

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**  
<https://ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

ASL: 111 – Beginners’ American Sign Language I  
**2021 – 2022 (Fall Term)**  
Section **LEC 803**   **M/W 11:00am-11:50am**   **T/R 11:00am-12:20pm**

*Note: Remote Delivery*

Instructor: Rouzbeh Ghahreman  
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Office Hours: by appointment  
Course Website: U of A eClass

**Bachelor of Arts / Major in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:**  
<https://www.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies/undergraduate-program-information/prospective-undergraduate-students>

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**Course Prerequisite:**

None. This is a fundamental ASL course designed for students who have little or no prior knowledge of ASL. Students who have previously taken ASL courses (i.e. in high school), have immersion experience, or have fluent ASL skills, must consult the department for a placement assessment to ensure that they will obtain credits for the course they register in.

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

**Technology requirements (minimum):**

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate technology for the course. Please review the university’s requirements for remote learning:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/information-services-and-technology/services/software-hardware-vendors/technology-requirements.html>

To participate synchronously in ASL 111, you will need a reliable up-to-date computer or laptop with video conferencing capabilities (built-in or otherwise), and a very dependable internet connection.

**Course-based Ethics Approval** in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes       No, not needed

**Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available**

- Exam registry – Students’ Union  
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below

- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

### **Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:**

This course is designed to introduce you to the beginning level of American Sign Language (ASL) and the culture and community of Deaf people. As a result of this course, students will be able to carry on conversations (expressive and receptive skills) on everyday topics with fluency and accuracy at the beginner level. The students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of Deaf culture and the Deaf community and show awareness of and respect for the Deaf community. The class will be conducted in ASL.

### **Course Format:**

The objectives of this course will be learned from a combination of formal lectures, PowerPoints, clips, and online group practices in Zoom.

### **Required Texts:**

- 1) Signing Naturally Student Workbook: Units 1-6 Set (2008, including DVD)  
Authors: Cheri Smith, Ella Mae Lentz and Ken Mikos).  
Units covered: all units 1-6.
- 2) Additional materials or handouts may be provided on the course website (eclass).

### **Recommended Texts:**

- 1) "Canadian Dictionary of ASL" (by Sue Bailey and K. Dolby). It may be available on reserve in the Rutherford Library or H.T, Coutts Library.
- 2) "Hand Speak" (by Jolanta Lapiak). An online ASL Dictionary that can be accessed for free on any internet browser.

### **Additional Course Fees**

- Yes
- No

### **Important Dates:** [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 1, 2021

Add/Delete Date: September 15, 2021

50% Withdrawal Date: October 4, 2021

Withdrawal Date: November 30, 2021

Last Day of Class: December 7, 2021

Final Exam Date: Monday, December 13 at 2:00pm

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): Please consult the following site:  
(<https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=34&navoid=10107 - examinations-exams>)

Deferred Final Examination: For information on how to apply for a deferred exam see  
[“I Missed my Final Exam, Now What?”](#)

**Grading Distribution (see ‘Explanatory Notes’):**

Participation/attendance	10%	
Short quizzes	10%	Date: Monday, September 27, 2021
Assignments (expressive)	20%	
a) Assignment #1		Due: Thursday, October 7, 2021 (tentative)
b) Assignment #2		Due: Thursday, November 4, 2021 (tentative)
Mid-term	20%	Wed October 20 and Thurs October 21, 2021
“Oral” final exam	20%	Dates: December 2, 6, 7, and 8, 2021
Final Exam	20%	Date: Monday, December 13, 2021 at 2 pm

**Explanatory Notes:**

For all quizzes and tests, if you arrive late, there will be no make-up time. Arrive on time. If the quiz/test is missed, the mark will be zero.

**Mid-term Exam:**

The mid-term exam will be composed of receptive/comprehensive skill, written component, and expressive skill based on lecture/material content including knowledge of culture.

**Assignments (expressive part):**

For both assignments, you will produce a video in ASL. Your ASL expressive and productive skills will be evaluated in each of your assignments. Instructions, a list of the assigned topics and the grading rubric will be provided on eClass. See “Policy for Late Assignments” below for information.

### **Oral Final Exam (“communicative competency” part):**

The “oral” final exam will be composed of expressive, comprehensive and receptive skills in natural (live) one-on-one conversations with the instructor for up to 10 minutes. The mark will be based on communicative competency, comprehension, language proficiency, fluency, and knowledge of the materials. More details will be provided on eClass.

### **Final Exam:**

The cumulative final exam will be composed of comprehensive/receptive skill, written component, and expressive skill based on lecture/course material content. No exceptions will be made for planned holidays, etc.

### **Class participation:**

Attendance, conduct, active participation in class and the use of ASL in class will be assessed. Students are encouraged to take notes on their homework and come to class prepared. See more notes in “**Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components**” below.

The classroom (a fully visual environment) is an “ASL zone” in which we will practice “no voice policy” as you would find in the real world in Deaf space. Using voice in class (zero tolerance) will impact your participation mark as well as it’s distracting for both students and especially the instructor.

### **Required Notes:**

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University calendar.”

### **Student Responsibilities:**

#### ***Academic Integrity:***

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of

fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

***Language and Translation Courses:***

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that the use of on-line translation to complete assignments constitutes a form of cheating as the student's own understanding and work is therefore not reflected. Also, students in language courses should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, excessive editorial and creative help in assignments is considered a form of cheating that violates the Code of Student Behaviour.

***Learning and Working Environment:***

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment.

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

***Territorial Statement:***

The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

***Recording of Lectures:***

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars, or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

***Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:***

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the "attendance and participation" component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#).

**In this course**, each student is allowed three absences regardless of the reasons (excusable or not) for the entire term. Beyond three excused absences, one percentage point per absence will be deducted from the 10% participation grade. The students are responsible to enquire about what has been done and assigned for the next class. Students are encouraged to communicate with other students to keep up with missed classes.

***Policy for Late Assignments:***

Students are expected to submit assignments on or before the deadline. Assignments handed in after the deadline will receive a penalty of one-third grade point deduction (i.e., B to B-) for each day (maximum 3 days). A zero mark will be received after the third day. Late excuses will not be accepted for any reason. This late policy will apply to all assignments for which no approved request for extension has been made.

Students who consult in advance with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension with the deadline just one time throughout the course with no penalty. However, if a second excuse will be granted for late assignments, the penalty will be applied as described above.

***Disclaimer:***

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

**Student Resources:**

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

**Accessibility Resources:**

The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the [Accessibility Resources](#) webpage.

[The Academic Success Centre](#) provides professional academic support to help students maximize their academic success and achieve their academic goals. We offer appointments, advising, group workshops, online courses, and specialized programming year-round to students in all university programs, and at all levels of achievement and study.

They also administer the University of Alberta's [Duty to Accommodate procedure](#) for students and works with students, instructors, campus units, Faculties and departments, community and government agencies, and on and off-campus service providers to coordinate students' disability-related accommodation needs for participation in university programs.

For general information and to register for services visit the [Academic Accommodations](#) webpage.

**The Centre for Writers:**

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

[The First Peoples' House](#) provides an environment of empowerment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners to achieve personal and academic growth.

[Health and Wellness Support for Students](#) outlines available mental and physical health resources that are offered on-campus and in the community.

[The Office of the Student Ombuds](#) is a confidential service that strives to ensure that university processes related to students operate as fairly as possible. We offer information, advice, and support to students, faculty, and staff as they deal with academic, discipline, interpersonal, and financial issues related to student programs.

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) section of the University Calendar.

**Grading:**

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

**“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”**

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
<b>Excellent.</b> A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	<b>95-100</b>
	A	4.0	<b>90-94</b>
	A-	3.7	<b>86-89</b>
<b>Good.</b> B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students	B+	3.3	<b>82-85</b>
	B	3.0	<b>75-81</b>
	B-	2.7	<b>70-74</b>

<b>Satisfactory.</b> C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	<b>C+</b>	2.3	<b>66-69</b>
	<b>C</b>	2.0	<b>61-65</b>
	<b>C-</b>	1.7	<b>58-60</b>
<b>Poor/Minimal Pass.</b> D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	<b>D+</b>	1.3	<b>55-57</b>
	<b>D</b>	1.0	<b>50-54</b>
<b>Failure.</b>	<b>F</b>	0.0	<b>0-49</b>

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