

Demystifying Professional versus General Studies,  
when specialization is becoming ever more Important

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>> *Schafer*: Hello, everyone.

Welcome to our collaboratively sponsored webinar  
this evening.

You may be wondering who is sponsoring this  
particular webinar, the National Center -- excuse  
me, the MARIE Center, the MARIE Center.

For interpreter education. And our national  
interpreter education center are collaboratively  
sponsoring this workshop, so we welcome you. Next  
slide, please.

Before we proceed this evening, I did want to take  
a moment to explain a little bit about the technology  
we're using.

If you are finding the web cam screen is too small

for you, you can expand or collapse the window as you please, what you see is a white line at the bottom of the window separating the web cam from the slides. You can use that line if you hover over it with your mouse to enlarge or collapse the screen as you prefer. As the picture shows. Next slide, please.

If at any point during our webinar, you are in need of technical assistance, if the webinar -- if the web cam or any of the slides were to disappear off of your screen, what you can see in the menu at the top of your screen, next to the words GoToMeeting and file, at the end of that line you will see web cams. If you click on that icon, you will get a drop down menu, which will say "Show all web cams." If you click on those words, you should be able to see everyone once again.

If for some reason a problem arises that you are unable to solve on your own, feel free to type into the chat box and ask for help.

There is a section of the control panel labeled questions, click into that section and type your question, and someone on our team will respond as soon

as possible.

As well, if you think of a question or comment that you would like to share during the course of the webinar, that section remains open throughout and we will have a question and answer period at the conclusion of the webinar during which some of those questions and comments will be shared with the presenters.

I will be signing those questions at that time so everyone can see the content of the question. Next slide, please.

The MARIE Center and the National Interpreter Education Center exist in a consortium with four other regional centers and together we form the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. The mission of the consortium is to increase the quantity and quality of interpreters nationwide. We provide technical assistance, educational programming, training resources, research, and other related activities.

The interpreters are unable to view the screen and will be moving temporarily. Please hold for

voiceover.

[Pausing].

Just a moment, please.

We appreciate your patience during these small technical difficulties.

We're back.

I apologize.

My computer froze and I needed to log off and then log back in, in order to rejoin the webinar.

Hopefully it won't happen again. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

As I was saying, the NCIEC provides support and training, as well as resources, all focusing on the improvement of interpreting education.

As well as the interpreting field.

Next slide, please.

We would like to ask a few questions of our audience before we begin and you may be wondering how we'll go about that. Well, with go to webinar, it's very easy. You will see on the control panel a blue and white list of icons. The final icon is a picture of a hand. When I ask a question, as I will do in the

next slide, please raise your hand if that applies to you.

Oh, I see the first question. If you are watching this webinar from home, please click on the icon to raise your hand.

I see the numbers increasing. That's great.

Keep 'em coming.

Okay. I think we've stopped. We have 70% of our viewers, 70% watching from home this evening.

I'm jealous, I wish that we could switch places. No, I'm just kidding. Of course I'm happy to be here this evening.

Okay. Now, let me put the hands down and I will ask our second question.

Just one moment, I'm having another -- a little bit of technical difficulty again.

Okay. So now next question, please. Are you an RID-approved sponsor?

If yes, please raise your hand.

I see the numbers rising again.

Slowly but surely, we have 25% who are RID approved sponsors. I will put the hands down. Next

question.

Are you a teacher, instructor or presenter? If yes, please raise your hand.

We're getting good responses.

Interesting, we also have 25% of our viewership answering question to this question. All right, we will reset.

And our next question: Are you an RID member wanting to understand Professional Studies versus General Studies? Please raise your hand if that applies to you.

Oh, many, many hands I see.

61%. Okay, we will reset again. That is our final question. Thank you for your participation.

Next slide, please.

We are happy to welcome our presenters this evening for demystifying Professional Studies versus General Studies. First we will welcome Richard Laurion.

Next we have Nathan Fowler. And Nathan, can you open your web cam? Finally we have Mary Darragh MacLean.

Open your welcome cam, please, Mary. Welcome to all of you.

I'm going to close my web cam so we'll have the three of you on the screen. And we'll ask you just to briefly introduce yourselves and then go forward with your presentation.

Good luck and see you at the end of our webinar.

>> Okay. I will see you again Trudy. Hello, everyone. I'm Richard Laurion. I am the chairperson for the RID professional development committee.

[Interpreter's voice is cutting out]. It is our responsibility to supervise and develop policy as well as structure and offer support for the network of sponsors who work through the RID CMP, the continuing education program, for RID interpreters. When I'm wearing my other hat, [indiscernible], I work as the director of the CATIE center. There I work often with Trudy, as she just mentioned.

I'm here today because I've been involved in the RID CMP program for a very long time and I wanted to share with you a little sense of the history of the CMP and I'll turn it over now to Nathan.

>> *Nathan*: Hi, everyone, I'm Nathan Fowler. I'm here



in Massachusetts. We'll see where Mary is, but Richard I know is in a different state and I'm here in Massachusetts. I am a sign language interpreter -- the screen seems to have frozen, but I am an interpreter here in Massachusetts, I'm certified by RID since 2009.

I work generally free-lance interpreting. And our local chapter of RID, what we call Mass RID, I am the CMP coordinator as well.

I've been doing that for -- for several years. I began in 2008. I want to make sure that -- that I'm signing clearly. I'm seeing my own video is freezing and so please let me know if you are not able to see me. I don't know if the situation is the same on your end.

>> *Richard*: I can see you just fine.

>> *Nathan*: Okay. So I joined the [indiscernible] with RID in 2011 with Richard and with Mary. Mary, yes.

So I think that's all for my introduction.

PDC.

>> *Mary*: Hi, everyone, my name is Mary Darragh

MacLean. I've been involved with the PDC for a very long time. I joined back in 2007. And I'm currently the CIT representative for the Professional Development Committee. I am a teacher and interpreter so I wear both roles and I'm also a CMP sponsor through my company, which is SLR, Sign Language Resources. So that's a bit about me.

>> *Richard*: Okay. Next slide, please.

So in this slide, we see what we hope to share with you all tonight.

We want you to have a good understanding around what Professional Studies are, versus what we have generally called General Studies. We also would like to explain the purpose of the General Studies category as a whole.

In the field, we're becoming increasingly specialized. We find that many interpreters spend much of their career in the legal domain, perhaps all of it; or they are doing entirely medical interpreting work or in the mental health branch of the medical field.

Or they are working in educational settings, perhaps

specializing in K-12 aspect.

This is different from the way things have historically been when interpreters were often known as community interpreters. They did different jobs on a daily basis. We find that more and more, our colleagues are specializing in very particular domains and, therefore, need a profound understanding of the area that they spend most of their time.

So as you become involved in actively planning your own professional development, we want you to consider what may be some priorities for you in that contemplation around professional development for yourself.

Interpreting is a very dynamic field. We have noticed in 50 years the field has changed dramatically, it looks very different than it did back then.

So our committee is concerned around ensuring that this CMP ACET program is truly meeting the needs of the field as it stands today.

So we want the CMP ACET system to contribute to your

professional growth and development. So tonight's webinar is intended to clarify for you the function of the CMP ACET, how you can participate, in this program and how you can maximize your studies, regardless of whether you are taking professional or General Studies CEUs.

If you have questions, we encourage you to type them into the chat box and we will do our best to respond to all of the questions that are posed tonight. Next slide, please.

So RID is just over 50 years old now and way back when, as we all recall, we established the registry to be essentially a list of interpreters. Interpreters who could work with deaf people, who could work with DeafBlind individuals, and that list was to be maintained so that people knew when these services were needed, who to call, who they would get fair and accurate interpreting from. So they wanted a reliable resource for -- for connecting with and providing interpreters for the deaf and DeafBlind communities.

So that list was intended to be a trustworthy and

reliable source of information.

When candidates sought certification, they had to recruit two individuals who knew their work and ask for letters of support. Vouching for the character, the attitude, so to speak, the heart of the interpreter. And essentially vouching for the fact that they should be certified.

Upon receipt of those two letters, RID would review and deem whether or not a certification would be awarded at that time.

That system continued for some time but it became unwieldy and difficult to measure at a national level. So it was decided, as an organization, that a testing mechanism was needed.

Next slide, please.

So RID established a testing system in order to assess and evaluate interpreters and determine whether they were competent and had the knowledge base needed to interpreter with the deaf and DeafBlind communities.

So you may have heard stories about people who have been in the field for a very long time and who took the first test, way back when, on eight millimeter

film. Essentially, they were movie reels playing while the interpreters were being assessed and then it moved on to CD roms and other versions along the way.

However the structure of testing that was first established and the expectations back then were that every five years or so, certified members would be retested. It was understood that the knowledge base within any field or area of study would be dynamic, would be changing over time.

The first testing process required, as I said, that five-year retesting in order to not just initially prove that they had the capabilities and knowledge to interpret, but also that they are growing along with the growing field. How far, when our numbers began to increase, it became difficult to manage that at the national level. Imagine 14,000 members being retested every five years. You can see how impossible that would be to maintain.

So RID began to look for other solutions. There were many professional organizations at that time that were establishing continuing education and

maintenance programs for certified members. So RID began studying that approach. Next slide, please. So in 1981, RID made the decision to -- I don't want to misspeak. Let's see, in, yes, in 1981, RID decided to establish a certification maintenance program. And at that time, they -- they wrote out the history of what it would look like and the membership, the expectation was that the membership within RID would establish their own state chapters for certification maintenance. Unfortunately, only three states ultimately established maintenance programs. So it was not a successful effort. So the process was reconvened again in 199 and an investigation was conducted by the national certification maintenance program with the four-year stipulation. In 1993, an ad hoc committee presented a model that we are currently utilizing today for certification maintenance. This was presented at a conference. The membership voted unanimously, 100%, to support the CMP program. As it was proposed at that time. I remember this very well, because I was there. I

was part of the ad hoc committee and I was present at that convention, so I think of it as a very fond memory.

So we had a needs assessment, a certification maintenance program and then we see ethical practices. So we have testing, sorry, the certification maintenance program as well as ethical practices. All three of those pieces together are part of the certification process and it's what lends our certification credibility as well as integrity. This is a very important aspect to the validity of the certification that we are awarded through RID. It -- all three of these work together to ensure that our customers are protected and make our process legally defensible as well.

So next slide, please. So the goal for the CMP is to support and promote the professional development of its members, of you. To ensure that you are able to gain the knowledge and the skills that you need to do the job well.

So through that process of maintaining the knowledge and the critical elements that help you succeed in



the field, we are each of us showing that we value the strength of our individual and agency awarded certification.

Next slide, please. I will turn this over to Mary.

>> *Mary*: Hello, everyone, okay. So we will start by speaking about General Studies and then we'll move on to speaking about Professional Studies.

People may be wondering what originally was the idea when these two distinctions were created.

One -- why General Studies become included as something that needed to be earned with CEUs.

The research that was done in order to set up the CMP program included recognition that there were not enough professional topics related to the field of interpreting for practitioners to take part in.

There were not enough workshops locally, there were not enough resources for people to be engaged in in order to maintain the requisite number of CEUs. But rather they noticed the importance of general information gathering and we knew that across the board interpreters with more general and world knowledge provide more better and accurate services.

So the General Studies category was established for those reasons. It would allow for interpreters to recognize needs in their own work within their own realm of interpreting and take courses that matched those particular needs to gain knowledge of both breadth and depth around the subjects that played out in their work every day.

Also, work that interested them. So for whatever reason they were able to take part in these courses and earn these credits.

That's why the sponsors would pay attention to the details and then make sure to approve those CEUs where appropriate.

For General Studies. More occasionally workshops, courses and classes that didn't fit with the field of interpreting, our definition of what would fit with the field of interpreting for Professional Studies, but they would serve to enhance the general knowledge of the practitioner who was taking part in them. It might be that the information gleaned in those courses could not be directly applied immediately or in the short term, but we recognized

the value of it over the course of a career and so we wanted to grant those CEUs under the General Studies category. As I say, at the beginning of the CMP, there were not enough resources in terms of workshops and classes within local arenas for people to meet the -- to satisfy the requirements of all of the credits required. And in some larger cities, of course, there were. But we knew by offering the General Studies category there would be increased flexibility for interpreters who lived outside of the urban areas. Someone would have the opportunities to take advantage of educational resources through other means and receive CEUs.

There needed, of course, to be 12 hours -- excuse me, 20 hours -- or two CEUs -- and that was the reason that the General Studies category came into being. What we recognize today is that there are a myriad of opportunities for learning, whether locally or at a distance, there are classes both in person and online. There are a wide variety of resources available to people today compared to the way it was before.

Therefore, the PDC at present wants to open up a dialogue about -- with our membership and our sponsors as well -- so that we can all be on the same page and think about whether we should continue to operate with the General Studies category.

Where he wonder whether it might be time to put aside the General Studies category and focus only on Professional Studies going forward. That's something to keep in mind as you are watching our webinar this evening. We will have an open dialogue about that with our members and sponsors shortly and we would like everyone to contribute to that conversation. We wonder about how long to keep General Studies open and how to go about closing it off if we do, so we will want your input about that. Next slide, please.

What we see on this slide is a list of categories and topics. These are just a sampling of topics that impact our daily lives as interpreting practitioners. Take a moment and look at this list. You may have taken a class or a workshop or a training in any of these topics over the course of your career.

Some of these topics may seem clearly related to General Studies only, that may be the distinction that you assign. But I will say that the interpreters that we've worked with this the past have had all kinds of specialized training around these topics as well that apply directly to the field of interpreting.

So an interpreter could propose these topics seemingly fitting into the General Studies category and into the Professional Studies category because they would apply directly to the work at hand. As I say, we have flexibility within the system. If a topic were to look -- superficial and not as though it would apply directly to work, we would need some kind of documentation to -- to meet evidence that it would apply directly to someone's work and then we would understand.

We would understand how to assign it by getting a clearer picture of how the practitioner would use the information gleaned in that course to directly affect their work.

I will talk more about that later and the

documentation that we look for in order to explain to us why a General Studies topic would best be suited for Professional Studies CEUs. It's possible to earn Professional Studies CEUs through that process of document justification.

Next slide, please.

Often we hear about the idea of teaching as General Studies credit. People may wonder why it is if I myself take on the role of teaching a course about interpreting, if I'm teaching a workshop about interpreting, why I would earn only General Studies CEUs as opposed to Professional Studies when we assign it as being a direct correlation with the field.

Historically my understanding is when the process was established several years ago, there was a distinction made between teaching and interpreting. So the skills involved in the process of teaching versus the skills involved in the act of interpreting.

Individuals who are engaged in teaching are focused on the skills they are teaching versus thinking about

the process of interpreting.

So if a presenter or an educator has done research in order to set up a new workshop, to set up a new course to teach, that course work, that prework, is about the nature of interpreting and the distinction of our field. And so whether they are gathering articles, whether they are doing a literature review, that sort of work to create the workshop, that process of research and preparation and study, that applies to Professional Studies and would count for Professional Studies CEUs because it is directly involved in the study of interpreting.

They do that by setting up an independent study and working with a sponsor and they would earn those Professional Studies CEUs, I want to be clear it's for the process of creating a workshop or a class and the work involved in that process leading up to the event.

Now on that day, when the individual is engaged actively in teaching, whether that person is presenting or teaching, leading a workshop, they are focusing on the skills they are teaching and the

explanations. They may be speaking about 1 how to improve skills and dealing with the live action of the class and responding to questions and queries. So the information is being discussed and taught, but the skills involved in that moment are different than the preparation skills.

It's teaching pedagogy rather than interpreting.

And so that would be the reason that the act of teaching earns General Studies CEUs for the actual teaching of the workshop or class. Now the independent study I mentioned is again for Professional Studies CEUs. The preparatory work and then the General Studies CEUs are earned for the teaching itself.

If a teacher was interested in teaching a class that was new that was involved novel research, we recommend going ahead for that. That sounds like a great opportunity for General Studies. And if you are interested in further research on a specific topic related to interpreting, that would qualify as an independent study and be Professional Studies opportunity as well but the teaching we want to be



clear, the process, the preparatory work is Professional Studies, but the teaching itself, the process of that is General Studies CEUs.

So we're not limiting the actions of a teacher just to research, of course. Not only research related to the field, but the two together, Professional Studies and General Studies can be combined within the process of creating and then teaching a workshop. I've also noticed over the years a teacher may teach a workshop or present a class and then they come to us and say "Every time I teach it, I learn something new. I learn more about interpreting every time I have a new cohort of students. It's new for me every time I teach it. It's a new experience. So I should earn CEUs every time."

That's their idea. Every time they teach a specific class, whether it's the same material again and again because they are saying the work is dynamic and the education is dynamic. That they should earn CEUs each time. At the PDC we have thought about this, we have discussed it. We hear that concern.

We don't mind open dialogue about it. So we've had

some dialogue about this and as a committee, we have discussed it, reviewed, talked about the possibilities of changing the CMP program over time in response to that request.

Next slide, please.

I'll turn this over to Nathan.

>> *Nathan:* Okay. I will take it from here.

Hopefully again you can see me and my image is not freezing, because I said my video continues to freeze on occasion. But I hear the interpretation, so I'm assuming that everything is running fine.

Nothing otherwise, I will carry on.

So the Professional Studies, PS CEUs, is the topic that I would like to talk about. As you see on the slide, we have three main points. And some will overlap between the three included areas.

What I would like to emphasize here is that the interpreter must engage in a process of assessing what they wish to know. And then seek out the educational opportunities, the workshops, the classes, the college courses, presentations, whatever it might be that's available in the field

that is aligned with that particular area of interest and then take advantage of the opportunity.

When that learning applies to the field of interpreting, it qualifies for Professional Studies CEUs and it's very important that you provide the proper documentation.

So that process results in Professional Studies CEUs.

Again, just to reiterate, you have assessed your own learning needs, you have sought out a learning opportunity that aligns, you've documented the process and submitted for Professional Studies CEUs.

Now, if what's out there really works in terms of contributing to your knowledge in the field, you can earn Professional Studies CEUs. So that means that many, many things can be considered in this particular category.

So something that I've done often is to take a look at educational opportunities as a CMP sponsor myself, I take a look at what's out there, I see what's being approved for various categories of CEUs.

And I'm -- I asked myself as an interpreter, I've asked myself as an interpreter what it is that I need

to learn. I engage in that process as well and assess the opportunities that are available to me and determine which ones align.

So I engage in an independent study, I consider, you know, the audience, I bring it to the PDC for consideration, and I do believe that the independent study opportunity is the future of our field. I feel as though as practitioners we learn a great deal when we can be self-directed learners, when we are engaging in that assessment process on a regular basis. So attending a workshop is a fine opportunity to learn as well. You could certainly enrich your learning process, but for me personally, I find that the independent study model works much, much better in terms of contributing to my until and skills. So that's just a note that I wanted to make to the audience tonight.

Next slide, please.

So I'll talk a little bit more about Professional Studies and the categories that were mentioned in the previous slide. And you will notice that there is language, culture and human behavior at the top of

this slide.

Now a lot of things can fit into that category, right?

It could be a language, foreign language, French, Spanish, a signed language like LSF, DGF, I think, Dutch German sign language. I don't know German so I can't properly name that language unfortunately.

But there are many, many studies that could fit even just under the language category. It could be that you are analyzing specific features of ASL, specific registers of the language.

There are certainly some subdialect studies that have been recently researched and published of ASL. I think that I just saw a publication recently about the black vernacular of ASL, I think it was called the treasure of black ASL. So that study would certainly fit into the Professional Studies category.

We have to be careful when we're engaging in language studies. As a certified interpreter, you can't be taking ASL 1 and 2 and assuming that that's really contributing to your knowledge in the field, right? So that kind of delineation can be very tricky between

what levels of ASL you're going to be taking.

If you're interpreting in a college domain and you are interpreting for ASL 1 or 2 classes and you need to know more about those classes or let's say deaf history or deaf culture and wish to retake those courses again to make sure that you are completely current on the knowledge that you need in order to interpret effectively, you could possibly justify the choice of that course. But your CMP sponsor would certainly be looking for a very clear explanation as to why you chose to take those courses.

I would be unlikely to approve such a request, but it may be possible under certain circumstances. I would be asking for some very clear documentation. Under the category of culture, certainly culture is culture, right? The study of societies, the study of behaviors, traditions, religions, whatever it maybe, that pertains to a particular group of people coming together and having a set of norms and behaviors that are aligned over time. It could be that you are looking for religious studies as well. Looking at various religions across the world and how

each one of them is similar and different in order to better understand the human experience as a whole, Professional Studies would also be awarded for that activity possibly.

So my apologies for looking away on occasion. I'm just checking my notes to make sure that I've hit my points.

Related to human behavior, that includes the field of psychology, human social, emotional development, family dynamics. There are a number of possibilities that could fit into the human behavior category as well.

So if, for example, you find yourself interpreting in therapy sessions, pretty frequently you are taking a family dynamics course, this again is an opportunity to earn Professional Studies for that activity as long as you document it, well document it, the reason for taking that particular course and how it contributes to your knowledge in the field. So I'm going to take a risk and go to the next slide. You see theoretical, experiential on the top of that slide. In the interpreting field, which is a

relatively new field, we have done a great deal to become increasingly professional, to establish training programs, we now have master's level and Ph.D. level programs now at Gallaudet university showing that our field is really progressing and we have conducted a number of studies, we have conducted research and there are publications associated with this career. So the research that's being conducted around our work, in particular, cognitive experience of interpreting, the experience of collegially working with others, working in teams, working with particular customers, working with deaf people as consumers, certainly has resulted in a number of new theoretical understandings and being more widely disseminated via publications. All of this has contributed to our thought base and our knowledge around the field.

All -- all of those activities would qualify as Professional Studies as well. It could be that you're conducting research and it could be that you are meeting in a professional learning group with colleagues to discuss the findings within a home



community. And if those findings are shared with others in the community, via a workshop, that also would qualify for Professional Studies. Those attendees at that workshop would be earning Professional Studies as well.

So all of the work that you've done leading up to the workshop, all of that prep, would be Professional Studies. Prep and the attendees would also earn Professional Studies for being there.

Next slide.

Professional Studies CEUs, when you are doing independent studies, mean that you assess your own needs and look for learning opportunities that fit those needs. In the field over the last 40 years, has -- has become -- predominantly generalist, right? And now we are starting to see increasingly specialize. We are either doing mostly medical work or legal work, whatever it may be. However, we are still engaged, generally speaking, in the act of interpreting. We are still working between two languages, we are still engaged in the same cognitive processes and so on. But we are applying them in

increasingly specialized domains.

So, for example, if we are doing a lot of medical work and looking anatomy and physiology as a course, that if that's one that's very needed for medical interpreting, we have to have that information in order to do our jobs well. Therefore it would warrant earning Professional Studies. If, however, we're working in other domain it may not be applicable. Interpret training programs are now adding some of this specialized knowledge. So when you have graduated from an interpreter training program and have already taken anatomy and physiology, taking them after college may not be beneficial in any way. Things become increasingly -- things become more challenging to determine over time because we have to not only determine the changing nature of our fields, but the changing nature of the training programs and the knowledge base that you graduate with and therefore what could be deemed for Professional Studies versus General Studies.

So it could be if interpreters training programs

become specialized enough to provide you with all of the professional knowledge that you need, we won't even need Professional Studies CEUs at some point. So we are -- the number of specializations we know are growing by the day it seems almost. You can specialize in medical, legal, many more areas and we can't even predict how many areas of specialization there will ultimately be in this career.

I'm just checking my notes to make sure that I've checked off all of my major points. I think that I have covered the Professional Studies domain to my satisfaction. So, Richard, or Mary, if you have anything to add. If not, then we can turn it over to the audience for their questions and then I'm happy to engage in answering those questions as needed.

>> Next slide, please.

>> *Mary:* So we've mentioned several times during the course of our webinar this evening about the concept of documentation about proof or justification of the need for a particular learning opportunity or training or workshop, any of these qualify as Professional Studies. Of course, each sponsor has

their own way of handling the information, what they expect around justification from members who are asking for specific training opportunities to qualify. During a recent discussion, with the national office, many sponsors indicated a desire to create a standard for expectations for these documentations and justifications.

We are looking for some uniformity in the information we're asking for from members around the learning opportunities that they would like to qualify, so we have come up with a template with four different questions. And the members seeking Professional Studies CEUs can answer these questions by way of proof or documentation to the sponsor.

Now, it's up to the individual member how they choose to create this information and pass it along, whether in written documentation or in sign.

But it will, of course, be the final say of the sponsor as to whether or not these qualify for Professional Studies CEUs.

But for the first time, we have a nice template and a structure that we can pass along to members so they

understand what it is that we are looking for with regard to whether or not something would qualify as Professional Studies. So as you see on the slide, the information we have just passed along to all of the sponsors and we will share with members as well and these give you a good indication of the information that we're looking for.

So please ask your sponsor for this list as you consider engaging in different educational opportunities.

And try to follow it as best you can because we're trying, as I say, to establish uniformity. And this will give us all a better sense of what engaged -- what's being engaged in that activity, for your professional development.

I can promise you that sponsors generally feel better knowing there will be some uniformity in using this template because they wonder about how to go about making these decisions on an individual basis. We are looking forward to having this tool in our bag and with our sponsors and members and having everyone feel more comfortable in the process. If a sponsor

needs to, they can ask more questions, but I think this is a good base for knowledge regarding the reasoning and rationale. Feel free to share this with others and ask questions about that as we get towards the end of the webinar. It is an important part of the program. And we want interpreters to feel comfortable knowing that they have the right to ask for things to qualify as Professional Studies, that's why we're hosting the webinar to explain the process. Next slide, please.

>> *Nathan:* So this is Nathan again.

I was actually looking for that slide earlier, I'm so happy to see it appear now.

I did already to some degree talk about the fact that interpreters are becoming increasingly specialized and this is part of the dynamic aspect of our work and our response to that. We know that many of us are working in video relay, we are working in VRI as well. So we are not only interpreting phone calls, but in VRI we are working in hospital settings. What do interpreters in those settings need? What do deaf consumers need from VRI interpreting? This is an

area that has not been researched at any great length. It needs a good deal more examination so we can determine whether the needs of that domain are quite different or similar to others. So anybody who is out there and interested in taking up a research question, it is time to do research on that particular area.

When interpreting with individuals who be DeafBlind, we find a whole new set of needs for training and we are finding that this is an increasingly in demand service, so haptics for example is something that DeafBlind people have been teaching to interpreters in order to prepare them for this specialization of DeafBlind interpreting.

So, again, that would qualify for Professional Studies, CEUs, because it's considered specialization studies.

Next slide.

>> *Richard:* So now I think we'll have the audience ask some questions. Questions have appeared already in the chat box. We will ask Trudy to open her web cam and then we'll have some questions from the

audience.

>> *Schafer*: Okay, hello, everyone. I do see more questions appearing and I am trying to categorize them by topic to the best of my ability.

So one topic that's coming up quite a bit relates to independent study from sponsors. They would like to know how to become sponsors. And let me refer to my list for a moment. So one sponsor says that she's very happy to have that template available. And has noticed in the past that interpreters will often sponsor shop in order to find a sponsor that -- suits their needs better. But having a template will provide some sort of standard model by which Professional Studies will be awarded.

Can you talk a little bit more about that process, in particular?

>> *Richard*: Well, it's important to know that anyone can apply to become a sponsor for CMPs for RID. Whether it's a group, organization or business or an individual, anyone is welcome to apply.

We have our complete application process on the RID.org website. But to be fair it's a long



application with many, many pieces that's because we want to make sure if a person is approved to become a sponsor that that individual or organization or group will do a good job for our membership.

For the RID members. And those who are not members.

So we want that person or organization to have a full and complete understanding of what's required in the role of being a sponsor and the role of maintaining that continuing education.

There are some charges involved as well. The process was on hold for about six years. Because there were revisions being made, so it is currently open again just as of very recently and so anyone who is interested is welcome to apply. It's [www.RID.org](http://www.RID.org) and the application is available at any time so feel free. Would either of you like to add anything?

>> No, thank you very much.

>> No, nothing to add? Okay.

>> *Schafer*: There are some questions related to the justification document, documentation. One question related to what is involved in that justification process. So if an interpreter is

working in the community, for example, how do they in fact document that they are increasingly working in a medical specialization rather than in the more general community setting?

>> Nathan or Mary?

>> *Nathan*: I can try, sure. I did discuss that briefly in Professional Studies portion, but I'm happy to elaborate. Some interpreters who are working as professionals who are certified, as interpreters who are working as professionals who are certified, we do expect that we will not be engaging in fraudulent behavior in order to earn Professional Studies CEUs. We do expect that we all have integrity. So as a CMP, and as a sponsor, it is expected that we will know our constituents. We will know the interpreters who will come to us seeking CEUs. And that interpreters will engage in a certain amount of self assessment as well as have the -- frankly the common sense of knowing that this is truly an area of specialization.

So as a sponsor, I also have to have a critical eye on ensuring that I'm awarding CEUs properly and that

the individual is truthfully portraying their work in the field. If at any point I'm suspecting that this has not been proposed with the best of integrity, it's my purview to challenge and to question and to follow-up and ask for RID's assistance as needed. However, if an individual is truly preceding along the right path, taking courses and workshops and training that seem to fit their needs, then, you know, we continue to engage in the process with any of our colleagues and award them CEUs as, you know, requested with proper documentation, unless we see otherwise.

So, Mary, Richard, anything to add?

>>> Nope, I concur.

>> *Schafer*: So I see a few questions asking for clarification related to teaching and earning General Studies CEUs during the moments of teaching versus Professional Studies CEUs for preparatory work. On ARS, there is a check box where you put down that you are teaching this workshop for the first time. And that seems to intimate by checking that off that you are earning Professional Studies CEUs

for that first time teaching. So it may be worth revisiting that document is one suggestion.

Another individual asks for a clarification around that same topic with the question: Is it true that I cannot earn CEUs for preparatory work before teaching a workshop? So can you clarify that again?

>> *Mary:* I can answer that. This is Mary. I hope that I was clear. But let me repeat myself. If a course -- you definitely can earn Professional Studies CEUs for the preparation involved in teaching a workshop or creating a class, whether that's research or any other kind of work. Anything that's involved in the preparation will be Professional Studies. That would be under the rubric of an independent study.

So that would have to happen over the course of a laid out amount of time, requires some preplanning. It can't happen last minutes. You would need to get in touch with the sponsor ahead of time and set that up as an independent study and then it could happen and the process would be documented in order to garner credits, those CEU credits as Professional Studies

for that prep.

As I say for the workshop class or presentation.

So, yes. This may be something that Nathan or Richard would be able to help me with, but I believe that the form you referenced clearly explains that individuals engaged in teaching will be earning General Studies CEUs.

But if we're finding that's not clear on the form, then we as a committee should look at that to make sure that it's amended. Richard?

>> *Richard:* Yes, I believe that it is on the form. However, there may be some older versions of the form still floating around and those older versions do not have that statement. But if you are using an updated version of the form, it certainly does have the statement that you will not earn -- you will be earning General Studies CEUs for teaching activities.

When we look at the theory behind the CMP, well, let me start again.

The CMP is essentially not our creation. It's not something that we created out of thin air without any

guidance. We worked with the international association of continuing education and training that IACEA, and they are the ones who truly came up with the whole term CEU. We just borrowed these terms from another organization, frankly. We also followed their structure for awarding the CEUs and for the whole certification maintenance program. Their philosophy behind the continuing education process is -- continuing education process is that professionals who are doing their work should already have the capacity and the knowledge to perform the tasks that they are asked to do on daily basis. So if you are teaching a topic for example, we expect that you are the professional in the room. You know that topic thoroughly. So sob awarded Professional Studies indicates that you are in the learning process, you are engaged in adding to your knowledge and capacity, when in fact as a teacher you already bring the expertise to that task. So when you are prepping for teaching, engaged in the research, you can certainly earn Professional Studies because you are learning. But when you are actually delivering

the content, as the expert in the room, you are earning General Studies.

You should not be learning while teaching. You should already have the expertise that you need in order to deliver the content to participants effectively. But every moment that leads up to that first minute that you stand up in front of the class, whether it be in the development of curriculum or searching materials and so on, that's all certainly a learning process that contributes to your professional skills and capacity and with an expect study agreement with a sponsor, you can earn Professional Studies for that activity.

Think Nathan mentioned the need to have integrity, to be able to trust and certainly the Professional Development Committee will be pushing this issue over the next few years. Because we have recognized that our program might be becoming a little watered down, a little shaky. We have all heard the term CEU cops, checking to make sure that nobody is taking needless bathroom breaks, you know, that the doors are locked when you enter the room and you must stay. We

certainly don't want to set that tone in our training. We want to be able to trust our membership to be doing the right thing that they are present in the room, attending, participating, learning and benefiting from these activities that they're engaged in.

We're engaged in them for our own benefit, so that is the attitude that we expect everyone to be taking. But at the same time we don't want to be like the American Medical Association, right? We don't want doctors who are attending conferences in name only, actually spending their time on the golf course.

Right?

So the Professional Development Committee is working hard to make sure that our members are encouraged at all turns to be as integrity bound and trustworthy as possible in doing the best they can to earn CEUs appropriately. Trudy, do you have another question?

>> *Schafer*: We have many questions on this topic.

But I also have other questions related to other topics. So what I suggest is when the webinar is concluded, we will collate all of the questions and we can type them up into a frequently asked questions



document or something similar and we'll share them on our website so that people can see both the questions and the answers.

Is that okay?

>> *Richard:* Yes. In fact, could I add something?

The PDC has been creating, along with Carol Greer, a staff person at RID headquarters, an FAQ document already. So we do have a list of many, many questions and answers on that website, [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org). And it's there for sponsors so review as they need because a number of those FAQs relate to sponsorship. But the document is open to anyone who is interested and curious about the Professional Development Committee and CEUs.

>> *Nathan:* This is Nathan. I have a question about the process. Trudy, it seems that we have many comment around many different topics. Would you like to give us the opportunity to review what those topics are and then we can make a decision as a panel about what topics we think would best maximize our time?

>> *Schafer:* It's -- it's a bit challenging for me to

run that kind of analysis without using too much air time to do so.

But, yeah, the next one I can assure you is that we have the most number of questions around and it has to do with the very fine line between professional and General Studies CEUs. A lot of questions for clarification around that. One particularly good one is: Teaching English as a second language relating to that topic. And the fact that teaching English is a second language may actually warrant Professional Studies because many deaf people are using English as a second language.

Then there are a number of topics pertaining to teaching but not interpreting that could be either in the professional or General Studies categories. How do you make the distinction? Is there a very clear bright line between the two? Or is there, in fact, a good deal of gray over language area. People are looking for specific clarifications on certain topics.

>> *Nathan*: I can try. It's interesting the attorney that we're noting about specific questions around

specific learning opportunities. Is this particular course or workshop or experience Professional Studies or General Studies, I see that's the theme that we're getting. I would like to take a step back, if we can.

I would like to ask people about their intentions. Am I taking this course, for example, because I need CEUs, am I taking advantage of that opportunity or is it a true desire to learn the content? As a CMP sponsor, as an interpreter with certification, do I have these conversations with my colleagues do they know about these opportunities and have they asked me why I am interested. Have I had that conversation with myself? I have those conversations with my colleagues.

If we just look at ourselves in these moments, ask what are our intentions, if we have those conversations, with ourselves and with others, we may find that the problem of distinction, of where that boundary lies and that gray area is resolved.

It's possible one opportunity or another may be available and may fit any of those Professional

Studies or General Studies, but I think the intention has to be the focus. Whether or not something is viable or qualified for Professional Studies or General Studies is no longer the question. If the question pertains to one's intent in taking the course. I think the person who asks may be upset that I haven't answered the question, but I think the answer lies within.

>> *Richard*: Honestly, I feel as though we have pretty much answered that question. If you're talking about teaching, for example, you don't teach and learn about the topic that you are teaching at the same time. You shouldn't be teaching if you don't know how -- have a sufficient knowledge base of the topic to deliver content on it. You should know it well enough to be providing instruction and guiding others in that topic.

However, all of the preparatory work that you do around teaching in advance certainly could be contributing to your knowledge base. These are the skills that you are acquiring in order to become more confident as a teacher. But the moment that you

begin teaching you are earning General Studies CEUs rather than Professional Studies CEUs because you're not learning in that time.

>> *Schafer*: A few people have asked again about the documentation one person has asked whether there's a rubric or something that might help sponsors so know that something qualifies as Professional Studies versus General Studies. But the template is something that people are finding an exciting tool. But are there other tools available?

>> *Mary*: I think one concern is that -- that we don't want to see sponsors being needlessly limited.

Around the kind of analysis that they can do. If we were to provide a really detailed rubric, then the sponsor is not able to use their intuition and their knowledge gleaned from many years of being sponsors to appropriately award CEUs.

I think that the questions on the template will be very helpful to many sponsors. I think many times sponsors will read the template and find that it confirms exactly what they have been doing, the kinds of inquiries that they engage in with members in order

to get the specifics around the activity and determine whether the activity warrants Professional Studies CEUs or not. I think that this will be very good for many of our sponsors. Like I said it will confirm the kinds of activities that they have already been engaging in as they explore the categories of CEUs with their colleagues.

It also provides our sponsors with some protection. It allows the sponsors to respond to grievances or provide the kind of sponsor shopping that we have seen in the past. We could provide more detailed list but I am concerned about the down sides of doing so. We don't want to generate something that appears to be a very stringent black and white set of requirements. The committee is certainly open to the membership's ideas if there are tools that you would find helpful, things that could make you more comfortable in terms of the decision-making process, we are happy to consider them.

>> *Richard:* Also, we do include several handouts for people. Those are available on our website as well. As part of this webinar. That includes information

about the distinction between Professional Studies and General Studies and what we look for in each of those categories, that material will be available as well. So you can use that as a sponsor or as a member to make those determinations in advance.

>> *Schafer*: One person has commented they are noticing the role of sponsor is very important. Can sponsors charge for their services? And how would they determine their own fees? What's a reasonable fee?

>> *Richard*: Yes. Sponsors can charge for their services and to the question of what's reasonable, well, that is a good question. It certainly varies. Across the field. We do have a sponsor email list and we see a good deal of question around charging fees. The CMP encourages sponsors to charge in ways that will cover their own expenses and perhaps produce some amount of profit for themselves or their agencies. So we do encourage the, you know, an appropriate charge for their services.

There is some competition out there because we don't have an adequate number of sponsors and certainly

somebody could use that competition as a way to exploit their customers by charging unreasonably high fees, but we don't see that at this time. Thank goodness. We would suggest that you take a look at the list of sponsors on [www.RID.org](http://www.RID.org) and certainly feel free to check with the number of sponsors to check their fees and see which ones work for you.

>> *Schafer*: We do have several questions related to that topic, also power, privilege and diversity, the requirements for CEUs around those topics. Would those topics if studied become Professional Studies or General Studies and how would that play out?

>> *Nathan*: I'll take that. This is Nathan. So some resources for you, online at [RID.org](http://RID.org) that I would like to point out. So if you look at the website at [RID.org](http://RID.org), you will see the Professional Development Center has its own Certification Maintenance Program and in there there is the SC, standards and criteria. Within the standard and criteria there is information about the type of information that would end General Studies and Professional Studies. Anybody can take a look at that information. CMP sponsors use that



information to help them as they make decisions about applications.

I think about two years ago the PDC began to review the power and privilege requests. At an RID conference this topic came up. And there was an interest in putting that on the list, very explicitly. So we began to have that conversation. We -- the Professional Studies has already incorporated that power and privilege topic in the list. Again, it really does relate to human behavior.

And culture, right? Groups of people, how we engage in oppressive acts and colonization of less privileged groups and so on.

So it's already in the list, I want to be very, very clear about that. But we have actually clearly and explicitly listed both power and privilege in the Professional Studies category and it's going to earn Professional Studies for CEUs if you engage in those activities. So it's a very easy process to apply for and receive CEUs. Richard?

>> *Richard*: But the proposal, I believe, that Nathan

was mentioning, the proposal that came up for RID around professional development CEUs related to power and privilege. There's a committee appointed by RID to investigate the possibilities of that and what it would include to include Professional Studies CEUs. We know that power and privilege CEUs earned would definitely qualify as Professional Studies. We know that as Nathan mentioned. But what it would look like and what would be required of us is not something that has been determined yet. That's for the committee to decide.

>> *Schafer*: We have a question about sponsors again. And the idea of auditing. If a sponsor were to decide that a particular topic labeled Professional Studies, for example, was labeled Professional Studies, so if they labeled a particular activity Professional Studies and the CMP disagreed, would there be a process that the Professional Development Center would engage in with that sponsor?

>> *Richard*: My screen is frozen, so I'm waiting for it to catch up.

The auditing process is not intended as one of ill

feelings. It's not intended to catch people out. It's about trying to resolve misunderstandings. It's about trying to figure out and improve a process that has gone awry. At that time the sponsor may put the application on hold or maybe deny the application.

So there may be a time where a sponsor is not allowed to award CEUs given inappropriate behavior of certain types. It's really not intended to be punitive in nature. The idea is we are going to support efficacy and integrity of their work. If we discover some inconsistency or error in the awarding of CEUs, we would engage in a conversation whereby we discuss our viewpoint and listened to their viewpoint to come to a middle ground where we agree on continuing to support that sponsor or CEUs in moving forward with more agreements.

It is 8:25, noting the time. I'm thinking we might have time for one or two more questions.

>> *Schafer*: I think we need to stop with the questions at this point. What we'll try to do is categorize the ones that we have not yet addressed and put them

into an FAQ as we mentioned. We will offer those to the panel and then share them with the audience. We want to say thank you so much to our presenters this evening, for your time, for your efforts, for your wisdom and for sharing them all with us tonight. We appreciate them. We will ask you now to close your web cams and we will conclude our webinar. Thank you, everyone.

>> Thank you.

>> Good night.

>> *Schafer*: Next slide, please. At the beginning, we explained that a portion of our sponsorship was from the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers this evening and here you see a map of all of our centers, including the regional centers as well as the National Center. Please feel free to observe that at your leisure.

Next slide, please.

We are thrilled to announce upcoming webinars. We have two more webinars next month, the first happening May 23rd, successful educational programs: well-written learning objectives tied to

achievement, measured through effective evaluation.

The following webinar is on June 13th, it's called designing effective online education programs.

Both of these webinars have a target audience of RID CEU sponsors, presenters, and people developing educational programming.

We hope you'll join us. Next slide, please.

If you are interested in more information about the NCIEC or our work, please feel to visit us at our website, [interpretereducation.org](http://interpretereducation.org). Next slide,

please, we would like to thank our interpreters this evening, Rachel Judelson and Jeanne Reis, are and -- and as well as our captioner, Terry McGinty.

When the webinar is concluded, approximately one hour after that, you will receive an email, that email will obtain the evaluation form as well as CEU request information.

Please know that it take about one month to for your RID CEUs to apply and show up on your transcript. If you are watching this evening with a group, please send an email to Carolyn Woodruff,

[carolyn.woodruff@unco.edu](mailto:carolyn.woodruff@unco.edu), with the names and

addresses of everyone in the group. And then the host of the group will be responsible for sharing information about how to acquire CEUs with those members.

Those of you interested in earning CEUs must have watched at least one hour and 15 minutes of tonight's webinar. Next slide, please.

Our funding comes from the federal government, the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, that is our tax dollars at work and we are grateful to them. We are grateful to you as well for your participation this evening, for your efforts and your attention, thank you and good night.

[End of webinar].