

WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS TIP SHEET

CHAIRPERSON USING ASL

Will you be at a meeting chaired by someone using American Sign Language? ASL-English interpreters will then be present and this tip sheet is for you.

TOP TIPS

1. Meetings chaired by an ASL user run very similar to any other meeting. The interpreting team are there to ensure information is facilitated in a way that is accessible and inclusive for everyone. The interpreting team will work between both languages, American Sign Language (ASL) and English.
2. Sight lines are important for a visual language and the interpreting team will be set up roughly on the opposite side of the table to the chairperson.
3. Votes tend to be conducted by a show of hands and not verbal cues.
4. Be prepared for slight pauses between speakers and turn-taking of meeting participants. The simultaneous interpreting process takes a few seconds which may cause slight pauses. It is beneficial for everyone if only one person speaks at a time, which allows access to communication to and from everyone - no interpreter can interpret multiple statements simultaneously.
5. Please look and speak directly to Deaf person in the first person and do not ask the interpreter to "tell him/her, ask him/her, etc." Similarly the interpretation into English you hear will also be in the first person.
6. The interpreters will switch who is actively working approximately every 15-20 minutes. Try to ignore the interpreters when this occurs.
7. Interpreters will not participate in the conversation taking place. Please do not directly engage the interpreter(s) while they are working. If you have comments, questions, or feedback for the interpreter(s) please wait until the meeting is finished and then bring it to their attention. Interpreters are open to having debriefing discussions.

For more detailed information, please check out the SMU [Deaf Academics & Interpreters](#) webpages, specifically the [Work with an Interpreter](#) section.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the SMU Faculty of Science staff interpreter, Ashley Campbell at:

ashley.n.campbell@smu.ca

or

902-496-8761