

Spotlight Chat- Scaling Disability Services with UC Berkeley's DSP

[00:00:00.56] JACLYN LAZZARI: Thank you for joining us today for the session titled "Scaling Disability Services with UC Berkeley's Disabled Students' Program."

[00:00:09.56] Before we meet today's speakers and dive into the presentation, I'd like to introduce myself and take care of a couple of housekeeping items. My name is Jaclyn. And I'm on the marketing team here at 3Play. I'll be moderating today's session.

[00:00:25.88] Just a quick self-description-- I'm a young white woman with long brown hair wearing a black t-shirt today. And with that all taken care of-- thank you for bearing with me-- I'm happy to introduce today's speakers, Trenna Davis and Alecia Barnes from the University of California, Berkeley. Thank you, Trenna and Alecia, for joining us today. With that, I'll pass it off to you for what I know will be a wonderful presentation.

[00:00:55.43] TRENNA DAVIS: Good morning, everyone, and welcome, or I should say good afternoon for those of you who are on the East Coast. I am Trenna Davis. I'm the communications services supervisor here at UC Berkeley in the Disabled Students' Program. I'm a woman of color wearing a pink shirt and a gray cardigan.

[00:01:14.22] I have been in the industry for about 26 years. I started off as a court reporter, a stenographer. And I did that for approximately 10 years. And I transitioned over to broadcast captioning and a CART provider for the last 16 years. The last six years, I've been here at UC Berkeley.

[00:01:34.97] I'm a certified shorthand reporter in Georgia and Texas. And I also hold a registered professional reporter certification through the National Court Reporters Association. And I will turn it over to Alecia.

[00:01:48.12] ALECIA BARNES: Good morning, everyone. I am Alecia Barnes. And I'm the Captioned Media coordinator for UC Berkeley. I am an African-American woman. My pronouns are she/her/hers. And I am currently wearing a bright gold t-shirt. And I'm very happy to be here.

[00:02:10.05] Just a little about my experience-- I have incorporated close to seven years of experience in providing captioning solutions for UC Berkeley. I started as a student. And I am a 2020 alum of the University of California at Berkeley.

[00:02:26.52] Currently, I hold a Master's of Education degree from San Francisco State University with a special education emphasis. I have a profound passion for working with accessibility empowerment tools, which stems from my personal experience with the same accessibility and accommodations that I used while attending UC Berkeley that enabled me to graduate from both SFSU and UC Berkeley with honors.

[00:02:55.21] So I'm going to go to slide 2, which is our agenda. We are going to review our background and the context to accessibility, strategies that have been employed by University of Berkeley, our DSP Captioning Unit, which is Disabled Students' Program, our experiences and challenges, anticipated developments and rollouts that we are looking forward to in the future. And finally, we will end with a Q&A and our closing remarks.

[00:03:30.16] So if you will go to slide 5, we just want to share our mission statement briefly with you. And I'll be turning it over to Trenna Davis, who'll go over our growth.

[00:03:44.22] Our mission is for the Disabled Students' Program to promote an inclusive environment for students with disabilities. We try to equip our disabled students with appropriate accommodations and services that help them to achieve their individual academic goals.

[00:04:02.73] We're absolutely dedicated to supporting disabled students and collaborating with the campus community to remove barriers to educational access and embrace the university's value of equity and inclusion. We believe that an accessible environment universally will benefit everyone. The services that we provide include alternative media, communication services, which we will be diving in today, note-taking, and proctoring.

[00:04:33.03] I will now turn it over to Trenna, who will highlight the growth in the number of students served and the increasing demand for services.

[00:04:49.91] JACLYN LAZZARI: Hi, Alecia. Just hopping on. I think we might have-- or maybe Trenna lost connection. I'm not sure what happened. I don't see her on the presentation. Do you want me to--

[00:05:05.36] ALECIA BARNES: Go back-- yeah. Let's stay on this slide. Go back to slide 5.

[00:05:12.41] JACLYN LAZZARI: Sure.

[00:05:13.39] ALECIA BARNES: So since 2017, the number of students requiring CART/ASL services has grown from a total of nine students to 53. And the demand for captioned media has increased from approximately 100 videos per semester in the beginning to now over 4,500 videos that we captioned per semester.

[00:05:41.63] To manage this growth efficiently, we have integrated our student accommodations portal, AIM, which is Accessible Information Management, which has streamlined workflows and reduced administrative burdens, especially during the busy period of new adds and drops at the beginning of each semester. Our partnerships with remote vendors provide real-time captioning. And our post-production vendors, like 3Play, ensure that we can handle the increased volume while maintaining high-quality service for both real-time and post-production captioning needs.

[00:06:17.85] Continuous improvement is vital. We listen to student feedback. We take it seriously and update our technology and processes accordingly to stay ahead of industry trends and compliance requirements.

[00:06:32.70] By leveraging technology integration, automating scheduling, and maintaining clear communication with our instructors, we ensure that our services scale effectively without compromising quality. This approach is crucial for providing high-quality real-time captioning, ASL interpreting services, and post-production captioning, or-- otherwise known as Captioned Media, ensuring all students have equal access to educational resources. Let's go ahead and move on to slide 6.

[00:07:13.02] So to ensure that we're continually improving our services, we do actively seek and listen to the feedback from our students with accommodations. And here are some of the challenges that they've shared with us, which highlight the areas that we needed to focus on to enhance their learning experience and accessibility.

[00:07:33.12] The top six points that we heard consistently of our student challenges were difficulty with differences between lectures with a real-time captioner and participating in discussion groups. For that, our-- addressing the student challenges with technology and partnerships-- difficulty in switching-- the solution was remote captioning for group discussions.

[00:08:10.79] When providing remote captioning services for a class that also has group discussions, the remote captioner is often not able to hear the students in the discussion groups because they're not individually miked, which prevents the student from being able to participate in real time. To handle this, we assign an in-person captioner for classes that include discussions. This ensures that all students can participate fully in real time.

[00:08:40.06] Challenges in participating in group projects with other students in real time-- our solution was to provide audio clarity in group projects. Participating in group projects can be difficult for students relying on captioning due to issues with audio clarity and group dynamics. We provide assistive listening devices that enhance audio quality and can be connected directly to the student's hearing aids. Captioners also use headsets and small microphones to improve their ability to capture group discussions.

[00:09:17.65] Next, we found that students informed us that the instructors often would not repeat questions that were asked by other students, which affects comprehension for those relying on captioning. What we found is that when students do not-- or excuse me, when the instructors do not repeat questions asked by students, it affects the ability of those relying on captioning to follow the discussion. We do send out reminder letters to instructors emphasizing the importance of repeating questions so that all students, including those using captioning services, can follow along.

[00:09:58.54] Videos being captioned before lectures or relying on auto-captioning, which often lacks accuracy-- our solution is professional captioning services. Instructors often want to show media that has auto-captioning features. And they're unaware that they're not accurate, leading to misunderstandings and missed information.

[00:10:25.97] We educate instructors on the importance of having their videos professionally captioned to ensure 99% accuracy compared to the 95% that ASR provides, depending on the

vendor. This includes providing clear instructions on how to access profession captioning services.

[00:10:47.66] Another issue that are challenges-- that our students face as challenges was pushback from some instructors regarding the implementation of accessibility measures. Our solution and what we found is that pushback from instructors often stems from a lack of understanding about the necessity and implementation of accessibility measures. We address these concerns by inviting instructors to bring any issues to us directly. We have developed a multi-media step-by-step guide to walk instructors through the process of implementing accessibility measures. And this reassures them.

[00:11:31.91] Equipment issues, such as poor audio quality and accessibility of equipment-- what we found is that we needed to provide high-quality audio and video equipment. Our students were reporting that connecting audio via Zoom often results in poor audio quality because the instructor might not be near the computer holding the Zoom presentation to stream the audio.

[00:12:00.24] We have installed course capture equipment in classrooms to provide high-quality audio and video to our remote captioners, eliminating the need for the Zoom audio feed, which can sometimes be unreliable. Additionally, we offer assistive listening devices to students, which they can check out to enhance audio quality. All right.

[00:12:29.17] JACLYN LAZZARI: Alecia, really quick, Trenna is back, just to let you know in case you didn't see her-- but just wanted to jump in.

[00:12:36.95] ALECIA BARNES: Perfect. Perfect. OK.

[00:12:45.75] TRENNA DAVIS: And because I did get disconnected for a moment, I am going to go back and address the growth. Alecia, did you have a chance to go over the growth?

[00:12:55.23] ALECIA BARNES: I went over the growth.

[00:12:58.35] TRENNA DAVIS: Great. All right. Now that we've identified the various challenges our students face, it's crucial to explore how we overcome these obstacles and enhance our services. By leveraging technology and establishing strong partnerships with our vendors, we can not only address the difficulties highlighted, but also streamline our processes for a more efficient and effective support system.

[00:13:22.89] Technology plays a huge role in our ability to maintain quality captions. Classrooms equipped to stream audio enable us to provide remote services for captioning. We strive for the best quality possible by providing on-site captioners for interactive discussions, as microphones do not pick up the students adequately. We also utilize assistive listening devices for our students and our captioners to enhance the audio within the classroom.

[00:13:52.15] Now we'll look at how we have leveraged technology and vendor partnerships to streamline our workflows, particularly with real-time captioning, CART, and interpreting

services. AIM, which-- AIM has allowed us to streamline workflows, manage scheduling for all services, and keep up with the student and instructor needs efficiently. AIM helps in scheduling and coordinating captioners and interpreters, centralizing all processes and reducing administrative burdens. The integration greatly assists in managing our workload and ensures quick turnaround times, all while uploading our commitment to providing high-quality real-time service for equal access.

[00:14:35.32] We collaborate with multiple vendors to efficiently manage our workload and maintain high standards of quality. Timely delivery is paramount in our operations, alongside upholding rigorous quality control measures.

[00:14:50.45] A significant enhancement has been the recent integration with AIM and 3Play Media, streamlining our scheduling processes. Once a third-party vendor is assigned, all pertinent information, such as blackout dates, times, location, captioning links, and the Zoom links, is seamlessly transmitted to third-party-- to the third-party vendor.

[00:15:11.68] Interpreting services include remote services, as well, which is VRI-- also benefit from quality audio. With classrooms equipped to provide high-quality audio, interpreters can hear clearly, ensuring accurate and effective communication for students.

[00:15:28.57] Now I'm going to talk about the Assistive Listening Devices, ALDs, to address the specific audio challenges in the classroom. ALDs are checked out to students and the captioners to enhance the audio in small groups. These devices help students with hearing aids to filter out the ambient noise and connect directly to their hearing aids.

[00:15:50.21] Captioners use headsets to listen in on small group discussions, maintaining high-quality captioning. And now we will talk about the leveraging of technology and vendor partnerships with our Captioned Media unit.

[00:16:05.25] ALECIA BARNES: Thanks, Trenna. So for the importance of captioned media, it's important to note that captioned media is not just limited to the lowercase d/capital D deaf and hard of hearing student community. Research shows that there are tremendous benefits for all students.

[00:16:25.47] Students with neurodivergent learning and communication disabilities, as well as those whose first language is not English, can benefit from the accommodation. Captioned media can also increase retention, focus, and engagement for all students by up to 40%. This is sourced by the University of South Florida at St. Petersburg.

[00:16:52.62] In addition, of the ADA, Section 508 also states that multimedia should be supported with captions and transcripts that have been human-edited for appropriate grammar, punctuation, speaker and sound identification, as well as time synchronization. The goal is for captions and transcripts to be easily readable and timed for comprehension with-- audio content cannot be heard.

[00:17:20.20] In leveraging vendor partnerships, we have utilized our relationships with our vendors, including 3Play, to test our existing platforms, such as AIM and Kaltura, for technology improvements with high success. The AIM integration specifically-- we have utilized AIM for instructor requests, documentation and tracking, returning of video files with captions, and notifications to instructors. We also use it to gauge the flow of influx of video requests so that we know how to prioritize by show date, ensuring timely return of materials.

[00:18:10.84] The Kaltura integration-- we have utilized Kaltura and processing speed tags that are recognized and uploaded into 3Play and our other vendors every 15 minutes through API integration. And working in collaboration with 3Play, we have been able to request that 3Play create the ability for any of the files that our team of student editors work on to be auto-synced for-- to make sure that all captions that have been edited are automatically synced to match up with what is being spoken on the screen.

[00:18:55.35] Through 3Play, we've also utilized open captions feature for classes that lack good access to Wi-Fi or classes where the instructor may be a little bit old-school and want to utilize the MP4 file in their class downloaded on their computer. Open captions allows us to provide this feature to that instructor so that they have no worries about Wi-Fi connectivity. And they can still show and be in compliance.

[00:19:28.71] We also utilize the WebVTT feature from 3Play, which allows for our instructors who utilize videos within their PowerPoint presentations to caption those videos and, again, remain in compliance for their student with the accommodation. We also leverage the processing speeds that have been made available to us, including having the option of a two-hour turnaround, which is a huge bonus for us and allows greater leverage with turnaround time for our urgent requests.

[00:20:08.75] So next, we will address the need for-- in previous slide. Next, we'll address the need for human captioning over automated speech recognition. Automated speech recognition technology may offer automated captioning solutions. But our commitment to quality and effectiveness drives our reliance on human captioning.

[00:20:37.22] It does have limitations. The technology does not meet our quality of standards for real-time captions. It is effective for speakers that have no background noise, speaking one at a time, and with English as their first language. While ASR may be effective for English speakers, particularly those without accents, human captioning remains essential for ensuring accurate interpretation and comprehension, especially for individuals with diverse linguistic backgrounds or accents.

[00:21:14.34] The importance of human captions for our students is that our feedback that we receive consistently highlights the noticeable difference in accuracy and effectiveness between human-generated captions and those produced by automated speech recognition. As a result, we prioritize human captioning to ensure the highest level of accuracy and accessibility to our users. We find that it's just the right thing to do. It's more than an compliance thing for us. We want to make sure that it is something that we provide because we believe that it increases inclusivity for our students as well.

[00:22:00.03] Next, I'm going to turn it over to Trenna, who will talk about live captioning versus real-time captioning and why it's important to understand that these terms are not necessarily interchangeable. Trenna?

[00:22:15.73] TRENNA DAVIS: Thanks, Alecia. We've noticed that our vendors often use live captioning and real-time captioning interchangeably. This can lead to confusion about what services they actually provide. It's crucial to make sure vendors clearly distinguish between these terms and specify what they offer.

[00:22:34.34] Many vendors promote their captioning products as live or real-time. But they rely on automatic speech recognition, or ASR, technology. ASR often introduces delays and lacks the accuracy and immediacy we need for effective real-time captioning. Some vendors use a hybrid approach, where ASR is used initially and then a human editor makes corrections in real time. This method can cause significant delays, sometimes two to three minutes. Such delays are unacceptable in an interactive learning environment, where students need to follow along in real time and do not meet the ADA guidelines.

[00:23:11.71] ASR and AI technologies often also summarize spoken content instead of providing a verbatim transcription. Summarized captions are not suitable for deaf or hard of hearing students who rely on accurate, word-for-word transcriptions to fully understand the material. When working with vendors, it's essential to confirm that their captioning services involve live human captioners, either a stenographer or a voice writer. These captioners must provide accurate real-time captions without delays. Our commitment is to ensure that students receive high-quality captioning services, maintaining the integrity of their learning experiences. The next slide.

[00:24:03.24] Now that we've discussed the importance of how we address the challenges to our partnerships, let's move on to how we streamline our processes to enhance operational efficiency and reduce administrative burdens. Let's discuss the importance of automating the scheduling and the syncing processes.

[00:24:22.66] Automating scheduling and syncing processes has proven instrumental in effectively managing the high volume of students and services. Previously, we relied heavily on manual entries using Google Sheets and manipulating fields to extract the necessary data. This manual approach often led to errors and inefficiencies, particularly when sending information to vendors through various Sheets and formulas.

[00:24:47.48] By automating the scheduling process, we have significantly reduced the occurrence of errors and streamlined our operations. Now essential information is seamlessly transmitted to vendors without the need for manual intervention, resulting in smoother workflows and enhanced accuracy.

[00:25:09.72] ALECIA BARNES: For automating scheduling and syncing processes on the captioned media side, what we have found is that by using AIM, we are able to automate the video submission process and ask instructors to engage with AIM in order to give us not only the video titles, the show dates, and the URLs if they're available-- and this also has eliminated the

need for us to use the older formats that we use, such as Google Suite, Google Forms, Google Sheets. And that allows us to continue on with more timely delivery of our materials.

[00:26:09.56] TRENNA DAVIS: Alecia, you want to go ahead?

[00:26:11.24] ALECIA BARNES: Yes, I see. OK. Sorry about that. It also allows us to provide comprehensive training for staff and instructors. So we will speak about how to ensure comprehensive training for staff and the instructors.

[00:26:28.67] We employ multiple strategies to familiarize them with the technology and processes in place. Our training methods include sending out detailed letters to instructors, providing comprehensive instructions on how to effectively utilize captioned media accommodation and CART/ASL services. Additionally, we organize FAQ sessions to address any questions or concerns that the instructors may have, particularly if they're new to these accommodations.

[00:27:01.83] Moreover, we prioritize updating content of our website, ensuring that it serves as a reliable source of information with relevant resources. By implementing these measures, we equip our staff and instructors with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively navigate the technology and processes involved in providing accommodations, therefore-- thereby ensuring an inclusive learning environment for all students.

[00:27:38.61] TRENNA DAVIS: Another key aspect is maintaining clear communication. Regular communication with staff, instructors, and students is crucial for smooth operations. We ensure ongoing dialogue through emails, meetings, and updates on our website. Clear communication helps in addressing any issues promptly and keeps everyone informed about new developments and best practices.

[00:28:03.69] Regularly soliciting feedback is also crucial. Ensuring regular solicitation of feedback is essential for maintaining high-quality services. At the initial intake with each student, we emphasize the importance of their input and encourage them to share any suggestions or concerns they may have regarding our services.

[00:28:23.74] Additionally, we conduct two surveys per semester to gather comprehensive feedback. The first survey, administered mid-semester, allows us to perform a check-in and address any emerging issues promptly. The second survey, distributed at the end of the semester, seeks feedback on the overall quality of services provided encompassing captioned media, real-time captioning, CART, ASL interpreting services. By actively seeking feedback at the various stages, we demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement and ensuring that our services meet the evolving needs of our students effectively. And next, we'll go to the experiences, challenges, and successes with Alecia.

[00:29:09.39] ALECIA BARNES: So the things that we've learned along the way is we quickly identified that given the pace of our growth-- that our then-current practices were not conducive to a high-volume environment-- thus, the need for scaling based on increased volume. In 2017,

we received all requests via email. Due to our growth, now in 2024, we utilize AIM for instructor requests, documentation, and tracking of files.

[00:29:45.72] Returning by due dates was a huge challenge for us because of course capture automatic recorded lectures. This was based on the 24 turnaround time required. And so by the utilization of using AIM, we are better able to track those 24-hour turnarounds, document each class shortly after the class finishes, and walk it completely through the system to make sure that the student has access to the file immediately with the proper captions.

[00:30:25.45] The impact of the pandemic created an environment where we went from 100% on-campus attendance to 100% remote. And the demand for post-pandemic videos and accommodations did not drop, and in fact, continued to increase, as instructors became more creative about the ways that they could deliver their content, both online, hybrid, and in-class.

[00:30:59.72] The recent changes in legislation for the state of California resulted in the approval of additional attendance for UC Berkeley, which further drove demand. And this enrollment increase resulted in the increase of our student staff members, who have been highly vetted for their analytical and accuracy skills. So during that time period between the pandemic and post-pandemic, we increased our team of staff workers from six to 12 to over 25 to handle the additional volume.

[00:31:45.40] Our commitment to quality in this process was not affected because we had the commitment of our vendor, 3Play, as well as our other vendors, to maintain our quality standards. And with the addition of student staff, we found that that increased our accuracy further as the student staff on UC Berkeley attends classes, are familiar with terms on classes, and what we call Berkeley-isms so that in many situations, if transcription resulted in indiscernibles or inaudibles, our student staff would be able to decipher that and result in a more accurate transcript.

[00:32:31.83] So what we learned is that by staying on top of strategies and utilizing technology and, in some cases, making requests for improvements of technology we had available, we significantly increased our in-house efficiencies and did away with several interim makeshift solutions such as the Google Forms, Google Sheets, and the like, which allowed us to keep up with the tremendous demand for services. Our strategic move was anticipating these changes and forecasting that our volume would not return to pre-pandemic levels, but would continue to increase as instructors innovated.

[00:33:19.30] I believe that we found-- excuse me. I want to say that in this situation, for us, working from the perspective of not just as a student at one point and now as the Captioned Media coordinator, one thing we have found is that the quality of commitment was tantamount. And our students thanked us for that.

[00:33:47.13] Next, we will go over to the anticipated technologies that we are looking forward to in the future and best practices as well as our commitment to continuous improvement moving forward. Trena?

[00:34:01.65] TRENNA DAVIS: This is Trenna speaking. We are working with our campus to implement new equipment in the classroom to support assistive listening technology. This includes installing technology that allows students with Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids to connect directly to the classroom audio system.

[00:34:18.73] We are evaluating different systems to ensure no lag in audio streaming, which is essential for the real-time interaction and comprehension. Having better technology in the classroom installed also improves the outflow of sound quality to our remote vendors, which improves accuracy of both the captioned media and CART/ASL services.

[00:34:42.03] ALECIA BARNES: Our commitment to continuous improvement-- UC Berkeley is dedicated to continuous improvement in accessibility services. That is one of the reasons that we have committed to the software processes. We have committed to partnering with our vendors. We are looking forward to a partnership between 3Play and AIM, which will streamline our processes and allow us to stay on top of the demand for services without a reduction in quality.

[00:35:21.39] What we mean by that is that we have significantly taken-- we have taken a look at the new platform that AIM is rolling out. We are lucky that we are able to rely on our vendor partnership to anticipate certain things as a university that we need. And we're seeing those changes, which is very pleasing.

[00:35:45.81] We will continue to stay on top of technology as it changes. We have continued to look at why human editing is needed. And we will continue to maintain that commitment to that level of quality as well.

[00:36:04.79] TRENNA DAVIS: And dedication to continuous improvements in accessibility services-- we also listen to our students and make adjustments based on their feedback to continuously improve our services. We regularly update our technology and processes to stay ahead of the industry's trends and compliance requirements.

[00:36:23.46] Our collaboration with our Research, Teaching, and Learning, which is our technology services department here on campus-- it ensures us quick resolution of any technical issues, maintaining high-quality service. We are actively involved in finding and implementing the best technologies and practices to enhance accessibility for our students.

[00:36:44.13] Our efforts to integrate Bluetooth-enabled hearing aid technology in classrooms highlight our commitment to providing cutting-edge solutions for our students. And that is our presentation for you. Thank you. We welcome any questions.

[00:37:07.56] JACLYN LAZZARI: Great. Thank you so much, Trenna and Alecia. We do have some questions. And we have a bit of time. So let's go ahead and dive into those.

[00:37:20.61] The first question I have here is, with the implementation of automation to reduce manual tasks, have you encountered any resistance or challenges from staff or students? And how did you address these concerns to help ensure a smooth adoption of the new workflows?

[00:37:42.26] TRENNA DAVIS: Of course, with any new system, there are always going to be some challenges with the resistance. One of the things that we do foster here is we're always trying to try out new things. Even if it doesn't work, it's OK.

[00:37:56.99] So what we do-- we communicate. We really try to make sure that we set the staff up for success. So we go through the training. We take our time, knowing that there will be glitches on the way, knowing that it's not going to be a perfect system. And we just look at everything. And we work with our vendors.

[00:38:16.22] One of the biggest things that we do is we ask, hey, can this be adjusted? Can this be adjusted? Every school is unique. Every student is unique with their accommodation. So we handle that as a one-on-one and make sure that everybody is supported in the transition.

[00:38:32.34] We have not really received much pushback on the change from the students. With the instructors, the biggest challenge that we have found with our instructors is that it is the lack of education that they have about the accommodation.

[00:38:46.18] So what we do is we let them know when they reach out to us on email or they even give us a phone call-- we're like, hey, we're here to help you with this accommodation. We're here to support you along the way. And when they realize that we're there to support them, they relax. And they know they're not in it by themselves. That's been the biggest thing. Alecia, do you have anything to add to that?

[00:39:08.16] ALECIA BARNES: I was just going to say, one of the things that we've been able to successfully do is we have taken the process of doing everything for them. We have put that our Captioned Media department is willing to "partner" with them. But what we ask them to do is they have-- we've pushed the responsibility to the instructor to provide the materials, to provide the dates. And we've given them the step-by-step instruction on how to do that in the faculty letter.

[00:39:46.02] It has gone seamlessly. And as Trena has said, one of the big things has been training and understanding. No, you do not have to caption these videos. We will do it for you. You just have to provide us with the information. Once we know when it's due and what titles, we will do the work from that end.

[00:40:07.48] And so an educated instructor is a confident instructor. And you would be surprised. Some will come to you and just be very flustered because they feel like, oh my gosh, this is so much more on my plate. But when you educate them that, oh, no, we're here to partner with you, we're going to help you, this is what we need from you, this is how you need to do it in order for us to receive it, they are-- they're wonderful. They go from a bear to a kitten real quick.

[00:40:39.73] [CHUCKLING]

[00:40:40.64]

[00:40:41.55] TRENNA DAVIS: And I will add that we've had instructors who have had their-- the they handled their classes they've handled the same way for 30 years. And introducing it, it was very hard for them initially. But at the end, they came back to us and said, thank you, because now they realize that they're able to-- their students have been more engaged in the process when we introduce the new things to them, especially with the captions, because we do have students where English is their second language. So having the captions, even for the students, is really crucial. And they realize the engagement that that has brought to their class.

[00:41:17.31] JACLYN LAZZARI: Absolutely. And that's wonderful. Thank you so much for sharing. We often hear stories of the initial pushback. And then after time and support and communication and finding solutions, of course, often they come around. And so that's wonderful.

[00:41:38.12] We have another attendee question. And they asked, do you secure captioning services and interpreting services from different vendors? And is that an option in AIM or do you partner with one vendor? Not sure if that makes sense. But let me know if I can clarify.

[00:41:55.86] TRENNA DAVIS: Oh, no, that definitely makes sense. We do utilize different vendors. We have different vendors that specialize in certain areas. And we really like that because we can use them to their-- what their strengths are. And so we do utilize that. And in AIM, it does allow for you to select-- the way that we set up AIM, it allows for me to use whatever vendor that I choose, which we really like.

[00:42:25.50] JACLYN LAZZARI: Wonderful. And building off of that question, when you're procuring outside vendors, what goes into that evaluation process? And what are you looking for in the vendor?

[00:42:41.40] TRENNA DAVIS: Quality. Quality is our biggest thing. This is higher ed. So it's important for the students to have-- the accuracy is there because this is a learning environment. And so it's important for them to have the exact same information that someone that does have the hearing ability.

[00:42:58.03] So quality is our top thing when we are looking at any vendor, whether that's for the captioning, whether that's ASL, whether that is for the offline captioning or the post-production captioning, which we call our Captioned Media unit. So quality is number one. And we do our testing when it comes to quality.

[00:43:22.60] JACLYN LAZZARI: Yes. Wonderful. Of course, quality is important, especially in educational environment. So it's great to hear the prioritization there. And that's a great tip to keep in mind.

[00:43:35.44] TRENNA DAVIS: I do want to say one thing about that. We've heard, because of this, when students come from other schools, that's one of the things that they notice the most. They're like, oh, our videos are captioned properly because we've been using auto captions. And also, with the real-time, they're like, oh my gosh, thank you for providing us a captioner on-site

that's in discussion. Because so much can get missed when it's remote and you don't have the correct audio system set up for the students to be heard remotely.

[00:44:05.24] So those are also-- it's been the feedback from the students when they come from other places and they tell us this. That is really, really helpful. So a lot of it is also student feedback.

[00:44:16.16] ALECIA BARNES: I'd like to add something to that. I'm an alum of UC Berkeley. But I was a transfer student. And when I started receiving captioning services, I started out with a live captioner in classes with me in community college.

[00:44:31.76] At some point, it was a budget consideration. And they wanted to move me to remote. And I was open to the process. But when I began to see how much of my transcript was inaudible because the remote captioner, due to no fault of their own, could not hear what was going on in the classroom, I had to advocate for myself to receive live captioning. And it was a fight.

[00:44:59.69] So I came with my fists balled up to-- when I transferred to UC Berkeley and-- I don't want to say an attitude. But I was just staunch about, I'm not going to have remote captioning. And at that time when Trenna came in, she was like, oh, no, no, you'll get real-time captioning. You'll have a live captioner. We have them on staff here. And I immediately relaxed because I knew what a difference it made for me.

[00:45:29.34] Remote captioning is good in some situations where it's a lecture hall where maybe questions aren't asked a lot. But if you are required as a student to have participation in the class and there's a two to three-minute delay because they can't hear what's being asked of other students, it significantly not only affects your experience, but it affects your confidence.

[00:45:54.46] And so by having a live captioner who's-- sometimes will have to ask, can you please repeat the question, it makes a huge difference. One thing that I noticed about our vendors is that when we go back in, they rarely miss, unless it's really, really soft. And our team, our student team-- they pick up a lot because they're on campus. They know what the terms are. And that has been a huge benefit for us. So I just wanted to put my two cents' worth in there.

[00:46:28.64] JACLYN LAZZARI: No. That's great, Alecia. Thank you for sharing your personal experience and reminding us about the impact that captioning and accessible services can have for students and making a better experience. So I appreciate you sharing that.

[00:46:44.85] And I'm also glad you mentioned budget constraints because it is, naturally, often a big consideration for universities. And given that resources are often limited, how do you prioritize the accessibility initiatives to pursue? And how are you going about making decisions for resource allocation to ensure you're making the most significant impact possible for the students?

[00:47:15.77] TRENNNA DAVIS: That's a good question. We're in compliance. So when it comes to budgeting, myself, I don't particularly look and see what the budget is. But everything that we

bring forth, essentially, is making sure that the quality is there. And if we make sure that the quality is there, we can keep down the grievances, the lawsuits, because we're providing what should be provided.

[00:47:45.62] So when it comes to budgeting, we're not doing anything extra that's outside of-- I don't know how to put this-- that's outside of what is needed. And so we haven't had any pushback on the services that we've-- that have been requested. And when we say, hey, we need this, we need to send an interpreter over to Vietnam because our student is doing this, we haven't had that challenge.

[00:48:11.76] We do have a good team here at DSP that goes out and work on the grants and the different resources that we need. But budget is, because we're in compliance, is so important that we're making sure that we're providing what is needed. I hope that answers your question.

[00:48:30.94] JACLYN LAZZARI: No, that's a wonderful answer. Thank you for sharing. Switching gears away from the topic of captioning, someone asked, what is your experience-- or do you have any experience with audio description? And what works well there, and what doesn't?

[00:48:51.30] They mentioned they've had issues in the past where audio description did not necessarily meet the needs of someone who is unable to view the visuals. So just wondering if you have any experience there, you can share.

[00:49:02.58] TRENNA DAVIS: Yes, we actually do have. We have our Alternative Media Department that handles that. But we have actually handled some of the audio description and submitting that to 3Play. I will say that it's the vendor. You want to make sure that you choose the proper vendor.

[00:49:21.24] When you receive it, it's really, really good to listen to it and make sure it's what it's supposed to be. We've had some times in the past-- we used to get-- receive material and we're like, oh, this is not correct, or something was missed. And it's not necessarily the vendor's fault. It could be that the audio was off. And choosing the vendor is really important, and also editing and making sure that it's accurate when you get it back. That's how you can resolve that issue.

[00:49:56.47] ALECIA BARNES: I will also add that the 3Play has an option where you can choose how the audio description person speaks. They can either do long pauses or they can try and insert the audio description in between pauses.

[00:50:15.78] What I've found is that by letting 3Play choose, the audio describer has the option of determining whether there is enough spaces or pauses to adequately describe what's on the screen. So I always, when we used to do it before we turned it over to Alt Media, would let 3Play, the audio describer, decide. And we never had any complaints about our audio description.

[00:50:47.52] JACLYN LAZZARI: Wonderful. That's great to hear. Thank you both for sharing. Someone else asked-- so I think this is calling back to throughout the presentation, you mentioned quite a few times about taking in student feedback and really considering the students' experience. So they asked if you have any suggestions on the best way to capture that feedback from students. And do you reach outside of your list of students registered with disability services?

[00:51:19.66] TRENNA DAVIS: To answer the last question first, I do not reach outside of the students that we encounter. If someone comes to me, then I will ask. But on the student feedback, like I said, we will-- on the initial intake with the student-- I'm not a specialist. So what happens is they receive the accommodation from the specialist here. And then they come to me, where I can assess their experience with ASL or CART or offline captionings to see specifically what their need is for the classrooms.

[00:51:52.31] When I do that assessment, I speak with them. And I ask them, OK, if you've had this experience, can you advise-- do you have any input on things that may work for you? What are you looking for? And I said, if you don't know anything now, just let me know. I'll touch base with you a few weeks in.

[00:52:09.76] So I check in with them mid-semester to see. And what I do is I send out an email to them-- hey, just checking in on you if you can let me know if you have any concerns, how your class is going.

[00:52:20.16] Sometimes, we have students that will say, I have a remote captioner. Is there any chance I can get an in-person captioner? Because maybe they are in a discussion. And then we'll do that check-in at the end of the semester as well. And I find that we do get pretty good responses when we're checking in with our students.

[00:52:38.28] I work closely-- we have a lot of students. But I work really, really closely with each and every one of them. If they have any problems in class, they can shoot me a message and say, hey, the audio is out, or the video wasn't captioned.

[00:52:54.51] So they communicate with me a lot. So we develop that relationship. So when they have feedback, they are like, oh, hey, this, or they-- I sent a referral. And they let us know what the word is out there on the streets.

[00:53:09.99] JACLYN LAZZARI: Great. I love that you're in such close collaboration and communication with the students. And building off of that and evaluating the effectiveness of the Captioned Media at UC Berkeley, beyond hearing the students and hearing their feedback and concerns and their needs, how are-- how do you go about measuring the quality and satisfaction of these services? Are there specific tools or methodologies you use to track any benchmarks you're trying to reach to improve the performance of captioned media content at your school?

[00:53:50.22] TRENNA DAVIS: For the real-time captioning and ASL, of course, we take the feedback from the students because they're the one that are in the classes. I also will go and I will

click on the links, the captioning links, when they're in class. I'm a captioner myself. So I can look and say, oh, this is-- I can understand this.

[00:54:10.45] Sometimes, just because a captioner or an interpreter is not getting-- they're not doing a good job in a particular class, it doesn't mean they're necessarily not good at their job. It's just sometimes the terminology. If we don't have the prep material that we need, it can impact the quality that is produced. And so I speak to the captioners and the interpreters. I ask them, hey, do you need prep materials? What can we do to improve? Sometimes, I'll move it around.

[00:54:40.39] I personally schedule approximately 300 classes a week with our vendors and our on-site captioners. So our volume is really high. But we do a pretty good job of making sure-- when I'm scheduling, I try to schedule the captioners in subjects that I know that they are familiar with. And I will let Alecia address how she handles the post-production captioning to ensure the quality there.

[00:55:06.28] ALECIA BARNES: Thank you, Trenna. So for captioned media, what we do is we have 25 student workers. They are required to provide me with what their major is. And they are bound that-- they are bound to the commitment that they are not allowed to caption their own classes. So if they're enrolled in a specific class, they cannot edit that class.

[00:55:34.13] But I find out what they're experts in. And I utilize those strengths to my advantage. For example, I have two student workers that are-- they're going through the physics program. And so what they are able to do is-- I get some of the cleanest transcripts from them. But I QC. We do a QC process as well.

[00:56:01.46] So each file is looked at by more than one editor just to make sure that-- if anything is missed. If they listen to the file, they spot-check it and make sure it syncs. And then once they are done with that file, it goes into a file that is completed for a final audit.

[00:56:22.68] If they find problems, such as inconsistencies in the file, paraphrasing in the file, paragraphs of information missing-- there's just flukes that occasionally occur-- they set those to my attention. I audit them. And if I need to, I'll send them back to the vendor for corrections.

[00:56:45.53] So that is how we stay on top of our accuracy rate. And we've never had an issue with any of our vendors if we have to send back files, not only redoing it, but prioritizing it to get it back to us quickly.

[00:57:09.14] JACLYN LAZZARI: Wonderful. Thank you both so much for all your insight there. And we are out of time for this presentation today. The hour flew by. Thank you so much for your wonderful presentation and conversation today. And thank you to everyone who joined us today with Alecia and Trenna and for asking such great questions.

[00:57:34.40] So with that, I will leave you all to have a wonderful rest of the day. Thank you so much.