

Communication in Public Areas at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)

NTID Steering Committee on Communication (SCC)

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NTID, one of the colleges of the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), is a unique Institute that serves over 1,000 Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing students and employs a significant number of Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing faculty and staff. This grand experiment of having a Deaf college within a hearing Institute has been a success largely due to the recognition and respect of the different languages and cultures brought together on this campus. Essential for the spirit of a thriving bilingual community is equal communication access for all. In order to promote and maintain visually accessible communication, **NTID faculty and staff should use sign language in all NTID related public areas.** This signing may occur with or without spoken communication (voiced and unvoiced).

Considering the above, all NTID faculty/staff have a special role to serve as models for their colleagues, students, and visitors to demonstrate this communication protocol and spirit of our symbiotic community.

Since signing in NTID public places has not always been the norm and may not be first or second nature for some, the following actions should be adopted to help ensure the right of all NTID community members to accessible communication.

- At the beginning of each academic year, the RIT Vice-President/NTID Dean will send a memo reminding our community of our commitment to accessible visible communication in NTID public places.
- Chairperson/supervisor training will include information and discussion about our community commitment to accessible visible communication in public places.
- Each academic year, at the first meeting of all administrative units, our commitment to accessible visible communication in NTID public places will be discussed.
- Professionally designed and produced signage encouraging and reminding NTID Faculty and Staff to use sign language will be posted in appropriate places in NTID-related public areas. Additional promotional materials (for example, buttons, stickers, and coffee mugs) will be used to aid in communicating this spirit.
- Workshops about Deaf culture and communication access will be offered utilizing video materials depicting realistic scenarios. These, and other related materials as appropriate, will be available for self-instruction/viewing.

NTID/RIT has achieved remarkable success in educating Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing people since its doors opened in 1968. One of the top reasons students and parents choose NTID/RIT is because of the co-existence of our Deaf and hearing communities. This would not be possible without the recognition, respect, and endorsement of creating and fostering our bilingual community together.