OJD
Court Interpreter Services
2009 Annual Report

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Program Manager
Court Interpreter Services
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The Oregon Judicial Department published the OJD 5-Year Strategic Plan for 2009-13. Court Interpreter Services is an integral part of meeting the goal to protect public access to justice through the following objectives:

- Improve and expand, through the use of technology and other means, the availability, distribution, and scheduling of qualified court interpreting services.
- Increase the number of languages for which a certification or registration process is available to ensure quality interpreter services

We are glad to report on our activities in 2009 which support these objectives and improve services for Limited English Proficient individuals in the courts. We are making positive contributions to the Oregon Judicial Department by the dedication and hard work of our staff in the delivery of interpreter services and the certification of court interpreters.

The OJD budget for 2009-11 was reduced by approximately 10% during the 2009 legislative session. Court Interpreter Services eliminated one analyst and one staff interpreter position and relocated one staff interpreter workstation as part of a reduction plan. The Program Manager was designated as the Administrative Authority for Court Interpreter Services (CIS) and CIS now reports directly to the State Court Administrator as part of a reorganization. The Court Programs and Services Division was eliminated but CIS, as an entity under the Oregon State Court Administrator, continues to respond effectively to the challenges and realities of the current state and national economies.

The Need for Interpreters in the Oregon Circuit Courts

The need for interpreting services in circuit courts has grown dramatically over the past ten years. In 2006, Hispanic/Latino individuals comprised 10.7% of the state's population through a steady 3.3% growth rate[1]. The Oregon Department of Education projects that by 2020, 28% of

[1] US Census

student enrollment in the Oregon public schools will be Hispanic/Latino[2]. 14.2% of Oregonians speak a language other than English at home[3]. Among Mexican and Guatemalan immigrants in Oregon, there are at least 14 different indigenous ethnic groups.[4] In 10 years, court requests for all languages have increased 307% and in non-Spanish languages, over 590%. CIS received an average of 2,339 requests per month in 2009 for interpreted matters statewide. There were 28,062[5] requests among 116 different languages in the Oregon courts in 2009, from Akateko to Zapoteco, or 2.62% more than 2007-2008. CIS filled 22,712 Spanish, 624 ASL, 165 Latin American indigenous languages, and 4561 requests in all other languages. Six judicial districts had over 1000 interpreter requests in 2009: Multnomah 8643, Washington 5738, Marion 3198, Clackamas 2391, Umatilla/Morrow 1507 and Jefferson/Crook 1149. Deschutes County had 970 requests. Thanks in part to technology, an active certification program and careful scheduling, the OJD Key Performance Measure "Accessible Interpreter Services" was calculated to be 95% when it was completed in the 2007-09 biennium[6].

Remote Interpreting (telephonic and video interpreting):

The OJD leads remote interpreting initiatives nationwide. Under the management of supervisors, this project is coordinated by a staff interpreter and supported by schedulers, other staff interpreters and local courts. The CIS goal is to develop best practices and standards of delivery in order to provide high-quality remote interpreting. Using the ASL calendar as a pilot, data gathering mechanisms were developed. CIS effectively documented quality standards and a reduction in ASL interpreting expenses of $16,000 through the use of inexpensive equipment and cooperation with local courts. Although remote interpreting in spoken languages has also

[2] Oregon Department of Education
[3] US Census
[4] The Oregon Law Center
[5] OJD Duty court assignments count as one
[6] OJD Performance Measure Advisory Committee

been incorporated over the years, we aim to now improve standards and report clearly on those activities following the ASL model.

Statewide Interpreter Scheduling

Centralized scheduling provides efficient use of resources, uniform interpreting quality and protocols, and compliance with Oregon statute. Thirty-one counties now schedule interpreters through CIS. In 2009, we began using a team approach to cross-train our nine schedulers and developed a comprehensive desk manual for scheduling. Besides training new schedulers, the desk manual also serves as a reference tool for experienced schedulers. A business continuity plan has been developed to provide uninterrupted interpreter services in the case of an unforeseen closure in one or more locations of the OJD. Three additional counties were brought on to the statewide scheduling model in 2009, Baker, Grant and Malheur. Transition planning with Lane County in 2009 brings CIS scheduling services there in February 2010.

Responsible Stewardship of State Resources

Despite the ever growing caseload of interpreter services, CIS contributed significant cost savings to the OJD budget in the 2007-09 biennium. This helped the OJD meet end-of-biennium cuts. Before the 2007-09 biennium ended, CIS had already contributed $200,000 towards the overall OJD end-of-biennium shortfall through aggressive cost savings measures.

Training and Education Activities

An integrated approach to all educational programs related to expertise in court interpreting includes expanding programs to ASL interpreters, Non-Certified Language interpreters and indigenous interpreters and to focus on ethics training for beginners and veteran interpreters alike. In 2009 improvements were made to a variety of administrative processes, including forms, the CIS web site, registration and data tracking, use of technology to deliver programs, criminal background checks and finalizing the registered credential timeline for 2010-11. Standard rates for Continuing Education units and refund policies were adopted in 2009 and the

authority to offer Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf (RID) credits for events was granted. OJD certified exam and training fees were revised for the first time in eight years.

In 2009, continuing education events allowed 34 certified interpreters to renew their three year credential. 26% of examinees (8) passed the oral examination. Historically, Oregon's pass rate is 27% compared to 24% nationally[7]. There are now 111 Oregon certified interpreters and an additional eight will be sworn in on March 4, 2010. CIS is currently undertaking a comprehensive revision of the 1999 OJD Certified Court Interpreter Policies, which will include the ASL - legal and registered interpreter credentials and we will seek and incorporate stakeholders' feedback in early 2010. In 2009, we offered oral exam study webinars for people as far away as Colombia, South America!

1. On-the-Job Mentoring and Coaching of interpreters of Lesser Diffusion Languages

Participants: 79

Format: Assignment to court with an experienced mentor to a low level hearing. The preparation before, during and after the hearing with a coach provides immediate opportunities to interpret, receive feedback, improve and develop skills. Mentoring will be a requisite of the registered interpreter credential. Written and oral feedback and observations are used to assign less experienced interpreters to the appropriate level of hearings in the future.

Coaches: Sally LeBaron, Interpreter Liaison, and CIS Staff Interpreter IIs

2. Two-Day Introduction to Working with the Oregon Courts, March 21, 2009:

Participants: 33

[7] Consortium for Language Access in the Courts

Topics:

Day 1 -- Overview of the interpreting profession, the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Oregon Courts, role-playing ethics scenarios and the administration of a written ethics exam.

Day 2 – (Webinar); Continued ethics training, overview of the criminal process, an oral exam overview, and oral exam study techniques.

Presenters: Jose E. Behar, Max Christian, Carla Farrell, Sally LeBaron, Kelly Mills

Evaluation: 95% of participants agreed that "the orientation gave me a good foundation to begin to understand the ethical and professional responsibilities of a court interpreter."

3. <u>Webinar: Ethics - Complex Issues – Friday March 13, 2009</u>

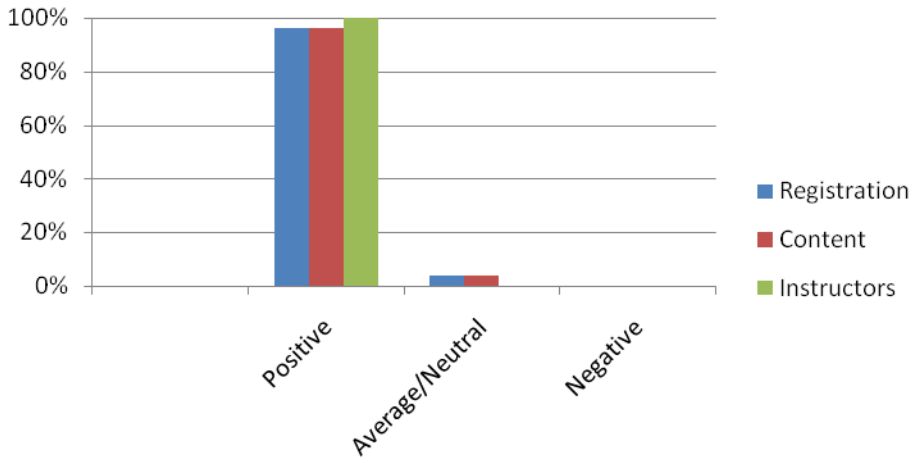
Participants: 50

Eligibility: Certified Oregon and Washington Interpreters

Topic: Discussion of complex ethical issues in legal proceedings

Presenters: Jose E. Behar, Max Christian

Evaluation:



4. <u>CE Myths of Crime Scene Investigation – Wednesday, May 6, 2009</u>

Participants: 22

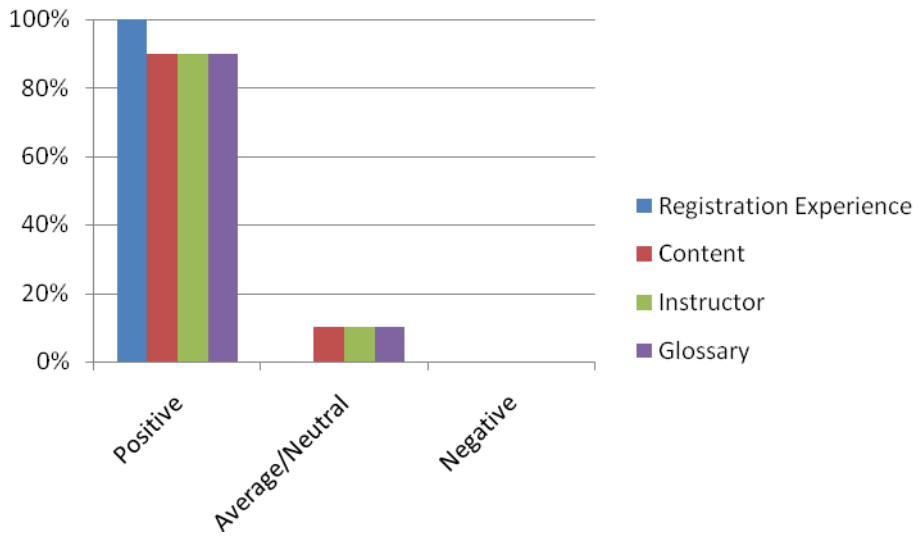
Eligibility: Oregon certified and non-certified interpreters

Topics: Myths of crime scene investigation, forensic vocabulary

Delivery Format: On-site presentation and tour; glossary was provided by CIS

Presenters: Kori Barnum/Forensic Scientist, OSP Portland Metro Forensic Laboratory

Evaluation:



5. <u>Spanish Language Specific Study Tools Webinars, June & July 2009</u>

Duration: 5 sessions over an 8-week period

Participants: 12 per week

Topics: Webinar I (webinar technology and active memory development)

Webinar II (study plan for the oral exam)

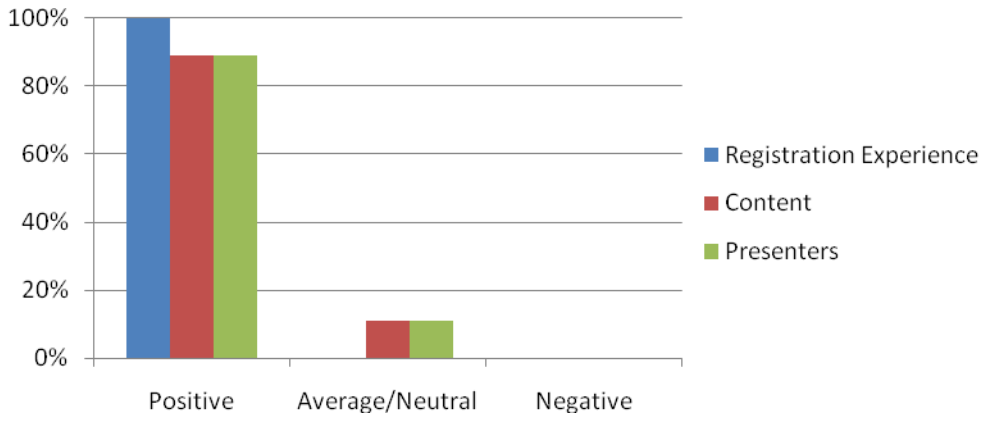
Webinar III (sight and simultaneous interpretation tools and practice)

Webinar IV (consecutive note taking tools and practice)

Webinar V (sight, consecutive and simultaneous tools and practice)

Presenters, support staff: Carla Farrell, Enrique Andrade, Max Christian & support staff: Katie Randall & Yvette Tamamoto

Evaluation:



6. <u>CE The Judicial System: Abridged & Annotated – Saturday, July 25, 2009</u>

Participants: 35

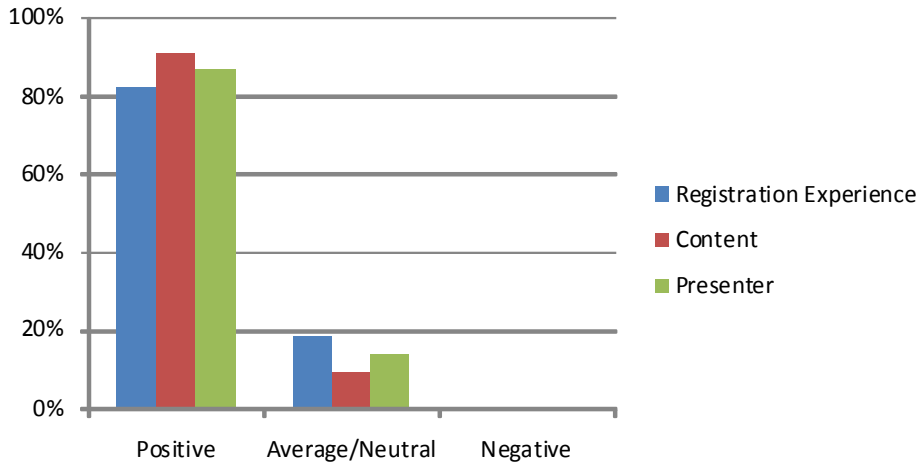
Eligibility: Certified Interpreters, RID certified ASL Interpreters, Non-Certified Interpreters

Topic: The History of the Judicial System

Delivery Format: Lecture

Presenter: Erin Ruff/JD., OJD Appropriate Dispute Resolution and Court Improvement Legal Analyst

Evaluation:



7. <u>Speakers of Indigenous Latin American Languages Training</u>, Saturday, April 18, 2009

Co-Sponsor: The Oregon Law Center

Participants: 5 (Chuj, Mixteco P'urepecha, Akateko, Q'anjobal)

Topics: Modes of interpretation, the Code of Professional Responsibility, relay interpreting

Instructors: Bruce Allen, Max Christian and support by Sally LeBaron

8. <u>Mock Spanish Oral Exams, July 18 & 19, 2009</u>

Participants: 8

Eligibility: Passed written test, ethics test and attended orientation

Topic: Familiarize examinees with the test environment and performance feedback

Proctors & support: Carla Farrell, Sally LeBaron, Yvette Tamamoto, John Wilson

9. <u>Guided Court Observation, August 17, 2009</u>

Participants: 10

Eligibility: Certified and Non-Certified Interpreters

Topics: Courtroom dynamics and familiarity with terminology and case flow

Instructors: Carla Farrell, Sally LeBaron

10. <u>Webinar: Ethics - Complex Issues II – Thursday September 24, 2009</u>

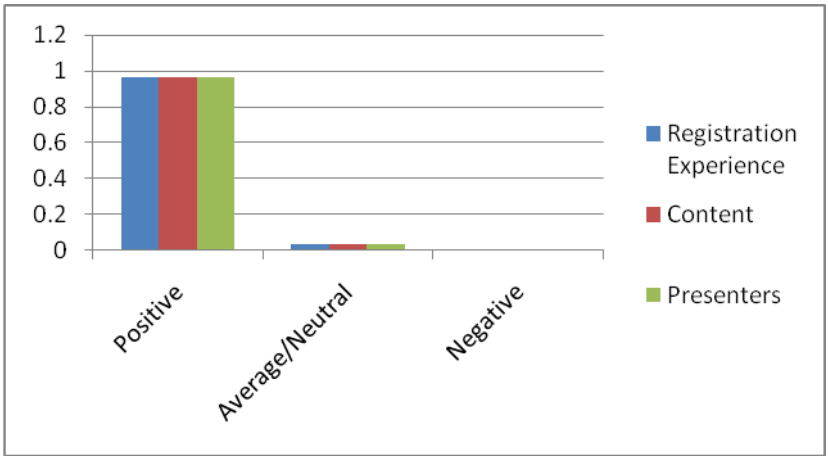
Participants: 45

Eligibility: Certified Interpreters; ASL and Non-Certified Interpreters

Topic: Presentation and discussion of complex ethical issues that arise during legal proceedings

Presenters: Max Christian, Carla Farrell; Support: Jose E. Behar & Michaelle Bienvenu

Evaluation:



11. <u>Oregon Spanish/Russian Standardized Legal Terminology III, Saturday, October 10, 2009</u>

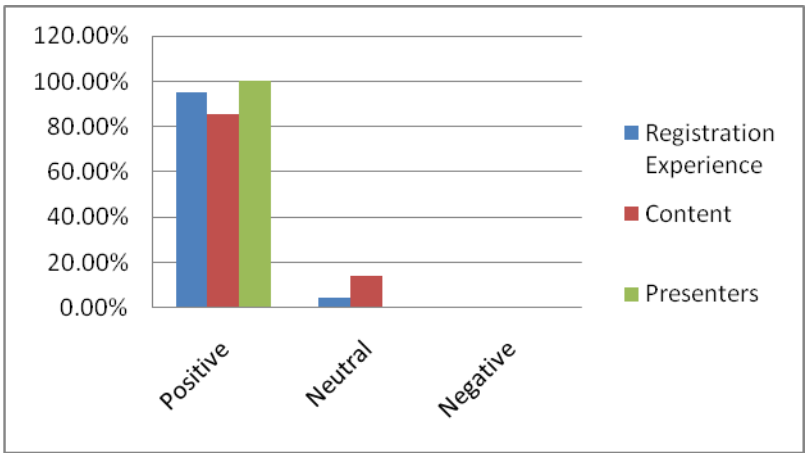
Participants: 36

Eligibility: Oregon Certified Spanish and Russian Interpreters

Topics: Results posted on OJD website for reference

Facilitators: Jose E. Behar, Elena Bogdanovich, Carla Farrell, André Knaebel, John Mathis, Oscar Nuñez

Evaluation:



12. <u>Speakers of Indigenous Languages Training, November 24, 2009</u>

Co-Sponsor: The Oregon Law Center

Participants: 12 (Copala Triqui, Mixteco, Akateko, Q'anjobal, Maya

Topics: Criminal case judicial process, court interpreter role, protocol, and ethics, glossary development, modes of interpretation

Presenters: Max Christian and André Knaebel

13. <u>Webinar: Complex Ethics Issues, November 30, 2009</u>

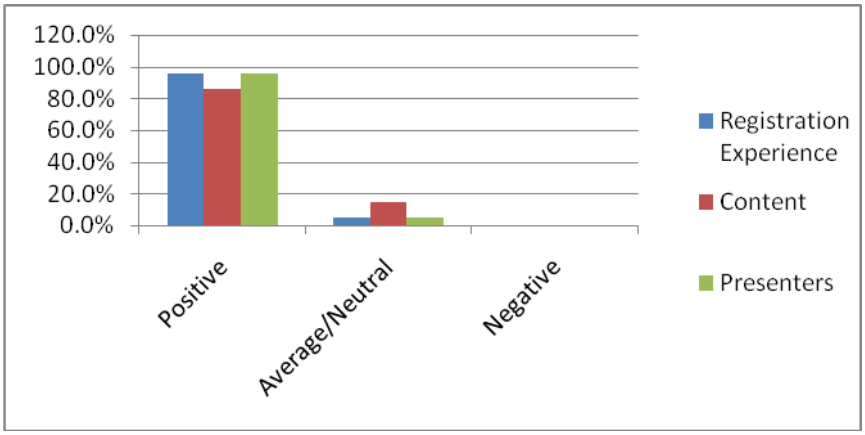
Participants: 35

Eligibility: Certified interpreters; ASL and Non-Certified Interpreters

Topic: Presentation and discussion of complex ethical issues that arise during legal proceedings

Presenters: Jose Behar, Max Christian, Carla Farrell; Support: Michaelle Bienvenu

Evaluation:



14. <u>Various Outreach and Educational Activities</u>

The cancellation of some OJD statewide training events due to end-of-biennium budget reductions provided an opportunity to target new audiences through 20 educational programs. CIS met the needs of 500+ participants through educational events and presentations in 2009.

- Mediator training
- Citizen Review Board
- The Clackamas Women's Association of Attorneys

- The State of Oregon Management Labor Advisory Committee
- The Department of Human Services Healthcare Interpreter Program
- The Oregon Law Center
- The Benton County Sheriff's Department
- Independent study modules for rural Spanish oral exam candidates
- Various job shadowing appointments with local high school students
- Statewide court visits
- Attendance at local court staff forums and events

15. <u>Other 2009 CIS Accomplishments</u>

- All staff completed OJD security training and private information was redacted from paper files
- Established CIS Business Hours policy
- Added a new scheduling calendar, "CIS Midvalley" (Marion, Polk, Yamhill)
- Completed stage 1 of 2 of distribution of wireless interpreting equipment to local courts (stage 2 pending 2009-11 budget)
- Revised OJD Interpreter Billing Statement
- Implemented webinar format for Continuing Education events
- Completed JSS3 workload study
- Moved JSS2 workstation to Portland to support managers
- Hired Yvette Tamamoto, Amanda Jesse, Alison Smith (JSS3s)
- Hired John Mathis (Interpreter II)
- Welcomed Terri Tennimon (MA) and Michaelle Bienvenu (JSS2) to CIS
- Assigned Carla Farrell to work out of class in the Certification and Training Manager position
- Held first annual summer picnic
- Held meetings with freelancers in Lane, Deschutes, and Multnomah counties

- Held meetings with freelancers in Jackson, Josephine, and Klamath counties (via video)
- Improved CIS Mission Statement
- Provided bilingual differential exam preparation materials for OJD – HRSD
- Translated statewide DUII, Marijuana Diversion, FAPA, Elder Abuse and Stalking Orders into Spanish
- Collaborated with staff to implement cost-busters ideas
- Sent two staff to train on Federal Court Interpreter Certification Exam proctoring
- Improved collection of psychometric data, especially written exam
- Revised scheduling matrices
- Implemented an Other Than Spanish (OTS) languages rates freeze
- Published Focus Newsletter for interpreters, courts and colleagues
- Evaluated all educational programs
- Revised analyst position descriptions
- Began the staff interpreter "Collegiality Initiative"
- Recorded and reported on 12 months of statewide interpreter requests
- Established remote interpreting capability in Salem
- Purchased equipment for improved webinars and several copies of the now-out-of print book, The Art of Interpreting
- Determined the average amount of interpreter time in misdemeanor, felony, civil and felony cases
- Many satisfying, small and large professional victories in the halls, offices, cubicles and courtrooms of justice in Oregon!