

UNDERGRADUATE American Sign Language I

Sample Syllabi

Instructor:

Email address:

Course Description

This is the first in a 2-level series of courses in American Sign Language (ASL).

This course emphasizes the learning of basic person-to-person conversational signing skills as a second language, including use and comprehension of ASL vocabulary, syntax, and fingerspelling. Students are expected to learn over 1,500 vocabulary items, presented in semantic groupings such as numbers, people and occupations, emotions and feelings, mental actions, food, etc.

Students gain experience in both formulating and sending messages and understanding the signed messages of other in class. Students are also given in-class practice responding contingently and spontaneously to questions posed by the instructor and other students. Increasingly, students are expected to rely wholly on ASL communication, and effective use of communication repair strategies, as the course progresses. Students are given field assignments to promote maximum interaction with the Deaf community to facilitate effective second language learning. Moreover, field assignments are designed to enhance student understanding of the dynamic language, culture, and multicultural issues alive in the Deaf community today.

Course Credits 3 hours

Course Prerequisites None

Desired Learner Outcomes/Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Master sufficient ASL conventional skills and vocabulary to effectively communicate with members of the Deaf community in the United States.
- Encode/express and decode/comprehend fingerspelling in the context of conversation.
- Demonstrate awareness of dynamic language, culture, and multicultural issues alive in the Deaf community today.
- Participate in an academic exploration of multicultural issues, linguistic code-switching, and language dominance as it relates to spoken languages in general.
- Participate in an academic exploration of multicultural issues, linguistic code-switching, and language as it relates to the deaf culture uniquely.

Required Texts

Humphries, T. & Padden, C. (1992) *Learning American Sign Language*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Tennant, R.A. & Gluszak Brown, M. (1998). *The American Sign Language Handshape Dictionary*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Evaluation of Learner Outcomes

➤ Attendance	10%
➤ Journal	10%
➤ Signed video	10%
➤ Article Review	10%
➤ Quizzes	50%
➤ Participation	10%

Grading Scale

A =	100%-90%
B =	89% –80%
C =	79% –70%
D =	69% –60%
F =	59% - 0%

Attendance and Policy Statements

Language learning takes time, active practice, and patience. Your success in learning ASL depends to a great extent on the number of hours you participate in ASL communicative experiences. For this reason, I expect you to attend all classes and participate in all classroom activities.

- During this summer session I will allow a maximum of one class period of excused absence. **Make sure you get notes /information from a classmate.
- Each 2 hour of absence after that (excused or unexcused) will lower your grade by one level (e.g., an additional 2 hours of absence would reduce a B to a B-).
- I am unable to schedule make-up classes. Make-ups for class presentations, daily vocabulary activities, and quizzes are also not offered.

Participation

Learning a new language requires active participation and patience. There will be moments of confusion in this course. Keep trying to understand, and use ASL. When you are confused, avoid speaking English and fingerspelling. Use signs that you know to ask questions. Be patient with yourself, your classmates and your instructor.

You should prepare for class by reading the assigned material and viewing the corresponding videotapes **before** the class period they are reviewed. In other words, you should come to class on each day having studied the vocabulary for that day on your own. I may or may not be viewing the videotapes during class. I will focus primarily on grammar and interactive practice in class.

Culture Journal

Each student will be expected to keep a Culture Journal. In it you will be asked to respond to various questions relating to each deaf culture lesson. This will be collected at the end of each class session. The object of this exercise is to relate your experiences and knowledge of deaf culture to the topics presented. We will be utilizing An Introduction To Deaf Culture by Betty Colononos and MJ Bienvenu as well as other sources.

Signed Video

Each student will be expected to select a song or children's picture book to present in sign language to the class. Instructor must approve the selection by Wednesday. You may choose to present alone or with **one** other class member. Presentations will be the following Thursday.

Article Review

Each student will be expected to locate and select an article to be presented to the class. This article must relate to American Sign Language or Deaf culture. Instructor must approve the article by Thursday. There will not be two presentations allowed on the same article; therefore, you may want to select two articles, or have the articles approved as soon as possible. Article presentations will be Sunday.

Quizzes

Each student will be expected to complete a short quiz the day following the completion of each unit.