

# Equal Footing Program Manual

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**EQUAL FOOTING**  
FOR LEP PERSONS

## Program Overview

### Description

Enhance your professional development with the Equal Footing course, which prepares individuals to work as community and medical interpreters. This seminar focuses on critical concepts for interpreting in the medical and community settings, providing participants with a guide to identifying the setting at hand and empowering them to approach each communicative event professionally by observing established strategies and codes of conduct in the field.

The Equal Footing Program was developed using the medical interpreter education standards from the Commission for Medical Interpreter Education (CMIE), a division of IMIA. Specific topics addressed will include the fundamentals of professional interpreting, the role of the interpreter in medical and community settings, medical terminology, the Codes of Ethics proposed by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) and by the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) as well as ethical dilemmas based on these Codes of Ethics. Participants will have the opportunity to practice and implement interpreting techniques in small groups, listen to and critique recordings of interpreting scripts, and record and critique their own renditions. The program offers 40 hours of class time dedicated specifically to medical interpreting with 20 additional hours geared toward community interpreting.

### Mission

The mission of Equal Footing is to place Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons on an equal footing with those who understand English by providing interpreter training in three key areas of medical interpreting: linguistic proficiency, a clear understanding of ethics, and definitive knowledge of which role is appropriate for each setting.

### Goals

Students who attend Equal Footing and complete all 60 hours will acquire knowledge that can be applied in the field of medical interpreting. Equal Footing shall lay the foundation necessary to sit for the national certification exam for medical interpreters.

### Objectives

Upon successful completion of the Equal Footing course, students will:

- Have a broad knowledge of medical terminology
- Understand all components of the Interpreter Code of Ethics
- Be able to perform simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, and sight translation in a medical setting

## Curriculum

- Basics of Interpreting
- Consecutive Interpreting
- Interpreter Codes of Ethics
- Medical Interpreting and Sight Translation
- Simultaneous Interpreting
- Roles of the Interpreter
- IMIA Standards of Practice
- Best Practices of Interpreting & Job Outlook for Interpreters
- Interpreter Management of the Interpreting Session
- Interpreting in On-site, Telephonic, and Video Scenarios
- Interpreter Safety
- Professional Development
- Medical Terminology (14 hours)

## About the Instructor

Saul Arteaga was born and raised in Lima, Peru. At 19 years old, he immigrated to the US where he worked while attending a community college. He further pursued his academic career by receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and has completed classes toward a Master's Degree in Translation Studies at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. In 2002, Mr. Arteaga established SWITS, Ltd., a language service provider based in Delavan, Wisconsin which provides all language services, including signed languages, to healthcare organizations, law enforcement, circuit and municipal courts, and educational institutions.

In 2004, Mr. Arteaga passed the Wisconsin Certified Court Interpreter examination. Soon after, he became a member of the Wisconsin Supreme Court Committee to Improve Court Interpretation and Translation in Wisconsin Courtrooms. The goal of this committee was to improve the processes of interpreting and translation used in the courtroom.

In addition to legal interpreting, Mr. Arteaga also pursued medical and community interpreting, passing the Medical Interpreter Competency Examination offered by the National Center of Interpretation at the University of Arizona and attending classes at the Agnese Haury Summer Institute for Court Interpretation and Medical Interpretation at the University of Arizona in Tucson in 2004 and 2008, respectively. In 2005, he completed the two-day National HETC Workshop on Community and Culture: Health Outreach Worker and Medical Interpreter Programs. Mr. Arteaga's most recent achievement came in 2012 when he passed the National Board of Certified Medical Interpreters examination.

As a believer in interpreter education, Mr. Arteaga acted as an adviser for several community college interpreter programs in Wisconsin and Illinois. He originally developed Equal Footing in 2008 as a two-day training to ensure SWITS interpreters had a better understanding of the role of the interpreter as well as best practices. This

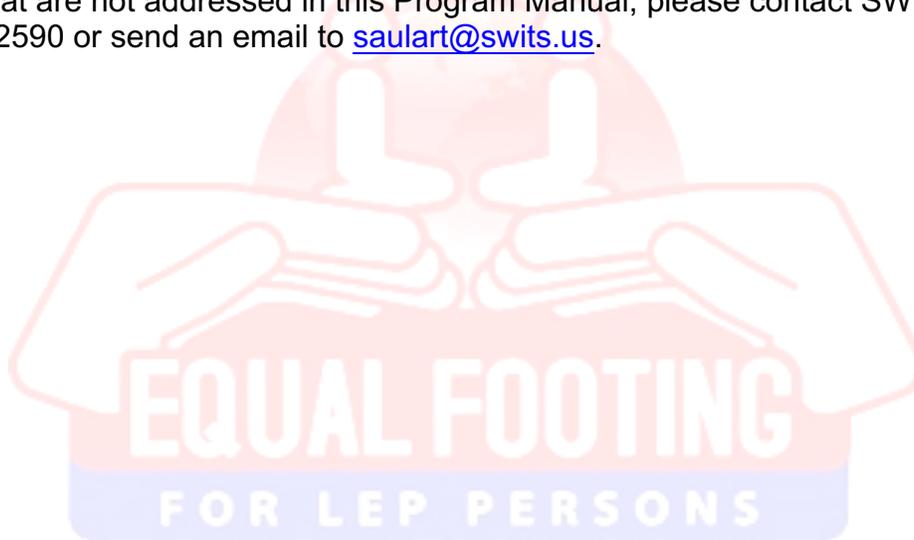
seminar grew into the 60-hour medical interpreter training that is now offered. One and two-day boot camp trainings continue to be offered as needed or when requested by SWITS customers.

### **Guest Lecturers**

While Saul Arteaga serves as the primary instructor for the full 60-hour course, he also works with consultants to add value to class discussions and provide another perspective on topics covered in the Equal Footing curriculum, including medical terminology and body systems. All consultants have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in sciences related to the medical field and at least five years of experience in the subject matter.

### **Contact Information**

The Equal Footing program is administered by SWITS with Saul Arteaga serving as Equal Footing Program Director. He is available to assist students with administrative needs and provide more information on the program. If you have questions about the program that are not addressed in this Program Manual, please contact SWITS at (262) 740-2590 or send an email to [saulart@swits.us](mailto:saulart@swits.us).



## Policies and Procedures

### Admission Requirements

Prospective participants for this course are those interested in entering the field as professional interpreters as well as interpreters seeking to refresh and enhance their skills. Participants must be proficient in English and at least one other language and be familiar with basic medical and social services terminology. The Equal Footing course has a maximum enrollment of 20 students per class.

Students must meet the following requirements for admission:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Provide proof of High School diploma (or equivalent) or a higher degree
- Provide proof of competency in English AND at least one other language through one of the following for each language:
  - CV with verifiable work experience of at least 5 years
  - Degree from a higher education institution where the main language is spoken
  - Graduation from high school where the main language of the country is used for instruction
  - TOEFL/ACTFL scores of at least Advanced Mid-Level
  - Test results from an approved language exam (See Appendix A for approved list)

Note: Minority languages that cannot be easily tested will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Please provide as much documentation as possible regarding linguistic competency to facilitate acceptance into the program.

### Recruitment of Students and Instructors

SWITS recruits students who meet the requirements in the *Admission Requirements* section above by providing program information to colleges and universities, current SWITS interpreters, and cultural community centers and groups.

Instructors must meet the following requirements in order to lead the Equal Footing course:

- Minimum of 3 years experience as a medical interpreter
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent
- Completion of medical interpreter training of 60 hours
- Nationally certified CHI or CMI if available in instructor's language
- Adherence to IMIA Code of Ethics
- Completion of cultural competency training (See Appendix B for a list of classes)

### **Referrals to Remediate Deficiencies**

A free 15-minute consultation with an Equal Footing representative is available to prospective students to assess if they are prepared to enroll in Equal Footing. If it is determined that they are not, the representative will help identify deficiencies and how to remediate them. Call (262) 740-2590 to schedule an appointment. Also refer to Appendix C for a list of resources to remediate deficiencies and gain the skills needed to succeed in the Equal Footing program.

### **Grading**

Students will be graded on five distinct components of the course. These grades will be used to determine the final course grade. A grade of 70% or higher is required to pass the course. Final grades will be derived from the following areas:

Homework: 10%

Quizzes: 20%

Presentation: 20%

Final written exam: 20%\*

Final oral exam: 30%\*

\*Students must pass both parts of the final exam with a score of 70% or higher to pass the course.

### **Record Keeping**

Student records are kept and stored at SWITS headquarters. Access to these records is limited to those who have a legitimate need to know. Student records including admission, enrollment, and grades will be stored for a period of 5 years.

### **Refunds, Withdrawal, and Suspension**

A full refund will be provided if the student drops the course before the first class. After the first day of class, a 90% refund will be provided. After the second day of class, a 50% refund will be provided. There will be no refunds after the third day of class.

Students may withdraw at any point, but will not be provided with a certificate of completion at the end of the course without attending all classes and meeting all course requirements. Suspensions may be issued for behavioral problems. Suspensions are issued at the discretion of the instructor and the Program Director.

### **Student and Instructor Grievances**

All grievances related to the Equal Footing program should be directed toward the SWITS Human Resources department in writing at [hr@swits.us](mailto:hr@swits.us). Students will receive a initial response from an HR representative within one business day. Resolutions provided by the SWITS Human Resources department shall be considered final.

### **Confidentiality**

Both SWITS and Equal Footing Program staff are committed to ensuring confidentiality of student information. Employees, consultants, and volunteers will not disclose any information about a student to anyone outside of the organization unless disclosure is authorized by the student in writing. Staff and other personnel will be granted access to student records on a need-to-know basis only and information regarding students is only discussed with those persons who have a need to know the information.

### **Certificate of Completion**

Criteria for successful completion of Equal Footing stipulates that student will:

- Attend all 60 hours of the Equal Footing training
- Successfully complete all homework assigned during the course
- Pass both portions of the final exam with a grade of at least 70%
- Receive a final course grade of at least 70%

Certificate of Completion shall be given to student after successful completion and passing of requirements. **IMPORTANT:** If student does not meet the requirements, a record of attendance (not a certificate) may be provided via a letter, accompanied by a statement that the student did not pass the criteria for successful completion.

### **Internal Quality Control Processes**

It is essential that Equal Footing provides students with a high quality education on the skills needed to work as a medical interpreter. For this reason, the creation of course material is highly scrutinized and adapted before being approved as part of the Equal Footing course. Individuals with experience in the industry work collaboratively to develop class lessons, activities, and evaluations that reflect situations that students can expect to encounter as professional interpreters. Then, this material is reviewed and approved by the Equal Footing Program Director.

Course materials are evaluated before each new Equal Footing session to ensure students are taught relevant and current practices. Student feedback from Equal Footing course evaluations is reviewed and changes are implemented as needed. SWITS also follows up with students who take the national medical interpreter certification exam after attending Equal Footing to assess how well the course prepared them.

In addition, the Equal Footing Program will be adapted based on feedback from IMIA evaluations. This feedback will be reviewed by the instructor and the Program Director. They will update the curriculum, Program Manual, and grading practices as needed in order to implement the changes suggested.

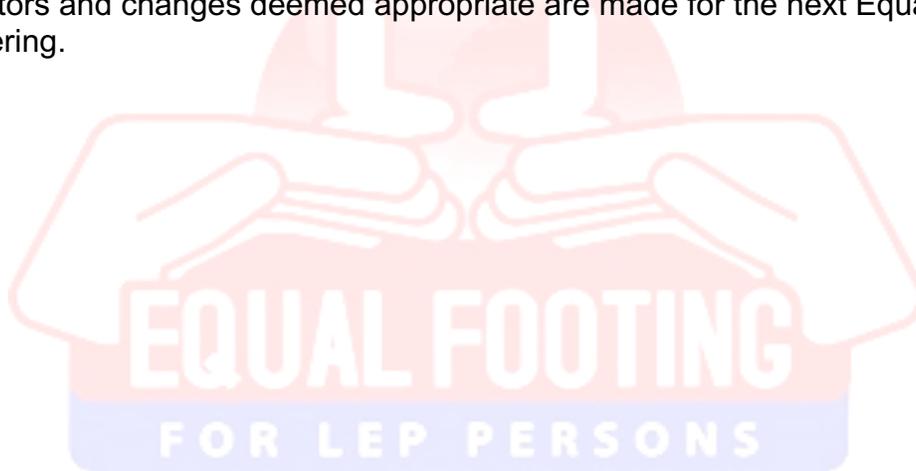
### **Annual Report**

Every year, SWITS will submit an Equal Footing Annual Report to IMIA as a requirement of accreditation. This report will include data on the number of students who enroll in the program, the number of students who satisfactorily complete the course, the percentage of students who already hold national certification and the percentage who plan to take the national certification exam after the course. The report will also provide the most updated curriculum and an explanation of any significant changes from the previous year.

### **Utilizing Results of Evaluations**

SWITS strives to continuously improve its Equal Footing course. In order to ensure that the course continues to be relevant and insightful for both new and experienced interpreters, we evaluate the syllabus after each course concludes.

An important component of quality control is soliciting feedback from students. During the final class session, students are asked to fill out an anonymous Program Evaluation Form (Appendix D). Feedback from these forms is evaluated by Equal Footing Program Administrators and changes deemed appropriate are made for the next Equal Footing course offering.



## Appendices

### Appendix A: Approved Language Exams

- ACTFL Oral Exams (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages): Advanced Mid-Level
- BEST Plus computer-adaptive assessment: High Intermediate or above.
- CAE (Certificate in Advanced English, Level 4): B
- COPI (Computerized Oral Proficiency Instrument) based on ACTFL rating (Advanced Mid-Level)
- CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English, Level 5): B
- ECPE (Examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English): PASS
- ELPT (English Language Proficiency Test): 950+
- FCE (First Certificate in English, Level 3): A
- IELTS (International English Language Testing System) 7.0+
- MELAB (Michigan English Language Assessment Battery) 80+
- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): 570+ on paper; 230+ computer version; 90+ on iBT.
- Validated language exam equivalent to ILR2 or higher.



## Appendix B: Cultural Competency Courses

The following courses and resources are accepted by IMIA as a means of meeting the cultural competency requirement for instructors:

- Free courses from Office of Minority Health
- <https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/Content/ContinuingEd.asp>
- Physician's Guide: 9 Hours <https://cccm.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/default.asp>
- Nursing Care: 9 Hours  
[https://ccnm.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/GUIs/GUI\\_CEU\\_info.asp#](https://ccnm.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/GUIs/GUI_CEU_info.asp#)
- Disaster Preparedness: 9 Hours <https://cccdpcr.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/>

According to HHS: During registration, users may select “Statement of Participation” as their certificate and submit it to their licensing body for consideration of credit.



### Appendix C: List of Resources to Remediate Deficiencies

- English as a Second Language programs
  - Wisconsin English Second Language Institute (<http://www.wesli.com>)
  - MATC (<http://www.matc.edu/student/offerings/precollege/learn.cfm>)
  - College of Lake County (<http://www.clcillinois.edu/programs-and-classes/adulted/esl>)
- GED programs
  - MATC (<http://www.matc.edu/student/offerings/precollege/ged.cfm>)
  - College of Lake County (<http://www.clcillinois.edu/programs-and-classes/adulted/ged>)
- Improve knowledge of medical terminology
  - IMIA Terminology Resource Database (<http://www.imiaweb.org/medical-resources/default.asp>)



**Appendix D: Program Evaluation Form****Program Evaluation Form  
for Equal Footing at [Insert Location]  
[Insert Dates]**

Thank you for attending Equal Footing! Please take a few minutes to answer these questions so we can provide the best content and use of your time in future courses.

1. What were your goals for enrolling in the course?

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2. Did the course meet your expectations?

- a.  Exceeded  
b.  Met  
c.  Did not meet. If not, what could we have done better?

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3. What information will you implement from this seminar in your own vocation?

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4. Was the instructor's teaching style effective for learning?

- a.  Yes  
b.  No. If no, what could have been done better?

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5. What other training topics interest you?

- a. Translation
- b. Localization
- c. Multimedia
- d. Interpreter Assessment
- e. Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

6. How did you first hear about the Equal Footing course?

- a. Friend/Family
- b. Colleague
- c. Advertisement
- d. Radio
- e. Internet/Website
- f. Newspaper article

7. Please provide any other comments you may have:

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