

Equitable Access for the Blind, Visually Impaired, and Print-Disabled (BVIPD) Students: A Pilot Study of BVIPD Services at the University of South Carolina

Introduction:

You are invited to take part in a research study being carried out by Dr. Dick Kawooya (Principal Investigator-PI/Associate Professor); Dr. Eric P. Robinson (co-PI/Associate Professor), and Dr. Clayton A. Copeland (co-PI/Instructor). We are in the College of Information and Communications (CIC) at the University of South Carolina (USC). USC's Office of Vice President for Research and The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) are sponsoring this research study. The purpose of this study is to develop a Campus Accessibility Partnership Model for providing accessible content to Blind, Visually Impaired, and Print-Disabled (BVIPD) students enrolled in online and face-to-face courses. BVIPD students often experience inequitable access to information that manifests as delays or failure to receive course learning materials that are otherwise more readily available to non-BVIPD students. The Partnership Model will enable the collaboration between campus, the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), Thomas Cooper Libraries and instructors to better serve BVIPD students. This study is being carried out at the University of South Carolina Columbia campus and other Southeastern Conference (SEC) institutions.

You are being asked to take part in this study because you are an SDRC staff member. You will participate by completing a short interview with one of the researchers. The interview will last no longer than 1 hour. Your information will be kept secured by the research team. No personally identifying information will be included in any publicly shared information. No significant risks are anticipated in participating in this study.

Concerns about your rights as a research subject are to be directed to: Lisa Johnson, Director, Office of Research Compliance, University of South Carolina, 1600 Hampton Street, Suite 414D, Columbia, SC 29208, Phone: (803) 777-6670 or Email: LisaJ@mailbox.sc.edu.

Interview questions:

Thank you for accepting to be part of this study. We appreciate you making the time to answer our questions. Answer all questions as candidly as possible. If the question is not applicable to you or you are uncomfortable answering any question, indicate not applicable.

Below are general questions about your department.

- 1) Tell us about yourself and the work you do as a Disability Service Office (DSO) (hereafter, your department).
- 2) What is your overall assessment of the quality of accessible services provided by your university library to Blind, Visually Impaired, and Print-Disabled (BVIPD) students?
- 3) What policies and procedures does your department currently follow for providing BVIPD students with accessible materials?
- 4) What are the current strengths and weaknesses of these policies and procedures?
- 5) How might the process of providing BVIPD student accessible materials be more effective and/or efficient?

Below we ask questions about legal and procedural issues associated with services to BVIPD students.

- 6) Could you please tell us about the current procedures and anticipated timeline for registering students with your department and what criteria must be met to be registered as a student with a visual impairment or print disability?
- 7) What accommodations are available to BVIPD students?
- 8) Does your department prepare or create an accessible copy of materials upon request or in anticipation of need (For example: for regularly used materials)?

- 9) What are your department's procedures for delivering accessible copies to BVIPD students in appropriate formats?
- 10) Specifically, how are the accessible copies delivered and what is the timeline for receipt of accessible materials?

In layperson's terms, how would you explain the legal infrastructure (laws regulating the creation and use of accessible content such as Copyright Act (Fair use, MTIA, etc), ADA, Rehabilitation Act, Higher Education Act / Higher Education Opportunity Act, etc) to facilitate access and accessibility for BVIPD students? Specifically, how familiar are you with the current legal infrastructure to facilitate:

- a) *Request* – Have established procedures for BVIPD students to request accessible copies?
- b) *Remediation* – Prepare or create an accessible copy upon request or in anticipation of need (For example: for regularly used materials)?
- c) *Delivery* – Deliver accessible copies to BVIPD students in appropriate formats and how are the accessible copies delivered?
- d) *Retention and Sharing* –retain and create database(s) of accessible copies for future use by BVIPD students?

Below are questions about collaborating with other entities on campus to provide services to BVIPD students.

- 11) To what extent does your department and the academic library (Thomas Cooper Library) work together to provide accessible content to BVIPD students?
- 12) How can your department and academic library work together to improve access for BVIPD students?
- 13) Does your department and/or the academic library retain accessible copies, say by creating database(s) of such materials for future use by BVIPD students?

14) If no to the question above, would you consider creating repositories of such materials and/or working with the academic library to create such repositories?

15) Does your department and the academic library coordinate services for BVIPD students? If so, what roles does each entity have? If no, why not?

16) Does your department work with instructors to coordinate services for BVIPD students? If so, what roles does each entity have? If not, why?

17) How can your department work with instructors to improve services to BVIPD students?

Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you for your time.