

WTCS Captioned Media Guide

The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) is committed to the principles of equity, inclusion, and accessibility by providing all students and staff access to campus programs, services, events and professional learning opportunities. The WTCS supports inclusive environments by promoting universal design principles, specifically the use of captioning in media that reduces or removes barriers.

The increased use of media in education poses barriers to some students with disabilities, specifically students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Although the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA and ADAAG), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA) provide the legal support for addressing accessibility for persons with disabilities, research (Gernsbacher, 2015; Brasel & Gips, 2014) clearly shows captioning benefits a much wider audience. Captioning promotes notetaking, enhances recall, content comprehension and language acquisition, and provides access to auditory content when there is diminished sound quality or when surrounding noises create distractions (Chai & Rosemary, 2008; Steinfeld, 1998).

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to each of the Wisconsin Technical Colleges in the adoption of a media accessibility policy. The WTCS endorses the [Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium](#) (W3CO) as the standard for World Wide Web accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. W3C is composed of over 400 member organizations world-wide developing common protocols to make the benefits of the Web available to all people.

For more information on this guide or other captioned media issues, contact a member of the WTCS Captioned Media Workgroup:

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Special thanks to the members of the Wisconsin Postsecondary Captioned Media Workgroup.

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I. Definitions

For the purposes of this guidance, the following terms are defined:

Media includes DVD, MP4, digitally streamed video, (YouTube, Vimeo etc.) audio files in web-based environments, and any other format that includes an audiovisual component.

Captioned media displays the audio content of the program as text. Captions not only display spoken dialogue or narration but also include speaker identification and sound effects. It is important that captions are synchronized and equivalent in content to that of the audio.

To be compliant with the captioning guidance and the law (ADA and ADAAA, Section 508, CVAA and FCC Mandates), media captioning must be accurate and synchronized with the video content.

- **Accurate** is defined as having proper word order, correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar; synchronize with the corresponding spoken word or sounds; placed without obstructing view of any pertinent information; and completeness, showing from beginning of the video until the end. *YouTube auto generated captions are generally not an accurate or reliable substitute for regular captioning.*
- **Synchronized** is the display of text for audio at the same time that it is spoken.

Captioned media is produced in a variety of ways:

Closed captioned media provides the option of having the captions appear on the screen through a decoder, which is built into the television. Closed captions are usually the preferred method for making videos accessible.

Open captioned media does not require a decoder, as the captioning is permanently part of the picture and cannot be turned off.

English subtitles are included on many DVDs and may be turned on using the remote control to access the subtitle list.

Subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) are subtitles that also contain non-verbal cues. SDH subtitles tend to be used on video formats that do not support closed captioning, such as Blu-Ray disks.

II. Considerations for Establishing Campus Procedures

It is important to develop specific procedures to ensure all media resources purchased and/or used will be captioned. The following are some of the decision points that colleges should consider when implementing a policy requiring captioned media. **See Appendix C** for two examples of campus-specific procedures for obtaining and/or producing new captioned media.

Communicate Rationale for Captioning

It is helpful to be able to clearly communicate the rationale behind captioning to various campus stakeholders. Captioning media does not only benefit students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Captioning promotes notetaking, enhances recall, content comprehension and language acquisition, and provides access to auditory content when there is diminished sound quality or when surrounding noises create distractions (Chai & Rosemary, 2008; Steinfeld, 1998). If this is widely understood, captioning can start to become an accepted norm when creating and using media anywhere on campus.

- Design a communication plan/toolkit for informing anyone creating and/or displaying audio-visual media at the college.
- Refer to Appendix D, “Benefits of Captioning” for a sample handout.

Determine Campus Policy Oversight

Creating a captioning policy is only the first step. Oversight as to how and when captioning is done is important to seeing the work through to completion. Captioning requires a college-wide commitment. Therefore, it is best for this oversight to come from a cross-functional team consisting of individuals with the authority and scope to implement the policy. Consider the following when deciding on an oversight structure:

- Include representatives from Information Technology, Curriculum, and/or Program Departments when creating captioning oversight cross-functional teams;
- Create a process for tracking captioning requests assign an individual to the task of tracking and following up on requests; and
- Use Disability Resource Services to assist in the captioning work; not necessarily to oversee the college’s captioning process.

Create a Plan for Auditing and Prioritizing Captioning Work

In order to ensure that captioning efforts are complete, create a plan for how and when each program and/or department will be reviewed. The plan should lay out a process for auditing each area of the college and determining its immediate and ongoing captioning needs. This is a great time to review the quantity and quality of the media used and to reassess if all videos are necessary, useful, and current. It is essential for individuals that drive curriculum and manage Information Technology resources at the college to be involved in this process in order to align captioning work with other requirements for approval and accreditation.

Priorities for captioning should include:

- Requested Accommodations
- Public Information including College Website
- Online Classes & Materials
- Events
- Training Materials
- Recorded Lectures

Purchase New Media

After evaluating and determining a video is necessary but not captioned, the most efficient and least expensive solution is to replace it with a new captioned video. When purchasing new media it is helpful to:

- Communicate and enforce a purchasing policy that requires all new media to be captioned. If new media is not captioned, copyright permissions must be obtained before purchase.
- Create a checklist for purchasing that includes reminders about captioning and obtaining copyright permission.
- Consult Disability Resource personnel when creating or reviewing the purchasing process to ensure captioning or other accommodations are considered.

Caption Existing Media

If media is necessary, not captioned, and not able to be replaced with a new or captioned version, then the college may take steps to caption the existing media. Adding accurate, synchronized captions to media in-house may require a significant amount of labor and therefore expense. Before adding captions, colleges should:

- Verify the validity and quality of media before beginning the captioning process. Newer captioned versions may be available;
- Refer to the source of the media (for example, if you are trying to caption a New York Times video on YouTube, check with the NY Times website for captioned versions before captioning the YouTube video); and/or
- Collaborate with the library for help locating newer and alternative versions and identifying the source of media.

Obtain Copyright Permissions for Adding Captioning

Copyright permission must be obtained in order to caption any existing media. The process to obtain permission to caption videos can be lengthy and time consuming. The process may take several days or months. Additionally, copyright owners may not always respond to requests for permission. It is recommended that you plan possible alternatives.

- See Appendix A for a sample copyright permission request form.

Research and Choose a Captioning Vendor

If a college chooses a third-party vendor there are varieties of options, including two that have consortium pricing ([Automatic Sync Technologies](#) and [3Play](#)). WTCS colleges have also worked with [Rev](#) and [Postcap](#) previously.

While a college may choose to work with these vendors, WTCS does not endorse any particular company. We recommend looking into each company for your specific needs before choosing. It is important to research the company's services, abilities, and prices before committing. Many companies offer a transcript and/or time synced file as opposed to the complete captioned video.

III. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the cost of adding captions to media?

There is much variance in the cost of adding captioning to media. Cost depends on whether the captioning is done in-house, or sent out to a third party vendor. Third party vendor prices fluctuate with services requested and turn-around time. Some educational systems have established a contract for discounted captioning services with specific vendors. Check with the WTCS Education Director and your institutional leaders for any available consortium deals. [Automatic Sync Technologies](#) and [3Play](#) are two vendors that currently offer consortium pricing to WTCS colleges.

2. What should be considered when deciding to caption in-house or with a third-party vendor?

- It is estimated that one hour of media requires 8-10 hours of labor to add captioning.
- Does your institution have technicians available to do captioning in-house?
- What is the volume of media needs to be captioned?
- How quickly does material need to be captioned? Sending media to a third-party vendor may have a longer turnaround time as compared to doing the captioning in-house.

3. What are the standards for quality captioning?

The U.S. Department of Education and the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) has identified the following standards:

- Accurate Spelling
- Number of captioned words per minute displayed on-screen
- Sound effects (e.g., “buzz” or ♪) included
- Explanations of audio (e.g., *thinking/dreaming*)
- On-screen placement of captions
- Audio/visual synchronization

4. How do I know if a piece of traditional media is captioned and for web-based media players, such as YouTube and Windows Media Player, how do I turn on the captioning?

- The captioning symbol is usually white letters encased in a black box on the screen. 
- For VHS and DVDs, catalogues and video containers/jackets often show the closed-captioned symbol. It is usually displayed on the side or the bottom of the back cover.
- Sometimes it is difficult to know if web-based video is captioned. Media players vary in their support for closed captions as well as in the steps users must follow to turn these features on when they are available.
- Instructions for turning on [captioning for YouTube videos](#)

5. Doesn't the Fair Use Law allow educational institutions to make multimedia content accessible by adding captions?

No, captions cannot be added without permission of the copyright owner.

- The copyright law may be found at: <http://www.copyright.gov/title17>

6. Our department has a lot of media that is not captioned. We want to make it accessible. Where should we start?

The first priority must be to caption all media that is limiting or prohibiting access for those who have requested this accommodation. This is not optional. This is a legal mandate. A strategy for captioning the rest of your media should consider the content, shelf life and volume of the specific media. Often, it is most efficient to replace old media with a new captioned alternative. Two categories warrant special attention. Media accessible to the public is the community's first impression of the accessibility of your institution. Distance learning course material should also be considered early. Many students register for online classes believing they will be more accessible. This is often not the case.

7. Are there other ways to make media presentations accessible?

Providing a written transcript of the audio content or a sign language interpreter as access for a video offers only marginal access because it is not possible to read a transcript or watch an interpreter and view a video simultaneously. Therefore, captioning is the only way to make media fully accessible.

Appendix A: Letter to Obtain Copyright Permission Template

(Letterhead from Your College Campus)

(Insert Date)

(Insert Name/Address of the Copyright Owner Attn: Permissions Department)

Dear (Insert Name of the Contact Staff in the Company's Permissions Department):

The purpose of this letter is to request authorization to modify instructional audiovisual material to include captioning for students attending public postsecondary education at the (insert name of college) in (insert city), Wisconsin.

Please complete the statement that appears on the bottom portion of this correspondence and return it to:

(Insert Name, Title, Address, and Contact Information of College Staff Seeking Permissions)

This request is time sensitive and requires an immediate response. Please reply on or before (insert date).

Title of Publication and Publishing Details: _____

Copyright/Trademark Owner: _____

Address/Contact Information for Copyright/Trademark Owner:

The (insert name of college) requests authorization to modify the audiovisual material to include captioning for the purpose of ensuring access for students with disabilities within the instructional setting for education purposes. The (insert name of college) presently owns _____ copies of the material. The material is used in conjunction with classroom instruction for educational purposes. The audiovisual material will be used until such time the material is removed from (insert name of college) collection (*unless the Copyright/Trademark Owner specifies an expiration date*).

Your signature on this document confirms that permission has been authorized. This authorization will be clearly placed on the audiovisual material, along with the date that permission was authorized.

Permissions Department Authorization _____ Date _____
(Printed Name, Title, and Company of Individual Granting Authorization)

Appendix B: Captioning Policy Template

This institution is committed to the fundamental academic principles of equity and accessibility by providing all students and staff with equitable access to the College's programs, services, events, and staff development activities. The aim of this policy is to support an inclusive academic environment by incorporating design concepts that reduce or remove barriers. This institution will achieve this goal by endorsing this policy on the use of captioned media.

COURSE OF ACTION

All media resources purchased and/or used after (date) at this institution must be captioned.

All new audiovisual materials produced by this institution, including instructional, informational, marketing, and promotional materials as well as content posted on websites, will be produced with captions.

LEGAL SUPPORT

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA and ADAAA), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA) protect persons with disabilities from discrimination through barriers to communication. Communications with individuals with disabilities must be as effective as communications with others. The use of captioned media breaks down these barriers and equalizes communication access.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 also prohibits discrimination and mandates accessibility to individuals with disabilities. Individuals may not be excluded from participation or denied the benefits of educational programs.

SUMMARY

- Purchase and produce captioned media.
- Before using an existing legally obtained video currently in inventory or recorded from a broadcast, obtain copyright permission to caption. The video may not be used unless it has been captioned. It will not be captioned without copyright permission. Be aware the process of obtaining copyright permission to caption a video is lengthy.
- When using audiovisual media, view with captions turned on.

Appendix C: Procedures for Obtaining and/or Producing Captioned Media Template

This institution is committed to the fundamental academic principles of equity and accessibility by providing all students and staff with equitable access to the College's programs, services, events, and staff development activities. In order to implement this commitment and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA and ADAAG), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA), we endorse the following set of procedures on the use of captioned media.

College Representatives:

- Will purchase the open and/or closed-captioned version of new instructional media and other audiovisual materials.
- If a particular product is not available with captioning, and the College requires that particular product, the purchaser will obtain written permission from the copyright owner to add captions to the video. The purchaser may contact Disability Services for assistance with this process. **Please note that permission must be obtained prior to purchase, as a condition of purchase.** In the event that permission is denied, a suitable captioned alternative will be sought.

Faculty Members:

- Will only show captioned media in the classroom and will only assign captioned media as a course requirement.
- Faculty utilizing media from their own personal or departmental collections (original or commercial productions) are responsible for ensuring it is captioned. In the case of commercially produced videos, appropriate public performance rights and licenses must be available for viewing at the College. Three years after the effective date of this policy, all captioning costs are to be built into departmental budgets. For further information and assistance, contact Disability Services.

Library:

- Will maintain a library of captioned media resources that are available for faculty, staff, and student use.
- Will maintain a record of all permissions for captioning and the digitization of copyrighted media resources.
- Will assist faculty by:
 - Identifying materials that are captioned prior to purchase.
 - Finding suitable, alternative media products that are captioned.

Disability Services:

- Will assist with obtaining permission to caption.
- Will coordinate the process for captioning media resources for which permission to caption has been obtained.
- Will maintain a list of approved vendors to perform captioning.

Information Technology Department:

- Will ensure all classroom and presentation equipment is caption-compatible and the default on all TVs, etc., is set to provide open captioning.
- Will provide specific instructions on the existing instruction sheets for faculty so it will be easier for them to show captioned media in their classroom.
- Will ensure this information is incorporated into faculty training on AV equipment.

Purchasing Department:

- Will forward all purchase orders for media resources to Library for review to ensure all resources acquired are captioned or captionable.

All Departments of the College:

- Will support this policy by ensuring all college employees are made aware of the policy, their obligations, and the supports available to assist them.

Marketing Department:

- Will ensure all new communications and promotional materials produced under its own auspices and, on behalf of and by College departments, will be caption

Appendix D: WTCS Colleges Sample Policies and Procedures

Waukesha County Technical College Administrative Policy – Student Services

CLOSED CAPTIONING STU-450

Waukesha County Technical College is committed to the fundamental academic principles of equity and accessibility by providing all students and staff with access to the College's programs, services, events, and staff development activities. This Closed Captioning policy and procedural documents provide guidance for WCTC to comply with applicable laws and support an inclusive academic environment.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law in 1990, protects persons with disabilities from discrimination through barriers to communication. Communications with individuals with disabilities must be as effective as communications with others. The use of captioned media breaks down these barriers and equalizes communication access. (Section 508 and Section 255)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 also prohibits discrimination and mandates accessibility to individuals with disabilities. Individuals may not be excluded from participation or denied the benefits of educational programs.

The **Closed Captioning Requirements Matrix** provides specific guidelines for the application of closed captioning to various types of media used at the College.

See Administrative Procedure – Student Services STU-450-01 Closed Captioning Procedure

Policy owner: Manager of Counseling, Advising and Student Accessibility

ADOPTED: August 2012

REVISED: August 2016

Northcentral Technical College Guidelines for Closed Captioning

Northcentral Technical College (NTC) is committed to the fundamental academic principles of equity and accessibility by providing all students with equitable access to the college's programs, services, events, and staff development activities. The aim of this procedure is to support an inclusive academic environment by incorporating design concepts that reduce or remove barriers. NTC will achieve this goal by endorsing a procedure on the use of captioned media.

Course of Action:

All new/revised courses going through ESS as a curriculum project due for Spring 2015 start and forward will include the requirement of Closed Captioning. All media purchased and used within NTC courses will have Closed Captioning by January 1, 2018.

If a student requiring closed captioning as an accommodation is enrolled in a course with existing media, the faculty is responsible for ensuring accessibility of all material prior to the start of that course.

All new instructional, informational, marketing and promotional audiovisual materials produced by NTC, including content posed on websites, will be produced with captions to ensure all subsequent copies will be captioned.

Legal Support:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law in 1990, protects persons with disabilities from discrimination through barriers to communication. Communications with individuals with disabilities must be as effective as communications with others. The use of captioned media breaks down these barriers and equalizes communication access.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, also prohibits discrimination and mandates accessibility to individuals with disabilities. Individuals may not be excluded from participation or denied the benefits of educational programs.

Summary:

- Purchase and produce captioned media.
- Before using an existing legally obtained video currently in inventory or recorded from a broadcast, obtain copyright permission to caption. The video may not be used unless it has been captioned. It will not be captioned without copyright permission. Be aware the process of obtaining copyright permission to caption a video is lengthy.
- When using audiovisual media, view with captions turned on.

Adopted 3/2015

Northcentral Technical College
Closed Captioning Support - Curriculum

Closed Captioning Support:

Please note that this accommodation requires captions to be on all videos used for class (in the classroom or online) and also that the captions need to be edited to ensure accuracy. Some videos are already captioned but not accurate. If needed, Jon DeGroot (IT) and his team can assist with the closed captioning needs. Please submit videos to him at least 2-3 weeks ahead of time if you need assistance with captioning. Please keep in mind per the instructions below, you are able to edit captions yourself in the event that you find a video that needs captioning right away.

Here are some [tips for Creating Course Videos](#).

Here are the 3 types of videos that are most likely in your course and how they are captioned.

Instructor made Welcome & Module Overviews

If you are making a welcome video or learning plan overview you must upload this to your Panopto account and fix the captioning. If a student joins your class and requires captioning accommodations you would then be required to have them done prior to the student needing to watch them. Here are tutorials on how to caption in Panopto.

[Panopto Tutorials](#)

Instructor made content videos (preferred 5-10 minute) for Module material in Blackboard/Canvas:

This can be done in Panopto. The Flex Learning team will set you up with an account and folder for your course videos. Captions are then handled by our work studies.

3rd party videos (DVDS, YouTube videos, etc...):

Faculty can find an alternative video that is captioned or contact the publisher with the help of Katie Aldrich from the library or CTLE. Otherwise work with Jon or Todd to come up with a plan to have these captioned.

If a student that requires captioning signs up for your class, JoDee Smith will attempt to notify CTLE, Flex Learning and the faculty ahead of time so we can make sure everything is accessible for the student prior to the student taking the class. However a student may sign up for a class a week prior which makes being proactive about having content captioned makes the process much easier.

REMINDER: Always use library streaming video resources as your first option when looking for content to show.

Appendix D: Sample-Captioning Documents

Waukesha County Technical College Benefits of Captioning

Number one: visibility. When videos are captioned, it means that you are providing a text version of a previously audio-only format. The importance of this is that search engines can read and index content that would otherwise not be index able. Search engine visibility means more people will be able to find and watch your video.

Number two: search. Viewers can search the transcript for a specific part of the video; students who are studying a topic will be able find a specific phrase or subject even if they don't know at which point in the video it is mentioned.

Number three: ESL. For those who know English as a second language, captions help comprehension when watching videos. Even if they are fluent in the language, sometimes foreign accents or the speed of speech can make some parts of a video difficult to understand.

Number four: students. Providing captioning for educational videos has the ability to increase comprehension among all students. It aids in concentration, information retention and engagement.

Number five: learning styles. Linguistic or verbal learners, as well those with other learning styles or learning disabilities, can better understand videos when accompanied by text.

Number six: language learners. Captioning and subtitles can help those who are learning a new language pick it up faster by allowing them to visualize words as they are being vocalized.

Number seven: literacy. Struggling readers can benefit from captions because they offer them additional exposure to printed words. Captions can increase vocabulary and word recognition.

Number eight: quiet environments. Captions allow individuals to watch videos in environments where sound is not allowed or preferred, with libraries being the most obvious example.

Number nine: noisy environment. On the other end of the spectrum, captions are helpful in a noisy environment where the viewer cannot concentrate or hear the audio well.

Number 10: Diversity. By making your videos easier to understand to people from different backgrounds, you also make your audience and learning groups more diverse. This diversity benefits everyone, as it allows people to share ideas and learn from their peers.

It goes without saying that providing closed captioning can broaden your audience making your videos accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing. With these additional benefits, we can see that they can reach an even wider audience for many, less obvious reasons.

For more information on the benefits of captioning visit:

<http://www.automaticsync.com/captionsync/closed-captioning-learning-styles/>

**Waukesha County Technical College
Closed Captioning Request Form**

Media closed captioning support is available for instructors who need to ensure media is accessible for students who require a captioning accommodation as documented by the Student Accessibility Office. Please note the following parameters regarding WCTC captioning support. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this form, please contact the SAO office wctccaptioning@wctc.edu or Paula Bell at 262-691-5318

- Captioning requests of video content will require a minimum of 72 hours and in some cases up to 10 business days to process so please plan accordingly.
- Videos recorded on media (DVD, thumb drive, CD, etc.) will need to be submitted with your request - SAO room C021
- Requests accepted throughout the year.

Send completed form and/or (DVD, thumb drive, CD etc.) to: WCTCCAPTIONING@WCTC.EDU

Instructor's Name: _____ Date: _____

Email address: _____ Phone number: _____

Department: _____ Program: _____

CRN & Course Name of the class the video is being captioned for:

Date needed by: _____

Did you create this video? _____

Title of video: _____

Length of video: _____

Is the video a DVD or online video? _____

For online videos (i.e., YouTube, Screencast, Vimeo, etc.) what is the URL link used to access the video? _____

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Date needed by: _____

Did you create this video? _____

Title of video: _____

Length of video: _____

Is the video a DVD or online video? _____

For online videos (i.e., YouTube, Screencast, Vimeo, etc.) what is the URL link used to access the video? _____

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Waukesha County Technical College
Closed Captioning Acknowledgement for Instructors

Waukesha County Technical College is committed to the academic principles of equality and accessibility by providing all students with access to our programs, services, events and activities. WCTC's recently updated Closed Captioning Policy (STU450) is to support our obligations to students with disabilities as stated under the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA).

The WCTC Closed Captioning Policy provides accessibility to students with disabilities that have captioning as an approved accommodation. To be compliant with the captioning policy and the law, media captioning must be accurate and synchronized with the video content. (ADA, Section 508, CVAA and FCC Mandates)

- **Accessibility** means the media you are showing has access to accurate closed captioning.
- **Accurate** is defined as having proper word order, correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar; synchronize with the corresponding spoken word or sounds; placed without obstructing view of any pertinent information; and completeness, showing from beginning of the video until the end. *YouTube auto generated captions are generally not an accurate or reliable substitute for regular captioning.*
- **Captioning** is the process of converting the audio content of a television broadcast, webcast, film, video, CD, DVD, live event or other productions into text and displaying the text on the monitor or screen synchronized with the visual input.
- **Media** can be anything, to name a few; CD, DVD's, digitally streamed video/audio files in web-based environments such as YouTube. All auditory media.

If you use any of the above-mentioned media tools, the Student Accessibility Office would like to collaborate with you to ensure support of our students and of WCTC's captioning policy. In addition, if you would like assistance with closed captioning your media content, please fill out the, "Closed Captioning Media Request Form", that can be found, along with this acknowledgement letter on the portal under Student Supports.

I will not need assistance my class already meets these requirements.

I will need assistance to meet these requirements.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

****Please return signed form to SAO C021, wctccaptioning@wctc.edu within two weeks**