NCIEC

National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers

Interpreting in VR Settings

Module 1: VR as a Federally Mandated System

Study Guide

Spring 2014

THE NCIEC SHARES THIS STUDY GUIDE AS A RESOURCE TO EDUCATORS. PLEASE LOOK AT THE ROAD MAP (pp. 12-14) FOR LIVE LINKS. REVISION OF THIS STUDY GUIDE WILL BE REQUIRED FOR FUTURE INSTRUCTION.

Interpreting in VR Settings

Module 1: VR as a Federally Mandated System

Hosted by the UNC MARIE Center of the NCIEC in collaboration with WRIEC.

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Module Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this module is to provide interpreter practitioners with a holistic view of vocational rehabilitation as a system. This module focuses on increasing an interpreter's knowledge and understanding of the history and development of the VR system with particular attention to the VR process, current theories that underpin counselor service delivery, and creation of a common framework for discussing terms and concepts specific to the field of rehabilitation.

This introductory module addresses the competencies relating to the skills, knowledge and understanding of the VR system. The learner will gain a historical perspective on the development of the VR service system, including the state/federal relationship, the VR process, and the role of VR legislation in interpreter education.

Impact

Interpreters work within a variety of systems and as a result, need to be system thinkers. A system is a coordinated body of methods or a scheme or plan of procedure; an organizational scheme. Examples of systems in which interpreters work include: a system of government, a legal system, the healthcare system, the K-12 system of education, or—as is the case with this training module—the VR system. System thinking is a way of viewing the inter-relationship between parts of a process and viewing them holistically. In organizations, systems—such as VR—consist of people, structures, and processes that work together to make an organization work together as a whole.

Systems thinking is based on the belief that the component parts of a system can best be understood in the context of relationships with each other and with other systems, rather than in isolation. Systems thinking focuses on cyclical rather than linear cause and effect.

In the case of interpreters, being a system thinker means appreciating how the system works and functions, and how interpreters fit into the system. Sometimes, practitioners can be interpreter-centric and expect the system to adapt to them versus them adapting to the system.

Increased knowledge of the VR system will enable interpreters to work more effectively with counselors, individuals seeking services, community delivery partners and interpreter colleagues. The goal of this module is for the interpreter to understand the history, processes and theories that form the foundation for the VR system to better understand the world view of VR counselors and the activities that VR consumers are engaged in. With better understanding, interpreters can more accurately interpret between consumers, counselors, and other service personnel, and thus be a more effective member of the team.

Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Describe the history of VR and its role in the development of interpreting and interpreter education.
- Understand federal mandate administered through states to help individuals with disabilities obtain employment and the mission of VR as administered through the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- Explain VR process assessment tools and research a specific tool in detail.
- Describe the Federal/State relationship and the importance of the State Plan in the administration of VR services.
- Describe the VR process from application to post employment services, including the roles of VR personnel.
- Describe community partners and the implications that a variety of settings has for the job of the interpreter.
- Describe Service Delivery theories and how they can be applied to vocational rehabilitation counseling.
- Identify and utilize common terminology and abbreviations.

Completion Requirements

As a distance learner, you have a unique opportunity to take responsibility for your own learning by establishing a study and participation schedule that maximizes your learning. Since the class does not 'meet' at an established time and day of the week, it will be your responsibility to stay current with your readings, activities and assignments. As well, it is important for you to be an active participant in the online discussions that connect you with your peer learners and section facilitator for the purpose of exploring and discussing your new learning.

This Blackboard class will challenge you to do your best work. Information, exercises and activities are provided to help you with this process. You will have the opportunity to assist each other toward success. Your input is essential. You will gain what you put into the class. All assignments will be done electronically.

Deadlines are important. Web-based participation requires that you stay on top of your work, communicating with your classmates and your facilitator. There will be requirements for discussion and collaboration using the Blackboard discussion groups. You have interpreting experiences and personal perspectives to share. This sharing will facilitate new learning for all participants.

So, to ensure that this learning experience works for you, the following items are required for satisfactory completion:

- Complete the Module Pre-Test
- Read all assigned readings.
- Complete all defined activities.
- Complete homework assignments per instructions.
- Submit homework as directed by the assignment on, or before, assigned due dates.
- Actively participate in online discussion groups. You should be posting both original and responding posts each week of the module.
- Complete Module Post-Test
- Complete the Module evaluation(s).

Student Participation

The primary goal of this module is to deliver training and knowledge to prepare interpreters to effectively work within VR settings. This module is created for individuals with a direct knowledge of the interpreting process and demands associated with the interpreting task. It will be most beneficial for those individuals who can apply this module to their work as an interpreting in a broad range of VR settings.

Facilitator Role

The facilitator for this module will be Anna Witter-Merithew, Director for the Mid America Regional Interpreter Education Center (MARIE)—which is one of the partners of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) and funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). She is a one of the lead content specialists for this area of study and has been an interpreter practitioner and/or educator for four decades.

The facilitator's role is to assist you in accomplishing the learning objectives of this module. In this capacity, she will provide general guidance for discussions and overall module management, act as a resource and provide feedback on assignments. She will not function as a "teacher" in the traditional sense (sage on the stage), but rather a "facilitator" (guide on the side). If you have a question and/or concerns regarding assignments, materials, or module-related issues please contact your Section Facilitator.

Reasonable expectations for responses from your Section Facilitator electronically are 48 to 72 hours and feedback on written assignments may take up to a week. When contacting your Section Facilitator for specific or assignment related information, plan ahead. Remember she will need a couple of days to respond to you. Assignment grades will be posted to Blackboard and can be viewed in the “My Grades” icon.

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Guidelines for Use of Technology

Responsible use of the MARIE Center technologies and services (i.e., Blackboard, video conferencing, media) requires that you:

- Respect the rights of others by complying with all college and program policies regarding intellectual property and copyright.
- Respect the rights of others by complying with all college and program policies regarding sexual, racial and other forms of harassment, and by preserving the privacy of personal data to which you may have access.
- Respect the privacy of others by not tampering with their tapes, files, attachments, passwords, or accounts, or representing others when messaging or conferencing.
- Use only computer IDs or accounts and communication facilities which you are duly authorized to use, and use them for the purposes for which they were intended.
- Do not allow anyone else to use your ID or accounts to access classes or other resources available to registered students of the program.
- Respect the integrity of computing systems and data; for example, by not intentionally developing programs or making use of already existing programs that

harass other users, or infiltrate a computer or computing system, and/or damage or alter the software components of a computer or computing system, or gain unauthorized access to other facilities accessible via the network.

Inappropriate Use

Certain activities are considered inappropriate use of technology services. These include electronic chain letters, pyramid schemes, mass-mailing of unsolicited e-mail, and "spamming". Spamming refers to the mass posting of a single message to multiple Usenet newsgroups regardless of whether the message is relevant to each group's topic.

Guidelines for Blackboard Discussions

The following guidelines should be followed for all discussion groups unless otherwise indicated in the activity or assignment.

- Different discussions are created for difference purposes. Some are for academic discussion and exchange. The Student Lounge was designed as a discussion where personal information could be shared by all student members of the module. Participation in this discussion is voluntary—this is not considered part of module instruction, therefore, no staff member is facilitating the interactions in this discussion, nor are participation points considered for student interactions. All guidelines of use of technology apply in this discussion. Respect for diversity and disagreement, as well as general principles of courtesy and politeness, are expected.
- For discussion assignments, compose an articulate comment/response to the appropriate discussion.
- If you are starting a new topic, use the THREAD feature to start a new message and put the topic in the subject line of the message.
- If you are responding to another message, make sure you are reading that message when you click the REPLY button so that your message is indented under the message to which you are replying.
- It is OK to agree or disagree with a posting, but be sure to explain why you agree or disagree in a professional manner. At times it may be easy to forget that this is a public discussion and during times of stress the form of communication (written with no indication of affect or inflection) can be easily misunderstood. Therefore, concerns and issues to be brought to the attention of staff or students need to be thoughtfully composed and considered prior to posting. Private postings should incorporate the same considerations.

Information about how to use the Blackboard discussions is in the Blackboard User Guide that you received.

Guidelines for Written Assignments

The following guidelines should be followed for all written assignments submitted via an attachment through Gradebook in Blackboard or an email to the facilitator, unless otherwise indicated in the activity or assignment.

You can help your Section Facilitator and help yourself by paying attention to these guidelines, which make it much easier to review your work.
For assignments to be sent via the Gradebook in Blackboard or email:

- When you see "Email to your Section Facilitator," do so within the email function within Blackboard.
- Create a document in MS Word and email **as an attachment** either as MS Word 6.0/95 (or above) document or Rich Text Format (RTF). **NOTE: Documents submitted in a format other than this (such as MS Works) will not be graded.**
- Check for grammar and spelling.
- Minimum/maximum number of words will be indicated in each assignment.
- Use 12-point font with 1-inch margins.
- Indicate the following in the subject of your email: your name, section and the assignment number.
- Put your name, the date, the module, section and assignment number at the top of your attached document.
- In the email message to your Section Facilitator, identify which version of MS Word you are using or that you are sending rich text format.
- Print a copy of the assignment as a working copy for your own notes as you view the critique of your work. Your Section Facilitator's critique will be found in writing via email to you individually.
- Timeliness of the assignment is based on the time/date stamp on your email. Print a copy of your email with the time/date stamp to document your submission of the assignment. The Section Facilitator will let you know that it has been received and opened properly within 48-72 hours.

Grade based on:

- Content.
- English spelling and grammar.
- Timeliness of assignments.

Module Evaluation

Module grades will be assigned based on the following:

Product	Description	Points
Unit Activities	Twenty (20) Blackboard discussion activities (each worth 1.5 points)	30 points
Assignment #1	VR Evaluation Tool Fact Sheet	30 points
Assignment #2	Community Partnership Case Study	30 points
Pre and Post Test	Completion of module Pre and Post tests	10 points

All extensions to due dates must be negotiated with the module facilitator in advance of the due date. Late assignments (not more than 5 days past the due date) not negotiated in advance will lose one letter grade—an A assignment will be a B and so forth. Assignments submitted 5 days past the due date may not be graded—pending discretion of the facilitator.

Grading Criteria

The VR modules are NOT offered for college credit. However, assignment points will be awarded and tied to RID CEUs. Students achieving a satisfactory point distribution for all assignments will receive the full award of 3 CEUs for Module 1.

The following scheme will be used to assign grades for students taking this module:

A	91-100	Superior achievement of objectives
B	81-90	Above average achievement of objectives
C	71-80	Average achievement of objectives
D	61-70	Below average achievement of objectives
F	Below 60	Unacceptable level of achievement of objectives

Weight will be placed on the quality of the responses and/or comments, as well as the presentation of the work (e.g., spelling, grammar). Timeliness will be a factor in grading of all assignments and will be assessed by postmark (USPS) or time/date stamp on email/Blackboard requirements.

Your work is to be your own. Using the words, ideas and/or written product of another individual without giving due credit to that person is unacceptable. Plagiarism is considered a violation of academic integrity. Work that demonstrates academic dishonesty may result in a lowering of the grade on an assignment or module dismissal.

Materials Checklist

You will be using a variety of materials for this module that will be available in the online course.

- This Study Guide containing the module overview (Objectives, Unit Previews, Materials, Requirements, Assignments, Roadmap).
- Interpreting in VR Settings: A VR Staff Meeting (Video clips available in the online course)

The following readings for this module will be found online:

- NCIEC (2011). Interpreting in Vocational Rehabilitation Settings: A Literature Review
- NCIEC (2011). Interpreting in Vocational Rehabilitation Settings: An Annotated Bibliography
- Elliott, T. & Leung, P. (2004). Vocational Rehabilitation: History and Practice
- Myers, J. & Sweeney, T. (2007) Wellness in Counseling. American Counseling Association.
- Kosciulek, J.F. (2005). Employment and Career Challenges Encountered by People with Disabilities. Retrieved from http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Empoweringpeoplewithdisabilitiesthroughvocationalrehabilitation...-a0126791480

In addition, a variety of module-related resource material will be available under the resource link of the module.

- Glossary of Terms
- PPTs of key content information
- Graph of the VR System of Service Delivery
- Sample State VR Policy and Procedure Manuals

How to use this Study Guide

This Study Guide contains all the information you need to get started with the module including:

- Module and Unit preview
- Completion requirements
- Materials checklist
- Roadmap
- Assignment overview
- Some of the module Readings (others will be available through the Blackboard resource section of the class)

To help you keep organized (there's lots to do and remember), there is a "roadmap" that lays out all the activities required for the module.

The rest of the module content is located on the web in Blackboard. There you will find the detailed information on each activity and assignment as well as access to the discussion groups and Blackboard email. Remember, you can print activity or assignment pages from Blackboard if you want so that you can highlight, underline, circle items, write notes in the margins and do anything else you need to do to understand and work with the information.

Also, each of you has an individual amount of "processing time". This means that it may take you a while to absorb and really understand some of the information. That's OK! You can go over the readings several times or watch the DVDs as many times as you want. That's one of the advantages of distance education!

Module Preview

There are five (5) units of learning in this module. These are:

1) Historic Overview of VR, Federal Civil Rights Legislation and Interpreter Demand,
2) Federal/State Relationship,
3) VR Process and VR Personnel,
4) VR Community Partners,
5) Service Delivery Theories.

Each unit will contain activities designed to engage you in the review, reflection, and application of your new learning. There will be a variety of these activities throughout the module—worth 30 points towards your grade—all are intended to foster your synthesis of new learning through peer discussion, reflection, and application. To further assist you with the application of your learning, there will be a pre- and post-test, and two (2) assignments associated with this module.

The primary difference between an **activity** and an **assignment** is the amount of time required for completion and the point value assigned to each. The **activities** are designed to provide you with immediate review and reflection of the module material towards the goal of fostering discussion with peers. The **assignments** are designed to provide you with an opportunity to explore specific elements of the module material in more depth through research, critical analysis and synthesis.

The organization of the module will engage you alternately in review of module notes (contained in the Blackboard module materials), assigned readings from the module textbook, supplemental readings of online articles or materials, vocabulary building through a readings and a glossary of terminology, and guided online discussions.

As previously mentioned, the online discussions are an integral part of your learning process. Your ability to have meaningful participation in the online discussions is contingent on being current with the readings and other module activities. The module roadmap, available after the Unit Preview section of this Study Guide, provides you with a tool for guiding your progress through the module. It provides you with timelines and due dates associated with each unit's activities and assignments.

Unit Preview

Unit 1: Historic Overview of VR

This unit introduces learners to the inception of VR services and how those services have evolved into today's vocational Rehabilitation system. Understanding the system from its federal roots will assist interpreters in understanding the complex regulations that guide today's services. Learners will also be exposed to the benefits of the public VR system from the taxpayer's perspective—the return on the investment. In addition, learners will gain an appreciation of how Civil Rights legislation over the years has expanded VR services to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind. This expansion of services has also increased the demand for interpreters and required interpreters to be more highly educated and knowledgeable on a wide range of topics.

Unit 2: Federal/State Relationship

This unit provides the learner with basic knowledge of the federal/state relationship as mandated by law and some of the variations in implementation of VR procedures from state to state, as defined in each state's plan. In order for interpreters to make informed decisions around the interpreting process, especially at higher levels of administration when working with deaf professionals, the interpreter must have a basic understanding of the federal/state relationship and its implications for the state VR budget and decision-making related to the budget.

Unit 3: VR Process and Personnel

In this unit, the learner will become acquainted with the processes, structures and key VR personnel that frame the counselor's approach, strategies and decision making, including the assessments used to determine eligibility. Such knowledge will help provide a context from which interpreting decisions can be made, enhance the learner's understanding of related terminology, and increase the interpreter's comfort level with this specialized setting.

Unit 4: VR Community Partners

In serving the needs of individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind, VR engages in partnership with many different community based organizations and agencies. This unit provides interpreters with an understanding of the multitude of settings they may find themselves in when interpreting for VR consumers or deaf VR counselors, and the role they will play in the process.

Unit 5: Service Delivery Theories

In delivering services to VR clients, various theories of service delivery to persons with disabilities exist. In this unit, learners will explore in readings the application of psychological counseling theory as applied to vocational rehabilitation services and how this affects the VR counselor's style of service delivery. The effects of gender, disability, and majority/minority status on service delivery will also be explored.

Roadmap

Throughout the module, you will see charts that are designed to be "roadmaps" for you to help you fulfill all the module requirements. There is a "roadmap" at the start of each module with all the assignments, due dates, etc. for the module. Each unit has its own "map" to summarize the critical dates and assignments for the unit.

In your "map", or on each activity page, you may see the following symbols to help you quickly identify the type of activity.

	Indicates DVD that you are to watch.
	Indicates a reading included in a textbook or online.
	Indicates an online discussion.
	Indicates a web activity such as searching the web or accessing Blackboard.
	Indicates a paper you are to write and send to your facilitator via regular email.
	Indicates an assignment to be uploaded to YouTube (if generated in ASL)
	Indicates an assignment to be uploaded to a Blackboard assignment tool.
	Indicates a GoToMeeting event.

Module Roadmap

Use this as your "map" while traveling on your distance learning journey. All the information you need to complete the module is here in one location. Use the last column to check off each item as you complete it. See the following pages for details on each assignment.

Dates before or next to any activity indicate specific dates for that item.

Points	Dates	Activities		Done!
Unit 1: Historic Overview of VR				
			Complete Module 1 Pre-test	☐
	1/13	1.1	**Introductions**: Post an introduction that describes how you see this module relating to your current work in the field of interpreting and/or interpreter education.	☐
	1/14	1.2	Read through the Study Guide and Unit 1 Insights.	☐
	1/15	1.3	View the Unit 1 PPT entitled *History of Vocational Rehabilitation.*	☐
	1/15	1.4	View the Unit 1 PPT entitled *The Rehabilitation Act*	☐
	1/16-19	1.5	Post response to two of the Discussion Questions in the Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation postings.	☐
	1/20	1.6	View the PPT on *Disability Rights Legislation and Interpreter Demand*	☐
	1/21	1.7	Read the NCIEC Interpreter Report. Optional: View the archived Webinars available at: https://ncrtm.org/moodle/mod/page/view.php?id=2577	☐
	1/22-25	1.8	Post response to one Discussion Question in the Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation postings.	☐

Points	Dates	Activities		Done!
Unit 2: Federal/State Relationship				
	1/27	2.1	Read Unit Insights and view PPT. *PPT with Audio and Interpreting*	☐
	1/28	2.2	Internet Search: Research the VR State Plan for your state and be prepared to post findings. **You will refer back to this State Plan in future activities. (3.5, 4.3)**	☐
	1/29-2/1	2.3	Post response to two Discussion Questions in the 2.3 Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation postings. (old 3.3 discussion)	☐
	1/31-2/1	2.4	Optional: Participate in one of the scheduled GoToMeeting events: Oct 1 from 6-7 PM MST Oct 2 from 5-6 PM MST	☐
	By 2/3	2.5	Complete the Unit 1 and 2 Quiz	☐
Unit 3: VR Process and Personnel				
	2/3	3.1	Read Unit Insights and view the associated PPT: VR Process	☐
	2/4	3.2	View the Unit 3 PowerPoints: • VR Services and Interpreter Roles • From Intake to Rehab	☐
	2/5-8	3.3	Post responses to two Discussion Questions in the 3.3 Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation points.	☐
	2/10	3.4	Watch the video entitled *A VR Staff Meeting* *Refer to NCIEC VR DVD 6-Pack*	☐
	2/11	3.5	Return to your State Plan to see what the *Order of Selection Policy* is for your state.	☐
	2/12-15	3.6	Post responses to two Discussion Questions in the 3.6 Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation points.	☐
	By 2/15	3.7	View the video webcast entitled *Assessment and Evaluation Tools for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.*	☐

Points	Dates	Activities		Done!
	2/15-18	3.8	Post responses to two Discussion Questions in 3.8 Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation points.	☐
	2/24	3.9	**Assignment 1:** Research a specific evaluation tool used in VR to evaluate deaf clients and create a fact sheet about 1) how it works, 2) what it measures and how, and 3) key considerations for interpreters.	☐
Unit 4: VR Community Partners				
	2/25	4.1	Read Unit Insights.	☐
	2/25	4.2	View the Unit 4 PPT entitled *VR Community Partners*	☐
	2/26	4.3	Return to your State Plan and identify two community partners that work with VR in your state and be prepared to answer questions about your findings.	☐
	2/27-3/1	4.4	Post responses to two Discussion Questions in the 4.4 Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation points.	☐
	2/28-3/1	4.5	Optional: Participate in one of the scheduled GoToMeeting events: Feb. 28 from 10 – 11 AM MST Mar. 1 from 5 – 6 PM MST	☐
	3/10	4.6	**Assignment 2: Community Partnership Case Study** Read the Case Study and respond to the questions in the Discussion board.	☐
Unit 5: Service Delivery Theories				
	3/11	5.1	Read Unit Insights and view associated PowerPoint on Service Delivery	☐
	3/12-13	5.2	Read Elliott and Leung Chapter "Vocational Rehabilitation: History and Practice"	☐
	3/13-15	5.3	Read Myers and Sweeney article "Wellness in Counseling"	☐
	3/13-15	5.4	Read Kosciulek article "Employment and Career Challenges Encountered by People with Disabilities"	☐
	3/17-19	5.5	Post responses to one Discussion Question in the Discussion Forum. This activity counts towards your participation points.	☐
	By 3/20		**Complete Module 1 Post-Test**	☐
	3/21		**Complete Module 1 Evaluation** **Congratulations! You have completed Module 1**	☐

Assignments

Assignment Overview

Assignment	Description	Points	Due Date
Participation Activities	**Online Discussions**: 15 posts with Introduction. Blackboard discussion activities. Post a response to at least one of the Unit Discussion Questions for each Unit in the module and reply to the post of at least one colleague in each Unit. This pairing is worth a total of 3 points.	45 points	Ongoing
Assignment #1 Submit to Assignments	**Fact Sheet**: Research a specific evaluation tool used in VR to evaluate deaf clients and create a fact sheet that 1) provides a clear description of the tool and how it works, 2) what it is designed to measure and how it measures what it intends, and 3) key considerations for interpreters when interpreting the tool. The fact sheet should be no more than one page (front and back). Students may work in collaboration with each other for this assignment if desired. Doing so requires equal contribution and acceptance of a single grade/the same grade for all collaborating students. Seek approval from the module facilitator in advance.	30 points	2/24
Assignment #2 Post in Discussions	**Case Study**: Students will review the Community Partnership provided as part of the assignment and analyze the case and post a response in the discussions that includes: 1) the relationship of the agency to Voc Rehab, 2) the nature of services provided by the agency, 3) the challenges an interpreter is likely to face in the scenario, and 4) the strategies the interpreter might utilize to manage the challenges.	15 points	3/10
Pre and Post Tests	**Respond to pre and post tests**	10 points	3/14

Online Discussions/Participation

Post Original and Response postings to Questions in the Discussion Forums

Description

The goal of regular participation in online discussions is to provide you with the opportunity to learn from your peers and share your experience with them. In addition, participation allows you to explore your responses and reactions to the readings and homework assignments from the Module activities.

PARTICIPATION is a critical component of all learning. This is an opportunity for you to interact with the course material, your peers, and your course facilitator, as you formulate your thoughts and opinions about the topics being addressed. It also enables you to benefit from the perspectives of your peers and to challenge one another's thinking.

Approaching the Assignment

You are to post at total of 15 responses in the Blackboard discussion activities. Each unit will have at least one discussion forum and you are generally required to post an (1) original response to at least one (1) of the questions in each forum. In some units you will be asked to post an (1) original response to two (2) of the questions embedded in the discussion forum. An original post is a post where you are addressing a specific question directly—providing your own interpretation of the course content combined with your own experiences working in the VR setting as an interpreter.

You are also expected to contribute at least one (1) response posting within each forum. A response posting is one that you submit in response to an original post by one of your peers. A response post should be more substantive than a simple agreement or “good job”. It should contribute to a continuation of the discussion by expanding on the concepts/ideas offered by your peer, offering alternative perspectives, or asking thought-provoking questions that arise as a result of your peers contribution.

It is helpful if you indicate in your subject line if the post is an original (OP) or a response (RP).

You are encouraged to post early in a discussion cycle. The days allocated to the discussion are indicated in the road map. By posting early you allow yourself and your peers time to respond and engage in authentic conversation around the course material. Posting late or last minute discourages meaningful engagement.

Each member of the class has a responsibility to:

- Post early so that others in your group have sufficient time to read and respond
- Reflect on your own learning
- Share thoughts and observations in a professional and thoughtful manner
- Give consideration to the thoughts and observations of others, and
- Post thoughtful responses to peers' postings

Completing the Assignment

To successfully pass this assignment you must:

- ✓ Post the required number of postings for each discussion forum
- ✓ Post substantive postings that reflect your own learning and understanding of the content
- ✓ Prepare your posts in a professional and courteous manner (use spell check and reflect sensitivity to diverse perspectives)
- ✓ Post in a timely manner—early for original postings and mid-way during the discussion cycle for response postings

Grading

Each post is worth 3 points for a total of 45 points. Grading will be done in accordance with the discussion rubric posted within the assignments link. Successful completion of this assignment means that you earn at least 35 of the 45 points available. To move onto the next module in the program, you must successfully pass this assignment.

Assignment 1

Develop a Fact Sheet about a VR Evaluation/Assessment Tool

Description

Research a specific evaluation tool used in VR to evaluate deaf clients and create a fact sheet about it. The fact sheet should address criteria relating to the purpose and function of the evaluation/assessment tool, what it is designed to measure and how it goes about measuring what it intends, and key considerations for interpreters when interpreting the tool.

Learners may work in collaboration with each other for this assignment if desired. Doing so requires equal contribution and acceptance of a single grade/the same grade for all collaborating learners. Seek approval from the module facilitator in advance.

Approaching the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to acquaint the learner with various evaluation and assessment tools used within the VR system. To this end, the learner will research a number of tools and select one for the purpose of creating a fact sheet about it. The fact sheet should be viewed as a tool that could be used by other interpreters seeking to work in VR settings. Since assignment material is the property of the program/university, it is likely that the fact sheet each learner submits will be made available to future learners in the program in hopes that a repository of fact sheets on various tools will be available for use by the fields of interpreting and interpreter education. Each learner should also anticipate that their completed tool will be shared with their peers within the cohort in which they are participating.

VR uses a wide variety of evaluation/assessment tools—many of which must be interpreted. In this assignment, you are to research evaluation/assessment tools, select a tool, and prepare a fact sheet about the tool. Some types of tools are identified in the course materials. Others can be found in resource documents in the resource section of the class. You can go online and research VR evaluation/assessment tools. You may also need to use your own experiences within VR to request, review and select an evaluation/assessment tool.

In analyzing the tool and preparing your fact sheet, be sure to address these elements.

- The name of the tool and a general description of the type of tool it is, how it is administered, what it is intended to assess/evaluate, and how it does that
- Discuss key considerations for interpreters when interpreting the tool
    - Procedural considerations- Define the procedures used in administering the tool. Discuss at least three (3) demands that may surface because the client must do something simultaneously with being given instructions, or if the assessment is timed, or any other procedural demand that impacts the

interpretation of the tool. And, identify at least three (3) possible strategies the interpreter can employ to mitigate or manage the demands.

- Linguistic considerations—What language is used during the administration of the tool? Are there unique terms or grammatical structures included? Are there ready equivalents for these in ASL? Is the tool a completely written tool that must be read? If so, can it be sight translated? If it is sight translated, what are the implications for reliability and accuracy? Discuss at least three (3) of the linguistic demands associated with the interpretation of the tool. As well, identify at least three (3) possible strategies the interpreter can employ to mitigate or manage the demands.
- Role considerations/conflicts—Are there any unique considerations impacting the interpreter role or that might create a unique intra- (internal) or inter- (external) personal demand for the interpreter? To what degree does the interpreter have to assert his or her presence/involvement when interpreting this tool? What are the implications of this for the assessment process? Discuss at least one (1) role consideration associated with the interpretation of the tool and at least one (1) possible strategy the interpreter can employ to mitigate or manage the demand.

Another element of approaching this assignment is to evaluate whether you want to collaborate with other peers in the completion and submission of the assignment. Collaboration can be a great way to energize a greater degree of creativity and to share in the responsibility of research and planning. And, there are a few tips that can help make the process effective.

- **Avoid assumptions.** Be as explicit as possible with one another regarding expectations, tasks, who is responsible for what, and the timelines involved.
- **Respect one another.** Different people bring different strengths and styles. When someone works differently than you, it can be a source of tension and frustration. This can be minimized if the group establishes clear agreements and frequently checks in with one another to verify progress towards completion. As well, being respectful of one another, honoring your commitments and understanding differences is required. This requires listening, not letting any one person take control, and sharing as equally as possible in the responsibility for completing the assignment.
- **Draw on one another's strength.** One of the great things about working in a group is that not everyone has to be good at the same things! Someone might be really good at doing research, while writing comes easy for someone else. Another person may be good at editing and formatting. Draw on your strengths to create the best end product possible! It is true that two (or more!) heads are better than one!
- **Get advanced approval.** If a group decides to work together, do so early and make sure to get advance approval from the course facilitator. One of the questions you will be asked is if you are prepared to move forward and accept that the SAME grade will be given to each group member, regardless of how individual members may perceive their contribution to the final product. So, making sure everyone is on the same page before moving forward is an important step towards a successful collaboration.

Completing the Assignment

To successfully pass this assignment you must earn at least 25 of the 30 points possible and:

- ✓ Prepare a Fact Sheet that is no longer than one page, double sided, and contains no grammatical or spelling errors (1 point)
- ✓ Include a copy of the evaluation/assessment tool (1 point)
- ✓ Address all of the criteria stated in the Approaching Assignment section of this description (28 points total)
  - Name of the tool (1 point)
  - A general description of the tool (type of tool) (2 points)
  - Purpose of the tool, how it is administered, what it evaluates/assesses and how it measures what it intends (3 points)
  - Identify the procedural considerations/demands (at least 3) (9 points)
    - Include possible strategies that interpreter can employ to mitigate or manage the demands (at least 3)
  - Identify the role considerations/demands (at least 1) (4 points)
    - Include a possible strategy the interpreter can employ to mitigate or manage the role conflict/demand (at least 1)
  - Identify the linguistic considerations/demands (at least 3) (9 points)
    - Include possible strategies that interpreter can employ to mitigate or manage the demands (at least 3)
- ✓ Organize your Fact Sheet with clear introductions to topics, a logical and coherent flow of ideas, clear transitions from one part to the next
- ✓ Post your Fact Sheet to the Assignment 1 Tool in BlackBoard under the Assignments tab. The facilitator will pick it up, grade it, and return feedback to you. You can check your grade and see any feedback by going to Course Tools and selecting My Grades.
- ✓ Be sure your name(s) are attached to the assignment.

Grading

This assignment will be graded based on the above criteria basis. To move onto the next module in the program, you must successfully earn 25 of the 30 points for this assignment.

Assignment 2

Case Study Analysis RE: Community Partnerships and VR

Description

Learners will review a Case Study about an agency that is frequently involved in community partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation. The actual case is attached at the end of this description. Learners will analyze the case to determine the relationship of the agency to VR, the nature of services provided by the agency, challenges the interpreter may encounter within that agency, and possible strategies the interpreter might utilize to manage the challenges. After reviewing the case, post your responses to the above topics in the discussion forum and respond to postings of your peers.

Approaching the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to enable the learner to explore in greater detail one of the community partnerships in which VR engages. For this reason, Goodwill Industries, a frequent community partners with VR agencies across the country, has been selected. Some basic information about Goodwill Industries is provided in the case study, and as part of this assignment, the learner will further research Goodwill to learn more specifics about the nature of the community partnership with VR.

In analyzing Goodwill Industries, you will need to read the case study, review the specific points to be covered in the "Completing the Assignment" section below, and do some online research

Completing the Assignment

To successfully pass this assignment you must earn 8 of the 10 points available and address the following criteria:

- ✓ Briefly discuss the history of Goodwill Industries (1 point)
  - Finding this information will require online research and/or discussion with a Goodwill administrator
- ✓ Provide a description Goodwill and how it operates at a national and local level (2 points)
  - Finding this information will require online research and/or discussion with a Goodwill administrator
  - What is the national-state relationship?
  - What does it mean to be a non-profit organization? How do such organizations fit into the social service system of local communities?
  - How are local Goodwill's funded? How is Goodwill governed? Who comprises the Board of Directors?
- ✓ Describe the services that Goodwill provides to Vocational Rehabilitation (5 points)
  Some of this information is available in the case study description. Additional information will require that you speak with a knowledgeable Goodwill

administrator or staff person. Some local Goodwill agencies have a deafness specialist or a vocational program manager who can address many of these questions.

- What are the types of service?
- Who are the personnel that provide the service?
- How are clients referred? How are VR clients funded to go through Goodwill programs?
- How does Goodwill report the progress of VR referred clients?
- What type of specific services does Goodwill provide for deaf individuals?
- Where might services provided by Goodwill be physically located?

✓ How do/might interpreters fit into the Goodwill system? (7 points)
Determining this information will require that you speak with a knowledgeable Goodwill administrator or staff person. Some local Goodwill agencies have interpreters on staff or regular contract who can address many of these questions.

- Are the interpreters employed as staff of Goodwill or freelance? What factors impact the employment relationship of interpreters to Goodwill?
- When might interpreters be used within Goodwill programs?
- What are some of the role considerations impacting the work of interpreters in the Goodwill setting?
- What are the demographics of clients served by Goodwill?
- What is the implication of these demographics for the interpreting process?

✓ You are to report your findings in a written report (1,000 words) or ASL narrative (25-30 minutes in length).

✓ Post your paper or the link to your ASL video narrative to the Assignment 2 Tool in BlackBoard under the Assignments tab. The facilitator will pick it up, grade it and return feedback to you. You can check your grade and see any feedback by going to Course Tools and selecting My Grades.

Grading

This assignment will be graded based on the above criteria basis. To move onto the next module in the program, you must successfully earn 12 of the 15 points for this assignment.

Case Study – Good Will Industries

Over the years, countless Goodwill Industries leaders have traveled the world spreading the vision of helping people in need to reach their fullest potential through the power of work. As a result, there are currently 165 Goodwill organizations in the U.S. and Canada with 14 Goodwill affiliated organizations in other countries around the world.

Goodwill brings its reputable model of self-sustainability, backed by a 100+ year-old history of success, to markets that can support it by working closely with a wide range of local stakeholders. This model builds social enterprises that provide skills training and job placement activities leading to the employment and sustainability for people with barriers to employment.

Long-Term Services
Long-Term Services helps people with developmental disabilities earn wages in an integrated, productive environment. In addition to the programs below, we also employ individuals with barriers to employment in our transportation, contracts, vocational services and administrative departments.

At Goodwill, our mission is to provide vocational opportunities to individuals with barriers to employment. When you donate to Goodwill or buy from our stores, you will likely meet some of the people who have found independence, dignity and strength through our mission.

Enclave Jobs
Many of our Long-Term Services employees are eager to learn retail operations work at one of our Goodwill Retail Training Centers. These employees can learn and work at a variety of jobs, including dressing room attendant, stocker, pricer, sorter and donation attendant.

High School Work Experience
Several high schools use our worksites to assist developmentally disabled individuals 17 to 21 to adjust through the transition from school to work by offering work opportunities. Eligible individuals are identified and accompanied by a trainer from their school.

Vocational Rehabilitation
Goodwill assists individuals with diagnosed disabilities attain and retain jobs in the community. Our services include workplace assessments and individual job search assistance. These services are offered in partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Veterans Administration, and the State Commissions for the Blind and other referring agencies. Please call Goodwill Industries near you and ask for our Vocational Services program and learn more about these services.

Supported Work Program
Goodwill provides supported work experience opportunities to individuals receiving special funds for this purpose. Our Employment Specialists provide an initial evaluation to identify and/or establish positive work habits and dependability. Individuals are then provided opportunities for additional work experience at a Goodwill location. Some participants can receive up to six months of paid on-the-job training. This program is a partnership with various supported employment networks in specific states. Please call a Goodwill near you and ask for one of our Employment Specialists to learn more about these services.

Community Service
People with misdemeanor offenses may be able to use one of Goodwill's worksites to perform their community service. The appropriate law enforcement agency will make referrals.

CARF Accreditation
Goodwill Industries programs are accredited for organizational employment services by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). CARF is an independent, not-for-profit agency promoting quality, value and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative process that centers on enhancing the lives of the people receiving services. For more information on CARF, visit carf.org. CARF accreditation ensures that:

- Our programs and services actively involve clients in selecting, planning and using services.
- Our programs and services have met client-focused, state-of-the-art national standards of performance.
- Our organization is focused on assisting each client in achieving his or her chosen goals and outcomes.

Pre and Post Tests

Take the Pre and Post tests

Description

Pre and post tests provide an evaluation of effectiveness measure for course developers. While your score on these tests do not count toward your grade, you will receive 10 points for completing the two tests.

Rubrics

The following pages contain the rubrics for the assignments and will print landscape, one to a page.

Rubric for Graded Discussion Items

CATEGORY	At or Above Standards	Needs Improvement	Below Standard
Specifics and Timeliness	Discussion postings must be made in the correct discussion and respond to a given question, open a new thread with a question to which it responds, or respond to another student's posting (depending on the instructions). Length is dictated by substance (approximately 250-500 words), and "too short" or "too long/rambling" can affect the grade for quality (either not covering the topic, or by obfuscating it). Late postings lose one grade level.		
Original posting	• Shows understanding with thoughtful, substantive ideas concerning the topic along with a supporting example, reference to relevant material, or real-life. Clarifications and explanations are concise. • The response demonstrates knowledge of the field, best practices, self-awareness, and reflective analysis skills • Posting is written in classic form (topic sentence, main point, supporting points and examples, conclusion), and includes referencing of external sources and resources. • Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are correct.	• Topic, purpose, and author's point are all clearly identifiable, as is how it relates to the discussion thread. All required elements are addressed. Demonstrates a basic understanding and insight into the topic. • Posting has an appropriate structure; and grammar, spelling, and punctuation are almost entirely accurate.	• Content of posting does not meet requirement(s) for reason(s) such as: ✓ Does not respond to the required topic ✓ Required elements are missing ✓ Point is unclear or wholly unsupported • Number of grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors is unacceptable for college work.
Response to another student posting	• Response clearly indicates author's position in relation to what fellow student(s) said, such as agreeing, disagreeing, adding to, modifying, extending, or questioning it. • Includes an outside resource, example, reference to relevant material, or real-life.	• Is responsive to at least one fellow student in a personalized, meaningful way that expands the discussion with an additional piece of information or an idea.	• Fails to respond to fellow student(s) or response is trite, inane, simplistic, or without substance (e.g., a personal remark that adds no ideas or information to the exchange, such as "I really liked your comment." "I couldn't have said it better!").
Tone	• Is respectful and professional.		• Shows disrespect or includes inappropriate (crude) language.

Rubric for a Fact Sheet on VR Evaluation/Assessment (Assignment 1)

CATEGORY	At or Above Standard	Needs Improvement	Below Standard
Timeliness	Late assignments will lose one grade level		
Mechanics (1 point)	Fact sheet is no longer than one page, double-sided, and contains no grammatical or spelling errors.	Fact sheet is more than one page and contains some grammatical or spelling errors.	Fact sheet contains many grammatical or spelling errors.
Inclusion of evaluation/ assessment (1 point)	A copy of the evaluation/assessment tool is included.	A copy is not included.	A copy is not included.
Quality of Paper Content			
Identification and description of the tool (6 points)	The response(s) includes: • Name of tool (1 point) • Description of tool (2 points) • Purpose of tool, how it is administered, what it evaluates/assesses and how it measures what it intends (3 point) Description and purpose demonstrate a thorough understanding of the tool and its intent.	The fact sheet identifies and describes the tool and its purpose. However, the description and purpose demonstrate only a basic understanding of the use of the tool.	The fact sheet does not accurately identify and articulate the tool and its purpose.
Identification of Procedural Considerations/ Demands (9 points)	The fact sheet identifies at least 3 procedural considerations/demands in use of the tool and includes at least 3 strategies that interpreters can employ to mitigate or manage demands. The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of considerations/demands and includes appropriate strategies.	The fact sheet may not correctly identify some of the procedural considerations/demands or strategies: • Less than 3 demands are identified. • Some important demands are not identified • Some demands are incorrectly identified • Some strategies are not appropriate. • Less than 3 strategies are identified.	The fact sheet does not identify demands or strategies or generally identifies demands incorrectly.

CATEGORY	At or Above Standard	Needs Improvement	Below Standard
Identification of Role Considerations/ Demands **(4 points)**	The fact sheet identifies at least 1 role considerations/demands in use of the tool and includes at least 1 strategy that interpreters can employ to mitigate or manage demands. The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of role considerations/demands and includes appropriate strategies.	The fact sheet may not correctly identify some of the role considerations/demands or strategies: • The demand identified is not the most significant demand • The strategy is not appropriate for the identified demand.	The fact sheet does not identify demands or strategies or generally identifies demands incorrectly.
Identification of Linguistic Demands **(9 points)**	The fact sheet identifies at least 3 linguistic considerations/demands in use of the tool and includes at least 3 strategies that interpreters can employ to mitigate or manage demands. The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the linguistic considerations/demands and includes appropriate strategies.	The fact sheet may not correctly identify some of the linguistic considerations/demands or strategies: • Less than 3 demands are identified. • Some important demands are not identified • Some demands are incorrectly identified • Some strategies are not appropriate. • Less than 3 strategies are identified.	The fact sheet does not identify demands or strategies or generally identifies demands incorrectly.

Rubric for Case Study (Assignment 2)

CATEGORY	At or Above Standard	Needs Improvement	Below Standard
Timeliness	Late assignments will lose one grade level		
History of Goodwill (1 point)	The history of Goodwill Industries is discussed and shows evidence of online research and/or discussion with a Goodwill administrator.	The history is discussed but includes only minimal independent research.	The history is missing or does not include any independent research.
Description of Goodwill (2 points)	The case study includes a description Goodwill and how it operates at a national and local level and answers all the questions in the assignment requirements. The description shows evidence of online research and/or discussion with a Goodwill administrator. The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of Goodwill.	The description of Goodwill is included but the response may be lacking in one of these areas: • some of the questions are not addressed • minimal independent research is included • the response demonstrates only basic understanding of the topic.	The description of Goodwill is included but the response may be lacking in several of these areas: • some of the questions are not addressed • minimal or no independent research is included • the response demonstrates significant gaps in understanding of the topic.
Description of Services to VR (5 points)	The case study includes a description the services Goodwill provides to VR and answers all the questions in the assignment requirements. The description shows evidence of online research and/or discussion with a Goodwill administrator. The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of Goodwill.	The description of services is discussed but the response may be lacking in one of these areas: • some of the questions are not addressed • minimal independent research is included • the response demonstrates only basic understanding of the topic.	The services in Goodwill system are discussed but the response may be lacking in several of these areas: • some of the questions are not addressed • minimal or no independent research is included • the response demonstrates significant gaps in understanding of the topic.

CATEGORY	At or Above Standard	Needs Improvement	Below Standard
Discussion of Interpreters in the Goodwill system **(7 points)**	The case study includes a description how interpreters fit into the Goodwill system and addresses all the questions in the assignment requirements. The description shows evidence of online research and/or discussion with a Goodwill administrator. The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of Goodwill.	The role of the interpreter in Goodwill system is discussed but the response may be lacking in one of these areas: • some of the questions are not addressed • minimal independent research is included • the response demonstrates only basic understanding of the topic.	The role of the interpreter in Goodwill system is discussed but the response may be lacking in several of these areas: • some of the questions are not addressed • minimal or no independent research is included • the response demonstrates significant gaps in understanding of the topic.

Unit 1 – Historic Overview of VR

Introduction

This unit introduces you to the inception of VR services, how those services have evolved into today's vocational Rehabilitation system. Understanding the system from its federal roots will assist interpreters in understanding the complex regulations that guide today's services. Learners will also be exposed to the benefits of the public VR system from the taxpayer's perspective—the return on the investment. In addition, learners will gain an appreciation of how civil rights legislation and access by consumers increases the demand for interpreters.

Objectives

The goal of this unit is to provide you with a working knowledge of the evolution of the Rehabilitation Act and an understanding of the impact of the various social movements on it.

The learner will be able to:

- describe the benefits of the public VR system
- list the titles of the Rehabilitation Act and the entities and services created under each title
- describe how VR services evolved and the impact on interpreter demand

Key Questions

Key questions can help you focus your learning. Think about these questions as you proceed through the unit activities.

1. What was the historical and social context for the beginning of the VR movement?
2. What historical events and social movements shaped the public VR system?
3. When was interpreter training added to VR legislation?
4. How is it that the VR movement specifies the use of interpreters and facilitates services to deaf individuals but other movements (such as Independent Living) do not?
5. Who were the pioneers that shaped VR as it relates to deafness?
6. Why is the context of the development of the VR system important to interpreters?
7. How does understanding the history of the current VR system assist interpreters in conducting their work more effectively?
8. Alternatively, how would lack of knowledge of the VR system have a negative impact on the work of the interpreter?
9. What are the major legislative acts of the 20th Century asserting the rights of persons with disability to access buildings, programs, and services?
10. How do these laws affect the demand for interpreters?

Activity 1.1 – Blackboard Introduction

Check in on Blackboard

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is twofold: to make sure that you can access Module 1 in Blackboard and see all the discussion groups, and to introduce yourself to your peers and the class facilitator.

What to Look For

First, you should have the following discussions available to you in Blackboard. If you do not see these discussions, let your facilitator know right away.

- Homeroom
- Activity 1.1 – Introductions
- Activity 1.5 – On-Line Discussion (2 postings)
- Activity 1.8 – On-Line Discussion (1 posting)
- Activity 2.3 – On-Line Discussion (2 postings)
- Activity 3.3 – On-line Discussion (2 postings)
- Activity 3.6 – On-Line Discussion (2 postings)
- Activity 3.8 – On-Line Discussion (2 postings)
- Activity 4.4 – On-Line Discussion (2 postings)
- Activity 5.5 – On-Line Discussion (1 postings)

There are 9 discussions, with a total of 15 required postings (including Introduction) –

In your introductory posting for Activity 1.1, please answer the following questions:

- Introduce yourself! Who are you? Are you currently working in the field of interpreting? If so, in what capacity?
- Have you ever worked in the VR setting? If so, briefly tell us about it.
- What do you hope to take away from this module?
- What do you think is the greatest challenge to being an interpreter in today's society?

Activity 1.2 – Unit 1 Insights

Read the Insights below

Insights

The focus of this unit is to provide a historic overview of VR. VR is a federal government system, implemented in partnership with state systems who manage a state plan. As a system, VR is grounded in legislative mandate translated into a variety of rules, policies and procedures, implemented by a variety of federal, state and local government professionals. In addition to the internal structures that frame how the VR system works, there are important partnerships with local and state agencies and organizations that work in collaboration to achieve the aims and purposes of the VR system.

Learning to view VR as a system requires that you be a system thinker. System Thinking involves the ability to look at the system being studied holistically as an entity that interacts with the various parts that comprise the system in order to appreciate the dynamically complex nature of the system as a whole. Often as interpreters, our view is limited to an interpreter-centric view that focuses on the immediate nature of an interaction within a system. From this orientation, interpreters are often concerned with how the system will accommodate their inclusion—how the system will adapt to their presence and efforts to make the system accessible.

From a system perspective, the interpreter becomes more system-centric and seeks to appreciate the system as a whole and how their involvement in any one aspect of the system impacts other aspects. From this perspective, the interpreter becomes more attuned to the overarching goals and objectives of the system, the dynamic interplay between the individual parts of the system, and how the work they do enables the system as a whole to be more inclusive and meet its objectives of serving the needs of its consumers/customers. From a system perspective, interpreters give consideration to how they can adapt to the needs of the system, and engage the members of the system in finding common solutions to shared problems.

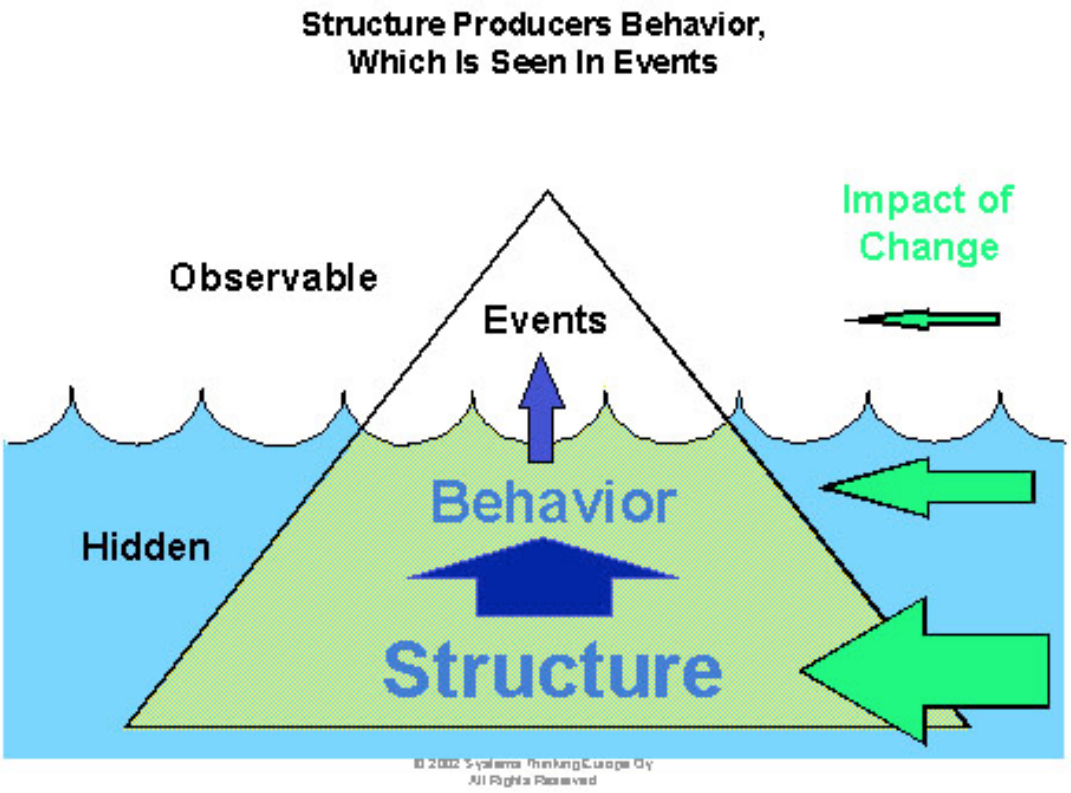
So many of the problems we as interpreters face in our work as interpreters within any system is that the nature of our work is becoming more and more complex, involving multiple individuals with diverse needs. And, we are faced with the reality that past actions of society (problems within the system of education of deaf individuals, gaps which exist due to limited access within society, etc.) have created some the diverse demands we are confronted with as interpreters. It can feel overwhelming. Dealing with some of our challenges is notoriously difficult (examples include deaf individuals with limited language competence or who are foreign born and have no formal language) and the results of our more traditional approaches to problem-solving have often proven insufficient. In fact, sometimes our efforts to problem-solve create more problems… or leave us feeling discouraged about the prospect of ever effectively addressing them. This frustration sometimes causes us to respond to members of the system in a hostile or antagonistic way.

Systems Thinking encourages us to look at the structures or systems in which we work from a new angle. It focuses on how systems change over time, identifies the forces of change and explains how they arise. Systems Thinking fosters our recognition of how

when factors within a system change—the way the system operates, the needs of the people within the system, the nature of interactions that occur, the availability of resources—those of us interfacing with the system must also change.

As a result of the awareness that systems change and needs change, we as interpreters must discover and reveal the underlying, often ineffective rules and practices that drive our behavior, and evaluate how what we can contribute positively to the effectiveness of a system. It leads us to find and implement new ways of addressing and resolving challenges. If you are familiar with the work of Dean and Pollard related to Demand-Control Schema (DC-S), this is an example of the applications of System Thinking to the work of interpreters. In a later module, DC-S will be addressed to explore its application to interpreting in VR settings.

Systems Thinking forces us to break free from old mental models of what interpreting IS or SHOULD BE (rule-based decision-making) and frees us to interface with the system in more genuine and authentic ways (contextual decision-making). By viewing the system we are working within on the structural level we can better appreciate the complex dynamics at play and learn to better navigate them. The graph below helps to illustrate this point.



Typically, as interpreters, we respond to immediate events that are observable. Systems Thinking helps us to interpret the observable events from a deeper, more holistic perspective by examining the structure and behavior of individuals within that structure, so we have a fuller understanding of the meaning and purpose of the events we are observing. With this deeper understanding, we can be more effective in impacting the

changes that are needed to create the greatest degrees of access for deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind individuals.

One of the key benefits of systems thinking is its ability to deal effectively with the demands we confront within systems because it involves utilizing a big-picture orientation. When we can demonstrate to systems individuals that we see issues and demands from their perspective, it more readily fosters collaboration!

So, in this Module, you will be learning about VR as a system and how all of its parts interact to create a system of services to individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing and deafblind.

The start of this journey into Systems Thinking starts here with Unit 1—you will be engaged in reading of foundational content (instructional insight), viewing PPT presentations about the History of Vocational Rehabilitation and Disability Rights Legislation (Activity 1.3, 1.4, and 1.6), and discussing your findings with your online peers (Activity 1.6 and 1.8).

The discussion aspect of each Unit within Module 1 is a critical part of your learning process. It is through discussions that you will begin to apply your understanding of the system to discuss the implications for your work as an interpreter. As you and your peers develop an online learning community, you will begin to appreciate the valuable resource you are to one another. These peer exchanges can provide you with some of the most profound insight into working in the VR setting. So, be sure to participate early and frequently in the discussions.

Activity 1.3 and 1.4

PPT presentations presented by Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program, Region 7

Purpose

The purpose of these presentations is to provide you with background on the history of vocational rehabilitation and an understanding of the components of the Rehabilitation Act.

What to Look For

These presentations have been made available in their original format containing slides and voice over with permission from Region 7. In addition, a version is provided with signing as well if you would prefer that mode of communication.

If you are interested in more information, the Region 7 website contains additional modules that we may be viewing in future Units of this program.

- Watch the Activity 1.3 presentation on *The History of Vocational Rehabilitation*.
- Then proceed to the Activity 1.4 presentation on *The Rehabilitation Act*.

If you are interested, here is a summary of legislation on the web:

http://www.in.gov/fssa/files/History_and_Regulations.pdf

Activity 1.5 – Online Discussion

Online Discussions (See discussions 1.5a and 1.5b in the discussion board)

Purpose

You have completed activities 1.1 thru 1.4 and will now select two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed as you answer two (2) of the following questions and engage in discussion with your peers.

NOTE: *Although you are only required to post one substantive, original response to two of the questions below, you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1. Your learning experience and that of the group will be greatly enhanced by engaging in frequent, active discussions.*

What to Look For

Reply to two of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Please post a response to ONE of these questions regarding systems thinking and VR:

1. Why might interpreters struggle to become System Thinkers, letting go of the more interpreter-centric view of their work? What historical factors impact our view of ourselves as interpreters?
2. How might the view interpreters' hold of themselves and their role differ from the view held by others—both deaf and hearing? What is the source of these differences in perspective?
3. Discuss an interpreter related experience where the interpreter-centric view of the interpreter's work created more problems than it solved. What was the outcome? How might systems thinking resulted in a different outcome?
4. Discuss two or three critical socio-political factors that impacted the creation of Vocational Rehabilitation. Do these factors exist today and if so, in what ways do they continue to impact the needs of individuals served by VR?
5. What is the primary purpose of VR as a system and what are some of the types of services VR historically pays for and provides?
6. What made VR such a popular system? What made it a Washington success story? Identify similar types of Washington success stories of modern society.
7. What factors impacted the need for VR to streamline the populations served and what was the consequence? What is the current status of the system?

8. Summarize the Disability Movement of the 1960's and 70's and some of the legislation that grew out of this movement. How specifically did this movement impact access for deaf individuals?
9. Describe your own observations about VR as a system and relate your observations to socio-political events that make up the History of VR.
10. Describe a VR success story drawn from your own experience and/or the experience of someone served by VR or working within VR. Describe the factors that contributed to the individual being served, the goal the individual sought to achieve, and the outcome. What about this success story represents the best of what the VR system can offer?

And, post a response to ONE of the following questions about the history of VR and legislation:

11. Describe the historical progression of federal legislation with regard to equal access to structures, programs, and services for persons with disabilities.
12. Describe the four key pieces of legislation and the rights they afford.
13. There was some confusion about the above question – ie which 4 pieces. Should we take out the "the" or rephrase to say:
14. Describe four pieces of legislation that you felt impacted vocational rehabilitation and disability rights and explain why they were important.
15. Describe the effects of federal legislation on the lives and opportunities of persons with disabilities, including persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind.
16. Explain the impact disability rights legislation has on the need for a larger and more highly educated interpreting force and the resulting impact on interpreter education and interpreter certification and testing.
17. State the federal definition of "qualified interpreter" under the ADA. How does this definition fit with your experience as a practitioner? Is the ADA definition sufficient? Why or why not?
18. What is the function of the initial part of the Rehab Act—the preamble? What are the essential elements and how does it impact the nature and focus of VR as a system?
19. What is a citizen's advisory group and what purpose does it serve? How might such a group be used to promote the interest of the deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind individuals?
20. What is NIDRR, what is its purpose and how was it formed? What types of funding has NIDRR provided to further the work of sign language interpreters?
21. What are the two of the approaches defined in title 6 designed to promote employment of individuals with disabilities? What experience have you had with either of these approaches and what observations can you share?

Activity 1.6 PowerPoint Presentation

View the PPT Presentation on *Civil Rights Legislation and the Effect on Interpreter Demand.*

Optional resource: This is an interesting summary of the history of disability rights from the Arkansas Disability Rights Center

http://www.drckansas.org/disability-awareness-project/HistoryofDisabilityRightsinKSandUS.pdf

Purpose

The focus of this activity is to provide insight into civil rights legislation and its impact on the demand and supply of signed language interpreters. In order to fully understand the work of interpreters in VR settings, learners need to understand federal civil rights legislation on structural and program accessibility for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind.

Insights

Major legislation providing persons with disabilities access to structures, programs and services can be traced to the 1960s with the Rehabilitation Act of 1965. For the first time, VR case money could be used to hire interpreters.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 required all programs and agencies rec1/26/2012eiving federal funds to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Following close, in 1974, P.L. 94-142 required that all “handicapped children” be educated to the greatest extent possible with their non-disabled peers in the “least restrictive environment.”

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law in 1990, expanding the requirements of Section 504 to most entities regardless of federal funding. The ADA also requires that transportation and telecommunication be accessible leading to TTY relay services and captioning. Under ADA the definition of “qualified interpreter” is "an interpreter who is able to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary."

Interpreters need to understand the intent of the following key legislative Acts as the basis for expanded accessibility and increased demand for skilled interpreters as well as VR’s role in advocating for these initiatives.

- The Rehabilitation Act of 1965
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- P.L. 94-142, “The Education of All Handicapped Children’s Act” currently authorized as I.D.E.A. “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act”
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The following insights are drawn from *Strategies for Teaching Universal Design*, Chapter 2, Adaptive Environments Center and MIG Communications, 1995. The emphasis of Chapter 2 is more on architectural barriers to accessibility by individuals with disability, which is not addressed in this Unit. Instead, the broader concepts relating to disability legislation and disability rights are represented. At the end of the insights, the implication of this information for interpreting is discussed.

Addressing the Needs of Americans with Disabilities

Disability has been made visible in American life primarily as an outcome of military engagement, and therefore, was managed by the federal government in the War Department and later at the Veterans Administration. Civilians with disabilities were largely invisible and unaccounted for by the government until the latter half of the twentieth century when the social and physical isolation of people with physical and mental disability became the focus of civil rights legislation.

Legislative Trends

Following each of the major wars, the U.S. Congress responded to needs of returning veterans with rehabilitation legislation in the form of the Smith-Fess Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Enacted after World War 1, it was amended in 1943, 1954, and 1965, after World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War respectively, to reflect changes in how people with disabilities were perceived and the availability of new treatment and rehabilitation protocols. In World War I, only about 2 percent of veterans with spinal-cord injuries survived more than a year, but three decades later during World War II, the discovery of antibiotics and more sophisticated medical interventions brought the survival rate up to 85 percent.

Although the purpose of rehabilitation legislation was to compensate veterans, the Smith-Fess Vocational Rehabilitation Act and each of its amendments brought additional recognition and benefits for civilians as well. In 1943, people with mental retardation were included in the legislation, making vocational training available to them for the first time. The polio epidemics of the early 1950's also brought new attention to the needs of civilians. In 1954, rehabilitation was moved from the Veterans Administration into the new federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare and funds were allocated for research and demonstration grants.

Changing Views on Disability

In spite of significant changes providing people with disabilities greater independence and opportunities for greater participation in American life—federal legislation, medical advances, and developments in assistive technology—changes in public attitudes have followed slowly and primarily in response to the educational efforts that have accompanied new laws. One of the critical factors to real change was that the definition of disability shifted from medical and economic perspectives, which view disabilities from the standpoint of functional and vocational limitations, to a socio-political perspective that focuses rather on the disabling qualities of the environment that limit the possible interactions of people with disabilities.

In this shift, people with disabilities merged as a "minority group", oppressed not by their disabilities but by circumstances that can be changed through legislation and political action. A principal dimension of oppression of a minatory group is the assumption of biological inferiority by the majority. While other minority groups have managed to disprove this assumption, the visible, physical differences of people with disabilities seems to evoke fearful reactions that perpetuate the notion of subordinate status.

The Disability Rights Movement

The disability rights movement, both in a formal legal sense and in a moral sense, has its roots in the civil rights movement of the 1960's. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, focused in its intent to eliminate racial discrimination, set the stage for a number of minority groups to broaden its coverage and use its mandate to demand equality. The disability rights movement began to be a force and have its agendas recognized in legislation during the 1970's,starting with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The power of that Rehabilitation Act comes from the fact that its language, especially Section 504, echoes Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Section 504 was the first statutory definition of discrimination towards people with disabilities. Although it did not have the scope of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and only outlawed discrimination by those entities that received federal funds, it was a crucial factor in shifting disability issues from the realm of social services and therapeutic practice to a political and civil rights context. The Act survived two presidential vetoes, suggesting that Congress finally understood the social significance of issues facing individuals with disabilities. The Act laid important groundwork for change but did not address implementation; it took four more years for the regulations enforcing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to be issued in 1978.

Program Accessibility, Mainstreaming and Independent Living

Three important new concepts emerged during the 1970's—program accessibility, mainstreaming, and independent living. While none of them directly addressed the technical issues of accessibility, each had implications for the accommodation of people with disabilities. Programs serving society began to explore program accessibility in new ways—including language and architectural barriers. Programs sought ways to involve individuals with disabilities in ways that had been unexplored—such as providing interpreting services for a wide range of program activities.

In 1975, Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, mandating free, appropriate and accessible public education for children with disabilities. This legislation introduced the concept of mainstreaming, ensuring children with disabilities an education in the least restrictive environment—when possible, the same environment as children without disabilities.

In 1978, federal funding for independent living services became available for the first time. The independent-living concept, first talked about in rehabilitation circles in the 1950's and 1960's as a full menu of services provided to people with disabilities, was redefined by the disability movement as a self-help empowerment movement to liberate people with disabilities from the traditional concept of dependency, especially in their choice of living environments.

Continuing Shifts and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The 1980's were a frightening period for people with disabilities because the prevailing political notion was that the best government was no government—a perspective that threatened to undo hard won rights. But, the disability movement was sufficiently strong at that point to preserve the basic structures of disability rights.

In 1988, four things happened in one year. First, HUD finally issued its 504 regulations—11 years after the model regulation had been issued. This was another step in the slow effort to develop standards that would change physical environments to ensure greater accessibility.

Second, the Civil Rights Restoration Act was written to repair damage that had been done to the structure of civil rights enforcement, both by administrative and judicial decisions in the 1980's. The Civil Rights Restoration Act, which was stimulated by a gender-discrimination case, required federal-funding recipients to comply throughout institutions, jot just within the funded unit. Important to disability rights, it was the first time that the disability community was accepted as a full partner in the legislative and the lobbying process for civil rights.

Third, the Fair Housing Amendments Act, the prelude to the Americans with Disabilities Act, expanded the protections of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 to include both people with disabilities and families with children. For the first time, a person with a disability could reasonably expect to be able to seek accessible housing in the open market.

And finally, the first version of the Americans with Disabilities Act went before Congress, crafted by Reagan appointees to the National Council on Disability. At that time, the disability movement was unified in the view that what was needed was a fundamental examination and redefinition of the democratic tradition of equal opportunity and equal rights.

In just two years, Congress passed the ADA and in 1990, President George Bush held the largest signing ceremony in history. The benefits of the ADA extend to a broad range of people by cutting across all sectors of society; virtually every person experiences positive benefits from the law or knows someone who does. There is no other mandate of this cope in the world. The ADA has a unique appeal for all Americans because, unlike other civil rights categories such as race and gender, the individual may become a member of the protected class at any moment in his or her life—whenever life circumstances warrant it.

Increased Demand for Interpreters

As indicated in the 2011 NCIEC Interpreting in VR Settings Literature Review (available as one of the resources and readings for this Unit), national interest in the preparation and hiring of interpreters for federal agencies and others receiving federal funds can be traced to legislation in the early 1970s beginning with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended 29 U.S.C. § 794 (U. S. Department of Justice, 2005). This law required that no otherwise qualified individual could be denied access to, or benefit of, entities receiving federal funds. Vocational Rehabilitation's interest in interpreters precedes federal legislation by a decade. In 1965, Public Law 89-333 known as the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1965 was passed. This historic law authorized for the first time interpreting as a case service for deaf clients of VR (Hanson & Corthell, 1980). By 1978, RSA was funding five-year competitions for regional and national projects to increase the supply of interpreters for persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing (Frishberg, 1986).

Closely following, P.L. 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children's Act, informally called the "mainstreaming law" accelerated the demand for qualified interpreters—a level of demand that the field was not prepared to address. The consequence of this unprecedented demand for interpreters continues to impact the field today. By 1990, The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) required all segments of society serving the public to be accessible again increasing the need for interpreters. The field continues to struggle with setting appropriate standards of competence.

Since the establishment of the first postsecondary interpreter education program the profession of teaching sign and oral interpreting in the U.S. has progressed through several major areas of focus. While not specifically defined by decade, these areas of focus can

generally be identified in ten-year spans. If the 1960's were the birth of the profession, then the 1970s saw the beginning of certification testing and the post-secondary offering of interpreter education. The 1980s addressed interpreter education curriculum while the 1990s shifted to identifying interpreter standards. By 2000 interpreter education focused on evidenced based effective practices and national interpreter education program accreditation.

Growth of Interpreter Education Programs

Due to a February late-night, pool side meeting in Tucson, Arizona of six individuals (Jerome Schein, Lottie Reikof, Ray Jones, Bill Woodrick, Ron Lafayette, and Robert Lauritsen) attending a Professional Rehabilitation Workers with Deaf Adults (PRWD) conference, the idea of a national effort to train interpreters was born (Stauffer, 2007). After meeting with Jim Buress and Boyce Williams of Rehabilitation Services Administration, the idea was developed as a proposal to RSA. The proposal was eventually funded in 1974 RSA as the National Interpreter Training Consortium (NITC) six postsecondary interpreter programs (Frishburg, 1986).

RSA took a further leap in 1980 when it began funding regional and national interpreter education projects in response to the 1978 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 95-602, [Sec 304(d)(1)] Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments) (Anderson & Stauffer, 1990; Public Law 95-602 95th Congress, 1978). The 1978 Amendments included a call to establish competency standards for post-secondary interpreter education program graduates, and authorized federal funds for interpreter training programs (Anderson & Stauffer, 1990). This funding continues to today with the current five-year cycle funding six projects as the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) from 2010-2015.

Interpreter education programs in public and private postsecondary institutions continued to increase. In a 2008 study of post-secondary interpreter education programs conducted by the National Interpreter Education Center (NIEC) 71 of 91 responding programs offered an associate degrees, 27 of 91 offer a bachelor's degree, and four offered a masters' degree. Some programs offered more than one degree such as an AA/BA or a BS/MS (Cokely & Winston, 2008).

By 2010, the NCIEC AA~BA Partnership Workteam identified approximately 140 postsecondary institutions across the US and Puerto Rico offering interpreter education (Stauffer, Annarino, & Lawrence, 2008). In a survey of these programs, 92 programs responded (66% response rate) with 64 (70%) programs offering an associate degree in interpreter education and 28 (30%) offering a baccalaureate degree in interpreter education.

Beginning in July 2012, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf requires a baccalaureate degree in order to sit for certification—however, it does not have to be in interpreting. This shift in academic requirement will likely continue to impact interpreter education programs and in the coming years there will be further shift from programs that offer two year degrees to four year degrees.

Interpreting In VR Settings - National Needs Assessments

Four recent national needs assessments report on the current status of interpreting needs and practices within vocational rehabilitation—all are available on the NCIEC website at http://www.interpretereducation.org/. These four needs assessments surveyed interpreters working in vocational rehabilitation settings, VR counselors, and state coordinators of the deaf (SCD).

1. NCIEC Vocational Rehabilitation Interpreter Practitioner Interview Findings (Winston, 2010)
2. NCIEC Vocational Rehabilitation Needs Assessment Final Report (Cokely & Winston, 2009).
3. NCIEC Vocational Rehabilitation – Needs Assessment Synthesis Analysis (Winston & Dahms, 2010).
4. Survey of State Staffing Patterns, Issues, CSPD, and Related Outcomes for Consumers who are Deaf, Deaf-blind, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened (Stauffer & Boone, 2006).

Later in this Unit, you will read about these studies further and gain additional insight into the implications of disability rights legislation on the field of interpreting and interpreter education. In the meantime, reflect on your own experiences as a practitioner and how legislative trends have impacted your practice in terms of demand for your services, settings in which you work, and the demographics.

Activity 1.7-1.8 Readings & Discussion

NCIEC VR VR Interpreter Report

Optional: View webinar at
https://ncrtm.org/moodle/mod/page/view.php?id=2577

Discussion Board Posting

Purpose

You have completed 1.6 and 1.7 and will now select one or two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed as you answer one (1) of the following questions and engage in discussion with your peers.

NOTE: *Although you are only required to post one substantive, original response to one of the questions below, you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1. Your learning experience and that of the group will be greatly enhanced by engaging in frequent, active discussions.*

What to Look For

Reply to one of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Required – Choose at least one of the following:

1. Discuss the differences between a medical/economic perspective on people with disabilities and one that is centered in a socio-political view. What factors contributed to such a shift in views within the American society? How has this shift in perspective impacted Deaf people?
2. Discuss the relationship between the disability rights movement and the civil rights movement. What relationship exists between legislation?
3. What three important concepts emerged during the 1970's relating to the disability rights movement? Discuss each in terms of its implication for Deaf people.
4. What law is considered the prelude to the Americans with Disabilities Act and why? How does that law impact Deaf people?
5. What unified view was held within the disability movement that impacted the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act? Why does the ADA have such broad implications for individuals with disabilities? How has it impacted Deaf people?
6. What is the implication of disability legislation on the demand for interpreters? Select a specific law and discuss its implications for interpreter supply and demand and the implications for the field of interpreting and interpreter education.

7. In what way has the federal government responded to the demand for qualified interpreters? How has funding from the federal government impacted interpreter education?
8. In addressing your own experiences as an interpreter, what do you think are the critical competencies an interpreter must possess in order to work in the vocational rehabilitation setting and why?
9. In considering the work of interpreters in VR settings, discuss the combination of credentials needed to be effective as an interpreter in VR settings. For example, what should be the academic, experiential and certification requirements for interpreters in this setting and why?
10. Currently, the RID requires a baccalaureate degree to sit for certification. However, this degree does not have to be in interpreting. Discuss your perspective on this issue addressing the role of academic preparation, the gap that frequently exists between program completion and certification, and your own path to competence as an interpreter.
11. What was the most frequently unmet need identified by VR personnel in the NCIEC Vocational Rehabilitation Needs Assessment Final Report (Cokely & Winston, 2009). How does this fit with your own experience as an interpreter working in VR settings? Provide at least one specific example.
12. What social and educational factors impact the limited or delayed language of deaf individuals being served by VR? What is the implication of language deficits for your work as an interpreter in VR settings? What are the strategies, techniques, and controls you employ to help mitigate the implications? Provide at least one specific example.
13. When and why might a Deaf Interpreter or Certified Deaf Interpreter be used when interpreting in VR settings? What has been your experience in working with DIs in VR settings? What makes the collaboration between Deaf and Hearing interpreters effective? What barriers diminish this collaborative effort?
14. What are some of the issues interpreters face in providing interpreting services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals who have Cochlear Implants? What is the implication of the changing demographics within the deaf population for interpreters in the next one to two decades? What is the specific implication of the changing demographics of the deaf population for your work as an interpreter? Provide specific examples.

Unit 2 – Federal/State Relationship

Introduction

The focus of this unit is to provide the learner with basic knowledge of the federal/state relationship in Vocational Rehabilitation, as mandated by law, and of some of the variations in implementation of regulations from state to state. This unit will answer questions like how the federal/state VR program is administered, what constitutes the federal/state relationship and the implications for individual states, and what are some of the differences between states in the way they implement their VR programs.

Objectives

The learner will be able to:

- Describe in general terms the structure of RSA.
- Discuss differences that may exist in the VR State Plans in individual states.
- Describe the impact of these differences on consumers served.
- Describe the implications of these organizational differences for interpreters working in VR settings.

Key Questions

1. Key questions can help you focus your learning. Think about these questions as you proceed through the unit activities.
2. How is the federal/state VR program administered?
3. What is the federal/state relationship in VR and what are the implications for the states?
4. How is VR organized in your state?
5. What are some of the differences between states in the way they implement their VR programs?
6. Why is there a difference in some states between the agencies that serve the blind and the general VR agencies?
7. What are the implications of these differences for individuals?
8. What happens if a VR client moves from one state to another?
9. What happens if a VR client is attending school out of state?

Activity 2.1 – Unit Insights

Read the Insights below and view the associated PPT posted in the online course

View PPT on *Federal State Relationship*

Insights

Rehabilitation Services Administration Structure

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program is administered by the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education programs and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) and is carried out by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). There are federal regulations that provide the authority for how VR programs are carried out:

34 CFR 361.1

This citation refers to the following.

- The 34 is the title for Education
- The CFR is the acronym for Code of Federal Regulations
- The Part 361.1 refers to the section of the Code covering the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) provides leadership and fiscal resources to assist State and other agencies to provide vocational rehabilitation (VR), independent living (IL) and other services to individuals with disabilities. The RSA is established by Congress as the principal Federal agency authorized to carry out Titles I, III, VI, and VII, as well as section 509 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. In addition, RSA administers programs and activities under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, as amended, the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults Act, and the Assistive Technology Act of 2004. The programs administered by RSA develop and implement comprehensive and coordinated programs of vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, and independent living for individuals with disabilities through services, training, and advocacy, in order to maximize their employment, independence and integration into the community and the competitive labor market. RSA accomplishes its mission by

- ✓ administering formula and discretionary grant programs authorized by Congress;
- ✓ evaluating, monitoring, and reporting on the implementation of Federal policy and programs and the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, independent living, and other related programs for individuals with disabilities;
- ✓ coordinating with other Federal agencies, State agencies, and the private sector including professional organizations, service providers, and organizations of persons with disabilities for the review of program planning, implementation, and monitoring issues.

RSA is under the leadership of a Commissioner who advises the Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services on programs and problems affecting individuals with disabilities.

RSA Funding to States

RSA offers funding to states in two different ways. First, there is a formula grant program that provides allocations of money to states or their subdivisions in accordance with a distribution formula prescribed by law or administrative regulation for activities of a continuing nature not confined to a specific project.

This program provides grants to states to support a wide range of services designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Eligible individuals are those who have a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment, who can benefit from vocational rehabilitation (VR) services for employment, and who require VR services. Priority must be given to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities if a state is unable to serve all eligible individuals.

Funds are distributed to states and territories based on a formula that takes into account population and per capita income to cover the cost of direct services and program administration. Grant funds are administered under an approved state plan by VR agencies designated by each state. The state-matching requirement is 21.3 percent—essentially, making the formula 79% federal funds matched by 21% state funds. If states do not maintain this ration, they will lose (or not be able to take advantage of) federal dollars.

The second source of federal funding is a discretionary grant process. Congress establishes discretionary grant programs through authorizing legislation and appropriations legislation. RSA then usually writes program regulations based on the authorizing legislation, which describe how the programs are to be administered. After these program regulations are published in final form and Congress appropriates funds for the program, RSA can elicit applications and award grants.

Unlike a formula grant, a Discretionary Grant awards funds on the basis of a competitive process. RSA reviews applications in light of the legislative and regulatory requirements established for a program. This review process gives RSA discretion to determine which applications best address the program requirements and are, therefore, most worthy of funding. RSA annually administers discretionary grant programs.

Examples of programs funded through Discretionary Grant Awards include the following.

- Assistive Technology State Grant Technical Assistance
- Centers for Independent Living
- Demonstration and Training
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
- Projects with Industry (PWI)
- Recreation Programs
- Rehabilitation Training
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services for American Indians

In addition to the discretionary grant programs identified above, RSA also administers other programs that provide services to individuals with disabilities as well as technical

assistance and evaluation activities. For example, VR funds the Helen Keller National Center.

Individual State Plans

Although each state adheres to the federal laws and regulations, each state has flexibility in determining its policy, procedures and business practices. This information is reported in a state plan.

> *Each year, all states prepare a State Plan that describes how the state will provide rehabilitation services that comply with the federal Rehabilitation Act. State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies are required to submit a State Plan describing the manner in which they administer the VR and Supported Employment programs in their states. All required updates and amendments constituting the State Plans and supplement must be submitted to RSA. Once RSA completes its review and approval of the State Plans, they notify agencies that the plans are approved—typically in October of each year.*

The State Plan has two parts. *The Preprint* lists the basic legal requirements about how states should operate VR programs. *The Attachments* give more details about how each state carries out the law.

The state plan defines the programs and services that help people with physical and mental disabilities go to work, become self-sufficient and stay independent in their homes and community. Each state plan is articulated around a mission statement and a set of guiding principles.

Differences in Each State

State plans can differ in the way they implement their VR programs. For example, the division of government housing the VR program varies from state to state (e.g., Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services). Some states are in what is referred to as an Order of Selection (see glossary of terms), and thus only serve the most severely impaired. Some states have financial needs tests for some services. Some states have limits on what they will pay for hearing aids or cochlear implants. A few states have hard-of-hearing specialists and deafness specialists (Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCDs) and State Coordinators for the Deaf (SCDs). Many states have moved away from a counselor having a deaf caseload and have moved to generalist counselors who serve all disabilities. These are just some of the ways in which state plans might differ.

Another possible difference is in the way that states may have combined or separate agencies for the blind and general populations. For example in Oregon, individuals who are deaf are served by the general agency, but individuals who are Deaf-Blind are served by the Commission for the Blind. This sometimes results in the need for duplication of personnel with specialized competence in working with specialized populations.

In some states, an exception must be granted to allow scholars to attend training programs outside their state. This is especially true for students wanting to attend Gallaudet or needing specialty programs for individuals who are deaf and lower

functioning. In some states, when the individual chooses to attend college out of state, the VR agency will only pay up to the in-state tuition rate.

Determining What Happens in Your State

Later in this unit, you will research the state plan for your state. In doing so, give attention to where the agency is placed within the state government system, what types of services are provided by the state, how eligibility is determined, what happens if someone moves from one state to another, what happens if a VR client is attending or wants to attend school out of state, and how your state might address certain aspects differently from other states. These are just some of the ways in which state plans may differ.

Understanding the differences in each state system will help you as an interpreter to better appreciate VR as a system, and make informed decisions around the interpreting process, especially at higher levels of administration when you may be working with Deaf professionals. In such capacities, the interpreter must have a basic understanding of the federal/state relationship and its implications for the state VR plan, budget and decision-making related to the budget.

Activity 2.2 & 2.3 Web Research and Discussion

- **Your State VR website**
- **Your State VR Plan**

Respond to Discussion Questions

Purpose

You have read the instructional insights for Unit 2 and now will do an Internet search (or some other form of research) to locate a copy of the state plan for the VR agency in your state. This activity will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from your state's plan with your peers in the discussion board, and to generate some dialogue about your state in relationship to what happens in other states. Several activities in future units require you to look back at your State Plan, so bookmark the site so there is an easy way for you to return to it.

What to Look For

As you search for your state plan, here are some tips. Using your favorite search engine—such as Google—enter the key phrase VR state plan proceeded with your state name. For example, here are some links to a few state plans.

NY State

http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/adult_vocational_rehabilitation_services/state_plan/about.htm

State of Georgia

http://www.vocrehabga.org/statepln.html

Oregon State

http://cms.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/pages/index.aspx

State of Florida

http://www.rehabworks.org/

As you review your state plan, look for these particular elements to discuss in Activity 2.3. NOTE: You may not find all of the answers to these questions in your state plan and therefore, will have to do some further research. This may include making contact with your VR agency and interviewing someone with administrative experience who can help you fill in the gaps.

You are not limited to discussing the following elements, so feel free to explore beyond these questions for other topics of interest to you as an interpreter.

Discussion Questions

Reply to two of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Required – Choose at least two of the following:

1. Under what state entity are VR services delivered in your state? Where is the entity located within state government?
2. What is the articulated mission and the essential goals and objectives identified in the state plan?
3. What types of services are provided by your state VR agency? Select two services described and provide an example of how such services are implemented.
4. How is eligibility for services determined? Is there an order of selection?
5. What type of community organizations does your state VR have cooperative agreements with and for what purpose?
6. Does the state have a Rehabilitation Council? What is the role of this council and who participates in this council?
7. Does the VR agency provide technical assistance? If so, what type of assistance is provided and to what type of entities?
8. How is transition planning incorporated into the plan? How does a transition plan relate to a school-aged student's Individual Education Plan?
9. What are some of the roles and responsibilities of partner agencies working with your state VR system? Select two and discuss, providing specific examples of how they might be monitored or implemented.
10. Is supported employment addressed? How is it defined and what are some of the policies or practices surrounding it within the state plan?
11. What provisions exist in the plan for recruiting, training and sustaining qualified personnel to work with VR clients? Are interpreters discussed as part of the qualified personnel? Should they be? Why or why not?
12. What is the role of needs assessments as discussed in the plan? How does data collected from needs assessment get used in setting the state plan?
13. What are some of the strategies used for evaluating the effectiveness of the state plan?
14. What type of demographic information is provided in your state plan? What new insight did you gain from reviewing this information? How might it impact your work as an interpreter in your state VR agency?
15. What is the process by which the general public is able to provide input into the state plan? How might feedback from interpreters impact a state plan?
16. What are your primary observations about the state plan for your state's VR agency? What new insight did you gain by reviewing the state plan? How might this new insight impact your work as an interpreter and/or enhance your understanding of VR as a system?

Activity 2.4 Go To Meeting Event

Optional GoToMeeting Event

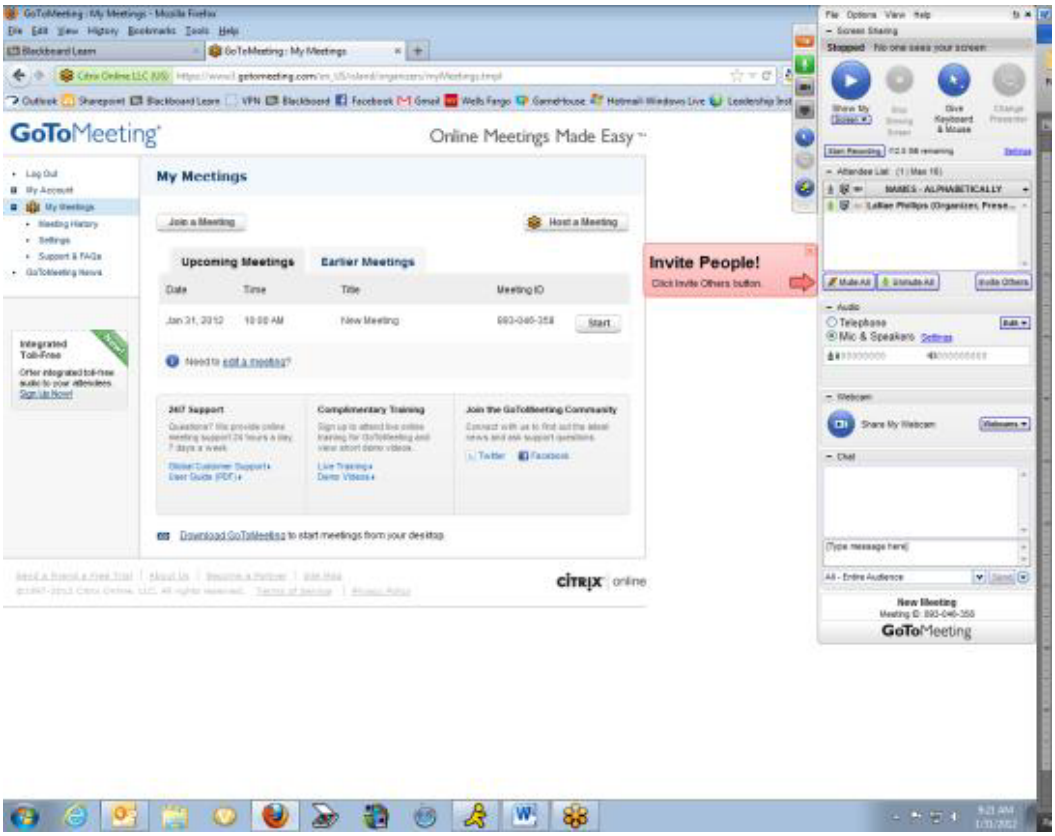
Purpose

GoToMeeting is a video conferencing tool that allows the course facilitator to meet with small groups of students (up to a total of six) to review course content and progress. It is ideal as a tool for small group review and discussion. The purpose of the GoToMeeting is to allow for a more individualized discussion of questions regarding the course material. The facilitator will offer a schedule of 3 or 4 times that students can sign up for during the period assigned in the Roadmap, with call-in instructions. Students can sign up for one or more of the times if they find value in this additional way of connecting to the course facilitator and some of the students in the course. Participation is optional.

What to Look For

In preparation for attending one of the GoToMeeting events, be sure you have access to a computer with a working webcam. Once you sign up for a time, the facilitator will send you an "invitation" to join GoToMeeting at the defined time. You will want to log into the GoToMeeting site a few minutes prior to the start time in order to download the software.

Allow it to load, then you will see this Control Panel:



Click the webcam icon to share your video, it will turn green. Up to six participants will be able to join simultaneously and view one another. It works well with both ASL and spoken English.

The facilitator will have the capacity to share her desktop, to show a PPT or a document or a video. She can also share this capacity with anyone else on the call. This will allow for the opportunity to talk about and see any number of resources in "real time". This system has the typical webinar options and can be used for a wide range of activities.

In preparing to participate, consider what topics you would like to explore further or questions you have that can be addressed. As well, the facilitator will offer possible topics for discussion.

Activity 2.5 Quiz

Unit 1 and 2 Quiz

Purpose

The quiz will give you a chance to review and check your learning from Units 1 and 2.

You can access the Quiz in the Assignments area in Blackboard.

Unit 3 – VR Process and Personnel

Introduction

In the Unit 1 Insights, the concept of System Thinking and regarding VR as a system was introduced. If you think of VR as a system, it has many component parts – the legislative foundation, the Federal-State Relationship, the State Plan, the Client Base, the VR process, and VR personnel. This unit focuses on VR processes and personnel as a part of the whole VR system. The purpose of this unit is to acquaint the learner with processes and structures that frame the VR counselor's approach, strategies and decision-making, including the assessments used to determine eligibility. Such knowledge will help provide a context from which interpreting decisions can be made, enhance the learner's understanding of related terminology, and increase the interpreter's comfort level within this specialized setting.

Objectives

The learner will be able to:

- Describe the general process by which an individual qualifies for and receives VR services.
- Describe key personnel involved in providing VR services.
- Describe the VR client process, including evaluation, testing, comprehensive assessment, intake, eligibility/presumed eligibility, orientation, rights and responsibilities, etc.
- Describe the implications of these processes for interpreters working in VR settings.
- Define and use common terminology used within the VR system.
- Describe the most common assessment tools used by VR counselors and/or vocational evaluators and the challenges they may present for interpretation.

Key Questions

Key questions can help you focus your learning. Think about these questions as you proceed through the unit activities.

1. What are the Status Codes as defined by the federal VR system (RSA)?
2. What are the key eligibility requirements that apply to all states?
3. What type of medical assessment is required as part of eligibility determination?
4. What is the Order of Selection and when is it applied or utilized?
5. What is the role of the VR counselor?
6. What is the role of a Vocational Evaluator?
7. What are the key areas of evaluation within the VR process?
8. What are some psychological evaluations appropriate for use with deaf, hard of hearing and/or deafblind individuals?
9. What do functional assessments measure?
10. Why is it important for the interpreter to know this information?
11. When (or how) might the interpreter apply this information?

Activity 3.1 & 3.2 – Unit Insights & PPTs

Read the Insights below and view the associated PPT posted in the online course

- The VR Process (the insights below)
- VR Services and Interpreter Roles
- From Intake to Rehab

Purpose

The first PowerPoint presentation provides an overview of the major milestones in the VR process, while the second two presentations, prepared by the staff of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, focus on the interpreter role and VR personnel.

Unit Insights

In order to make informed decisions around the interpreting process, the interpreter must have a working knowledge of the VR process, the system that underpins the workings of the VR endeavor. Interpreters need to have a strong understanding of the prescribed nature of the VR system, and the common terminology used by its personnel. In this unit, the VR process of service delivery will be examined in order to provide interpreters with the foundation necessary to make well-informed decisions regarding the interpreting process.

Rehabilitation has been defined as "a holistic and integrated program of medical, physical, psycho social, and vocational interventions that empower a person with a disability to achieve a personally fulfilling, socially meaningful, and functionally effective interaction with the world" (Banja, 1990, p. 615). Rehabilitation is thus related to the concepts of *disability* and *impediment to employment*. Here are a couple of definitions that inform these insights.

Definitions:

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment and which is not temporary.

Substantial impediment to employment: A physical or mental impairment which hinders an individual from preparing for, entering into, engaging in, or retaining employment consistent with the individual's abilities or capabilities. A substantial impediment to employment may be established if the impairment significantly limits one or more functional capacities of the individual in terms of an employment outcome. Rehabilitation professional determines if a substantial impediment to employment exists.

Who is Eligible for VR Services?

To be eligible for VR services, an individual must –

1. Have a physical or mental impairment, which is a substantial barrier to Employment, and
2. Require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure,Retain, or regain employment, and
3. Be able to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome.

If an individual is receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), VR will presume that she or he is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

VR cannot discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, age, religion or gender in the acceptance for or provision of services, employment or treatment in its educational and other programs and activities.

Within the context of rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation is defined as a comprehensive sequence of services, mutually planned by the participant and rehabilitation counselor; to maximize employability, independence, integration, and participation of people with disabilities in the workplace and the community.

What is Order of Selection?

State VR agencies, which rely on a combination of federal and state funding to carry out their mandates, face a challenge as they attempt to meet the needs of this potentially increasing population of individuals with disabilities who seek their services. With the federal government and nearly all state governments facing fiscal challenges, VR agencies may not be able to look to budgetary increases to meet these service demands. Instead, they must look to either savings within their program structures or move to limit the number of individuals they serve each year. The latter can only be done if the state VR agency moves to what is known as an Order of Selection, creating a federally-sanctioned waiting list of sorts by which individuals with the most severe disabilities get served first.

When a state chooses to employ an Order of Selection, they will serve those with the most significant disability and place other qualified applicants on a waiting list to be served as funds and resources become available.

Philosophical Tenants

The basic philosophical tenants of rehabilitation include recognition of the impact of disability on individuals, declarations concerning individual's rights, and the suggestion of strategies to achieve the goals of rehabilitation (Maki & Riggar, 1985). Rehabilitation philosophy has remained relatively stable over time, although many changes have occurred in circumstances surrounding rehabilitation service delivery. A study of rehabilitation philosophy over the years reveals a long history of belief in, and advocacy for, the rights of people with disabilities. These rights are broadly stated in the following basic principles of rehab philosophy—drawn from the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its amendments.

Rights of Individuals with Disabilities

- ✓ Individuals with disabilities are generally presumed to be capable of engaging in gainful employment and the provision of individualized rehabilitation services improves their ability to become gainfully employed.
- ✓ Individuals with disabilities must be provided the opportunities to obtain gainful employment in integrated settings.
- ✓ Individuals with disabilities must be active participants in their own rehabilitation programs, including making meaningful and informed choices about the selection of their vocational goals and objectives, the vocational rehabilitation services they receive, and the providers of those services.
- ✓ Families and natural supports can play an important role in the success of a vocational rehabilitation program, if the individual with a disability requests, desires, or needs such supports.
- ✓ Qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, or staff supervised by qualified personnel, facilitate the accomplishment of the employment goals and objectives of an individual.
- ✓ Individuals with disabilities and their advocates are full partners in the vocational rehabilitation program.
- ✓ Accountability measures must facilitate and not impede the accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the program, including providing vocational rehabilitation services to, among others, individuals with the most severe disabilities.
- ✓ The assets of people with disabilities should be emphasized, supported, and developed.
- ✓ Comprehensive treatment involves the "whole person," because life-areas are interdependent.
- ✓ Every person should assume as much initiative and participation as possible in the rehabilitation plan and its execution.
- ✓ The rehabilitation process is complex and must be subject to constant reexamination for each individual and for the program as a whole.

How do these rights impact the work of interpreters? How are these rights manifested in the work of interpreters? A rights-based approach to ethical decision-making has been discussed by Cokely (2000), who states that the choices made by interpreters, "can uphold or deny the dignity of other people, can advocate or violate the rights of other people, and can affirm or disavow the humanity of other people." In the 2000 RID Journal of Interpretation (pp. 25-57), Cokely offers a case for revisiting the structure of the current RID Code of Professional Conduct in favor of a rights-based approach to ethical decision-making. If you have not previously read this article, it is a valuable and insightful read and can further deepen your appreciation of the values and inherent obligation that stem from approaching our work on the basis of human rights entitled to those we serve.

Informed Choice

The 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act provide that individuals with disabilities must be active participants in their own rehabilitation programs, the goal of which is to achieve an employment outcome. Active participation includes making meaningful and informed choices about the selection of their vocational goals and objectives and the vocational rehabilitation services needed to achieve the goal. The goal of the Vocational Rehabilitation program is to assist persons with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome.

Informed choice is the process that provides an individual the opportunity to be an active participant in his/her rehabilitation program, to make meaningful and informed choices in all phases of the vocational rehabilitation process, including the selection of his/her vocational goal and the services needed to become successfully employed.

The Act gives participants the option to develop their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) independently, without direct assistance from the counselor. The counselor, consistent with informed choice, should inform participants of this option. Whether or not the counselor is directly involved in the development of the IPE, prior to approval, the counselor is responsible for ensuring that the IPE is appropriate, based on the comprehensive assessment, and can lead to a successful employment outcome.

Informed choice is the foundation for the partnership between the participant and the counselor in which they:

- Jointly participate in the comprehensive assessment;
- Develop the IPE; agree upon vocational objectives, services and service providers; and
- Determine the roles and responsibilities of the participant and the counselor.

The process of involving a participant in his/her rehabilitation program begins with an attitude of respect for persons with disabilities and recognition of their right to make appropriate choices regarding their own lives. All participants, regardless of the level of disability, education, functioning, skills and abilities, have the right to develop and maximize their decision-making skills.

Rehabilitation process major milestones and decision points:

The rehabilitation process can have many twists and turns. Moving from one step of the process to the next requires information, actions and/or decisions by the rehabilitation professional and the client or participant. The major milestones and decision points, in the rehabilitation process are:

Step 1: Applying for VR services

Any person with a disability may apply for VR services. To contact the office nearest to them, an applicant should consult the state government pages in the local telephone book. Tribal members may also apply with their tribal VR program.

VR staff will arrange for the individual to make an application and meet with a vocational rehabilitation counselor so that eligibility can be determined. The application process can be more efficient if the applicant has current medical, psychological and educational records or other information about their disability with them at the time of the appointment.

During the first interview, the counselor will explain the rehabilitation process and gather information about the applicant. An interesting fact is that in some states an individual may also register to vote or change their voter registration information when applying for or receiving services from a VR office.

Step 2: Evaluating An Client's Disability

VR must evaluate the individual's disability to find out if they are eligible. The applicant may be asked to help get medical or other records. If additional tests are needed, VR will pay for the tests required to determine eligibility. The purposes of the evaluation are to gather diagnostic information and explore the applicant's background, abilities, and disability-related barriers to employment and rehabilitation needs.

The assessment to determine eligibility for services is based primarily on a review and assessment of existing, current information. The assessment must be conducted in the most integrated setting possible, consistent with the individual's needs and informed choice. Sources of such information for the assessment can include:

1. Existing medical information provided by doctors, hospitals, clinics and referral sources, including the Confidential Health Assessment (Parts I), eye examinations and specialty medical examinations; and,
2. Counselor observations, education records, information provided by the individual or the individual's family, information used by the Social Security Administration, education officials and determinations made by officials of other agencies.

When requesting medical information, the counselor should ask the medical provider to address specific issues that may affect the individual's functional ability to work or participate in vocational rehabilitation services.

To the extent that existing information does not describe the individual's current functioning, or is unavailable or insufficient to make an eligibility determination, an assessment of additional information resulting from the provision of VR services can be conducted. This may include the provision of assistive technology devices and services, and worksite assessments to determine the employment barriers faced by the individual and to determine whether an individual is eligible.

Federal policy requires that the assessment to determine eligibility for services include an appraisal of the current general health status of the individual. The Confidential Health Assessment fulfills this requirement. Part I of the Confidential Health Assessment utilizes the consumer's knowledge of his or her health and medical history. In addition, when necessary, a physician can complete Part II.

Completion of Part I (along with evidence of legal blindness) will enable the counselor to make a decision regarding eligibility and guide the counselor in obtaining additional existing medical information. Part II of the Confidential Health Assessment can be obtained during the comprehensive assessment when the counselor is assisting the consumer in developing a goal and determining the nature and scope of services.

Part II of the Confidential Health Assessment is not required unless the counselor decides that it is necessary in order to determine eligibility or the individual's

rehabilitation needs. An existing current general medical examination report or equivalent is an acceptable substitute to Part II of the Confidential Health Assessment.

Step 3: Determining Eligibility

Generally, VR has 60 days from the time of application to determine whether or not an applicant is eligible for services unless the client and counselor agree to a specific extension.

If the applicant is eligible, she or he will be assigned to a priority group based on the significance of her or his disability. When services are restricted during an order of selection, clients in priority groups whose disabilities are less significant barriers to employment may have to wait until funds are available to pay for their services. Those who have completed an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) before an order of selection begins will continue to receive services under the IPE. If there is an order of selection in place at the time of application for services, the VR counselor will explain it.

Even when an applicant is not eligible for VR services or when she or he are placed on a waiting list, VR will provide vocational rehabilitation information and referral assistance to help her or him obtain services from other sources. VR counselors will refer her or him to other federal or state programs that may help with employment needs, including those located at workforce career centers.

Once eligibility is determined, the applicant becomes a client of VR and a plan for employment will be developed.

Step 4: Planning Services

If an individual is eligible, the VR counselor will provide information about choices for developing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This is a plan of VR services that VR will follow to help the individual get or keep suitable employment in an appropriate career. The IPE is based on the clients strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice, and must be approved by VR according to Rehabilitation Act requirements.

A client may choose to write the plan her or himself, work with a VR counselor or use the assistance of someone else that is willing to help. The plan must be in writing. If a client decides to write the IPE her or himself, a VR counselor will explain what items should be included and what assistance is available. The plan must be completed within 90 days of the determination of eligibility unless the client and VR counselor agree to a specific extension.

Information will be provided to the client about types and costs of services, length of time services are expected to last, who is available to provide services and qualifications of service providers.

As part of the planning process, the client will have the opportunity, with the help of a VR counselor, to choose an appropriate employment goal, the VR services to be provided under the plan, the businesses or companies that will provide the services and the methods for providing those services. The client may be required to participate in

assessment activities to help gather the information needed to identify her or his interests, capabilities, strengths and rehabilitation needs.

The VR counselor will do a financial status determination based on the client's income and financial resources before any services are provided. The purpose is to find out if she or he will need to share the cost of some services. However, some services are available to all eligible individuals without charges — for example, evaluations or other diagnostic assessments used to determine eligibility and rehabilitation needs; vocational counseling and guidance; information and referral to other sources; job search; on-the-job training and placement. The VR counselor can provide a list of other services available at no charge.

After the client and VR counselor sign the IPE, a copy is provided to the client. The plan will be provided in large print, Braille, electronic file, CD, or audiotape upon request. To the maximum extent possible, the plan will be provided in the client's native language or method of communication, or that of her or his family member or other person representing her or him.

At least once each year, the client and her or his VR counselor will review the financial status and the IPE to be sure it is still the best plan. If needs change while the client is served by vocational rehabilitation, the plan may need to be changed. The client may ask for a review of plan at any time.

The IPE is like a road map of VR services to help the client prepare for, obtain, keep or return to suitable employment in a career based on her or his interests, strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities and capabilities. Her or his participation in planning and carrying out the VR program is critical to her or his success.

Step 5: Receiving VR services

Many different services are available to help VR clients reach their employment goals. VR services will probably be different from those received by other clients because the services outlined in IPEs are based on individual needs and goals.

- Medical and psychological assessments are used to determine eligibility and review clients' backgrounds, abilities, and disability-related barriers to employment and rehabilitation needs.
- Throughout the rehabilitation process, vocational evaluation, counseling and career planning guidance are provided to clients by VR.
- Information and referral help individuals get appropriate services from other agencies
- Employment services, including job search, placement and follow-up services, help clients obtain and keep suitable employment in their chosen careers.
- Assistive Technology is any item, piece of equipment or product system used to maintain or improve the ability of people with disabilities to prepare for employment and function more effectively in the workplace, or any service that assists individuals in selecting, obtaining or using an assistive technology device.

- Training includes vocational, post-secondary, on-the-job, personal and vocational adjustment training, job search skills development and job coaching.
- Diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental disabilities may be provided to enhance clients' employment opportunities when services are not available through health insurance or other benefits.
- Maintenance helps pay for expenses, beyond a person's normal living expenses, that are necessary to enable the person to participate in vocational rehabilitation assessments or services.
- Transportation, including training in the use of public transportation, is provided in connection with other services needed to reach employment goals.
- Instructional services, such as rehabilitation teaching and orientation and mobility services, assist individuals who are blind.
- Self-employment programs help individuals who want to work for themselves or operate their own businesses.
- Personal assistance services are intended to help an individual with a disability perform daily living activities on or off the job. These services can be provided when necessary to enable a person to participate in vocational rehabilitation services and achieve an employment outcome.
- Transition School-to-Work services help high school students with disabilities prepare for and reach employment and other post-school goals.
- Supported employment assists individuals with significant physical, emotional, mental or multiple disabilities with employment in the community.
- Post-employment services help clients get, keep or move ahead in their jobs.
- Specialized programs assist clients who are blind, Deaf, hard of hearing, Deaf-blind and individuals with speech impairments, significant disabilities and those who require independent living services.

Step 6: Getting a job

A VR counselor will assist the client in finding a job. VR also has employment specialists who work with counselors and potential employers to match qualified clients with suitable employment. Counselors should be informed when a client starts working at a new job so that they can assist with any problems. Typically, after a client has been successfully working for 90 days, their case will be closed.

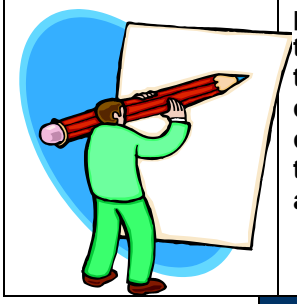
Step 7: Using post-employment services

If a client's situation changes—perhaps they lose or may have trouble keeping a job—they may go back to VR for more help after their case is closed. They may be eligible for post-employment services to help keep their job, get their job back, move ahead on their job or move to a better job. If a client needs a lot of assistance, she or he may be asked to reapply for services.

Individuals may leave or exit the program at anytime during the rehabilitation process. The rehabilitation professional's job is to navigate individuals through this process in an efficient and effective manner with the participant's interests at the forefront.

The following flowchart provides a brief synopsis of the major milestones in the process.

1. Application

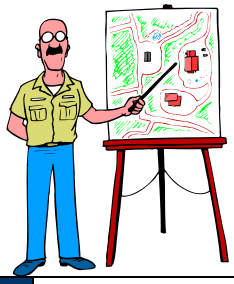


General information about the VR program is provided to potential clients. If they are interested in determining if they qualify for services, they complete an application.

2. Eligibility

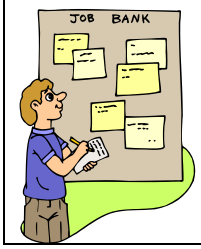
Information is gathered and processed to determine eligibility. A person is eligible if: ►they have a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment; AND ►they require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, obtain or retain employment.

3. Plan



Once eligibility is determined the participant and the counselor develop a written rehabilitation plan (IEP). The plan includes: the vocational goal and objective, counseling and guidance activities, specific services to be provided, benchmarks to measure progress, rights/responsibilities.

4. Employment



The counselor works with the participant to find suitable employment.

5. Successful Closure

A participant is considered successfully rehabilitated when they have been working at least 90 days, and both the employer and the employee are satisfied.

Codes

An important part of the VR lingo/terminology is the use of reference codes that relate to specific aspects of the VR process and services provided. A comprehensive list of these codes can be found at the following website. You are encouraged to review these codes and to bookmark the website for later reference, as these codes will be used frequently when interpreting within the VR setting—particularly when working with VR professionals in staff meetings, working with VR counselors and clients, and during other administrative processes.

http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dsb/VR/man/Case%20Status%20Codes%20and%20Rehabilitation%20Process%20Diagram.htm

Vocational Assessment

Vocational assessment is the process of determining an individual's interests, abilities and aptitudes and skills to identify vocational strengths, needs and career potential. Vocational assessment may use a variety of standardized techniques (e.g., tests) or non-standardized approaches (e.g., interviews, observing people). Vocational assessment is

part of the vocational guidance process and usually results in recommendations for training or employment.

Conducting Vocational Assessment

Vocational assessment is used for different purposes and may differ according to a country's culture and social system. It may be used to determine a person's potential, the content of a vocational training program, his or her employability or ability to adapt to different work environments.

Depending on the perspective, vocational assessment has many benefits. Vocational assessment assists an individual to make realistic job training and career choices based on their interests, aptitudes and abilities and the realities of the job market. It helps counselors, rehabilitation professionals and employment specialists work more effectively with their clients. It helps trainers and instructors adapt to the needs of the person with a disabilities. It helps administrators use resources more wisely. It helps employers make better hiring selections.

Vocational assessment should focus on identifying abilities and strengths that can be used in training and work situations. It should compare these to viable job requirements and make recommendations. For people with disabilities, the recommendations may also include the need for support services, assistive devices, and job accommodations or address other disability-specific issues that will further the person's training or job success.

Steps Involved with Vocational Assessment

Vocational rehabilitation of the individuals with disabilities typically involves the following ten steps as part of the vocational guidance process:

1. An interview with a vocational guidance officer
2. Examination of record of work experience
3. Examination of scholastic or other records relating to education or training received
4. Medical examination for vocational guidance purposes
5. Appropriate tests of capacity and aptitude and, where desirable, other psychological tests
6. Ascertainment of personal and family circumstances
7. Ascertainment of aptitudes and development of abilities by appropriate work experiences and trail and other similar means
8. Technical trade tests, either verbal or otherwise, in all cases where such seem necessary
9. Analysis of physical capacity in relation to occupational requirements and the possibility of improving that capacity
10. Provision of information concerning employment and training opportunities related to the qualifications, physical capacities, aptitudes, preferences and experience of the person concerned and to the needs of the employment market.

Assessment Techniques

Assessment includes a variety of methods and assessment techniques. Some are standardized and some are non-standardized, that is are less formal and more subject to individual bias or educated judgment. As noted, standardized methods include various tests or work samples that have norms or averages form the general population against

with the person's score or outcome is based. Non-standardized methods may include observation of a person working. Non-standardized methods are important and a mix of approaches will produce the best assessment.

Vocational assessment typically includes the following techniques and tools:

- Background information and reports of other professionals and the individual
- Interviews with the person with a disability and perhaps his or her family, former teachers, employers or others
- Checklists (for use by professionals or the individual being assessed)
- Vocational exploration and counseling to clarify goals and help direct the process
- Paper and pencil tests, including a variety of standardized psychometric and psychological tests (some which must be administered by a trained psychologist)
- Work Samples (work tasks that require individuals to perform work and compares his or her performance to that of others)
- Situational Assessment (observing people in work or training settings)
- Job-tryouts

The VR process is comprehensive because the commitment made to individuals with disabilities is significant—often including post-secondary career development and preparation, among a broad range of other services. Understanding the specifics of the progress will enable you as an interpreter to be more effective within the process.

Activity 3.3 Discussion

Online Discussion

Purpose

You have completed activities 3.1 and 3.2 and will now select two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed. Remember, *you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1.*

What to Look For

Reply to two of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers.

Required – Choose at least two of the following:

1. Who is eligible for VR services? How is eligibility determined? Who determines eligibility and what types of information do they rely on in doing so?
2. What is Order of Selection and when might it be used? What factors are considered when determining Order of Selection?
3. What are some of the philosophical tenants associated with Vocational Rehabilitation and how are these evidenced in the VR process? Offer at least two specific examples.
4. What are at least two of the rights of individuals with disabilities? From where are these rights drawn? What is the implication of these rights for how interpreters approach their work?
5. What are the seven major milestones associated with the VR process? Select two of these milestones and describe what occurs within each and identify at least two considerations for interpreters associated with each.
6. What are some of the services that a VR client can receive? Discuss at least 3 of the services and identify at least 2 considerations for interpreters associated with each.
7. Define informed choice as it relates to VR clients. What is the implication of ensuring informed choice as an interpreter? What challenges might an interpreter face in communicating and engaging a deaf VR client around the process of informed choice? Discuss at least two.
8. What is the purpose of vocational assessment? What are some of the benefits associated with vocational assessment? What are the implications of assessment for interpreters?
9. What are some of the steps involved with vocational assessment? Discuss at least two and identify at least two considerations for interpreting that relate to each of the steps.
10. Discuss at least two assessment techniques used within VR. Discuss the implications of these techniques for interpreting. Identify at least two implications for each of the techniques you address.

Activity 3.4 View clips of VR Staff Mtg

Links provided in Blackboard to video clips

Purpose

In this activity, you will view a DVD of a VR staff meeting for the purpose of exploring the activities that transpire during the meeting, the way in which language is used, the topics addressed, and considerations for interpreting. You will also view a sample interpretation of this meeting for the purpose of observing the various demands that surface and the controls employed by the interpreter(s) during the assignment.

Later, in Activity 3.6, after you have done some further research on VR processes, you will discuss your observations about the DVD with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives.

What to Look For

The DVD is organized into several segments. First, there is a brief introduction to the speaker and access to the PPT that she will address in her presentation. Then, there is the actual meeting, sans interpreter (although the deaf consumer is visible in the bubble) that lasts about 30 minutes. Following this segment, there is the interpreted version of the meeting. Afterwards, the two interpreters briefly reflect on their experiences. They also provide a brief bio.

You are asked to view both the meeting sans interpreters and the interpreted event. The reason for viewing both is that in each viewing you are asked to look for different things. Viewing the meeting without attention to the interpretation, allows you to focus on the process and content as it relates to the thought-world of VR personnel. The observations you make will be useful in helping you to understand the VR system a bit better. Then, as you turn your attention to the interpretation, you can consider the implications of how the system operates for your work as an interpreter.

As you view the VR staff meeting sans interpreters, look for the following.

- Who appear to be the people involved in the meeting?
- What are their roles?
- How do the various participants engage, take-turns and participate in the meetings?
- What kind of side conversations are you able to observe? What might be the role of these side conversations?
- What types of background and environmental noises or activities impact the meeting? In what ways?
- What are some of the system-based challenges or problems the participants in the meeting identified? How did the group approach resolution of these challenges or problems? What recommendations or strategies surfaced that they group might use in managing the challenges/problems?
- What are some of the salient linguistic features of the primary speaker? How did these salient linguistic features impact register, style, and speaker credibility?

- Some of the unique concepts that surface include the following. What do they mean within the context they are being used? If you do not know, how might you find out what they mean?
    - Eligibility for services
    - Tax Credits
    - Checklists
    - Supported Employment
    - Memorandum of Understanding
    - Cycle of a case
    - Form 58
    - Community Service Brokers
    - Acronyms including CRPs, OJT, CSDP

As you view the interpretation of the VR staff meeting, and the associated reflections by the two interpreters, look for the following.

- How did the interpreters manage speaker transitions and overlap? What specific strategies did they employ?
- What did you observe about the deaf consumers behavior during the interpretation? What is the implication of these behaviors for the interpreting process?
- How did the speed of speech impact the interpreting process? What was the implication of the rapid speech for message accuracy? How did the interpreters manage this demand?
- How did the interpreters transition from one to the other? Was the transition effective? Why or why not?
- In what ways did you observe the interpreters relying on one another? Were there opportunities for relying on each other that were not utilized? When/where?
- What differences did you observe in the strategies used by the two interpreters? What similarities? Were there instances where additional strategies were needed but not utilized? When/where?
- As the two interpreters briefly reflected on the assignment, what surfaced as the demands they identified and/or tips they offered? Were these observations consistent with your own observations? What additional reflections might you offer about the assignment?

Activity 3.5 Internet Search

Return to your State Plan to review the Order of Selection policy for your state.

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to help you become familiar with Order of Selection policy for your state.

What to Look For

Be sure to review your OWN state's Order of Selection and be prepared to post about it. If you are interested, you can also look at some other states. Here are some samples:

Missouri
http://dss.mo.gov/fsd/rsb/manual/vrman/propolman/propol_orderselect.htm

New York
http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/current_provider_information/vocational_rehabilitation/policies_procedures/0250_order_of_selection/policy.htm

Virginia
http://www.vadrs.org/oosbrochure.htm

NOTE: Feel free to research other samples including the policy in your own state.

Activity 3.6 Discussion

Online Discussion

Purpose

You have completed activities 3.4 and 3.5 and will now select two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed as you answer two (2) of the following questions and engage in discussion with your peers.

NOTE: *Although you are only required to post substantive, original responses to two of the questions below, you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1. Your learning experience and that of the group will be greatly enhanced by engaging in frequent, active discussions.*

What to Look For

Reply to two of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Required – Choose at least two of the following:

1. What is Order of Selection? It is allowable by Federal regulations? When might it be used? What factors are considered when determining Order of Selection?
2. Post the key points for the Order of Selection standards for YOUR state. When you reply, reply to a student from another state and compare the Order of Selection standards your two states. What similarities and differences exist in terms of how the standards are worded and implemented?
3. Who appear to be the people involved in the VR staff meeting? What are their roles? How do the various participants engage, take-turns and participate in the meetings?
4. What kind of side conversations are you able to observe? What might be the role of these side conversations? What types of background and environmental noises or activities impact the meeting? In what ways?
5. What are some of the system-based challenges or problems the participants in the meeting identified? How did the group approach resolution of these challenges or problems? What recommendations or strategies surfaced that they group might use in managing the challenges/problems?
6. What are some of the salient linguistic features of the primary speaker? How did these salient linguistic features impact register, style, and speaker credibility?
7. Provide a summary of the content of the meeting. You can do this in the form of an outline, a mind-map/content-map, or other visual representation.

8. Some of the unique concepts that surfaced during the staff meeting include the following. What do they mean within the context they are being used? If you do not know, how might you find out what they mean?
    - Eligibility for services
    - Tax Credits
    - Checklists
    - Supported Employment
    - Memorandum of Understanding
    - Cycle of a case
    - Form 58
    - Community Service Brokers
    - Acronyms including CRPs, OJT, CSDP
9. How did the interpreters manage speaker transitions and overlap? What specific strategies did they employ?
10. What did you observe about the deaf consumers behavior during the interpretation? What is the implication of these behaviors for the interpreting process?
11. How did the speed of speech impact the interpreting process? What was the implication of the rapid speech for message accuracy? How did the interpreters manage this demand?
12. How did the interpreters transition from one to the other? Was the transition effective? Why or why not?
13. In what ways did you observe the interpreters relying on one another? Were there opportunities for relying on each other that were not utilized? When/where?
14. What differences did you observe in the strategies used by the two interpreters? What similarities? Were there instances where additional strategies were needed but not utilized? When/where?
15. As the two interpreters briefly reflected on the assignment, what surfaced as the demands they identified and/or tips they offered? Were these observations consistent with your own observations? What additional reflections can you offer about the assignment?

Activity 3.7 View Archived Webcast

Watch the recording of the webcast entitled "Assessment and Evaluation Tools for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing" (link to webcast and resources available in BB)
http://hosted.mediasite.com/mediasite/SilverlightPlayer/Default.aspx?peid=954b88fe19574b42b726c735847218f61d

Purpose

In this activity, you will view a PEPNet webinar relating to Assessment and Evaluation Tools for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The purpose is to expand your awareness of various tools that are available and used, how they function, and some considerations for the implementation of these tools. Issues relating to the use of interpreters in administering tests to deaf individuals will also be addressed.

Later, in Activity 3.8, you will discuss your observations and learning from the webinar with your peers and to generate some dialogue around discussion questions. And, this webinar will serve as a foundation for Assignment 1 when you will select an evaluation tool and create a Fact Sheet about it.

The PPT materials, a chart and several white papers from this webinar are located in the Resource section of the class and all labeled as Activity 3.7 Resources. Be sure to download these resources and keep them handy as some pieces—such as the chart—will be helpful references when you begin Assignment 1.

The actual webinar presents the information in spoken English, with ASL interpretation and Captioning available.

What to Look For

The webinar has two parts. The first part is a series of three speakers who each address a specific aspect of testing and assessment of deaf individuals. Of particular interest is the third speaker who specifically addresses vocational evaluation. The second part is a panel discussion involving the three speakers and a moderator who discuss specific considerations related to test administration and interpretation of the test results.

As you view the webinar, look for the following.

- What does reliability and validity of a test mean?
- What are some of the specific problems in testing individuals who are deaf?
- What are Deaf Norms and when might they be most appropriately used? When might the use of Deaf Norms not be preferable? When might an assessor want to use existing norms when testing individuals who are deaf?
- What issues can arise when using an interpreter during the testing process?
- When might a test be translated from English into ASL? What challenges are associated with this strategy? What is the role of back translation within such a process?

- What issues exist around the translation or interpretation of word problems?
- When individuals who are deaf are being tested, who would be considered a qualified assessor?
- What are some of the cautions associated with testing deaf individuals? What factors adversely affect scores?
- What are some of the best practices associated with testing deaf individuals? How do these practices address some of the challenges/problems associated with testing individuals who are deaf?
- What etiologies (sources) of deafness increase the risk for other conditions? What percent of deaf children have been diagnosed with additional disabilities? What are some examples of conditions that co-exist with deafness?
- What are the two premises for test equity in vocational evaluation?
- What are the three tools of vocational evaluation
- What are some types of tests used to assess achievement?
- What are some types of tests used to assess aptitude?
- What are some types of tests used to assess intelligence?
- What are some types of tests used to assess interest?

Prior to viewing the webinar, you might want to look at the questions associated with Activity 3.8 to ensure you collect all the data you need to effectively respond to questions.

Activity 3.8 Discussion

Online Discussion

Purpose

You have completed activity 3.7 and will now select two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed as you answer two (2) of the following questions and engage in discussion with your peers.

NOTE: *Although you are only required to post substantive, original responses to two of the questions below, you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1. Your learning experience and that of the group will be greatly enhanced by engaging in frequent, active discussions.*

What to Look For

Reply to two of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Required – Choose at least two of the following:

1. What does reliability and validity of a test mean? Define each and provide some examples of how each impact test administration.
2. What are some of the specific problems in testing individuals who are deaf? How might some of these problems be addressed in the testing context?
3. What are Deaf Norms and when might they be most appropriately used? When might the use of Deaf Norms not be preferable? When might an assessor want to use existing norms when testing individuals who are deaf?
4. What issues can arise when using an interpreter during the testing process? What types of things does an interpreter need to know before interpreting a test? Why is having a 3rd person in the testing process a potential issue?
5. When might a test be translated from English into ASL? What challenges are associated with this strategy? What is the role of back translation within such a process?
6. What issues exist around the translation or interpretation of word problems?
7. When individuals who are deaf are being tested, who would be considered a qualified assessor? What qualities should the assessor bring to the process and why?

8. What are some of the cautions associated with testing deaf individuals? What factors adversely affect scores? Provide at least two examples. What are the implications of these factors for interpreters?
9. What are some of the best practices associated with testing deaf individuals? How do these practices address some of the challenges/problems associated with testing individuals who are deaf? Provide at least two examples and discuss the implications for interpreters.
10. What etiologies (sources) of deafness increase the risk for other conditions? What percent of deaf children have been diagnosed with additional disabilities? What are some examples of conditions that co-exist with deafness?
11. What are the two premises for test equity in vocational evaluation? In terms of the premise for practice, what information can be used to corroborate findings?
12. What are the three tools of vocational evaluation? Provide at least one example of each. Discuss the implications of each for interpreting.
13. What are some types of tests used to assess achievement? Select one and discuss the pros and concerns associated with it. Also discuss what you see as the implications of the pros and concerns for interpreting the test.
14. What are some types of tests used to assess aptitude? Select one and discuss the pros and concerns associated with it. Also discuss what you see as the implications of the pros and concerns for interpreting the test.
15. What are some types of tests used to assess intelligence? Select one and discuss the pros and concerns associated with it. Also discuss what you see as the implications of the pros and concerns for interpreting the test.
16. What are some types of tests used to assess interest? Select one and discuss the pros and concerns associated with it. Also discuss what you see as the implications of the pros and concerns for interpreting the test.

Note: Assignment 1 is due at the end of this unit.

Unit 4 – VR Community Partners

Introduction

Perhaps more than in any other setting, Vocational Rehabilitation places the interpreter in a vast array of locales, situations and backdrops, including healthcare, social services, education and employment. A successful vocational rehabilitation interpreter is able to navigate these settings both culturally and linguistically. The goal of this unit is to help interpreters develop a broad understanding of various related systems that function parallel to the VR system and work as partners in helping VR meet the needs of individuals with disabilities as they prepare to enter the workforce.

Objectives

The learner will be able to:

- Discuss the prevailing culture of each community partner common to Vocational Rehabilitation
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the acronyms most commonly used in various community partner agencies/organizations
- Discuss the services and activities typically associated with common community partners with whom VR works
- Discuss why and how VR personnel use and access community partners
- Discuss how interpreting services are arranged and paid for when working with different community partners

Key Questions

Key questions can help you focus your learning. Think about these questions as you proceed through the unit activities.

1. In what settings might interpreters find themselves working with consumers of VR services?
2. What is the relationship between VR and its community partners? How is information shared and how do various entities interface in support of individuals with disabilities?
3. In what settings might interpreters find themselves working with deaf VR professionals as they interface with VR partners? How does this impact the role and responsibility of the VR interpreter?
4. What is the role of community partners in the completion of a VR client's Individual Plan of Employment?
5. When working within VR partner agencies, who pays for the cost of interpreting services? How are interpreting services coordinated?

Activity 4.1 & 4.2 – Unit Insights & PPT

Read the Insights below and view the associated PPT posted in the online course: VR Community Partners

In addition, two readings in Resources area are referred to in these Insights

- NC Rules and Standards
- Sample Florida State Plan

Insights

Vocational Rehabilitation is strongly rooted in community and collaboration. VR has a large network of groups with whom it partners to serve individuals with disabilities who are seeking employment. Each state, as part of its State Plan, creates partnership with those agencies or organizations that can best assist the state in achieving its goals and objectives.

Typically, VR agencies have specific regulations about who can serve as a community partner/vendor with VR. A sample of state regulations for North Carolina is available under the resource section of the class marked 4.1 Reading. Take time to look over the various types of considerations VR takes into account in determining community partners. This information will be helpful to you when you engage in the 6.4 Discussion Forum.

In many instances, the relationship between VR and the community entity is outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that outlines the purposes, roles and responsibilities of VR and the entity—such as an educational institution—as well as financial and programmatic responsibilities. The Memoranda of Understanding provides information regarding financial assistance, sharing of assessment findings, accommodations, rehabilitation technology services, services to be provided, counseling, confidentiality, and other topics.

There are many examples of partners with whom VR works. The specific agency name or organization will vary from state to state, although the function served by these entities is to support and assist individuals with disabilities in their quest for independence and meaningful employment.

The following outlines some common community partners working with Vocational Rehabilitation in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Universities, Community and Technical Colleges

VR clients often attend specific job training programs housed at universities, community or technical colleges. Such trainings are often long-term, although in some instances may be at the certificate level, versus degree level. As well, universities can house preparation programs for VR personnel—such as VR counselors.

Supported Employment Providers (SEPs)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has a variety of agreements with private non-profit organizations. These include contracts, rate agreements, and other cooperative, non-financial agreements.
Specifically, VR provides contracts for employment services, supported employment, and On-the-Job Training (OJT). Additionally, some VR services are purchased through registered vendors. All new vendors/providers, whether through a contractual or vendor relationship, must go through a registration and approval process. VR reviews the qualifications of vendors providing services to our clients in order to ensure the quality of these services, as well as the safety of the public. In addition to approving and registering vendor/provider services, VR conducts employment verifications on all client placements facilitated by vendors/contract providers.

VR's policy ensures that applicants and eligible individuals exercise choice of qualified service providers. Customers are also informed if the provider has staff experienced in working with special disability populations, foreign languages, and other communication skills. Eligible individuals have the choice of necessary services, service providers, and the setting in which to receive services in the written Individualized Plan for Employment.

The Supported Employment Providers serve people who need help to become successful in their jobs. In many cases, a Job Coach can be assigned to work with an individual to help them learn a new job, gain new skills and get comfortable with the work environment. Such programs are available to specific individuals who have developmental disabilities or mental illness.

The network of SEPs can include mental health agencies, developmental disabilities service provides, organizations like Goodwill Industries, and others that specialize in providing one-on-one support to workers with disabilities.

Department of Labor (DOL)

VR works closely with the state Department of Labor to help individuals with disabilities access the wide range of training and placement services typically offered through the Workforce Investment Act. In many cases, VR and DOL staff work cooperatively/collaboratively to create the training and work experiences needed. This can include One-Stop Centers where people with disabilities can find a wide range of work-related services and information in one location.

Department of Veterans

Originally established as an independent agency in 1930 and elevated to cabinet level in 1989, the Department of Veterans Affairs dispenses benefits and services to eligible veterans of U.S. military service and their dependents. The Veterans Health Administration provides hospital and nursing-home care and outpatient medical and dental services through a range of medical centers, retirement homes, clinics, nursing homes, and Vietnam Veteran Outreach Centers across the United States. The Department of Veteran Affairs also conducts medical research in such areas as aging, women's health issues, AIDS, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) oversees claims for disability payments, pensions, specially adapted housing, and other services.

The need to serve veterans who have disabilities led to the development of an agreement between the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and VR. The agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of VR and the Department of Veterans

Affairs. Also, it clarifies which agency can provide specific services and it includes information regarding shared planning, joint activities, and coordination.

Public Schools

VR has transition counselors who have strong ties to public schools and work with guidance counselors and other staff to help prepare young adults for their future. VR typically uses an early referral/application process for transition students to better coordinate with the state education agency and local education agencies. Brochures for the VR School to Work Transition Program are typically made available to students and families so that they can begin gathering information at age 14. Referrals for VR services are made at age 16 for those students with disabilities that are engaged in community-based work experiences or in the last two years of secondary school for other students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who are at high risk for dropping out of school may be referred at any age. This additional time allows the counselor to develop a rapport with the transition student and family, explore vocational options and comparable benefits, and begin necessary guidance and counseling.

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is completed or updated as early as possible prior to graduation or leaving school to allow a seamless transition to a student's desired postsecondary outcome.

VR counselors, with assistance from VR technicians, are assigned as representatives to work with all public high schools statewide. They provide outreach and vocational rehabilitation services orientation to students, school officials, parents, and others involved in transition services. Only the VR counselor may determine a student's eligibility for VR services, develop an approved IPE, and sponsor the delivery of necessary transition services to assist the student with planning, preparing for, and attaining successful postsecondary employment.

Local education agencies are strongly encouraged to enter into written agreements with VR. The agreement addresses consultation, coordination, and the provision of technical assistance to students, and their families/guardians/surrogates in planning for the transition from secondary school to postsecondary activities and inclusion in the adult community.

Department of Corrections

VR works with the Department of Corrections to serve offenders with disabilities as they prepare to re-enter the community. VR counselors may be assigned to a correctional facility, working with individuals to begin their job search upon release.

Independent Living Centers (ILCs)

The term `center for independent living' means a consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agency that is designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provides an array of independent living services.

51% of staff of ILCs are persons with disabilities; 51% of Board of Directors are persons with disabilities; and ILCs provide four core services:

1. Information & referral
2. Independent living skills training
3. Individual and systems advocacy
4. Peer counseling

Social Security Administration (SSA)

On August 1, 1956, the Social Security Act was amended to provide benefits to disabled workers aged 50-64 and disabled adult children. In September 1960 President Eisenhower signed a law amending the disability rules to permit payment of benefits to disabled workers of any age and to their dependents.

In the 1970s, SSA became responsible for a new program, Supplemental Security Income (SSI). In the original 1935 Social Security Act, programs were introduced for needy aged and blind individuals and, in 1950, needy disabled individuals were added. These three programs were known as the "adult categories" and were administered by State and local governments with partial Federal funding. Over the years, the State programs became more complex and inconsistent, with as many as 1,350 administrative agencies involved and payments varying more than 300% from State to State.

In 1969, the President identified a need to reform these and related welfare programs to "bring reason, order, and purpose into a tangle of overlapping programs." In 1971, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare proposed that SSA assume responsibility for the "adult categories." In the Social Security Amendments of 1972, Congress federalized the "adult categories" by creating the SSI program and assigned responsibility for it to SSA.

SSA was chosen to administer the new program because of its reputation for successful administration of the existing social insurance programs. SSA's nationwide network of field offices and large-scale data processing and record-keeping operations also made it the logical choice to perform the major task of converting over 3 million people from State welfare programs to SSI.

On December 17, 1999 the President signed the "Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999"--one of the most significant changes in disability policy in the last 20 years. This law creates a Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program that will provide disability beneficiaries with a ticket they may use to obtain vocational rehabilitation services, employment services, and other support services from an employment network of their choice. In addition to allowing beneficiaries to purchase vocational services, the law provides incentive payments to providers for successful rehabilitation in which the beneficiary returns to work. The new provisions also provide a number of safeguards to the beneficiaries to protect their benefits and health Taken together, the Ticket to Work initiative seeks to shift the emphasis in the disability program away from mere maintenance of benefits more toward rehabilitating the disabled and assisting them in returning to productive work.

One of VR's ongoing objectives for the Ticket to Work Program is to increase the number of partnerships with Employment Networks (Employment and Rehabilitation Service Providers). VR hopes to expand the resources available to customers to meet the current and future levels of demand. It is also the goal of VR to ensure that customers have a choice in service providers available within their communities. Also, VR has implemented a new Employment Network Referral and Partnership Agreement that creates more opportunity to develop partnerships with Employment Networks. The agreement features a transitional approach by assisting Social Security Administration customers in their efforts to achieve self-sufficiency through core VR services followed by ongoing support services from employment networks.

Social Service Agencies

The label of Social Service Agencies covers a broad range of organizations that go by many different names, but can include the following types of state agencies, among many others.

- Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse—provides access to alcohol and substance abuse treatment services
- Mental Health Division—provides access to a wide range of services for individuals with mental illness
- Division of Developmental Disabilities—provides access to a wide range of services for individuals with developmental disabilities, including employment services
- Commission for the Deaf--Coordinates Interpreter Contracts for use by state agencies, access to TTY and video relay services, and contracts with Regional Service Centers (in some states) that provide other services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing

VR has extensive coordination efforts to assist customers who have mental illnesses, addiction, or other barriers to employment. One of these is participation in treatment planning, or serving on teams focused on community-based, outreach-oriented methods of delivering services to individuals with mental health or addiction challenges. VR provides staff liaisons with many of these teams to help serve customers in a comprehensive manner. In addition, VR is an active member of various state planning and advocacy councils. Cooperative agreements promote coordination so that appropriate services can be delivered to maximize customer choice and satisfaction.

Client Assistance Programs (CAP)

The purpose of this program is to advise and inform clients, client applicants, and other individuals with disabilities of all the available services and benefits under the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, and of the services and benefits available to them under Title I of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA). In addition, grantees may assist and advocate for clients and client applicants in relation to projects, programs, and services provided under the *Rehabilitation Act*. In providing assistance and advocacy under Title I of the *Rehabilitation Act*, a CAP agency may provide assistance and advocacy with respect to services that are directly related to employment for the client or client applicant.

Agencies designated by the state to provide CAP services help clients or client applicants pursue concerns they have with programs funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. The state may designate a public or private entity to operate the CAP.

In addition to these state or local based organizations, there are national resources with which VR might connect for the purpose of accessing information and resources for serving individuals with disabilities. Some common organizations include American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association, Council of State Administrators for VR, the National Council on Disability (NCD), among others. Take time to research these and other national organizations to better understand the contribution they make to professionals serving the employment needs of individuals with disabilities. As well, review your state's plan to see the community partnerships outlined and the specifics of the MOUs and MOAs that exist. A sample from Florida is available for review in the resource section of the class—it was used in formulating these insights.

Activity 4.3 Internet Search

Return to your State Plan to research Community Partners who work with VR in your state

Research two partners in more detail

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to help you become familiar with the various community partners that work with VR in your state and to share this information with your peers.

What to Look For

Using the list in Activity 4.1, research the community partners working with VR in your state.

You might find information about partners in the State Plan that you researched in Unit 3. However, if you don't find what you are looking for there, you can search for the information on the web. (Hint: a straight forward Google search might find this list – for example "Colorado VR Community Partners".) Once you have found a list, pick two of the partners to research in more detail.

As you research, try to collect the following information:

- What services does the partner provide?
- Who do they serve?
- Do they offer training? And what type?
- Do they offer counseling? What type? To whom?
- Would this partner have a role in the completion of an individual's IPE?
- Would an interpreter work in this setting? In what capacity?
- What might be unique about working in this setting?

Activity 4.4 Discussion

Online Discussion

Purpose

You have completed the activities in this lesson which provided information about VR community partners and partners who work with VR in your state. Now, select two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed as you answer two (2) of the following questions and engage in discussion with your peers.

NOTE: *Although you are only required to post substantive, original responses to two of the questions below, you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1. Your learning experience and that of the group will be greatly enhanced by engaging in frequent, active discussions.*

What to Look For

Reply to two of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Required – Choose at least two of the following:

1. In what partnership settings might interpreters find themselves working with consumers of VR services? Identify at least 3 from your state and discuss the role and function of each.
2. What is the relationship between VR and its community partners? How is information shared and how do various entities interface in support of individuals with disabilities?
3. What are some of the regulations that impact a community agency from functioning as a partner or vendor with VR? Identify at least two and discuss why you think it is a necessary and important regulation. You can draw from the 6.1 reading or research the regulations in your own state.
4. In what settings might interpreters find themselves working with deaf VR professionals as they interface with VR partners? How does this impact the role and responsibility of the VR interpreter?
5. What is the role of community partners in the completion of a VR client's Individual Plan of Employment? Identify the role of at least 3 from your state and discuss what each contributes specifically to the IPE.

6. When working within VR partner agencies, who pays for the cost of interpreting services? How are interpreting services coordinated? Provide the mechanism associated with at least three of the community partners VR works with in your state.
7. Refer back to your state's State Plan for VR and identify three (3) of the partnerships discussed in the plan. Identify the services provided by the entity and what it is intended to contribute to the State Plan.
8. Select one of the following organizations, research it and then provide a description of what it is, what it does, and how it contributes to improving the circumstances of individuals with disabilities. Provide two specific examples of how this organization might contribute to a State Plan or the VR professionals in your state.
    - American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association
    - Council of State Administrators for VR
    - National Council on Disability (NCD)
    - National Association of the Deaf
    - American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB)
    - Black Deaf Advocates (BDA)
9. Look at your state plan and explore the role of universities, community and technical colleges contribute to IPE of VR clients, and also to the development of qualified VR personnel. Summarize how this role is discussed in your state's Plan. What might be the implications for interpreters in these different settings?
10. Identify two community partners working with VR in your state. Investigate how interpreters are arranged for and compensates. Discuss your findings and the implications for the work of interpreters in your state.
11. Consider role perception and implementation for an interpreter who works across many different partner agencies working with VR clients. Discuss your observations about the challenges interpreters could face in moving across multiple entities, and the implications for role definition and expectations. Provide at least one specific example to support each of your observations.
12. In considering the work of interpreters across agencies, what might be possible conflicts of interest that could arise? How should potential conflicts of interest be recognized? When they exist, what are at least two strategies interpreters can employ to address them in an ethical manner?

Activity 4.5 Go To Meeting Event

Optional GoToMeeting Event

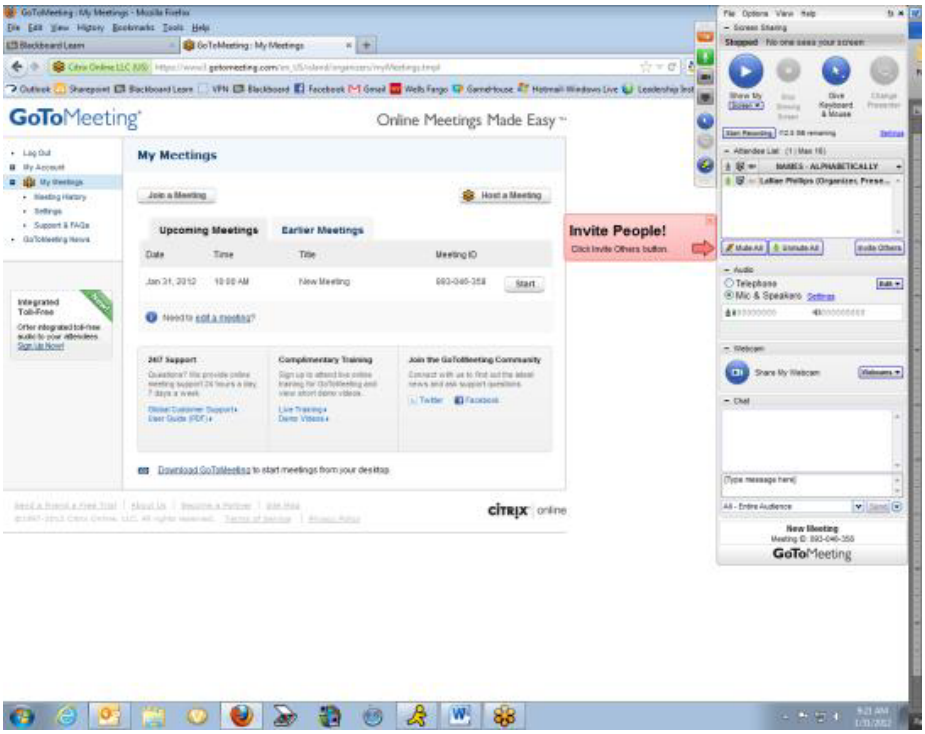
Purpose

GoToMeeting is a video conferencing tool that allows the course facilitator to meet with small groups of students (up to a total of six) to review course content and progress. It is ideal as a tool for small group review and discussion. The purpose of the GoToMeeting is to allow for a more individualized discussion of questions regarding the course material. The facilitator will offer a schedule of 3 or 4 times that students can sign up for during the period assigned in the Roadmap, with call-in instructions. Students can sign up for one or more of the times if they find value in this additional way of connecting to the course facilitator and some of the students in the course. Participation is optional.

What to Look For

In preparation for attending one of the GoToMeeting events, be sure you have access to a computer with a working webcam. Once you sign up for a time, the facilitator will send you an "invitation" to join GoToMeeting at the defined time. You will want to log into the GoToMeeting site a few minutes prior to the start time in order to download the software.

Allow it to load, then you will see this Control Panel:



Click the webcam icon to share your video, it will turn green. Up to six participants will be able to join simultaneously and view one another. It works well with both ASL and spoken English.

The facilitator will have the capacity to share her desktop, to show a PPT or a document or a video. She can also share this capacity with anyone else on the call. This will allow for the opportunity to talk about and see any number of resources in "real time". This system has the typical webinar options and can be used for a wide range of activities.

In preparing to participate, consider what topics you would like to explore further or questions you have that can be addressed. As well, the facilitator will offer possible topics for discussion.

Note: Be sure to review the Community Partnership Case Study (Assignment 2) and post your responses to the discussion forum.

Unit 5 Service Delivery Theories

Introduction

In delivering services to VR clients, various theories of service delivery to persons with disabilities exist. In this unit, learners will understand the application of psychological counseling theory as applied to vocational rehabilitation services and how this affects the VR counselor's style of service delivery. The effects of gender, disability, and majority/minority status on service delivery will also b explored.

You will read a series of articles that focus on various service model approaches used in the VR system and are asked to consider the following realities:

- The shifting knowledge base and skills needed by today's workforce;
- The exploding potential of technology; and,
- The importance of internal and external accountability, including internal controls, monitoring and enforcement, and results-based evaluations of performance.

Objectives

The learner will be able to:

- Describe the prevalent counseling theories and their application to the VR process.
- Understand the influences of gender, minority status, and disability on the VR process within each counseling theory.
- Be able to identify and use terminology associated with VR service delivery theory and practices.

Key Questions

Key questions can help you focus your learning. Think about these questions as you proceed through the unit activities.

1. What are some of the key theories of service delivery within vocational rehabilitation counseling?
2. What are the key components of motivational interviewing theory?
3. What are the key components of client centered counseling?

Activity 5.1 – Unit 5 Insights

Read the Insights below and view the associated PowerPoint presentation: Service Delivery Theories

Insights

One of the pressuring challenges facing the Vocational Rehabilitation system nationwide is the need to evaluate the current system of service delivery in an effort to address the challenges associated with operating within the context of the 21st century. These challenges include the gaps in school performance and employment for individuals with disabilities, each state's changing demographic characteristics, the global competition for skilled workers, and the need to maximize the collective assets of each state while ensuring expanded community and business partnerships.

The fact is that vocational rehabilitation service delivery models—much like models of interpreting services-- must evolve to address the changing needs of 21st century customers and to incorporate 21st century resources, especially in the area of technology. Future models must focus on the needs of VR customers (or clients/consumers in terms more common to us as interpreters). VR's primary customers are those individuals with disabilities who are seeking employment, but VR must also recognize its obligation to respond to the needs of employers as well as the many rehabilitation service providers who serve as the bridge between the system and job placement.

VR alone—like interpreting—will never have the capacity to close the employment gap. Goals can only be achieved through greatly expanded collaborations, including VR's integration into the work of school districts, institutions of higher education, and the Independent Living Centers, as well the statewide workforce development systems, State agency partners, and the broad range of community-based rehabilitation service providers. Likewise, the goals of the field of interpreting and interpreter education to create a system of language access for deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind individuals can only be achieved with systems thinking and collaboration within the systems where interpreters work.

What are the overarching issues faced by VR as seeks to implement 21st century service models?

Common issues faced by VR across the nation include the need to:

- Expand access to technology;
- Implement a staffing-ratio system to support the functions of the district level offices;
- Restructure the VR fiscal system; and
- Develop a marketing strategy that meets the needs of our diverse pool of customers.

It is interesting to note that with only slightly different wording, these issues can be found in the field of interpreting as well.

Some recommendations from a 2003-2004 study done by NY State follow below. In total, the NY State Study included fifteen (15) recommendations that offer insight into

some of the creative service models being considered and currently implemented. Ten (10) of those recommendations are discussed in these insights. You can find the full set of recommendations at the following website.

http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/current_provider_information/vocational_rehabilitation/designing_the_future.htm),

Although the 10 recommendations are framed from the needs and experiences of NY State, they offer insight into possible changes in service models for other states.

As you read through the NY State recommendations, think about your own state VR system and how it functions. Consider which of these recommendations would fit your state system? Which ones may already be implemented or planned? How do you see some of these recommendations impacting your work as an interpreter in the VR system?

RECOMMENDATION #1: Provide Access to a "Placement Express"

All consumers now entering VR services go through the same "case management" approach, including an in-depth information session and a counselor appointment to develop an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). However, a small number of consumers are not interested in the full range of VR services. Some consumers, such as County Department of Social Services (DSS) benefit recipients, have mandates from other systems that limit them to seeking VR support solely for job placement. NY state is proposing an alternate rapid entry track for those individuals who chose to or must focus on immediate job placement. Expedited placement services will be delivered following the establishment of VR eligibility.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Develop an Incumbent Worker/Career Development Track for Easy Consumer Re-Entry to VR

Reflective of the job market of the future, where most workers will have multiple employers/careers in the course of their working lives, VR needs to offer an open door to former consumers who still meet VR eligibility criteria, have disability related employment barriers, and are currently working and seeking to upgrade employment or need to rapidly re-enter employment. In previous years, Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) directives focused state VR agencies in assisting individuals with disabilities in obtaining entry-level employment; thereby, "leveling the playing field" with their non-disabled peers. That focus has not expanded into assisting those same individuals with career development and advancement on their jobs. However, within the VR culture, criteria for re-entry is often more strictly enforced than for individuals seeking initial eligibility. VR needs to refine its service provision to address the ongoing vocational needs of previously eligible consumers.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Provide A "Fast Track" Entry Option within Each District Office

A key finding from the NY State focus groups was that consumers generally indicated satisfaction with current VR Orientation processes, but also indicated they would like to meet with a VR counselor sooner and more frequently. There is a direct correlation between how quickly consumers entered the VR system, and their satisfaction with VR services. It is unlikely that sufficient personnel will be available to enable VR to directly staff the many activities that are necessary to bring all consumers into the VR system in

a timely manner. The current capacity does not adequately address consumer demand and will not provide sufficient resources to respond to the proposed expansion of front-end activities included in this design. A "Fast Track" service entry model will utilize community vendors to perform a range of intake and orientation activities. This format is intended to broaden opportunities for consumers to enter the VR system in a timely manner, to expand upon existing community relationships, and to enable VR professional staff to focus on essential VR tasks such as eligibility determination and plan development.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Enhance Transition for Consumers Exiting School

Not all students in NYS schools identified as having disabilities require adult vocational rehabilitation services. However, a significant number of secondary students, who would meet VR eligibility, fail to link to VR or other adult services. For these students, gaps in connecting to VR often result in years of chronic unemployment, lack of benefits, dependence on public assistance and deterioration of skills gained in educational settings. In many cases, by the time the consumer is linked with VR, both costs and the difficulty of gaining employment have skyrocketed. Limited VR staffing for outreach and the autonomy of local school districts has made a systemic and coherent response to this issue problematic. The State level Department is in a unique position to bring resources and focus to this crucial juncture, both through mandated school transition activities and closer coordination of VR and other Department technical assistance activities focused on students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION #5: Utilize VR's Unique Expertise to Ensure NYS Partner Collaboration, Yielding the Best Employment Outcomes for Shared Disabled Consumers

VR's New York State partner agencies have expertise either in helping the general public find employment or in helping consumers address the impact of a specific disabling condition. People with varying levels of disability clearly comprise a significant portion of the job seeking public served by the NYS Department of Labor (DOL). Comprehensive responses to the needs of a specific disability group, such as those offered by the NYS Offices of Mental Health (OMH), Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) and Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) often include addressing some vocational issues. However, VR is the primary agency where expertise in the medical aspects of disabilities, current rehabilitation technology, and rehabilitation counseling best practices come together with a fully developed knowledge of career planning, employment preparation, job seeking and job retention for individuals with disabilities. Because the mission of VR reflects this dual role of disability and employment service delivery, it has a unique position bridging agencies addressing primarily one or the other focus areas. Since no other agency has so comprehensive a mission, VR should take a leadership role in enhancing the collaboration among all the key State partners involved in the employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION #6: VR Needs to Envision Its Own Operation as a Key Component of a Larger Workforce Development System through One- Stop Partnering

VR isolation from the larger workforce system as defined in the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is not a viable option and disadvantages our consumers. Services to all individuals with disabilities within the State cannot and should not be provided

exclusively by VR. Services at the One-Stop training and employment centers, which are the core of the national workforce program delivery system as defined by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), can assist some people with disabilities to achieve employment. Not all disabled individuals require a rehabilitation-based employment plan or a case management model for employment services. Measurement of employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities should be generated on a system-wide basis.

VR will develop a statewide strategy for its involvement in the WIA system. On the local level, District Offices will have a professional staff member without full caseload responsibilities assigned to the principle One-Stop sites (at least one per District Office). Specific role definition will be derived from the structure and process at the particular One-Stop.

RECOMMENDATION #7: Use Web-Based Technologies to Improve Access to VR Services by Consumers and Provider Agencies

An on-line orientation and application option for consumers and service providers will complement the existing manual methods of data collection for purposes of making eligibility determinations. It will direct potential applicants who are computer users to available information resources and allow timely referrals to VR. It will be designed to allow information exchanges between referral sources, health providers, community agencies, and other relevant parties. The system will direct consumers to relevant areas of service delivery, and include online contact information for persons or programs that would serve as alternate contacts to the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION #8: Ensure that all VR "Public Message" Materials are Clear, Consistent and of High Quality

VR materials will use the "language of success and inclusion" of persons with disabilities.

VR's public message materials will be responsive to the information needs of various partners in the vocational rehabilitation process, including disability groups, employers, advocates and school district personnel. Materials developed for use by VR for its public message will be available in various formats, including print, DVD and on Internet Web sites.

RECOMMENDATION #9: Implement a Service Delivery Team Model

The model of the future utilizes a team concept for service delivery, with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) maintaining responsibility for the core rehabilitation functions of eligibility certification, for goal planning, and for the development of the original Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Routine details regarding additional services and case management, will become the duty of a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Assistant (VRCA) working under the instruction of a VRC. Consumers will maintain the ability to access a VRC and receive counseling supports to appropriately obtain a successful rehabilitation outcome, but will also have other staff members to turn to for more routine needs. Senior VRCs will supervise units comprised of both VRCs and VRCAs.

RECOMMENDATION #10: Utilize a Milestone Approach in Quantifying the Successes of the VR Program

VR currently reports the success of the program based on the number of consumers who have been satisfactorily placed in employment and maintained that employment for ninety days. Although numerous steps need to be taken to meet this goal, VR has continued to concentrate on the attainment of consumers finding and maintaining

employment as the primary measure of success. While our funding stream requires us to focus on the number of employed consumers, often significant VR vocational assistance is rendered to consumers in other areas. Vocational rehabilitation is a developmental process, where consumers may require very different interventions at different times in their progress towards employment. This requires a new system in which we quantify and value the positive changes/successes that people obtain while receiving VR services.

NOTE: The federally funded interpreter education centers that comprise the NCIEC are also faced with the question of how to quantify and value the positive changes/successes that interpreters obtain while receiving services from the NCIEC. This is a fundamental movement within federal and state funding streams—providing evidence-based, qualitative and quantitative evidence of effectiveness.

Continue to consider the implications of these recommendations for your work as a VR interpreter. How might each recommendation increase the demand for your service or present you with new work-related demands and the need for conceiving new controls. Consider also the ways in which the field of interpreting may need to adapt itself to the changing needs of consumers in the 21st century. What recommendations might be needed in conceiving our own direction for service delivery? What theories have been advanced to date to assist us in such a process?

In the ensuing activities you will read publications discussing specific service models utilized within VR—such as the Wellness Model, the Empowerment Model and the Total Rehabilitation Model. As you explore these models, consider how the 10 recommendations discussed in these insights might help to improve or enhance each model. And, look for ways that each model appeals to the experiences of deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind individuals with whom you work.

Activity 5.2 – 5.4 Readings

Read the following articles:

1. Elliott and Leung Chapter – "Vocational Rehabilitation: History and Practice"
2. Myers and Sweeney – "Wellness in Counseling"
3. Kosciulek – "Employment and Career Challenges Encountered by People with Disabilities.

Purpose

These readings provide background into the evolution of VR from a legislative, historical, and theoretical perspective. They trace how various fields (counseling, assessment, psychology, wellness, and career development have become a part of the VR process.

Activity 5.5 – Online Discussion

Online Discussion for Activity 5.1 – 5.4

Purpose

You have read the instructional insights for Unit 5, read a variety of readings, and will now select one or two questions to discuss. This discussion will provide an opportunity for you to share any insights gleaned from the previous activities with your peers and to generate some dialogue about your perspectives on Service Delivery Models in Vocational Rehabilitation. Reflect on the information presented and the questions posed as you answer one (1) of the following questions and engage in discussion with your peers.

NOTE: *Although you are only required to post one substantive, original response to one of the questions below, you are also expected to engage in discussion with your peer's regarding their posts as part of Assignment 1. Your learning experience and that of the group will be greatly enhanced by engaging in frequent, active discussions.*

What to Look For

Reply to one of the discussion prompts from the list below and provide a substantive response. In addition, please engage in discussion with your peers by replying to their posts.

Required – Choose at least one of the following:

1. What common issues does VR face nationwide that must be considered in planning its service models for the 21st century? What similarities exist between VR's common challenges and those facing the field of interpreting? Provide specific examples of how those similarities are manifested in the field or work of interpreting.
2. Select one of the 10 recommendations stemming from the NY State VR study in 2003-2004 and explore its relevance to what is happening within VR in your state. Provide examples of how the recommendation, or some extension of the recommendation, impacts the type of service delivery models deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind individuals in your state receive.
3. Discuss the evolution of Vocational Rehabilitation in the early part of the 20th century. What socio-political factors impacted the need for such a system?
4. VR is a dynamic system that has continued to evolve since its inception. What are some of the different professions, polices, and population trends that have dictated change? What has each of these factors contributed towards change in the VR system?
5. What contemporary legislation has impacted the VR system of today? In what ways? What social factors impacted contemporary legislation? How does this legislation impact the work of interpreters?

6. What is the Golden Era of VR and how is it exemplified? What are some of the important/significant implications/ outcomes of that formative era?
7. What is the primary criticism of consumer advocates related to rehabilitation psychology? How is this criticism evidenced in service provision to deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind individuals? What efforts have been made to address the criticism?
8. Describe the concept of "Total Rehabilitation". What are the goals and aspirations of this concept? How might they be manifested in services to deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind.
9. What are some of the job placement approaches that have been used within the VR system? Select one and describe it in application.
10. What is wellness as a concept? How is the concept of wellness manifested in counseling strategies used in VR? What has been the effectiveness of these strategies and/or a wellness model of service delivery?
11. What is the consequence of society holding diminished expectations for people with disabilities? Why are such attitudes so pervasive? How does the castification processes embedded in societal institutions/systems contribute to this reality?
12. Describe an empowerment model of service delivery in the VR system. What are the primary elements consumers would bring to such a relationship? What are the primary elements the counselor would bring to such a relationship? How does informed choice impact the empowerment model?

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