**Brown University**

**Center for Language Studies**

**195 Angell Street**

**Providence, RI 02906**

**SIGN 0400: American Sign Language IV**

**Spring Semester 2014 Syllabus**

**Professor:** Tim Riker **E-mail:** Timothy\_Riker@brown.edu

**Days:** Tuesday & Thursday **Urgent Text:** 857-210-7719

**Time:** 10:30 PM to 11:50 PM **Classroom:** J. Walter Wilson 302

**Office Location:** Center for Language Studies, Room 204, 195 Angell Street

**Office Days/Hours:** Monday & Wednesday, 9-11:30 AM & 1:30-4 PM & by appointment

**Required Materials:**

Bridges, B. & Metzger, M. (1996). Deaf tend your: non-manual signals in American Sign Language Book & DVD. Silver Spring, MD: Calliope Press. ISBN: 0965487105

Smith, C, Mikos, K, & Mae Lentz, E. (1992). *Signing naturally, level 2: workbook & DVD*. San Diego, CA: DawnSign Press. ISBN: 9781581211313

Moore, M., & Levitan, L. (2007). *For hearing people only, third edition.* Rochester, NY: Deaf Life Press. ISBN: 9780963401632

Other articles may be assigned and posted on Canvas.

**Course Description:**

Intensive use of expressive and receptive skills in complex grammatical structures, advanced classifiers, dialogues, and storytelling techniques. Discussion of social factors that give rise to code-switching; regional and ethnic sign variations; social, political, and cultural evolution of U.S. Deaf community. Interaction with Deaf community in directed and non-directed activities. Prerequisite SIGN 0300 or placement interview. Enrollment limited to 18. Written permission required.

**Course Outline:**

Non-Manual Signals in American Sign Language

Unit 13: Locating Things Around the House

Unit 17: Talking About the Weekend

Units 13-17: Cumulative Review

**Teaching Philosophy:**

The curriculum parallels what we know about language development and second language learning. We focus on introducing language in context and reinforcing what is learned by engaging you into various interactive activities. A conversational curriculum requires you to be an active learner. You need to come prepared to sign with me and other classmates. Our classes are conducted in ASL from the very first day. You are immersed in the language to maximize your language learning. The teacher will use gestures, signs, drawings, and act out situations to get the point across and your job is to keep trying. This may sound daunting at first, but trust me, it works!

**ASL Immersion and No Talking Policy:**

The curriculum and workbook are designed with the assumption that you use English as your first language. ASL will be used exclusively in the classroom for two reasons. First, it is culturally inappropriate to use voice in an ASL environment, or to not sign in the presence of any Deaf person. Speaking eliminates the Deaf person, whether intentionally or not, from the communication around them. In the classroom, it is critical that the instructor, Deaf or hearing, maintain a culturally appropriate environment so that you can develop the habit of signing in Deaf-hearing situations. Secondly, you can only become fluent by constantly using ASL. The more you rely on English to understand ASL, the longer you will remain in the limbo of being unable to communicate in ASL. You can’t learn a language by speaking or listening to another language. No language is a direct translation of another, and concept formation is enhanced by full immersion. Students will not learn ASL until they actually commit to using it as a living language. The classroom will become a microcosm of the living world where all meaning is negotiated in ASL.

**Course Learning Outcomes and Objectives:**

The curriculum and the lessons are designed to help the class and the program meet the five areas of *Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons* and *Communities* outlined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Upon completion of the course, ASL students will be able to:

1. *Communication*— communicate in ASL about the layout of their home, placement of furniture in rooms, describing specific location of objects in a room, seasonal tasks and activities, events, short trips, weekend plans, plans which are disrupted, describing elements which do not have specific shapes or sizes and are in constant motion, and other functional topics which occur naturally in conversation with native Deaf/ASL signers. This will be accomplished by introducing dialogues, engaging in conversations with the instructor and students, discussing cultural and social norms regarding communicating in ASL, and presenting using a variety of registers with different goals.
2. *Communication and Culture***—**develop skills related to Deaf cultural behaviors, values and norms, including how to get and direct attention, how to resume a conversation, and how to control the pace of conversation.
3. *Cultures—*understand about the Deaf culture and the world view of Deaf people through examining one’s own culture and world view in relation to the Deaf community. This will be accomplished by a variety of cultural discussions and meeting native Deaf/ASL signers from the community.
4. *Connections—*apply what is learned to real-life situations by examining how one communicates and reacts to various situations from the lens of a hearing person and making the connection regarding how native Deaf/ASL signers approach the world. This includes examining the phenomena of code switching, sign variations, Pidgin Signed English, and attempts of hearing people to Anglicize American Sign Language for the purpose of assimilating native Deaf/ASL signers in American culture and the English language. Students will examine what it means to be an American and discuss bilingualism and biculturalism in context of native Deaf/ASL signers.
5. *Comparisons*—identify and understand the Deaf social norms, and the linguistics of ASL, including grammatical rules and non-manual signals. Students will have a better understanding of how ASL differs from English and be able to express ASL more naturally.
6. *Community*—interact with members of the Deaf/ASL community through attending Deaf events, immersing into an ASL classroom, interacting with the instructors and ASL students, and viewing media produced by the Deaf/ASL community.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Since learning a language requires interacting with native users and practicing with others on a regular basis, ASL students will need to attend, come prepared, and participate in all classes to be successful. Attendance will be tracked during each class and students who have excessive absences will see their grade suffer.

You are allowed to miss two classes during the semester for whatever reason as long as it is not during an exam. Each time a student is tardy or leaves early during class, it will count as ½ of an absence. Each additional absence will result in a lowering of your final grade by 10 percent.

**Make Up Exams:**

If you miss class on the day of the exam, it will be considered unexcused unless there is an extenuating circumstance. I will ask for supporting documentation before a make up exam is scheduled.

**Expectations:**

Students should expect to attend about three hours of lectures each week of class and on average to spend approximately six hours outside of the classroom on homework assignments to perform well in this class. Based on past experience, there is a strong relationship between a student’s attendance, participation, effort on homework assignments, and getting good grades on exams. If you are not able to put in at least this much time for each class, then maybe this class is not right for you.

**Grading:**

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Deaf Event #1 5%

Deaf Event #2 5%

Deaf Event #3 5%

Unit 13 Video Project 10%

Unit 17 Video Project 10%

NMS Video Project 10%

Unit 13 Comprehension Exam 10%

Unit 17 Comprehension Exam 10%

Conversations/Class Discussions 15%

Final Video Project 20%

Letter grades will be awarded based on the following scale:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Percentage Point |
| A | 91-100% |
| B | 81-90% |
| C | 70-80% |
| NC | Below 69 |
|  |  |
| S\* | 70 & above |
| NC\* | 69 & below |

\*Students who are taking the course for unsatisfactory/satisfactory credit are required to take all exams. If a student misses an exam then an NC (no credit) grade will be given regardless of the student’s overall average.

*Deaf Events—*students will be required to attend at least three Deaf events or more than 10 hours of service learning approved by the instructor during the spring semester and produce three short videos of no more than 5 minutes for each event. Student videos will be graded based on its organization; their experience, observations and reactions regarding the Deaf event; and according to a rubric of their language skills based on signing naturally following ASL grammar rules, using non-manual signals, presenting various vocabulary they learned from SIGN 0100 to SIGN 0400, and sign production using correct handshape, orientation, movement, and location. Each Deaf event is worth 5% of your grade.

*Unit Video Projects—*students will be required to complete a video project for Non-Manual Signals, Unit 13, and Unit 17 based on what they learned. Their videos will be graded based on their organization; following directions and demonstrating preparation and rehearsal; and a rubric of their language skills based on signing naturally following ASL grammar rules, using non-manual signals, presenting various vocabulary they learned from SIGN 0100 to SIGN 0300, and sign production using correct handshape, orientation, movement, and location. Each video project is worth 10% of your grade.

*Unit Comprehension Exams—*after each unit, the instructor will administer an exam which tests your comprehension of ASL based on what is learned during the unit. Since language builds upon prior knowledge, the exam may include what you learned during SIGN 0100 to SIGN 0400. There will be an exam for Units 13 and 17. Each unit exam is worth 10% of your grade.

*Conversations & Class Discussions* – students will be assigned reading or topics which they will be expected to discuss during class. Students will be evaluated based on attending and participating in the discussions, demonstrating they completed the reading and showed up prepared to contribute, and a rubric of their language skills based on signing naturally following ASL grammar rules, using non-manual signals, presenting various vocabulary they learned from SIGN 0100 to SIGN 0400. All conversations and class discussions will be worth 15% of your grade.

*Final Video Project—*the final video project will require creating a narrative which involves a mansion, disasters involving the elements, and how you and other Deaf people responded. Students will be evaluated based on a rubric of their language skills based on signing naturally following ASL grammar rules, using non-manual signals, presenting various vocabulary they learned from SIGN 0100 to SIGN 0400, and sign production using correct handshape, orientation, movement, and location. The final exam is worth 20% of your grade.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

January 23 Introduction to SIGN 400, Syllabus, Course Expectations

Ice Breaker Activity

January 28 Non-Manual Signals

Class Discussion 1

January 30 Non-Manual Signals

February 4 Non-Manual Signals

Class Discussion 2

February 6 Non-Manual Signals

February 11 Unit 13

Class Discussion 3

**Due: Non-Manual Signals Video Project**

February 13 Unit 13

February 18 Long Weekend: No Class

February 20 Unit 13

Class Discussion 4

February 25 Unit 13

Class Discussion 5

February 27 Unit 13

March 4 Unit 13

Class Discussion 6

March 6 Unit 13

March 11 **Unit 13 Comprehension Exam**

**Due: Unit 13 Video Project**

**Due: Deaf Event #1 Video Report**

March 13 Unit 17

Class Discussion 7

March 18 Unit 17

Class Discussion 8

March 20 Unit 17

March 22-30 Spring Recess: No Classes

April 1 Unit 17

Class Discussion 9

April 3 Unit 17

April 8 Unit 17

Class Discussion 10

April 10 Unit 17

April 15 **Unit 17 Comprehension Exam**

**Due: Unit 17 Video Project**

**Due: Deaf Event #2 Video Report**

April 17 Unit 13-17 Cumulative Review

Class Discussion 11

April 22 Unit 13-17 Cumulative Review

Class Discussion 12

April 24 Unit 13-17 Cumulative Review

Class Discussion 13

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April 29 Unit 13-17 Cumulative Review

Class Discussion 14

May 1 Unit 13-17 Cumulative Review

Class Discussion 15

May 6 Unit 13-17 Cumulative Review

Class Discussion – Final Reflective Discussion

**Due: Final Video Project**

**Due: Deaf Event #3 Video Report**

*This schedule is subject to change with advance notice from the professor.*