Sharing professional knowledge,
- Fostering an environment of diversity, accessibility, and opportunity, and
- *Empowering ourselves and the communities we serve to reach our full potential.*

Interpreting Captioning Unit , University of MN, 2008

# Transformational Leadership and the ICU

## ICU Vision

The Interpreting/Captioning Unit of the University of Minnesota is a nationwide leader in the fields of captioning and sign language interpreting. Our commitment to accessibility, equity, and excellence contributes to *an inclusive, welcoming, public university community that cultivates empowerment, innovation, and success.*

Interpreting Captioning Unit , University of MN, 2008

# Transformational Leadership and the ICU

## ICU Values Statements

- **SELF AWARENESS, AUTHENTICITY, INTEGRITY:** We take seriously our obligation to regularly examine who we are so that our knowledge may guide our actions.
- ***EQUALITY:*** *We contribute to a diverse community by improving and expanding access to opportunity.*
- **RESPECT:** We honor and celebrate differences and similarities by regarding each individual is valuable.

Interpreting Captioning Unit , University of MN, 2008

# Transformational Leadership and the ICU

## ICU Values Statements, cont.

- **TRUST:** We engender trust through our commitment to honesty, ethical principles, and actions that are consistent with our words.
- ***RESPONSIBILITY:*** *We are accountable to these values as we actively promote our vision and mission as part of the Disability Resource Center, the Office for Equity & Diversity, and the University of Minnesota.*

Interpreting Captioning Unit , University of MN, 2008

# CREATING A DEAF-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

# What Does “Deaf-Friendly” Mean?

- Most information focuses on workplace/business access
  - Hiring interpreters, be willing to write back and forth, have appropriate technology
  - Focus is on economic benefits; tapping a new market
- What about emotional/attitudinal “Friendliness”?



# In Their Words...

- *Organizational understanding of “Deaf” and the importance of quality access. – Norb*
- *Lots of accessibility, willingness to accommodate a variety of communication needs. – Erica*

# Our Deaf-Friendly Deaf-inition

Access to Communication

Access to Resources

Access to Community

Access through Collaboration!

**Now that we have the right  
attitude...**

# Every D/HH Student is Different...

- Differing degrees of hearing loss, identities, and ways of interacting with the world
- Isolation – not just parties and movie nights!
  - Shown to have “long term effects on personal, career and academic goals and achievements.” (Marschark 1997, p?)
- Oppression
  - The “silent minority”

Marshark, 1997

# Our Strategies

We set structures in place...

- ASL House
  - Signing floor in a residence hall
- Email Blasts
  - To all D/HH Students about events or announcements
- Open House
  - For policies and socializing
- Captioned Movies in the Student Union
  - Weekly
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day
  - Annual event for HS D/HH students

# Our Strategies

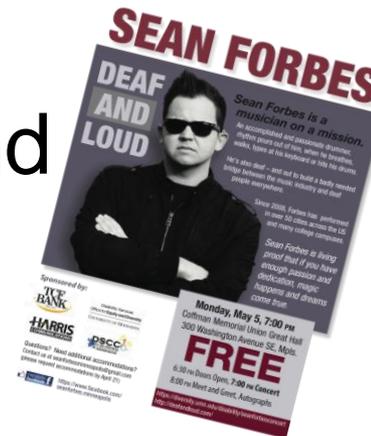
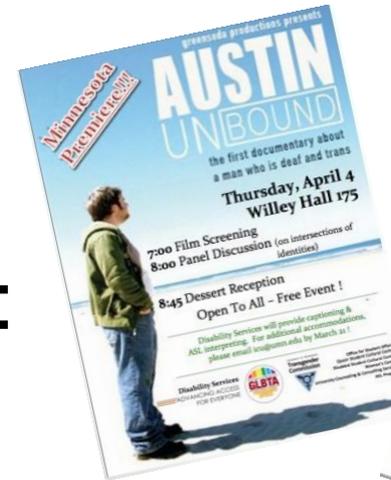
...and waited for some motivated students!

- D/HH Student Ambassador Program
  - Dedicated to making the U of MN more Deaf-Friendly; plans events, takes on issues
- ASL Social Hour
  - Set up by students; weekly signing community meeting
- CoBo Team
  - Is ready to compete at their second NAD competition this July!

# Community...On and Off Campus

Connecting Signing Communities on and off campus with public events:

- Keith Wann
- Signmark
- Austin Unbound Film and Panel Discussion
- Sean Forbes



# Results...

Students began taking the initiative to make their U of M as Deaf-Friendly as they wanted:

# Results...

Students have begun to feel a sense of community and belonging...on a hearing campus.

- *Based on my experiences, yes, the U of M is VERY Deaf-friendly. I could write an essay on all of the “accessible” moments I’ve had on this campus, and no “inaccessible” moments come to my mind at this time. –Eric*

# Challenges and Pitfalls

- Requires Investment
- Blurred Boundaries
- Time Management
- Staff and Admin Buy-In
- Motivated Students = Stronger Student Groups

# What We've Learned...

## This Approach Requires:

- Sharing Resources
- Collaboration
- COMMUNICATION
- Flexibility
- Relationship Building
- Open Minds and Risk-Taking



**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

# A New Approach

Social Justice Mindset

+

Mission and Vision Statements

+

Staff-Student Collaboration

=

***Transformational Service Provision***

# Your turn...

Considering what we've discussed—Social Justice, Transformational Leadership, examples of working with students...

Turn to a neighbor and discuss 2 or 3 steps you could take with your population at your institution.

# Suggestions...

- Learn more about Social Justice and Disability
- Partner with community D/HH populations or ASL Clubs
- Devise a Mission and Vision statement for your departments
- Start looking for ways to collaborate and share resources with your students
- Celebrate Deaf History Month – March 13 - April 15

# In Their Words...

*Be conscious of your actions—your attitude towards students with disabilities will be observed by all students...This is your opportunity to create an atmosphere of support and understanding. – Erica*

# In Their Words...

*Keep in mind that D/HH people have different abilities, so be conscientious of this, and be open to adjusting to meet the needs of your clients. Be creative with the possibilities of doing so while maintaining appropriate boundaries and ethics. Continually self-analyze your performance, and strive for improvement, or for excellence, if you feel you have maxed out your abilities. –Eric*

**Cheryl Fielitz – brdli001@umn.edu**  
**Maria Holloway – hollo015@umn.edu**  
**Dann Trainer – train042@umn.edu**

**THANK YOU!**

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