

Overview of St. Benilde's Efforts to Facilitate and Monitor student progress

DLSU-COLLEGE OF ST. BENILDE School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies

A REPORT ON SDEAS' PROGRAM SERVICES AND STRATEGIES THAT FACILITATE AND MONITOR STUDENTS' PROGRESS

A. STUDENTS' PROFILE

Generally belong to middle to lower income families. Very few come from higher income families. Graduated from public schools generally offering mainstreamed classes for the Deaf, with limited support service for tutorials, special classes, etc. Only one or two schools considered pure Deaf school, but majority of teachers are hearing without FSL skills. A significant number are considered pure Deaf (born Deaf or became Deaf early in life) but there are a handful of hard-of hearing or late deafened students. At present, there are 93 students enrolled in the program

General psycho-emotional issues of Deaf students in College

1. first to second year:

- 1.1. Issues of acceptance in family and peers. Family issues focus on the feelings of being unloved as a result of isolation from general family experiences and interactions (due to limited or no competence in SL).

Peer issues focus on conflicts between superior and inferior relations as embodied by social class (low, middle, upper class), school (public, private, Deaf or hearing school), locality (urban or suburban), etc.

Financial issues also a major concern, particularly those coming from very poor families. Though recipient of 100% subsidy, they are faced up with difficulties in paying for their food, clothing, transportation and school needs.

The above issues sometimes lead students to either consider seriously leaving school, or for some, to actually leave school without asking for help.

- 1.2. Generally feelings of inferiority very evident in relations particularly with hearing teachers, with junior or senior Deaf students. Also very evident in classroom set-up is the fear to assert and express their thoughts. When

called to respond, they show feelings of embarrassment, and have difficulty in responding accurately. May be too shocked to think straight.

There is initially a general feeling of panic with the extensive academic demands of college requirements that they have not experienced in high school. A few who could not cope with these pressures fail their subjects and eventually drop out from school.

2. latter part of second year to third year

2.1. family issues remain but with heightened conflict in relations as a result of students' general trend to defy parental wishes or family norms. Family often report that their children become more reactive, pursues on choices without asking permission, moves away from family gathering and spends considerable time with peers. Often staying more than 8 hours in school even in days where there are no scheduled activities, or even during weekends or vacation time.

2.2. peer relations settle down, students establishing their peer groups. There is growing sense of awareness about Deaf community, the Deaf culture, the Filipino Sign Language as a legitimate language, etc.

2.3. There is growing tension between the Deaf group and the Hard of hearing (HH) and the late-Deafened group. Issues on superiority-inferiority becomes heightened on various areas such as competence on FSL and English language, capability to perform in classroom activities and requirements

For example: There are some HH who perceive themselves to be "more intelligent" since they have more competence in writing and reading, seem to know and understand more. The pure Deaf believe in that perception and see themselves as having "weak minds" having great difficulty in reading and writing, in comprehending new concepts involving never encountered vocabularies or ideas, etc. HH also perceive them as such. Another source of conflict is the mode of communication used. Pure Deaf are native FSL users. HH or late deafened educated in a hearing environment are Signing Exact English.

- 2.4. There is general frustration for a few students who could not pursue their desired area of specialization. Though there are seven options for specialization, only those with greater number of students and those that will greatly increase students' chances for employment are finally opened for them. Those interested to pursue other areas but did not meet the requirements set are forced to take other options considered closer to their interest.
3. latter part of third year to fourth year
 - 3.1. A handful remains to have similar issues mentioned above and continues to have intense conflicts with family or peers. A great number learn to cope with it without being reactive and have learned to accept the situation as something beyond their capability to change.
 - 3.2. growing issues are focused on intense demands of academic requirements of their majors, desire to have Deaf organizations on campus. Issues of employment also become evident, particularly among those about to graduate (the first 8 students we had who were not included in the re-adjustments made for additional subjects for specialization: old students only had 6 units. The current junior-senior students are completing their 30 units of specialization).

B. PROGRAM AND SERVICES PROVIDED

1. Guidance & Counseling Service under the Counseling and Resource Unit for Deaf Esteem and Formation (C.R.U.-D.E.A.F.) is under the Student Services Area (see item 2). Guidance & Counseling Staff (with 3 part time female counselors, 1:30 ratio; 1 senior hearing counselor, 2 junior Deaf counselors) provides the following services:
 - 1.1. Initial interview, Individual counseling and group counseling
 - 1.2. individual or group involving family (for particular cases)
 - 1.3. growth workshops centering on: self-esteem issues evident in their family and peer relation problems; self-awareness and discovery; community building
 - 1.4. seminars on Deaf identity, Deaf community, Deaf culture, leadership etc are also offered.

Students' response: though voluntary, students use these services. However, female students avail of these services more often than male, and a number of students who greatly need these services do not at all avail them.

2. Student Services Area. Some part-time faculties are assigned a load equivalent to 6 hours/wk to take charge of organizing different activities for school-based presentations, competitions, or basing on the needs of the students.
 - 2.1. Sports Program (in-house training for campus and inter-school competitions)
 - 2.2. Dance and Art Program (extra curricular activities for self-enhancement of skills as well as venue for expression)
 - 2.3. Student activities (involving student-led projects such as Deaf Festival Week where students organize themselves to have various activities on Deaf issues, identity, Deaf culture, FSL, etc)
 - 2.4. Outreach activity (involve 2-wk summer outreach to a Deaf school in the province. Students with particular skills handling workshops are tapped to prepare the program for elementary and high school Deaf students).
 - 2.5. Spiritual Formation Program (once a year spiritual retreats and recollections, 2-3x a week Catholic Mass Service where students take responsibilities in the celebration, etc)
3. Career Placement Service is also under student services area. A part-time faculty with an assigned load equivalent to 6 hours/wk also handles this.

It was only this January that a Career Placement Service for Deaf needs was opened. For the last 10-11 years of the Deaf program, Deaf students have availed of the regular service provided to the hearing students. Their services included Career Orientation week (panel discussion of experts from different profession, panel discussion of past graduates successful in their fields, job fair etc), information service for placement, job preparation seminars for students due for OJT.

However, the Deaf students had limited chances from benefiting from the regular service due to problems in funding (for interpreters), personnel assigned to the general hearing population did not have the knowledge and understanding of neither Deaf needs nor the competence to communicate with them.

The closest input and assistance were provided to graduating students (of certificate course in bookkeeping/accounting that we used to offer for so many years) who had to undergo job preparation training for those due to have their OJT practicum. And these were in the areas of job interview coaching, basic etiquette and dressing, and resume writing. They also had opportunities to attend Career Orientation week. However, these were frustrating experiences for them since it did not tackle anything

about the Deaf experience in the workplace, either from the perspective of Deaf employees or hearing supervisors in charge of Deaf employees.

Middle of February we will be holding our first Career Orientation Week for Deaf students for first and second year students. The objective is to assist these students in making a decision as to what particular career direction they would like to take. There are only 2 areas of specializations we are offering at this point.

The 1st year group who is on their pre-college year have choices for their certificate course: Certificate course in Administrative Support for Business Operations (NTID's Business Technology) or Certificate course in Visual Arts. The 2nd year group are currently fulfilling requirements for their Bachelors Degree in Applied Deaf Studies with specialization options of any of the following: Entrepreneurship or Multimedia Arts.

Project activities are as follows:

- 1.1. Sharing and discussion of Deaf individuals involved in the following profession: entrepreneurs, artists in various fields (performing arts, advertising, architectural firm), office clerks and community leaders.
- 1.2. Input from Teachers handling 2 fields to discuss nature of subjects, kind of attitude and skills needed to excel in the subjects of each field, etc
- 1.3. Workshop session for students to gain awareness on their personal assessment of their readiness to pursue a particular field. Areas such as personality, values, and past achievements will be assessed and analyzed.
- 1.4. One or two faculty of each student will give their personal assessment of students' attitudes needed based from their 1 year of handling the students. A rating scale was developed to assist the teachers in determining whether students have particular attitudes and values needed for each area.
- 1.5. Individual interview with the Guidance Counselor. Results of 1.3 and 1.4 will be forwarded to the Guidance Counselors for their own use when they conduct their interviews. This is to make further assessment of student's readiness and make recommendations for the most appropriate choice for the specialization or certificate course to take next school year.

- 1.6. Are of limitation: no testing tool to assess students' aptitude and work values.

4. Program to prepare students for College Life

A summer orientation program is offered for in-coming students. Specific areas are presented, the rationale and expectations, the activities under each area. These areas are in the Academics and Student Services.

Deaf profile is presented and the specific attitudes and behaviors detrimental to college life, likewise the attitudes and behaviors encouraged are also discussed. The ladderized program and the specific students services program they will go through and the rationale for each as well as the general demands they are likely to be subjected to. Students from the other levels take part in the orientation and play a key role in sharing their experiences to the younger Deaf students.

Culmination of the 1 week orientation is their participation in the welcome party for all in coming students of the college and the Deaf students are introduced to the bigger community.

5. Service to monitor and facilitate student progress through the curriculum

- 5.1. Monitoring of students' grades is made as a requirement under the Scholarship-Grants-in-Aid Office in charge of disbursing subsidy to Deaf students. The monitoring scheme is to ensure that students who incur failures remain within the maximum allowable (15 units). Anything in excess incurred will correspond to a penalty of requiring the student concerned to pay for the subjects according to the units that is in excess of the maximum allowed.

- 5.2. There is no existing system that monitor and facilitate students' progress through the curriculum. Such a system only exists on a per subject set-up and handled by the teacher assigned in the subject. This is done via their academic performance record and the teacher's own strategies of following-up on the student. Teachers' are also required to provide regular consultation sessions for students. However, students rarely avail this on regular basis. There is also no standard system that is followed.

- 5.3. A few faculty members would refer students to the guidance counselors or set up appointments with them to discuss particular cases for referral. But there is also no standard system followed.

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