

**ASL 101**  
**American Sign Language Level I - Part A**  
**3 Credits**

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## ASL 101 Version: 10



### American Sign Language Level I - Part A

#### Calendar Description

In this course, students are introduced to American Sign Language (ASL), its culture, and to the community of Deaf persons who use this language. Students learn how to have basic conversations as well as use appropriate behaviours within the Deaf Community.

#### Rationale

Individuals working with the Deaf community need to develop basic, practical communication and conversational skills. The content of this course provides the foundational knowledge and skills required to begin interacting with the Deaf community.

#### Prerequisites

None

#### Co-Requisites

None

#### Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. use ASL to:
  - exchange personal information
  - describe an object or item visually
  - discuss living situations
  - demonstrate introductory skills in talking about family
  - converse about activities
  - demonstrate an introductory use of classifiers
  - use numbers 1 - 100 when communicating
  - fingerspell words

## Resource Materials

### ***Required Textbook(s):***

Smith, L., & Mikos. (2018). *Signing naturally student workbook*. Units 1-6.

ISBN 978-1-58121-210-5.

## Conduct of Course

This course has 45 hours of instruction introduced through a combination of instruction, video clips, activities, group and individual practices, discussions, reviews, lectures, and video-recordings. Students are encouraged to practice outside of class.

Lessons are presented in context. Activities provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful and exploratory conversations. Each unit builds upon the previous information.

This is an immersion course, which means students should not use their voices in class. The best way to learn ASL is to stop thinking and speaking in an oral language like English. See Appendix B.

Participation in class is essential..

## Evaluation Procedures

The grading system is based on the number of points received for each assignment. Students are required to complete all assignments and assessments. **No late assignments will be accepted.**

Participation	10%
Progress Check #1	30%
Progress Check #2	30%
Progress Check #3	30%
Total	100%

## Grade Equivalents and Course Pass Requirements

***A minimum grade of C (2.00) is required to pass this course.***

Letter	F	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
Percent Range	0-49	50-52	53-56	57-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95-100
Points	0.00	1.00	1.30	1.70	2.00	2.30	2.70	3.00	3.30	3.70	4.00	4.0

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance and participation in class are essential for success in any course. Openness to accepting and incorporating feedback regarding your ASL skills is important; this in turn will help contribute to your sense of confidence as you develop your skills and feel the excitement of learning a new language.

Absence for any reason does not relieve a student of the responsibility of completing course work and assignments to the satisfaction of the instructor. Students are responsible for catching up on any missed material. Students should exchange contact information with other students to keep up with any missed classes. More than two (2) absences may result in probation.

In cases of repeated absences due to illness, the student may be requested to submit a medical certificate.

Instructors have the authority to require attendance in classes.

## **Course Units/Topics**

Unit One: Introducing Oneself

Unit Two: Exchanging Personal Information

Unit Three: Discussing Living Situations

## Appendix A

Guidelines for ASL classes:

- ASL is the only language of communication to be used in the classroom and with members of the Deaf community. Neither spoken English nor using your voice is allowed.
- Socializing or doing assignments using any language other than ASL in class is not accepted.
- Always warm up and exercise your hands before signing.
- Learn, remember and follow the rules of Deaf Culture.
- When you do not understand something that is signed, ask for clarification - of the instructor and/or of your classmates, or any guests who attend class.
- Have a desire to improve.
- Be willing to accept feedback.
- Respect the different signing styles of all instructors and that each may use a different sign for the same word or concept.
- Always inform the instructor when you need to leave the class.
- Utilize the strategies of writing, gestures etc. to communicate when you do not know how to sign something.

## Appendix B

### Cultural Information

#### No using voice in the classroom!

This may seem harsh to you at first. The reasoning is simple and twofold - it forces you to become more expressive with your body and demonstrates respect of and to the Deaf Community. In short, signing without using spoken English fosters the development of your expressive skills. If you use your voice, there is no motivation to use your body - "Why bother, I can always talk." This also assists you in becoming more visually aware and sensitive to others in terms of attention-getting behaviors, visual accessibility, and ASL facial grammar.

Interpretation services may be provided in the classroom from time to time, during which time, and at your teacher's discretion, you are invited to ask questions and participate in discussions using spoken English.

#### Identifying People

Deaf people usually describe the appearance of a person if they do not know their name or who s/he is. By describing a person, it often starts with gender, height, body type (muscular, fat or thin), colour and style of hair, race, facial features (freckles, mustache, beard, mole, etc.) and clothing. Hearing people may find this offensive and uncomfortable. This is a Deaf cultural norm.

It is not Deaf people's intent to be insulting or negative. These physical descriptions help identify people quickly.

#### Individual Differences in Signs

Throughout your ASL studies, you may be exposed to multiple Deaf instructors and other members of the Deaf community, each of whom has a unique signing style. An individual's signing style is influenced by many factors such as the age of onset of Deafness, the family environment they grew up in, and the types of signed languages they learned at various ages. You will see Deaf instructors / D/deaf people using different signs for the same word or concept. Neither sign is 'right' or 'wrong' as there are many ways to sign a particular word or concept. As well, many words have multiple signs depending on geographical regions and ASL dialects. You are expected to show respect for each D/deaf person's individual style and approach to ASL by using whichever version of the sign that is preferred by the current teacher in your classroom. This may mean using different signs for one word during regular classes and events, depending on the instructor's preference.



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