



**College of Education and Human Development  
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Fall 2015

EDSE 115 001: American Sign Language (ASL) I

CRN: 80799, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Aja Puopolo	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 08/31/15 - 12/21/15
<b>Phone:</b> 703-99-3601	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Wednesday
<b>E-Mail:</b> apuopolo@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 4:30 pm-7:10 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> By appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Fairfax Krug Hall 14

***Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.*

**Course Description**

Introduces American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture. Teaches basic person-to-person conversational signing. Emphasizes development of expressive and receptive skills. Increase knowledge of ASL vocabulary and the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of the language. Explores issues of multiculturalism, linguistic code-switching, and language dominance, particularly in relationship to Deaf education. Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3 Hours of Lab or Studio per week: 0

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisite(s):** None

**Advising Contact Information**

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

**Nature of Course Delivery**

Delivery method is face-to-face.

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

### **Learner Outcomes**

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

- Develop initial proficiency in the language used to teach individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and master sufficient ASL conversational skills and vocabulary to effectively communicate with members of the Deaf community in the United States (DH1S2, VHI8).
- Develop and enrich cultural competency relative to the deaf community and demonstrate awareness of dynamic language, culture, and multicultural issues alive in the Deaf community today (DH1S2).
- Participate in an academic exploration of multicultural issues, linguistic code switching, and language dominance as it relates to spoken languages in general (DH1S2).

### **Required Textbooks**

Smith, C., Lentz, E., & Mikos, K. (2008). *Signing naturally: Level 1 student set*.  
San Diego, CA: DawnSignPress.

### **Digital Library**

Effective summer 2015, the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research will discontinue the use of the Pearson Digital Library. No further registrations will be accepted. Students who hold current subscriptions will continue to have access to the library for the remainder of their subscription time. However, no further updates will be made to the digital library. During this time, should a textbook be revised or a new book is adopted for a class where the text is included in the digital library, Pearson will have options available to you and will provide you with an individual e-text or, if there is no e-text, a printed copy. Students, who have purchased a 3-year subscription directly through Pearson Education, will also have an option to obtain a prorated refund. However, 3-year subscription access cards purchased via the GMU bookstore will need to speak with a George Mason Bookstore Representative. Please be aware that the issuance of a refund, in this case, is at the discretion of the George Mason bookstore. Concerns or questions may be directed to Molly Haines at [Molly.Haines@pearson.com](mailto:Molly.Haines@pearson.com).

## **Recommended Textbooks**

Valli, C. (Ed.). (2006). *The Gallaudet dictionary of American Sign Language*. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press.

## **Required Resources**

A computer with a DVD/Disc player or an external drive is needed to view videos that accompany the required text.

## **Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

Goals, objectives, and assignments in this class address NCATE Standard 1b/ Pedagogical Content Knowledge and 1c / Skills Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and Skill Standards, the Council on Education of the Deaf, and the Virginia Department of Education teacher licensure competencies. Code for CEC/CED Standards: CC = Common Core and DH = Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Code for VADOE Standards: VHI = Virginia's Hearing Impairments PreK-12 and VPS = Virginia's Professional Studies.

## **GMU Policies and Resources for Students:**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- d. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- e. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

g. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>]

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>]

### **Course Policies & Expectations**

#### *Attendance.*

Attendance and Participation (10 points): Class attendance is required. In order to learn and develop expressive and receptive skills in ASL, students must be present during instruction and participate in the discussions and small group work that occurs during the class period. Additionally, each class builds upon the foundational knowledge of the previous class. If you do have an emergency and will be absent, please inform the instructor in advance via email in order to be excused from class. Each student is allowed 1 excused absence. Beyond that, 1 point will be deducted per absence.

#### *Late Work.*

No late work will be excepted unless arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the due date.

#### *No Voice Policy.*

Our class has a NO VOICE policy. This class is a signing environment at all times for two reasons: (1) It is not considered inclusive to talk in front of a Deaf person and not make the information accessible. It is imperative that you develop the habit of signing when Deaf people are present. (2) This is an immersion class. Using ASL helps you develop your comprehension skills and your expressive skills quickly and effectively. Talking disrupts this process. If a fellow student asks you for your help, feel free to help by using signs you have learned or by writing back and forth. The first class will be presented in voice but subsequent classes will be voice-off with no whispering (some exceptions will apply).

#### *Electronic Device Policy.*

Electronic Devices are not permissible during class. Points will be deducted and considered as part of your participation grade.

## Blackboard Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, *Sign Presentation Video* to Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

## Grading Scale

A+	97-100
A	94-97
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	81-83
C+	79-81
C	76-78
C-	74-75
D	70-73
F	Below 70

Assignments	Points
Class Attendance and Participation	20
Receptive Tests 1 & 2	30 (15 each)
Expressive Tests 1 & 2	30 (15 each)
Attendance at Deaf Community Events 2 hrs. + Reflection Paper	30
Research Paper	40
Video Sign Presentation (½ Final Exam)	20
Receptive Test 3 (¼ Final Exam)	15
Written Exam (¼ Final Exam)	15
<b>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>200</b>

## Assignments

### Performance-based Assessment (Blackboard submission required).

#### (SEE ATTACHED RUBRIC) ½ Final Exam: Video Sign Presentation

The student will prepare a video (outside of class) using the vocabulary and grammatical structures learned throughout the semester (Units 1 – 6) to express one of the following narratives. The video should be approximately 10 minutes. It will be due 1 week prior to the final written exam. Specific guidelines will be given.

- The student will tell about a memorable life (childhood, adolescence, adult) incident.
- The student will describe activities done in one of their typical days (i.e., *A Day in the Life of.....*).

### Performance-based Common Assignments (No Blackboard submission required).

**Receptive tests:** There will be 3 receptive tests during the semester.

You will be assessed on your ability to understand what is being signed to you.

R1. Units 1 & 2

R2. Units 3 & 4

R3. Units 1 – 6 (¼ Final Exam)

**Expressive Tests:** There will be 2 expressive tests during the semester. Students will submit 7-10 questions based on their presentation for the class to answer.

You will be tested on your ability to express yourself in sign in front of the class.

E1. You will sign a simple story using the vocabulary and grammar structures learned in Units 1 & 2

E2. Students will sign an autobiographical story using the vocabulary and grammar structures learned in Units 3 & 4

### **¼ Final Exam: Written Exam**

The student will be successful on a written exam focusing on issues related to Deaf culture and American Sign Language.

### **Other Assignments.**

#### **Attendance at Deaf Community Events – 2 hours (undergrad), 8 hours (grad)**

The student will be required to attend 1 event equaling 2 hours (undergrad), 2-3 events equaling at least 8 hours (grad), in the GMU Community/Metro D.C. area. The instructor must approve the event. A one-page reflection paper will be written based on each of the experiences. The student should be prepared to share the experience in class.

### **Research Paper**

Students will select a topic from the two choices listed and write/submit a research paper. A detailed rubric on content and format expectations for the paper will be provided.

Students must:

- Use research from appropriate journals and textbooks

Students may:

- Interview Deaf/hard of hearing individuals
- Visit/tour local schools
- Explore local community resources

Written assignments will be done outside of class and will be evaluated for content, format, and presentation as college-level writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) style will be followed. All written work should be edited carefully as points will be deducted for spelling and formatting errors.

Details for written assignments:

- Submit double-spaced, 12-point font, electronic document by due date
- Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner
- Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly
- Reference appropriate authorities, studies, and examples and avoid generalizations, assumptions, and unsupported opinions
- Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar
- When in doubt, check the APA Manual, 6<sup>th</sup> edition

- o Online tip resources:

<http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx>

<http://search.apastyle.org/style>

### **Research Paper – Choice 1**

Topic: Modes of communication in the education of students who are Deaf and hard of hearing

Undergraduate students will:

- Write a paper 4-5 pages in length
- Describe and discuss the different modalities of sign communication

### **Research Paper – Choice 2**

Topic: Relate the importance of Deaf culture in the development of American Sign Language

Undergraduate students will:

- Write a paper 4-5 pages in length
- Discuss at least two prominent people in Deaf history and explain significance
- Discuss at least one event that positively influenced the lives of Deaf individuals today and explain significance

### **Research Paper –Choice 3**

Topic: Student choice, must be approved by instructor

Undergraduate students will:

- Write a paper 4-5 pages in length

**Schedule**

**PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE: ASL Course I (Fall Semester)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>9/2</b>	<p><b>Intro to ASL I Syllabi</b></p> <p><i>Unit 1</i>  <b>Lessons: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5</b>  <b>Lecture: Deaf Culture/Awareness</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Sign practice assignment 2.) Research topic</b>  <b>3.) Idea for signing presentation video</b></p>
<b>2</b>	<b>9/9</b>	<p><i>Unit 1</i>  <b>Lessons: 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12</b>  <b>Lecture: Modalities of communication and related topics on education of deaf/hard of hearing students</b></p> <p><b>Group Practice:</b>  <b>Introduce yourself in sign</b>  <b>Expressive &amp; Receptive activities</b></p> <p><b><u>DUE:</u> 1.) Research topic</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Review Unit 1 for receptive pretest 2.) Self-Assessment pg. 36</b></p>
<b>3</b>	<b>9/16</b>	<p><i>Unit 2</i>  <b>Lessons: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8</b>  <b>Lecture: Deaf culture</b></p> <p><b>Group Practice: Units 1 &amp; 2, Expressive &amp; receptive activities</b>  <b>Receptive pretest Unit 1</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Review Units 1 &amp; 2 (2.1-2.8)</b></p>
<b>4</b>	<b>9/23</b>	<p><i>Unit 2/Unit 6 (Storytelling)</i>  <b>Lessons: 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 6.1</b></p> <p><b>Receptive Test 1: Units 1 &amp; 2 (2.1-2.8)</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Sign practice assignment 2.) Self-assessment pg. 91</b></p>



5	9/30	<p><b>Unit 3/Unit 6</b>  <b>Lessons: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 6.5</b></p> <p><b>Group Practice:</b>  <b>Expressive &amp; receptive activities</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Prepare for Expressive Test #1 2.) Prepare 7-10 questions about your presentation for your classmates to answer (please make __ copies)</b></p>
6	10/7	<p><b>Expressive Test 1 – In class presentations **</b></p> <p><b><u>DUE:</u> 7-10 questions for classmates</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Sign practice assignment</b></p>
7	10/14	<p><b>Unit 3/Unit 6</b>  <b>Lessons: 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 6.6</b>  <b>Lessons: 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.16, 6.7</b></p> <p><b>Group practice:</b>  <b>Expressive &amp; receptive activities</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Sign practice assignment 2.) Self-assessment pg. 155</b></p>
8	10/21	<p><b>Unit 4/Unit 6</b>  <b>Lessons: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 6.9</b></p> <p><b>Group practice: Unit 3 Review, Expressive &amp; receptive activities, Deaf Culture Activity</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Sign practice assignment 2.) Prepare written narrative for video sign presentation</b></p>
9	10/28	<p><b>Unit 4/Unit 6</b>  <b>Lessons: 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 6.10</b>  <b>Lessons: 4.11, 4.12, 4.13, 6.11</b></p> <p><b>Group practice: Expressive &amp; receptive activities, Deaf Culture Activity</b></p> <p><b><u>DUE:</u> 1.) Written narrative for video sign presentation</b></p>
10	11/4	<p><b>Unit 4/Unit 6</b>  <b>Lessons: 4.14, 4.15, 6.12</b>  <b>Receptive pretest Units 3 &amp; 4</b></p> <p><b>HW: 1.) Prepare for Receptive Test #2 2.) Research Paper (due next class) 3.) Self-assessment pg. 215</b></p>

<b>11</b>	<b>11/11</b>	<b>Unit 5/Unit 6</b> <b>Lessons: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.13, 6.14</b> <b>Receptive Test 2 on Units 3 &amp; 4</b>  <b><u>DUE:</u> Research Paper</b>  <b>HW: 1.) Sign practice assignment 2.) Deaf Reflection Paper (due next week) 3.) Written narrative for video presentation</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>11/18</b>	<b>Unit 5/Unit 6</b> <b>Lessons 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 6.15, 6.16, 6.17</b> <b>Review Units 4 &amp; 5</b>  <b><u>DUE:</u> 1. Deaf Event Reflection Paper 2.) Draft written narrative for video presentation ( draft is optional, a final submission will be required)</b>  <b>HW: 1. Prepare for Expressive Test #2 2.) Prepare 7-10</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>12/2</b>	<b>Expressive Test 2 – In class presentations</b>  <b><u>DUE:</u> 7-10 questions for classmates</b>  <b>HW: 1.) Complete production of video sign presentation (due next week)</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>12/9</b>	<b>Expressive Test 2 – presentations to class</b>  <b>Receptive pretest 3</b>  <b><u>DUE:</u> 1.) Video sign presentation and rubric (1/2 final exam) 2.) Final written narrative</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>12/16</b>	<b>Final Exam:</b> <b>Receptive test 3 (comprehensive) – in class (1/4)</b> <b>Written exam (comprehensive) – in class (1/4)</b>

Due Dates:

9/9 Research topic

10/7 Presentation questions

11/11 Research Paper

11/18 Reflection paper/Draft written narrative (optional)

12/2 Presentation questions

12/9 Video/Final written narrative

		<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATION</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATION</b>	<b>DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATION</b>
<b>NARRATIVE/CONTENT</b>	Narrative length	8-10 minutes (1)	5-7 minutes (.5)	Less than 5 minutes
	Written script	Complete, well-organized accurate, explanatory notations provided (1)	Complete, well-organized, accurate (.5)	Incomplete, poor organization, inaccurate, difficult to follow
	Storyline	Presentation is clear and well organized; Storyline is exceptionally interesting; pacing excellent (1)	Presentation is generally clear and well organized; Storyline well developed; pacing good (.5)	Overall presentation confusing, not well organized; necessary preparation not evident
	Use of <b>personal</b> and <b>factual</b> vocabulary	Accurate, relevant use of wide variety of vocabulary that enhances storyline; vocab used from all units studied (2)	Generally accurate, relevant use of vocab; fits into storyline; vocab used from more than half the units studied (1)	Vocabulary inaccurate and not always relevant to story; vocab used covers less than half the units studied
	Use of descriptive vocabulary for <b>emotions/feelings</b>	Accurate, relevant use of wide variety of vocabulary that enhances storyline; vocab used from all units studied (2)	Generally accurate, relevant use of vocab; fits into storyline; vocab used from more than half the units studied (1)	Vocabulary inaccurate and not always relevant to story; vocab used covers less than half the units studied
	Use of fingerspelling and word signs	Accurate, appropriate use of fingerspelling and word signs; pacing and transitions well done (2)	Generally accurate, appropriate use of fingerspelling and word signs; pacing and transitions acceptable (1)	Less than 50% accuracy – difficulty using fingerspelling and word signs
<b>PHONOLOGY</b>	Use of basic parameters (hand shapes, palm orientation, location and movement in space)	Skilled, accurate, appropriate use of hand shape, orientation, location and movement; transitions smooth (2)	Generally accurate, appropriate use; errors made do not compromise meaning (1)	Less than 50% accurate, appropriate use; effort and practice not evident
	Use of inflections – manners, modulations, degrees, temporal aspects	Use is consistently accurate, well-chosen and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate within story; errors are few and do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident
<b>MORPHOLOGY</b>	Use of Non-Manual Markers	Use is consistently accurate, appropriate and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate within story; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident
	Use of movement to indicate timeline and time	Use is consistently accurate, appropriate and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate within story; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident

		<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATION</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATION</b>	<b>DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATION</b>
<b>MORPHOLOGY</b>	Incorporation of Numbers – Use of numeral hand shape with location, movement, orientation	Use is consistently accurate, appropriate and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate within story; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident
	Use of one-to-one verb inflection – Distributional Aspects	Use is consistently accurate, appropriate and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate within story; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident
<b>SYNTAX/GRAMMATICAL FEATURES</b>	Use of variety of Sentence Types (ST) – Topic, Statement, Command, Conditionals, Relative Clause	A variety of sentence types are used to enhance the understanding and enjoyment of story; solid knowledge of ST is evident (1)	A variety of sentence types are used; errors do not compromise meaning; use demonstrates effort and thought (.5)	Use is awkward and confusing; effort and practice not evident
	Use of sign to show Orientation and Spatial Relationship, Absence, and Presence of objects/subjects	Use is consistently accurate, appropriate and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate within story; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident
	Use of Classifiers – Description, location, relationship, functions, tracing, shape, size, etc.	Use is consistently accurate, appropriate and serves to enhance the story; use precisely expresses intended meaning (1)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate within story; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (.5)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with understanding of storyline; effort and practice not evident
	Use of Noun-Verb Types – Distinguish between the two through use of repetition and movement	A variety of Noun-Verb Types are used to enhance the understanding and enjoyment of story; solid knowledge of Noun-Verb Types is evident (1)	A variety of Noun-Verb Types are used; errors do not compromise meaning; use demonstrates effort and thought; skill is developing (.5)	Use is awkward and confusing; effort and practice not evident
	<b>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE = 20</b>	<b>Points earned in parenthesis</b>		<b>No points earned</b>