

California State University, Sacramento
Deaf Studies Program/College of Education

American Sign Language Level 1



Welcome to your first semester of American Sign Language Classes! I first encountered ASL as a 4 year-old watching Sesame Street! And I've maintained a passion for the language ever since. It truly is an amazing language. I hope you will join me on a journey of discovery as you learn to express yourself in ASL.

Success in this class takes dedication and practice but it can be fun too!

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Instructor: | Jennifer Rayman, PhD |
| Office & Hours: | Wednesdays 8:30-9:50 am & Thursdays 10:15-11:55am and by appointment |
| Class Time & Location: | MWF 10-10:50am Eureka Hall 223 |
| Phone/Fax: | (916) 278-4481 phone; (866) 760-2740 VP (916) 278-3498 shared dept. fax (Attention to Dr. Rayman) |
| Email: | jrayman@csus.edu |
| Websites: | SacCT: https://online.csus.edu/ Lifeprint.com: ASL University: http://www.lifeprint.com/ |
| Required Texts: | Free Lessons Curriculum Level 1. In <i>Lifeprint.com: ASL University</i> . Accessed from http://lifeprint.com/rayman |



Required Texts & Readings

Vicars, W. (1997-2009). ASL University Lessons: 2009 - Curriculum Level 1. In *Lifeprint.com: ASL University*. Retrieved from <http://lifeprint.com/rayman>

This is available online. You will need regular access to the internet for this class.

Examinations and assignments in brief:

| Assignment or Exam | Date | Points | Result |
|--|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Test 1: Receptive: Spelling, Numbers, & Basics | Wed-Feb-04 | 100 | |
| Test 2: Expressive: Spelling, Numbers, Basics, and Vocab | Wed-Feb-25 | 200 | |
| Research Blog: A 500-word, 3 or more reference, research article. | Mon-Apr-06 | 100 | |
| Test 3: Lessons 1 - 10 Receptive | Wed-Apr-08 | 200 | |
| Test 4: Lessons 1 - 15 Receptive | Mon-May-11 | 200 | |
| Final Exam (Receptive) | Mon-May-19 | 200 | |
| NOTE: All quizzes and exams are cumulative. Be ready to sign and understand any previously covered concepts | Total: | 1,000 | |

Grading Scale is out of 1000 points: 100%-95=A, 94-90 = A-, 89-87=B+, 86-83=B, 83-80=B-, 79-77=C+, 76-73=C, 72-70=C-, 69-67=D+, 66-63=D, 62-60=D-, 59 and below=F.

First Homework Assignment

1. Go to the fingerspelling tool on the web. <http://asl.gs/>
Learn your abc's. Particularly focus on learning to spell your first and last name, your birthplace and/or the place you grew up.

Don't worry about speed focus on staying relaxed, slow and clear. You should have these memorized by the beginning of the second week of classes. Be able to spell your name by Friday.

You should practice on this <http://asl.ms/> website quizzing your self for at least 15 minutes a day starting with the slow speed.

2. Go to <http://lifepprint.com/rayman> and preview lesson 1 for ASL 1

3. Read the transcript or listen to the interview "An Exploration of Deaf Culture in America" an interview with Tom Humphries and Carol Padden on NPR.
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4474055>

Note any questions you have about deaf people and deaf culture and bring these to class

4. I will be taking a digital photo of you on Wednesday so be ready to say cheese;-) This will help me learn your names faster.

Recommended Text

If you are someone who like to study from a physical book. I recommend getting Humphries, T. L., & Padden, C. A. (2004). *Learning American Sign Language: Levels I & II--Beginning & Intermediate (2nd Edition)*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

ISBN-10: 0205275532 & ISBN-13: 978-0205275533

This is sometimes available at the CSUS bookstore or online at Amazon. Make sure to get a copy with a DVD-so you can see the examples.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to American Sign Language. You will learn basic vocabulary and grammar. Upon completion, you will be able to exchange basic information about yourself and your family such as their names, where you live, and your interests. You will learn about elements of the deaf culture and community.

Course Objectives

1. Students will know basic vocabulary and possess basic grammar skills for communication.
2. Students will be able to make introductions and share personal information about self, family, basic desires and interests.
3. Students will be able to how to talk about their surroundings, by giving and receiving basic directions as well as sharing information about where they live.
4. Students will be able to use basic strategies for establishment and maintenance of conversations and relationships.
5. Students will have a basic understanding of Deaf Culture.

Method of Instruction

This course is taught using a variety of methods including PowerPoint images as well as written English language explanations, dramatic reenactments, and video examples,. Students will engage in a significant amount of pair practice and group work using dialog scripts as well as games and other activities.

Voicing Policy: During certain times this may become a "no-voice class." I will clearly announce such times. During no-voice times you should keep your voice off and not whisper nor rely on "exaggerated mouthing." If another student voices to you during the "no-voice" sessions you should respond as if you cannot hear them and ask them (by signing) to communicate with you by signing or fingerspelling (or even writing on paper or the board). If you ignore this rule, I can reduce your grade, require you to wear ear plugs, or drop you from class for participating in voicing either as a participating listener or the one using voice. (But, usually I'll just ask you to sit somewhere else. My goal is to help you learn.) See Course Policies p. 6

Attendance

Attendance is essential. In order to learn the language well you need regular exposure and practice. Much of your learning will happen in class and it is vital for you to be present and participating to make the best progress possible. Each class session will build on previous sessions. Please make every effort to attend all classes.

Your contribution is important!

You are allowed 3 missed classes. After those 'free' absences each additional absence risks lowering your final letter grade by 3% per absence. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign in on the attendance sheet at every class period. Make sure you check this every day.

Schedule:

| | Date | ASL 1 Students |
|----|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Mon-Jan-26 | Orientation, Syllabus & Resources |
| 2 | Wed-Jan-28 | Spelling, #'s, & Basic Vocabulary |
| 3 | Fri-Jan-30 | Lesson 1 |
| 4 | Mon-Feb-02 | |
| 5 | Wed-Feb-04 | Test 1: Spelling, Numbers, & Basics |
| 6 | Fri-Feb-06 | Lesson 2 |
| 7 | Mon-Feb-09 | |
| 8 | Wed-Feb-11 | Lesson 3 |
| 9 | Fri-Feb-13 | |
| 10 | Mon-Feb-16 | Lesson 4 |
| 11 | Wed-Feb-18 | |

| | | |
|----|------------|----------------------------------|
| 12 | Fri-Feb-20 | Lesson 5 |
| 13 | Mon-Feb-23 | |
| 14 | Wed-Feb-25 | Test 2: Expressive |
| 15 | Fri-Feb-27 | (appointments) |
| 16 | Mon-Mar-02 | (appointments) |
| 17 | Wed-Mar-04 | Lesson 6 |
| 18 | Fri-Mar-06 | |
| 19 | Mon-Mar-09 | Lesson 7 |
| 20 | Wed-Mar-11 | |
| 21 | Fri-Mar-13 | Lesson 8 |
| 22 | Mon-Mar-16 | |
| 23 | Wed-Mar-18 | Lesson 9 |
| 24 | Fri-Mar-20 | |
| 25 | Mon-Mar-23 | Lesson 10 |
| 26 | Wed-Mar-25 | |
| 27 | Fri-Mar-27 | |
| 28 | Mon-Mar-30 | Spring Break |
| 29 | Wed-Apr-01 | Spring Break |
| 30 | Fri-Apr-03 | Spring Break |
| 31 | Mon-Apr-06 | Research Blog Due |
| 32 | Wed-Apr-08 | Test 3: Lessons 1 - 10 Receptive |
| 33 | Fri-Apr-10 | |
| 34 | Mon-Apr-13 | Lesson 11 |

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|----|------------|---|
| 35 | Wed-Apr-15 | |
| 36 | Fri-Apr-17 | Lesson 12 |
| 37 | Mon-Apr-20 | |
| 38 | Wed-Apr-22 | Lesson 13 |
| 39 | Fri-Apr-24 | |
| 40 | Mon-Apr-27 | Lesson 14 |
| 41 | Wed-Apr-29 | |
| 42 | Fri-May-01 | Lesson 15 |
| 43 | Mon-May-04 | |
| 44 | Wed-May-06 | |
| 45 | Fri-May-08 | Practice for Test 4 |
| 46 | Mon-May-11 | Test 4: Lessons 1 - 15 Receptive |
| 47 | Wed-May-13 | Practice for Final |
| 48 | Fri-May-15 | Party (last day of class) |
| 51 | Mon-May-19 | ASL 1 Final Exam Start time: 10:15 a.m. |
| | | |

Expanded Details about Assignments and Exams

| Assignment or Exam | Date | Points | Result |
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Research Blog: A 500-word, 3 or more reference, research article. For instructions, visit: <http://lifeprint.com/asl101/topics/blog.htm>

In addition to posting this on a public blogging site post a link to it on our class SacCT website

Receptive Tests

All tests are cumulative. You will need to bring pen and paper. For most tests I will sign approximately 20 phrases. They will be based on practice questions and responses. Your task will be write these phrases down in English. Write your answers in clear English. I will not be grading your English grammar, but I should be able to tell whether you have accurately translated the phrase. Be sure to indicate whether the phrase is a question or a statement with punctuation. This means that you will need a ? at the end of questions.

For example if I sign:

_____q
YOUR TEACHER GOOD?

You could write: "Is your teacher good?"

But if you write "Your teacher good" or "Your teacher is good," then you will be marked down for missing the question part of the phrase.

Expressive Test

During the expressive test you do the signing. You are responsible for being able to sign any of the vocabulary in any of the lessons covered in class or in the lesson materials. You may also need to fingerspell and show me numbers that have been

covered. You may be required to sign in front of class. Your signing should exhibit accurate handshapes, location, orientation, movement, and facial expressions.

I will grade you based upon the following criteria listed in order of importance:

- ◆ Clear understanding: do you demonstrate understanding of what is signed to you, and are your responses sensible and complete.
- ◆ Appropriate, well-articulated vocabulary: Do you use the right signs? Do you "pronounce" the signs clearly using the right handshapes & movements.
- ◆ Facial Expression: Do you use grammatical facial expressions for questions, negations, and sentences? Is your face blank and "monotone" or does it have the appropriate liveliness for ASL conversation?
- ◆ Discourse Flow: Do you sign in a smooth pace with good rhythm, pausing in the right places to mark sentences? Are you "stuttering" trying to remember signs? Or is your rhythm "choppy" giving each sign the same beat as if following a constant metronome?
- ◆ Clear fingerspelling: Do you spell words smoothly using the right letters? Do you hold your hand with ease, not bouncing or twisting?

Final Exam: This will be a receptive test. I will sign one or more of the following to you: a set of vocabulary, a set of sentences, and/or a story to you.

Online Component

There is a significant online component to this class via SacCT and the Lifeprint.com curriculum. You will be asked to access these sites daily for announcements, course information, assignments and resources for practicing.

SacCT can be accessed at: online.csus.edu Use your SacLink ID and password to sign in and then look for the title of the class. The website will be an ongoing construction during the semester.

Jennifer Rayman's ASL Classroom Policies

The following policies are intended to make the learning experience go well for all members of the class. If you break any of these policies, I may ask you to leave the class for the duration of the session.

Communication policy

When you enter the doors of this classroom you enter a world intended to represent a Deaf signing world. This means that we will rely on visual means to express ourselves rather than verbal. Please keep your voices off for the duration of the class sessions. We will have designated 'talking' sessions at the beginning of the semester and gradually transition to a silent classroom.

There are three main reasons for this policy.

- 1) To experience what it might be like in an environment where people are using a language other than your preferred language.
- 2) To train your mind to function in a visual environment and gain more fluency in an immersion-like situation.
- 3) To develop awareness in the presence of deaf people and develop respectful ways of communicating in their presence.

Often Deaf people have lived lives excluded from their hearing families and colleagues who didn't learn to communicate with them through ASL. The best way to respect signing deaf people's communication needs is to remember to use sign language or some other form of visual communication in their presence. As learners of ASL the no voice policy will help you develop these skills. Some of the teachers on staff are deaf and it will serve you well to reflect an attitude of respect for the fact that they cannot hear your chatter rather than an attitude of disrespect whether intended or not.

Even though you may wish to verbalize a relevant question please use creative strategies to ask the teacher or another student. Draw on your skills in miming, acting out scenarios, and drawing pictures. Imagine that you are in a foreign land communicating with someone who doesn't understand English. If all else fails, you can write the question on the board.

As learners of the language you may face frustrations, especially as beginners, in trying to express yourself. View these moments as opportunities for creative learning. At some point you may be in a situation communicating with a deaf person or even with a foreigner where you need to be creative in order to get your point across.

What to do about voicing in class?

During class time unless I give you permission you should keep your voice off and not whisper nor rely on "exaggerated mouthing." If another student voices to you, you should respond as if you couldn't hear them and ask them (by signing) to communicate with you by signing or fingerspelling (or even writing on paper or the board). I can reduce your grade, require you to wear ear plugs, or drop you from class for participating in voicing either as a participating listener or the one using voice. (But, usually I'll just ask you to sit somewhere else.)

Attendance policy

Attendance is essential. In order to learn the language well you need regular exposure and practice. Much of your learning will happen in class and it is vital for you to be present and participating to make the best progress possible. Each class session will build on previous sessions. Please make every effort to attend all classes.

Your contribution is important!

You are allowed 3 missed classes. After those 'free' absences each additional risks lowering your final letter grade by 3%. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign in on the attendance sheet at every class period. Make sure you check this every day.

Students are expected to complete any assignments before class and to participate actively in class. This class may move at a fairly swift pace; students who miss class risk missing a great deal of new material. It is your responsibility to find out what material was covered during your absence by going to Sac and consulting with other students in the class.

If you are required to miss class in order to participate in pre-approved University program or other non-optional events such as being on an athletic team--show me the letter from your coach or supervisor and then send me an email for instructions on how to handle missed material.

Please be on time. Allow enough time to hunt for parking and arrive to class. Late entrances cause disruptions and distract from the learning process not only of yourself but of your fellow classmates.

Treat this class as you would a paying job, but your payment is in the form of an earned grade. As a courtesy to me and other students show up on time and let me know of any foreseeable absences before they occur via email. In addition, email me with any excused absences. Good attendance

as well as following these courtesies will factor in to any discretionary points that may be earned as a bonus if your earned grade falls just below a threshold.

Exam Make-ups and Late Homework

No make-ups without an obituary of a close relative and a copy of the "program" from the service or note on the funeral home's stationary, or a note from your medical professional specifically stating that you were too sick to take the test, or from school administrator on school letterhead. If you do have an excused absence I reserve the right to either give you a new test, or to substitute the equivalent score of one of your previous or future tests.

No late work will be accepted without following the same policy.

Pager/Cell phone policy

When you enter the classroom please make sure your pagers and cell phones are silenced and put away in your bags. If you do have particular family or work circumstances that require you to be on call please notify me before class and put your phone on vibrate.

Minor annoyances

Arriving late, chewing gum, hats, sunglasses. Sign language is a visual language and all of the above listed factors can prove to be distractions from what you have to say. Instead of paying attention to your message, your listener may be paying attention to your chomping gum. Or they may be unable to see your full expression and meaning hidden underneath your hat.

Please refrain from using these items in the classroom.

Fine Print:

This syllabus and the schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were absent. You may be dropped from class for checking your email during class or accessing websites other than those relevant to the session during class. You may be dropped from class for using your voice or whispering during class. Turn cell phones to vibrate or silent settings. Do not wear baseball caps during quizzes. No reading newspapers in class or other distracting behavior. No

videotaping the lecture or bringing visitors or guests without permission. Students are always expected to work independently on graded quizzes and/or assignments unless specifically directed otherwise by the instructor. Assignments turned in late for any reason may receive no credit. For information on the University's policy regarding cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Schedule of Courses (Legal Notices on Cheating and Plagiarism) and the University Catalog (Policies and Regulations).

University Policies

Academic Honesty

Penalties for cheating and plagiarism may include receiving an F for a particular assignment, an F for the course, or expulsion from the university. Plagiarism includes recycling work done for another class without prior permission from the instructor.

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Academic Honesty, Policy & Procedures. The policy on Academic Honesty and other information regarding student conduct can be accessed from the [University Policy Manual](http://www.csus.edu/umannual/index.htm) (<http://www.csus.edu/umannual/index.htm>).

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). For more information please visit the [SSWD website](http://www.csus.edu/sswd/) (<http://www.csus.edu/sswd/>). They are located in Lassen Hall 1008 and can be contacted by phone at (916) 278-6955 (Voice) (916) 278-7239 (TDD only) or via email at sswd@csus.edu.

Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester.

University Resources

Sac State Library

As a Sac State student you have access to the various resources offered by the library such as book checkout, study areas, computer labs, online tutorials, research databases, etc. To learn more about available resources visit the [Sac State Library](http://library.csus.edu/) website (<http://library.csus.edu/>).

Student Computing Labs

Students can use any of the IRT managed student computer labs on campus. Visit the [University Labs website](http://www.csus.edu/uccs/labs/generalinfo/about.stm) (<http://www.csus.edu/uccs/labs/generalinfo/about.stm>) for information about locations, hours, and resources available.

In addition the College of Educations Mac Lab in Eureka room 301 often has open lab hours where you can use the iMacs with webcams for video assignments.