University of South Carolina
College of Information and Communications

Equitable Access for 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 more readily available to non-BVIPD students. The Partnership Model will enable the collaboration between Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), USC's Disability Services Office (DSO), Thomas Cooper Libraries (TCL), and instructors. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a visually impaired/blind/print disabled (BVIPD) student. This study is carried out at the University of South Carolina Columbia campus.

You will participate by recording audio diaries based on interview questions below. You will record your interview as an audio file using your smartphones and upload the file to the fold using this [SharePoint hyperlink]. If you cannot record and upload your audio interview, you can answer the interview questions in a text format using a word processor like MS Word or similar applications. Upon submitting the audio or text file, you will receive a $100 gift card. Alternatively, the Interview can be conducted over Zoom. The interview will last about an hour. Your information will be kept secure 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 agreeing to be part of this study. We appreciate you taking the time to answer our questions. Answer all questions as honestly as possible. If the question is not applicable to you or you are uncomfortable answering any question, indicate it is not applicable.

<u>NOTE</u>: Remember to record the interview on your smartphone recording app! If you are using a word processor like MS Word, remember to save the file and save it often when completing the interview.

1) Tell us about yourself as a person and student, sharing anything you want to about yourself.

2) What does it mean to be, blind, visually impaired or print disabled (BVIPD)?

3) What is your overall lived experience? Answer based on the disability that applies to you.

4) How has your visual impairment, blindness or print disability affected your school experience?

5) Do you feel supported as a BVIPD student?

   a) If yes, who (a person or office) has provided such support?

   b) If you answered "NO" to feeling supported, why do you not feel supported?

6) What could be done differently to make you feel more supported as a BVIPD student?

7) What accommodations does the university provide to you as a visually impaired or blind or print disabled student?

8) Do you feel that the accommodations available meet your needs? Explain.

9) Which of the accommodations provided to you are most helpful and why?

10) How could the accommodations be improved to better meet your needs?

11) What policies and procedures does the university currently follow for providing you with accessible materials?

12) The following questions are about your school's Disability Services Office (DSO):

   a) How did you go about registering with the university's DSO, and was this process accessible to you?

   b) How long did this process take?

   c) What documentation do you need to register as a student with a visual impairment, blindness or a print disability?

   d) Could you obtain this documentation accessibly, or did you require assistance from others?

13) What accessible format options have you been given through the DSO or university library (for example: braille, accessible digital documents, or audio files of the information)?

14) If offered more than one format, what is your preference?

15) What accessible format options have you not been offered that you would find useful?

16) Does your DSO have established procedures for BVIPD students to request accessible materials?

17) If your DSO office does have established procedures, what are they and are they accessible to you?

18) How might the process of providing BVIPD student accessible materials be made more effective and/or efficient?

19) Does your DSO prepare or create an accessible copy of materials only upon request or do they maintain a repository of regularly used materials?

20) What are your DSO's procedures for delivering accessible materials to BVIPD students in appropriate formats?

21) How are the accessible materials delivered?

22) Do you get accessible materials by the start of the class?

23) What is the timeline for receipt of the accessible materials?

24) What role, if any, do your instructors play in facilitating you getting accessible materials in a timely manner?

25) Do your instructors coordinate with the DSO and/or library to facilitate the timely delivery of accessible materials for their classes?

26) What has been your experience using your campus library for purposes such as working on research papers?

27) If you have used the campus library, was the library able to provide you with the material you needed in an accessible format?

28) If you have used the campus library, did library staff direct you to the campus DSO to request or obtain the material?

29) What is your overall assessment of the quality of accessible services provided by your university library to BVIPD students?

30) How much do the DSO and the library work together to provide accessible materials to you as a BVIPD student?

31) Is there anything instructors can do to make that process more efficient?

Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you for your time. Please remember to save the audio or word processor file and upload it to this SharePoint hyperlink