



Deaf Interpreter Curriculum

Module 4: Ethical Considerations & Challenges for Deaf Interpreters



Module 4: Ethical Considerations & Challenges for Deaf Interpreters

Unit Titles & Sequence

- The Foundation of Ethics—Knowing Yourself
- History of NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct
- Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter
- The Deaf Interpreter as an Ally



Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Key Questions

- What are some of your core values, morals, and beliefs?
- What are ways to identify and reduce the potential impact of personal biases on professional behavior?
- What are general ethical decision-making processes?





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Principles of Professional Practice

- Meta-ethical principles
- Distinguishing characteristics of professionals
- Values within the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct
- Nine steps to ethical decision-making
- Personality characteristics that may affect work of Deaf interpreters





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Six Stages of Moral Development

- Pre-Conventional level
 - Stage 1: Punishment/obedience
 - Stage 2: Instrumental relativist
- Conventional level
 - Stage 3: “Good boy/good girl”
 - Stage 4: Law and order
- Post-Conventional level
 - Stage 5: Social contract (legalistic)
 - Stage 6: Universal ethical-principle





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Case Study 1:

- A Deaf interpreter is working at a local health fair, at an HIV testing exhibit. The interpreter is asked by a Deaf attendee waiting in a line, “Will the needle hurt?” The interpreter responds, “I cannot answer because of the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct,” while recalling a past experience of being reprimanded for providing an opinion.





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Case Study 2:

- This time, the Deaf Interpreter smiles at the Deaf attendee and says, “I’d be happy to interpret for you, let’s go and find the person responsible for HIV testing. I have had an HIV test in the past and it did not hurt for me, but maybe for others. It depends on the person’s ability to tolerate needles. Come with me and we’ll find out.”





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Ethics & Ethical Fitness

- ❑ Set of moral principles or values
- ❑ Theory or system of moral values (e.g., present-day materialistic ethic)
- ❑ Principles of conduct governing an individual or group (e.g., professional ethics)
- ❑ Guiding philosophy





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Ethics in Concept

- Goals
- Values & morals
- Ethical behavior
- Theories related to ethics
- Meta-ethical principles
- Interpretation of code
- Making ethical decisions
- Critical thinking skills





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Personal Status: Influence on Ethics

- Race & ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Religion
- Occupation
- Socioeconomic status
- Sexual orientation





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics— Knowing Yourself

Common Ethical Categories

- Personal
- Community/cultural
- Professional





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Ethics & Deaf Interpreter Practice

- Code/s of ethics (applicable to various professions)
- Purpose of such codes
- Ethical decision making
- Considerations & challenges for Deaf interpreters





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Ethical fitness: Right vs. Right Dilemmas

- Truth or loyalty
- Self or community
- Short term or long term
- Justice or memory





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Ethical fitness: Right vs. wrong dilemmas

- Legal?
- Violates code of ethics?
- Suppose it was on the front page of the newspaper?
- What would your mother (or mentor, role model) think?





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Case Study 1 (short- vs. long-term)

- You interpret regularly for a 16-year-old with cognitive delays and behavior problems. You and the student were involved in an altercation and are meeting with the disciplinary team regarding the incident. Since you are the only one that the student understands, you are asked to interpret the meeting for the student while reporting on the action.





Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics– Knowing Yourself

Case Study 2 (individual vs. community)

- In the lobby you see a candidate for a SSP job waiting. The interviewer is standing near the receptionist desk chatting. You walk by and see the candidate sign to another candidate, “The only reason I am applying for this job is because I want to pay off my college debts. This job is easy. Those DeafBlind people can’t hear or see and its easy to take advantage of them.” You and the interviewer enter the room. The candidate enters the room and the interview begins. During the interview the candidate says, “I am applying because I want to support DeafBlind people and be the best provider as possible.” After the interview ends, do you share what you saw with the DeafBlind interviewer?



Unit 1: The Foundation of Ethics— Knowing Yourself

Case Study Reflections

- ❑ View Ethics Case Study 2 video then trainer-selected *Reflections* videos
- ❑ Using the Demand Control Schema:
 - ❑ What challenges were noticed by observers and how can these be identified?
 - ❑ What are some controls that were identified by observers?
 - ❑ How can you apply the DC-S if confronted with a similar situation?





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Key Questions

- What historical issues led to RID & NAD collaboration leading to the development of the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct?
- How did the collaboration between RID & NAD impact the roles and functions of Deaf and hearing interpreters?
- What are the differences between policies/regulations and guidelines?
- Why is it important for Deaf interpreters to stay abreast of current trends in interpretation and in related subject areas (e.g., medical, mental health, and legal interpreting)?





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Historical Background

- RID Code of Ethics & NAD Code of Ethics
- NAD-RID Council on Interpreting and joint development of NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct
- RID VIEWS 2008 President's Report: *Reaffirming the NAD-RID Relationship*





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

RID Grievance System

- RID Ethical Practices System (EPS)
- NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct (CPC)
- EPS Enforcement Procedures





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Key Elements: NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct

- Sections – Name, Scope, Philosophy, Guiding Principles, and Tenets
- Essential Core – *Do No Harm*
- Structure – Tenets, Guiding Principles & Illustrative Behaviors for Interpreters





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 1.0 – Confidentiality

Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential information

- **Guiding Principle:** Interpreters hold a position of trust in their role as linguistic and cultural facilitators of communication. Confidentiality is highly valued by consumers and is essential to protecting all involved.





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 1.0 – Confidentiality, cont'd

Illustrative Behaviors

- Each interpreting situation (e.g., elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education, legal, medical, mental health) has a standard of confidentiality.
- Under the reasonable interpreter standard, professional interpreters are expected to know the general requirements and applicability of various levels of confidentiality.
- Exceptions to confidentiality include, for example, federal and state laws requiring mandatory reporting of abuse or threats of suicide, or responding to subpoenas.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 2.0 – Professionalism

Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation

- **Guiding Principle: Interpreters expected to stay abreast of evolving language use and trends in the profession of interpreting as well as in the American Deaf community.**





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 2.0 – Professionalism

- **Guiding Principle, cont'd**
 - **Interpreters accept assignments using discretion with regard to skill, communication mode, setting, and consumer needs.**
 - **Interpreters possess knowledge of American Deaf culture and deafness-related resources.**



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 2.0 – Professionalism, cont'd

Illustrative Behaviors

- Provide service delivery regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor.
- Assess consumer needs and the interpreting situation before and during the assignment and make adjustments as needed.
- Render the message faithfully by conveying the content and spirit of what is being communicated, using language most readily understood by consumers, and correcting errors discreetly and expeditiously.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 2.0 – Professionalism

- **Illustrative Behaviors, cont'd**
 - Request support (e.g., Certified Deaf Interpreters, team members, language facilitators) when needed to fully convey the message or to address exceptional communication challenges (e.g., cognitive disabilities, foreign sign language, emerging language ability, or lack of formal instruction or language).
 - Refrain from providing counsel, advice, or personal opinions.
 - Judiciously provide information or referral regarding available interpreting or community resources without infringing upon consumers' rights.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 3.0 – Conduct

Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation

- **Guiding Principle:** Interpreters are expected to present themselves appropriately in demeanor and appearance. They avoid situations that result in conflicting roles or perceived or actual conflicts of interest.





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 3.0 – Conduct

Illustrative Behaviors

- Consult with appropriate persons regarding the interpreting situation to determine issues such as placement and adaptations necessary to interpret effectively.
- Decline assignments or withdraw from the interpreting profession when not competent due to physical, mental, or emotional factors.
- Avoid performing dual or conflicting roles in interdisciplinary (e.g., educational or mental health teams) or other settings.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 3.0 – Conduct

- **Illustrative Behaviors, cont'd**
 - **Comply with established workplace codes of conduct, notify appropriate personnel if there is a conflict with this Code of Professional Conduct, and actively seek resolution where warranted.**
 - **Conduct and present themselves in an unobtrusive manner and exercise care in choice of attire.**
 - **Refrain from the use of mind-altering substances before or during the performance of duties.**



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 3.0 – Conduct

- Illustrative Behaviors, cont'd
 - Disclose to parties involved any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
 - Avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest that might cause harm or interfere with the effectiveness of interpreting services.
 - Refrain from using confidential interpreted information for personal, monetary, or professional gain.
 - Refrain from using confidential interpreted information for the benefit of personal or professional affiliations or entities.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 4.0 – Respect for Consumers

Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers

- **Guiding Principle:** Interpreters are expected to honor consumer preferences in selection of interpreters and interpreting dynamics, while recognizing the realities of qualifications, availability, and situation.





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 4.0 – Respect for Consumers

Illustrative Behaviors

- Consider consumer requests or needs regarding language preferences, and render the message accordingly (interpreted or transliterated).
- Approach consumers with a professional demeanor at all times.
- Obtain the consent of consumers before bringing an intern to an assignment.
- Facilitate communication access and equality, and support the full interaction and independence of consumers.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 5.0 – Respect for Colleagues

Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns and students of the profession

- **Guiding Principle:** Interpreters are expected to collaborate with colleagues to foster the delivery of effective interpreting services. They also understand that the manner in which they relate to colleagues reflects upon the profession in general.





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 5.0 – Respect for Colleagues

- Illustrative Behaviors
 - Maintain civility toward colleagues, interns, and students.
 - Work cooperatively with team members through consultation before assignments regarding logistics, providing professional and courteous assistance when asked and monitoring the accuracy of the message while functioning in the role of the support interpreter.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 5.0 – Respect for Colleagues

- Illustrative Behaviors, cont'd
 - Approach colleagues privately to discuss and resolve breaches of ethical or professional conduct through standard conflict resolution methods; file a formal grievance only after such attempts have been unsuccessful or the breaches are harmful or habitual.
 - Assist and encourage colleagues by sharing information and serving as mentors when appropriate.
 - Obtain the consent of colleagues before bringing an intern to an assignment.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 6.0 – Business Practices

Interpreters maintain ethical business practices

- **Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to conduct their business in a professional manner whether in private practice or in the employ of an agency or other entity. Professional interpreters are entitled to a living wage based on their qualifications and expertise. Interpreters are also entitled to working conditions conducive to effective service delivery.**





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 6.0 – Business Practices

Illustrative Behaviors

- Inform appropriate parties in a timely manner when delayed or unable to fulfill assignments.
- Reserve the option to decline or discontinue assignments if working conditions are not safe, healthy, or conducive to interpreting.
- Refrain from harassment or coercion before, during, or after the provision of interpreting services.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 6.0 – Business Practices

- Illustrative Behaviors, cont'd
 - Render *pro bono* services in a fair and reasonable manner.
 - Charge fair and reasonable fees for the performance of interpreting services and arrange for payment in a professional and judicious manner.



Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 7.0 – Professional Development

Interpreters engage in professional development

- **Guiding Principle:** Interpreters are expected to foster and maintain interpreting competence and the stature of the profession through ongoing development of knowledge and skills.





Unit 2: History of NAD & RID Codes of Professional Conduct

Tenet 7.0 – Professional Development

Illustrative Behaviors

- Increase knowledge and strengthen skills through activities such as:
 - pursuing higher education;
 - attending workshops and conferences;
 - seeking mentoring and supervision opportunities;
 - participating in community events; and
 - engaging in independent studies.
- Keep abreast of laws, policies, rules, and regulations that affect the profession.



Unit 3: Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter

Key Questions

- What are the ethical tenets that govern the given scenarios?
- Are there different ethical decision-making processes between Deaf interpreters and hearing interpreters?
- How can Deaf interpreters distinguish their values, biases, and norms from workplace ethical decision-making?
- Are there special ethical considerations and challenges Deaf interpreters face?





Unit 3: Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter

Case Analysis Process

- What is happening here?
- Why is it happening?
- What are the options?
- Which option would be best?
Why?
- How will that option be carried out?
- What would the outcomes be?
- What are possible consequences?
For whom?





Unit 3: Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter

Analysis of Case Studies

- Ethical Dilemmas Involving Deaf Interpreters
 - What would you do in this situation?
 - What factors did you consider in making your decision?
 - Can you justify your decision based on the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct?
 - Can you think of a similar situation in which you would act differently? Why?





Unit 3: Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter



Case Study 1

- You and a hearing interpreter facilitated communication for a grassroots Deaf man and his doctor about upcoming major surgery. Two weeks later, you and members of your family took part in a Deaf community social event; you encountered the same man for whom you interpreted. You maintained a professional demeanor. He was persistent and encouraged you to have a discussion with him. You tried to ignore him without being rude. Later, he and his wife approached you. He wanted you to debrief her on his medical appointment. You explained you couldn't recall the information. He persisted, giving you his permission to update her about his upcoming surgery.



Unit 3: Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter



Case Study 2

- You and a hearing interpreter facilitate communication for a hearing mental health counselor and Deaf patient who recently immigrated to the United States from China and has little knowledge of ASL or English. The counselor recommends the patient go through testing to screen for a specific mental illness. You (the Deaf interpreter) believe the local mental health center for Deaf patients would be a great resource for the counselor and the patient.



Unit 3: Ethics & the Deaf Interpreter



Case Study 3

- **Jon, a hearing NIC Master certified interpreter who has been interpreting for 15 years, contacted you to team with him. The local VR office contacted Jon to provide interpreting services for an appointment with a hearing VR counselor and a Deaf 16 year old bilingual native ASL user, Maeve, who has recently lost most of her vision. The counselor will be explaining qualification criteria, job training, and job placement. You have no interpreting experience with DeafBlind consumers, nor are you familiar with the DeafBlind community and their communication needs. No other Deaf interpreters work in your town.**



Unit 4: The Deaf Interpreter as an Ally

Key Questions

- What are the differences and similarities between the roles of ally, advocate, and Deaf interpreter?
- How can Deaf interpreters judiciously provide information or referral regarding available interpreting or community resources without overstepping their role as interpreters?





Unit 4: The Deaf Interpreter as an Ally

Definitions

- Ally
- Advocate

Roles & Overlap

- What are the differences and similarities between the roles and responsibilities of allies, advocates and Deaf interpreters?
- Describe how the roles of allies and Deaf interpreters may overlap.





Unit 4: The Deaf Interpreter as an Ally

Group Dialogue

- Why is it important for Deaf interpreters to maintain professional boundaries, impartiality, and integrity in their work?
- Identify strategies for evaluating educational, cognitive, physiological, and sociolinguistic factors and communication needs that may influence ethical decision-making by Deaf interpreters prior, during, and after interpreting assignments.





Unit 4: The Deaf Interpreter as an Ally

Group Dialogue, cont'd

- How can Deaf interpreters judiciously provide information or referral regarding available interpreting or community resources without overstepping their role as interpreters?

