

**SPPA480-001 COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**American Sign Language (ASL) For Beginners**  
Fall Semester, 2013

**Instructor:** Norene Dodge

**Class Time:** Monday / Wednesday  
3:00PM - 4:15PM

**Office:** Bell Hall  
Monday, 1:45PM - 2:45PM

**Classroom:** Buller Hall, Room 205

**Office Phone:** 269-471-6104  
**Cell Phone:** 269-519-9442

**Email:** [norene@andrews.edu](mailto:norene@andrews.edu)

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Signing Naturally Student Workbook, Units 1-6, Smith, Lentz, Mikos.  
Copyright 2008. Including 2 DVDs. Please  
do not substitute.

**OPTIONAL REFERENCE**

Random House Webster's Compact American Sign Language Dictionary  
[paperback] by Elaine Costello Ph.D. (Author). ISBN: 978-0-375-72277-6.  
Any older edition may also be substituted.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

To enable students to recognize, describe and produce, under appropriate conditions, the basic grammatical features and vocabulary of American Sign Language (ASL).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Everyday communication is the center piece of every lesson. Topics revolve around sharing information about our environment and us. Grammar is introduced in context, with an emphasis on developing question and answering skills. You learn conversational strategies to help you maintain a conversation. Interaction activities allow you to rehearse what you've learned.

**APPROACH**

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 American Sign Language (ASL) from the very first day. You are immersed in the language for three hours a week 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.

## **NO TALKING POLICY**

We insist on maintaining a signing environment at all times in the classroom for two reasons: one - it is considered rude and insulting to talk in front of a deaf person and not make the information passing between you and the other person accessible. Since your goal is to get to know deaf people in the community, it is imperative that you develop the habit of signing when deaf people are present. Secondly, this is an immersion class, which means only the target language is used. Using only ASL helps you to develop both your comprehension skills and your expressive skills quickly and effectively. Talking disrupts this process and delays your language development. If a fellow student asks you for help, feel free to help by using signs you have learned or by writing back and forth. In this way, I can see what is being said and can join in to help, if needed.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENT**

Class Attendance: Participation in class activities is crucial to your success in this class. The class forms a small community and your effort or lack of it impacts the success of the group. Please make every effort to come to every class with homework done and ready to learn and participate. If you come late or leave early this will be considered a missed class. Missing two classes does affect one's grade; two tardies count as one missed class. After two missed classes, final course grade may be lowered one half grade point for each absence. In-class work cannot be made up. If you miss 4 classes you may be dropped from the class in accordance with college attendance policies. If you know you will be absent from class make arrangements for a classmate to take notes and collect handouts for you. Please see the instructor immediately if you anticipate any problems with attendance. In the case of extended illness, family emergency, etc., it may be necessary to consider taking an incomplete or dropping the course until attendance can be assured.

Quizzes: Some weeks a short quiz will be given covering previous classes, or the assigned reading and video (DVD) material. The quiz will be given in the first few minutes of class and may or may not be announced prior to class.

Homework: You will study the student text materials including reading and viewing the DVD that may take anywhere from 1 to 2 hours. It is important that you review the previous class material and preview the next class material for each class because each class builds on the previous material. This class includes more class time and less research outside of class than a traditional class in order to practice the language in a natural conversational setting.

Examination: There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. Each will be worth 200 points. Each exam will have three parts - production, reception and written. You will receive more information on each of these later in the semester.

**Production Component:** You will be signing assigned material. Depending on the material it may also test your ability to respond appropriately in a conversational environment.

**Receptive Component:** The exam tests your comprehension of what is signed to you.

**Written Component:** You will answer questions or write essay answers about class material.

**Papers:** There are two Social Interaction Reaction Papers based on actual interaction with one or more deaf/hard of hearing individuals. Papers must be typed or in printable electronic style with a title page including your name, course number and description, date and instructor. A summary of the event followed by a reaction should total about 350-500 words. These may be selected from the list below or approved by the instructor. Additional events will be announced by the instructor either at class or by Email. You are responsible for selecting from the available events. NOTE: events Must happen within this semester, and the brochure announcing the event, and/or name Of at least one deaf person present must be attached. Submit these papers by the deadline listed in the class schedule.

#### Suggestions For Social Interaction

At any deaf event you must respect the needs of the deaf.

1 - Attend a church with interpreted services. The following churches sometimes Have services. Please inform the instructor what days you plan to attend and updated information will be provided. Email the instructor if you wish to be notified of last minute schedule changes for these events.

A - St. Joseph Church of Christ, 3550 Niles Ave, St Joseph, Michigan

B - DMMC <http://www.dmmc.net/>

C - Village SDA Church (Email Marvin Budd in advance: [marvbudd@gmail.com](mailto:marvbudd@gmail.com))

D - Niles Westside SDA Church (Email Marvin Budd in advance [marvbudd@gmail.com](mailto:marvbudd@gmail.com))

2 - Attend a deaf event, fellowship lunch, deaf club

<http://www.uhs-in.org/resources.html>

3 - Attend an ASL learning event at

a - Bethel College <http://www.bethelcollege.edu/news/events.html>

b - Goshen College <http://www.goshen.edu/club/asl>

4 - Check the following website: <http://www.michdhh.org/calendar/index.html>

5 - Deaf Nation: <http://deafnation.com>

6 - Outside Class Activities: The instructor may arrange one or more cultural Experiences where exposure to deaf culture may be experienced. A movie or an event where deaf from the local community come to chat and interact may be arranged. These will be announced by Email or in class. Some may be unexpected.

Please note that real-world interaction with the deaf is not always consistent with the values of Andrews University. You are expected to make appropriate choices for yourself while respecting the needs of the deaf..

**Missed/Late Work:** Most work cannot be made up. Late paper work is not accepted.

Miscellaneous: All tests and written assignments will remain in the possession of the instructor. They will be distributed during the class period and collected before you leave the class to be recorded.

Class Schedule:

- Class 1, August 26 - Introduction
- Class 2, August 28 - Reaction Paper due, Unit 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
- Class 3, September 4 - Unit 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8
- Class 4, September 9 - Unit 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, review unit / signs
- Class 5, September 11 - Unit 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4
- Class 6, September 16 - Unit 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8
- Class 7, September 18 - Unit 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12
- Class 8, September 23 - Review unit / signs, class signing practice
- Class 9, September 25 - Unit 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4
- Class 10, September 30 - Unit 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8
- Class 11, October 2 - Unit 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12
- Class 12, October 7 - Unit 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.16
- Class 13, October 9 - Review unit / signs, class signing practice
- Class 14, October 16 - Reaction Paper due, Mid-term exam
- Class 15, October 21 - Unit 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4
- Class 16, October 23 - Unit 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8
- Class 17, October 28 - Unit 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12
- Class 18, October 30 - Unit 4.13, 4.14, 4.15
- Class 19, November 4 - Review unit / signs, class signing practice
- Class 20, November 6 - Unit 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4
- Class 21, November 11 - Unit 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8
- Class 22, November 13 - Unit 5.9, review unit / signs
- Class 23, November 18 - Class signing practice
- Class 24, November 20 - Unit 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 - Timber
- Class 25, November 25 - Unit 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8 - Gum Story
- Class 26, December 2 - Unit 6.9, 6.10, 6.11, 6.12 - The Gallaudet and Clerc Story
- Class 27, December 4 - Class signing a story / review
- Class 28, December 9 - Final exam

**GRADING POLICY**

Grades will be calculated on a percentage basis as follows:

100 - 95	A	79 - 75	C	Below 60	F
94 - 90	A-	74 - 70	C-		
89 - 85	B	69 - 65	D		
84 - 80	B-	64 - 60	D-		

**Possible Points:**

- Attendance - 10 points per class (270 pts)
- Tests - quizzes (100pts)
- Mid-term exam (115pts)
- Final exam (150pts)
- Interaction Papers (2) (100 pts each / 200 pts)

Total possible points - 885-900

**Voice Policy**

Using your voice in class is not allowed. You will lose 2 points each time you are “caught”.

**Weather Information**

In case of inclement weather, please call the school hotline at 269-471-7660

See [http://www.andrews.edu/faculty/blizzard\\_procedures.html](http://www.andrews.edu/faculty/blizzard_procedures.html)

**Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)**

If you qualify for accommodations under this act, please see the instructor as soon as possible for referral and assistance in arranging accommodations.

**Academic Integrity**

You are responsible for accepting and obeying the Andrews University Code of Academic Integrity expressed in the Students Handbook. Academic dishonesty may result in a reduced grade. Part of the code states: In harmony with its mission statement, Andrews University expects students to demonstrate the ability to think clearly and exhibit personal moral integrity in every sphere of life. Honesty in all academic matters is a vital component of personal integrity, which explains why breaches in academic integrity principles are taken seriously by the University.

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO INSTRUCTOR**

I have read the SPPA480-001 course syllabus and had the opportunity to discuss it and ask questions. I understand what is expected of me based on the information contained in the syllabus and accept the procedures and conditions.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Audit or Credit \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe past classes or instruction in ASL, include teacher, date and level

Please describe your interests in taking ASL and tell me about yourself.