

Web-Based Distance Learning for Professionals in Postsecondary Education: Orientation to Serving College Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

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Abstract

The Postsecondary Education Programs Network (PEPNet) offers interactive multimedia web-based training on the PEPNet web site at [HtmlResAnchor www.pepnet.org](http://HtmlResAnchor.wwww.pepnet.org). The training, entitled *Orientation to Serving College Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*, is designed for postsecondary education professionals who are serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The instructional goal of the project is to provide postsecondary administrators, faculty, and staff with a basic understanding of hearing loss and its implications for communication and learning in a postsecondary setting. PEPNet is the national collaboration of the four Regional Postsecondary Education Centers for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Centers are supported by contracts with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The goal of PEPNet is to assist postsecondary institutions across the nation to attract and effectively serve individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Introduction

The Postsecondary Education Programs Network (PEPNet) now offers one hour of multimedia web-

based training on the PEPNet web site at [HtmlResAnchor www.pepnet.org](http://HtmlResAnchor.wwww.pepnet.org). The training, entitled *Orientation to Serving College Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*, is designed for postsecondary education professionals who are serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Others who may benefit from completion of the training include prospective employers of deaf and hard of hearing students and beginning students preparing for careers in deaf education, audiology, communication disorders, rehabilitation, or sign language interpreting. The training is offered at no charge, and individuals who complete the training may download and print an official certificate of completion issued by PEPNet.

Instructional Goal

The instructional goal of the project is to provide postsecondary administrators, faculty, and staff with a basic understanding of hearing loss and its implications for communication and learning in a postsecondary setting. Upon completion of the course individuals will be able to:

- define basic terms and concepts related to deafness and hearing loss,
- explain how deafness and hearing loss influence people's life experiences,

- identify languages and communication strategies used by people who are deaf and hard of hearing,
- apply skills for communicating with students who are deaf or hard of hearing,
- describe the services available for students who are deaf and hard of hearing and,
- adapt instruction to accommodate the needs of students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

PEPNet

PEPNet is the national collaboration of the four Regional Postsecondary Education Centers for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Centers are supported by contracts with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The goal of PEPNet is to assist postsecondary institutions across the nation to attract and effectively serve individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The training was developed with collaborative participation of a team of content experts from each of the four Centers:

- Debra Wilcox Hsu, Dissemination Coordinator (team leader) and David Buchkoski, Training Coordinator, Midwest Center for Postsecondary Outreach (MCPO) at St. Paul Technical College, St. Paul, Minnesota
- Charley Tiggs, Project Field Specialist, Northeast Region is served by the Northeast Technical Assistance Center (NETAC), located at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York.
- Marcia Kolvitz, Associate Director, Postsecondary Education Consortium (PEC) located at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville
- Allisun Kale, In-Service Training Specialist and Gary Sanderson, Outreach Program Coordinator, Western Region Outreach Center and Consortia (WROCC) located at the National Center on Deafness at California State University, Northridge.

The PEPNet content expert team contracted with Seward Learning Systems, Inc., in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the design, development and programming of the web-based training. The training module was available on-line within six months of the inception of the project. Team members worked together during those months through one face-to-face meeting and many telephone conference calls and chat meetings.

Role of Web-based Distance Learning

The four Regional Postsecondary Education Centers for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing were created to ensure that every postsecondary institution in the United States could easily access the technical assistance and outreach services that the Centers provide. The Centers serve over 10,000 colleges, universities, proprietary schools, and community based rehabilitation centers throughout the United States. Multimedia web-based distance learning is an ideal training and dissemination tool for organizations like PEPNet which provide outreach and training under the following conditions:

- Large populations - PEPNet serves over 10,000 postsecondary institutions.
- Geographically dispersed - PEPNet serves postsecondary institutions in rural and urban areas in every state and territory of the United States
- Continuous stream of trainees - PEPNet serves a continuous stream of professionals in postsecondary institutions.
- Learners at various levels - PEPNet serves professionals with varying levels of experience and knowledge about working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Stable content style and scope - *Orientation to Serving College Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing* content is stable and universally needed to effectively serve students.
- Accountability is required - PEPNet is

accountable to the U.S. Department of Education to provide training to professionals in postsecondary education and to document the training. Interactive web-based delivery of PEPNet training will allow for electronic tracking of completed training and automated credentialing of training for professionals in postsecondary education.

In addition to the collaborative web site and multimedia web-based training, PEPNet offers an on-line Resource Center on the PEPNet web site with thousands of listings of resources related to deafness and hearing loss. For more information about the PEPNet services or to participate in the on-line training, visit the PEPNet web site at <www.pepnet.org> or contact Debra Wilcox Hsu at 651-221-1432 or dwilcox@stp.tec.mn.us.