**Brown University**

**Center for Language Studies**

**SIGN 0100 American Sign Language I**

**Fall Semester 2014**

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

**Days:** Monday – Friday **Urgent Text Message:** 857-210-7719

**Time:** 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM **Office Location:** Room 204, 195 Angell Street

**Classroom:** Wilson Hall 205 **Office Days/Hours:** M & W, 9-11 AM & 1-3 PM

**Teaching Assistants: E-mail:**

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**Required Textbooks and Materials:**

Smith, C., Mikos, K., & Mae Lentz, E. (2008). *Signing naturally: student workbook, units 1-6.* San Diego,

CA: DawnSign Press. ISBN: 9781581212105

Holcomb, T. (2013). *Introduction to American Deaf Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199777549

Holcomb, T., & Mindess, A. (2008). *A Sign of Respect: Strategies for Effective Deaf/Hearing Interactions*. Pleasant Hill, CA: Treehouse Video LLC. ISBN: 1-932501-52-5

Access to a computer with a webcam or a video recording device with the ability to produce high quality videos & transfer video files.

**Recommended Textbooks and Materials:**

Axtell, R. (1998). *Gestures: the do’s and taboos of body language around the world.* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN: 9780471183426

Schaller, S. & Sacks, O. W. (2012). *A man without words.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN: 9780520202658

**Course Description:**

Introduces basic ASL conversation. Features core vocabulary, common signing phrases, non-manual components (facial expression, body postures), signing space, fingerspelling, numbers, loan signs, cultural protocols, rules of ASL grammar and structure. Deaf cultural behavior is introduced in the classroom and through readings, videotapes, and Deaf community events.

This is the first half of a year-long course whose first semester grade is normally a temporary one. Neither semester may be elected independently without special written permission. The final grade at the end of the course work in SIGN 0200 covers the entire year and is recorded as the final grade for both semesters.

*Enrollment is limited to 18. Written permission is required.*

**Course Outline:**

Introduction to American Deaf Culture

Unit 1: Introducing Oneself

Unit 2: Exchanging Personal Information

Unit 3: Discussing Living Situations

Unit 4: Talking About Family

Unit 5: Talking About Activities

Unit 6: Storytelling

**Course Learning Outcomes and Objectives:**

American Sign Language first and foremost goal of language teaching is to bring a person unable to communicate in ASL to a basic level of communicative competency. 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*: Exchange information in ASL using short dialogues about everyday life such as introducing oneself, personal information, living situations, family, and daily activities with other students, the instructor, and through video recording activities.
2. *Communication*: Develop basic skills in using facial expressions, gestures and specialized handshapes (classifiers) for communication and descriptive purposes.
3. *Communication*: Introduce themselves in ASL to native signers using both culturally appropriate content and interpersonal skills, and comprehend basic conversational questions and short discourses.
4. *Communication:* Develop beginning level understanding and use of ASL grammatical principles including (a) Use of space for referents, (b) Directionality for verb signs, (c) Modification of signs for degree, and (d) Communicating about more than one (plurals).
5. *Communication*: Produce at the normal rate the letters of the manual alphabet when fingerspelling proper names and other commonly fingerspelled words.
6. *Communication*: Comprehend commonly fingerspelled words represented at a normal rate in context of signed utterances.
7. *Cultural* and *Connections*: Discuss the view that Deaf people are a cultural-linguistic minority group.
8. *Comparative*: Demonstrate that ASL is not English on the hands.
9. *Comparative*: Demonstrate differences between Deaf cultural norms and hearing cultural norms.

7) *Community*: Locate and attend Deaf events to continue to develop ASL and Deaf behavioral norms outside of the classroom.

**Teaching Procedures:**

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.

Since ASL does not yet have its own standardized writing system, written English is used to give instructions, and explain some signs in the student workbook. However, whenever possible I will use pictures and other ways to minimize the use of English in the classroom.

**Sign Variations:**

Just like in any language, you may encounter different accents and signing styles. As a learner of ASL, you will need to accept and adapt to the fact that what you learn in my class may not always be exactly what you will see in the Deaf community. Some ASL instructors may have different signs for the same meanings because of their background and where they were raised. It is important that you are aware of and respect the differences.

My approach to ensuring that you have a strong foundation in ASL is to select commonly understood and used signs, including sometimes introducing two variations if they are equally used and understood. Whenever possible, I will introduce local signs if they are different from the curriculum and workbook to show respect to local Deaf ASL users. However, as you may learn as you continue to take ASL classes, some of the sign variations you will see in the community are the result of attempts in the past and to this day to Anglicize ASL—in other words adding strong English influence in ASL, often completely changing the grammar and vocabulary to make it more similar to the English language. I will not be teaching this contact language in this course even though you may encounter it in the community.

**Attendance and Participation Policy:**

Since learning a language requires interacting with native users and practicing with others on a regular basis, American Sign Language students will need to attend 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.

**Any more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a drop of your letter grade.** There are no exceptions to this policy. Each time a student is tardy or leaves early during class, it will count as ½ of an absence. It is your responsibility to report your presence to the professor if you miss roll call.

Students will be expected to attend **at least five (5)** ASL social hours, coffee chats, movie nights, guest speakers, and other Brown University ASL events during the semester. An attendance verification sheet will need to be signed by an instructor or teaching assistant.

**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 four hours of lecture, a conversation hour with the teaching assistants once a week, and on average to spend at least six hours outside of the classroom on homework assignments, social hour, study groups, and other ASL related activities 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 a good grade on the assessments.

**Grading:**

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Deaf Culture Journal #1 3%

Deaf Culture Journal #2 3%

Deaf Culture Journal #3 3%

Deaf Culture Journal #4 4%

Deaf Culture Journal #5 4%

A Sign of Respect Assignment 5%

 “Timber Story” Expressive Video Project 5%

“The Gum Story” Expressive Video Project 5%

ASL Journal – Practice 3%

ASL Journal #1 5%

ASL Journal #2 5%

ASL Journal #3 5%

Unit 1 Comprehension Exam 10%

 Unit 2 Comprehension Exam 10%

 Unit 3 Comprehension Exam 10%

 Unit 4 Comprehension Exam 10%

 Final Comprehension Exam (Units 1-5) 10%

Letter grades will be awarded based on the following scale:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Percentage Point |
| A | 90-100% |
| B | 80-89% |
| C | 70-79% |
| 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.*

*Participation –* Students will be expected to attend and participate in all of the classes to be able to benefit the most out of the learning experience. During the class, students will be asked to participate in group activities, stand in front of class to produce signs, and show active listening during lectures.

*ASL Social Hours, Movie Nights, and Brown University ASL Events –* Students will be expected to attend **at least five (5)** ASL social hours, coffee chats, movie nights, guest speakers, and other Brown University ASL events during the semester. An attendance verification sheet will need to be signed by an instructor or teaching assistant.

*Homework Assignments –* During each class, students will be assigned homework related to the lessons that will be covered during the next class. At the end of each unit, you will be asked to complete a self-assessment. These assignments will not be graded, but it’s in your best interest to complete them before attending class as you may struggle to keep up with the rest of the class.

*Journals* – There will be a total of 5 journals to submit online based on the assigned chapters in the Introduction to American Deaf Culture textbook. Journal topics will include the following:

1. Defining Culture (3%)
2. Who are the Deaf People? (3%)
3. Deafhood: A Personal Journey Toward Self-Actualization (3%)
4. Early Definitions of Deaf Culture and Deaf Culture Redefined (4%)
5. American Sign Language – The Language of the American Deaf Community and Deaf Lit (4%)

Each journal the student submits will be in response to assignment questions provided by the instructor to demonstrate you have completed the reading with critical thinking skills. In addition, students may share their reflections about the following:

1. Reflecting on new information you have learned from class;
2. Explaining information related to ASL and Deaf culture you have learned from outside of class;
3. Describing your insights regarding sign language and Deaf issues; and/or
4. Submit questions to the instructor relating to ASL and Deaf culture.

The journal will be evaluated based on:

√+ = Excellent (A): demonstrated reading was completed with critical thinking skills.

√ = Good (B): demonstrated to some extent reading was completed with some critical thinking skills.

√- = Fair (C): demonstrated minimal effort or submitted late.

Important Note: You must quote and cite with page numbers any information you discuss in your journal. Likewise, if you want to share about something you read in the news, you must provide the proper citation, including any URLs/links if they are available online.

*A Sign of Respect—*During the course, students will be given assignments from *A Sign of Respect* which will help you gain strategies to interact effectively with Deaf people and understand culturally acceptable behavior. It is highly recommended you complete this assignment before attending any Deaf events. The Student Workbook is a PDF document which is found on the DVD (you will need to access the directory manually if your computer auto plays the DVD). While it is optional for students to print this workbook or any of its pages, students will submit their assignments online. Students will be required to watch the DVD independently to complete the assignments. The assignments will be submitted online.

*Expressive Video Projects–* Selected stories such as “Timber” and “The Gum Story” from Unit 6 will be produced by students during this course. Students will be expected to produce each narrative by video recording themselves and submitting online. If a student needs access to a digital camcorder, they should contact the instructor to arrange filming and bring a USB with sufficient memory to transfer the files.

*ASL Journals –* Students will be required to complete a total of four video recorded ASL journals. The first ASL journal will be a brief 1 minute practice journal including an introduction and the student’s language background. The other three ASL journals will be 2-3 minutes long and require the student to present on selected topics related to their autobiography, narrative about living situations, and family album.

*Comprehension Examinations –* There will be comprehension exams for Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3, and Unit 4. During final exam week, there will be a comprehension exam which tests Units 1-5.

**Important Deadlines:**

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| --- | --- |
| A Sign of Respect Assignment | September 19, 2014 |
| ASL Journal (Practice) –Language Background | September 29, 2014 |
| Journal #1 | September 30, 2014 |
| ASL Journal #1 – Your Autobiography | October 14, 2014 |
| Journal #2 | October 15, 2014 |
| Deaf Event #1 Typed Report | October 15, 2014 |
| Journal #3 | October 31, 2014 |
| ASL Journal #2 – Your Narrative | November 3, 2014 |
| Journal #4 | November 15, 2014 |
| “Timber Story” Expressive Video Project | November 21, 2014 |
| ASL Journal #3 – Your Family Album | November 24, 2014 |
| Journal #5 | December 1, 2014 |
| “The Gum Story” Expressive Video Project | December 5, 2014 |

 **Exam Dates:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Unit 1 Comprehension Exam | September 17, 2014 |
| Unit 2 Comprehension Exam | October 8, 2014 |
| Unit 3 Comprehension Exam | November 5, 2014 |
| Unit 4 Comprehension Exam | November 24, 2014 |
| Final Comprehension Exam (Units 1-5) | TBA: Final Week |

**Tentative Schedule**

**Week 1**

Sept. 3 Introduction & Overview of the Course

 Review Syllabus

 Complete Deaf Culture Quiz

 Read Signing Naturally pages v-xiv

Sept. 4 Introduction to American Deaf Culture

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 4-5 & DVD lessons

Sept. 5 Meet & Greet with Teaching Assistants

 Lesson 1:1 Getting to Know You

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 6-15 & DVD lessons

**Week 2**

Sept. 8 Lesson 1:2 Cardinal Numbers 1-10

 Lesson 1:3 Fingerspelling Fist Letters

 Lesson 1:4 Same or Different, Part 1

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 16-20, DVD lessons, practice fingerspelling names of students in your class , and be prepared to introduce yourself to the class

Sept. 9 Lesson 1:5 Introducing Oneself

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 21-24, 28-29 & DVD lessons

Sept. 10 Lesson 1:6 Cardinal Numbers 11-15

 Lesson 1:7 Same or Different 2

 Lesson 1:9 Specifying Where (Inside, Above, and Below)

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 25-27 & DVD lessons

Sept. 11 Lesson 1:8 Asking Who

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 30-32 & DVD lessons

Sept. 12 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with TAs

Homework: Read Introduction to American Deaf Culture- Preface, Introduction & Chapter 1. Post Journal #1 on Canvas by September 30th.

**Week 3**

Sept. 15 Lesson 1:10 Giving Commands: Objects in the Classroom

 Lesson 1:11 Following Instructions

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 33-36 & DVD lessons

Sept. 16 Lesson 1:12 Culture: Getting Attention

 Unit 1 Review

 Homework: Study for the Unit 1 Comprehension Exam

Sept. 17 Unit 1 Comprehension Exam

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 48-57 & DVD lessons

Sept. 18 Lesson 2:1 Giving Information About Yourself

 Homework: A Sign of Respect, view the DVD & complete the assignment

Sept. 19 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with TAs

 A Sign of Respect Assignment Due

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 58-60 & DVD lessons.

**Week 4**

Sept. 22 Lesson 2:2 Cardinal Numbers 16-19

 Lesson 2:3 Identifying Locations: Tic-Tac-Toe

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 61-64, practice your language background narrative

Sept. 23 Lesson 2:4 Narrating Experience with Languages

Sept. 24 Lesson 2:4 Narrating Experience with Languages, Present your Language Background

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 65-71 & DVD Lessons

Sept. 25 Lesson 2:5 Fingerspelling Up Letters

 Lesson 2:6 Talking About Leisure Activities

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 72-76 & DVD Lessons.

Sept. 26 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

Homework: Read Introduction to American Deaf Culture- Chapter 2. Post Journal #2 on Canvas by October 15th.

**Week 5**

Sept. 29 Lesson 2:7 Cardinal Numbers 20-29

 Lesson 2:8 Describing Three Types of Shapes

 ASL Journal (Practice) – “Introduction & Your Language Background” Due Today

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 77-80 & DVD lessons

Sept. 30 Lesson 2:9 Identifying People

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 81-83 & DVD lessons

 Journal #1 Due Today

Oct. 1 Lesson 2:10 Fingerspelling Double Letters

 Lesson 2:11 Culture: Negotiating a Signing Environment

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 84-91, DVD lessons & practice Your Autobiography narrative. Be prepared to present the narrative in class.

Oct. 2 Present Your Autobiography narrative.

Oct. 3 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

**Week 6**

Oct. 6 Lesson 2:12 Asking What is the Sign

 Homework: Study for the Unit 2 Comprehension Exam

Oct. 7 Unit 2 Review

Oct. 8 Unit 2 Comprehension Exam

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 110-111 & DVD lessons

Oct. 9 3:1 Telling Where One Lives

 Homework: Signing Naturally, page 112 & DVD lessons

Oct. 10 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

Homework: Read Introduction to American Deaf Culture- Chapter 3. Post Journal #3 on Canvas by October 31st.

**Week 7**

Oct. 13 Fall Weekend Holiday: No Class

Oct. 14 3:2 Giving Commands: Locations

 ASL Journal #1 – “Your Autobiography” Due Today

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 113-117 & DVD lessons

Oct. 15 3:3 Communicating with the Face

 3:4 Fingerspelling Moving Letter Z

 Journal #2 Due Today

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 118-121 & DVD lessons

Oct. 16 3:5 Discussing One’s Residence

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 122-124 & DVD lessons

Oct. 17 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

**Week 8**

Oct. 20 3:6 Giving Basic Directions: Around the Classroom

 Homework: Signing Naturally, page 125 & DVD lessons

Oct. 21 3:7 Identifying Which Square, Part 1

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 126-137 & DVD lessons

Oct. 22 3:8 Cardinal Numbers 30-66

 3:10 Giving Basic Directions: Expressing Needs

Oct. 23 3:9 Talking About Roommates and Pets

 Animal Signs

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 138-145 & DVD lessons

Oct. 24 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

Homework: Read Introduction to American Deaf Culture- Chapter 4 & 5. Post Journal #4 on Canvas by November 15th.

**Week 9**

Oct. 27 3:11 Fingerspelling Down Letters P, Q, and Y

 3:12 Telling How Long

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 146-149, DVD lessons & practice “Your Narrative”

Oct. 28 3:13 Traveling to School or Work

 Homework: Practice “Your Narrative”. Be prepared to present it in class.

Oct. 29 3:13 Traveling to School or Work

 Present “Your Narrative”

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 150-151 & DVD lessons

Oct. 30 3:14 Identifying Which Square, Part 2

 3:15 Asking What is the Sign/Study Skills

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 152-155, DVD lessons & study for Unit 3 Comprehension Exam

Oct. 31 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

 Journal #3 Due Today

**Week 10**

Nov. 3 3:16 Reviewing Cardinal Numbers 30-66

 ASL Journal #2 – “Your Narrative” Due Today

Homework: Study for Unit 3 Comprehension Exam

Nov. 4 Unit 3 Review

 Homework: Study for Unit 3 Comprehension Exam

Nov. 5 Unit 3 Comprehension Exam

 Homework: Signing Naturally pages 178-180 & DVD lessons

Nov. 6 4:1 Talking About Immediate Family

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 181-187 & DVD lessons. Work on your “Timber Story” Expressive Video Project Due November 21st.

Nov. 7 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

**Week 11**

Nov. 10 4:2 Negation 1

 4:3 Rocking Numbers 67-98

 4:4 Have, Like, Want and Need

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 188-194 & DVD lessons

Nov. 11 4:5 Talking About Siblings

 4:6 Fingerspelling Moving Letter J

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 195-201 & DVD lessons

Nov. 12 4:7 Telling How Old

 4:8 Talking About Extended Family

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 202-203 & DVD lessons

Nov. 13 4:9 Telling How Family Members are Related

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 204-205 & DVD lessons

Nov. 14 Dialogue Practice/Conversation hour with the TAs

 Journal #4 Due Today

Homework: Read Introduction to American Deaf Culture- Chapter 6 & 7. Post Journal #5 on Canvas by December 2nd.

**Week 12**

Nov. 17 4:10 Negation 2

 4:11 Discussing Family Variations

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 206-207 & DVD lessons

Nov. 18 4:12 Review Cardinal Numbers 1-100

 4:13 Getting the Meaning Across

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 208-211, DVD lessons & bring photos of your family members to share in class

Nov. 19 4:14 Commenting on Family Members

 4:15 Culture: Maintaining a Clear Sightline

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 212-215, DVD lessons & study for Unit 4 Quiz

Nov. 20 Unit 4 Review

 Homework: Study for Unit 4 Comprehension Exam

Nov. 21 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with the TAs

“Timber Story” Expressive Video Project Due Today

Homework: Study for Unit 4 Comprehension Exam. Work on your “The Gum Story” Expressive Video Project due on December 5th.

**Week 13**

Nov. 24 Unit 4 Comprehension Exam

 ASL Journal #3 – “Your Family Album” Due Today

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 232-240 & DVD lessons.

Nov. 25 5:1 Talking About Everyday Activities

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 241-244 & DVD lessons

Nov. 26-28 Thanksgiving Recess: No class

**Week 14**

Dec. 1 5:2 Agreement Verbs

 5:3 Fingerspelling Words with G and H Letters

 Journal #5 Due Today

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 245-248 & DVD lessons

Dec. 2 5:4 Talking About Chores

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 249-250 & DVD lessons

Dec. 3 5:5 Asking if Done

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 251-257 & DVD lessons

Dec. 4 5:6 Talking About Errands

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 258-260 & DVD lessons

Dec. 5 Dialogue Practice/Conversation Hour with TAs

 “The Gum Story” Expressive Video Project Due Today

**Week 15**

Dec. 8 5:7 Telling How Often

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 261-272 & DVD lessons

Dec. 9 5:8 Talking About Activities with Others

 Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 273-277 & DVD lessons

Dec. 10 5:9 Talking About What One Does for a Living

Homework: Signing Naturally, pages 278-280, DVD lessons & Study for Final Comprehension Exam (Units 1-5)

Dec. 11 Unit 5 Review

 Homework: Study for Final Comprehension Exam (Units 1-5)

**Final Week**

Dec. 12-20 Final Comprehension Exam (Units 1-5)