

Press Release

Bilingual scope of services is uncontroversial at Gallaudet, as shown by 1990 Strategic Plan

Wednesday, October 31, 2007, 4:25 pm Eastern

On March 12, 1991, Gallaudet President I. King Jordan testified before an Appropriations subcommittee and submitted a copy of Gallaudet's official 1990 Strategic Plan into the record. This plan was approved and adopted by the Gallaudet Board of Trustees.

Here is a link to download and print out Gallaudet's 1990 Strategic Plan:

http://gallyprotest.org/gallaudet_university_1990_strategic_plan.pdf

Here is a quote from the "Scope of Services" section of the 1990 Strategic Plan:

QUOTE (emphasis added):

The basic Gallaudet University mission and the dedication of the administration, faculty, and staff to its achievement have not changed since the founding of the institution [...]

While the University historically has integrated sign language into its educational programs, it is only relatively recently that research has established American Sign Language as a discrete and formal language. As a result, the University is now actively exploring how best to integrate English and American Sign Language into all aspects of University life to meet the needs of the individuals we serve. ***The University is committed to becoming a working model of a bilingual, multicultural community*** where deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing people learn and work together without communication barriers.

UNQUOTE

(Commentary:)

The general context of bilingualism at Gallaudet is uncontroversial and has been part of Gallaudet's mission and scope of services since its founding in 1864.

It must be emphatically stressed and explained--to members of the press and all who are not fully informed--that the bilingual context of Gallaudet's mission has *already* been approved by the accreditors. It was approved when Gallaudet first became accredited decades ago, and it was re-approved in the 1990's when Gallaudet specifically and explicitly included a statement explaining Gallaudet's bilingual scope of

services in its 1990 Strategic Plan.

Although there has been somewhat of an ebb and flow to the degree to which authentic American Sign Language has been incorporated into Gallaudet's scope of services, it has truly been incorporated all along. This is what has made Gallaudet successful and is Gallaudet's niche on the American education scene. Jane K. Fernandes herself repeatedly acknowledged these facts in memos and official university documents issued during her tenure as Provost from 2000 to 2006. (Quoting one [document from April 2006](#): "In addition, a series of courses on the languages, cultures, and histories of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind people across race will be designed for inclusion in faculty, teacher, staff, and student orientation programs. The courses will introduce new employees to the 'inclusive deaf way' of doing things and set clear expectations for learning and using American Sign Language.")

Gallaudet has always accepted deaf people of diverse backgrounds for admission with the understanding that they realize the nature of Gallaudet's bilingual services. There is no controversy regarding inclusion at Gallaudet. Any such claim represents a red herring and the attempt to create a pseudo-debate for purposes which are inimical to Gallaudet's mission and are counterproductive overall. Deaf students who do not wish to sign or participate at Gallaudet have available to them the services of hundreds of other mainstream universities all over the country.

Sent: Thursday, November 1, 2007 11:27 AM

Subject: ADDENDUM---Press Release-- Bilingual scope of services is uncontroversial at Gallaudet, as shown by 1990 Strategic Plan

ADDENDUM (November 1, 2007):

An additional sentence has been added to a paragraph in Item 1 of yesterday's press release.

The expanded paragraph now includes this new sentence, beginning with: "Quoting one document from the Fall of 2006....":

Jane K. Fernandes herself repeatedly acknowledged these facts in memos and official university documents issued during her tenure as Provost from 2000 to 2006.

(Quoting one [document from April 2006](#): "In addition, a series of courses on the languages, cultures, and histories of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind people across race will be designed for inclusion in faculty, teacher, staff, and student orientation programs. The courses will introduce new employees to the 'inclusive deaf way' of doing things and set clear expectations for learning and using American Sign Language.")

(Minor [edits](#): Sept. 15, 2015)