

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

**ASL 111 – Beginners’ American Sign Language I  
2018-2019 - SPRING TERM**

Section A1 9:00-11:20am M/T/W/R/F + 11:40-1:40pm M/T/W/R Room T 1 125

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Office: 413A, Arts Building  
Office Hours: by appointment

Course website: U of A eclass  
Personal website: [www.handspeak.com](http://www.handspeak.com)

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**Course Prerequisite:** None. It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

This fundamental ASL course is designed for students who have little or no prior knowledge of ASL. It is not open to native or fluent ASL speakers. Students who have taken ASL in high school or have some immersion experience must consult the department about a placement test to ensure that they will obtain credits for the course they register in.

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

Yes  No, not needed, no such projects approved.

**Community Service Learning** component

Required  Optional  None

**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

**Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)**

Yes  No

## Course Description and Objectives:

The aim of this course is to develop elementary proficiency in ASL with a focus on receptive and expressive skills, comprehension, and communicative competency, and to introduce students to the culture and community of Deaf people. At the end of this course, students will be able to carry conversation in ASL on everyday topics and common situations at the beginner level. They are expected to demonstrate a basic understanding of Deaf culture and community. The class will be conducted in the target language: ASL.

## Required Texts:

- 1) Smith, C., Lentz, E., and Mikos, K. (2008) *Signing Naturally, Units 1-6: Student Workbook and DVD*. Berkeley, CA: Dawn Sign Press.

Additional materials or handouts may be provided on the course website (eclass).

## Optional Texts:

Sue Bailey and K. Dolby. *Canadian Dictionary of ASL*. It may be available on reserve in the Rutherford Library or H.T, Coult Library.

## Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

|   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| Participation/attendance/conduct              | 10% |  |
| 2 Tests                                       | 20% | Friday, May 10 at 9:00am<br>Friday, May 17 at 9:00am |
| Assignments                                   | 20% |  |
| a) Assignment #1                              |     | Due: Friday, May 10, 2019                            |
| b) Assignment #2                              |     | Due: Friday, May 17, 2019                            |
| Oral final exam<br>(communicative competency) | 25% | Thursday, May 23, 2019                               |
| Final exam (cumulative)                       | 25% | Friday May 24 at 9:00am                              |

## Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable):

Deferred examinations cannot be granted by instructors. Students must apply for a deferral to his/her Faculty office with adequate documentation substantiating the absence due to incapacitating illness, severe domestic affliction, and other compelling reasons. For information on how to apply for a deferred exam see [“I Missed my Final Exam, Now What?”](#)

### **Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

For all tests and exams, if you arrive late, there will be no make-up time. Arrive on time. If the test/exam is missed without acceptable documents, the mark will be zero.

### **Tests:**

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

### **Assignments (expressive):**

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):**

The oral final exam will be composed of expressive, receptive and comprehension skills in one-on-one conversations with the instructor for up to 10 minutes. The mark will be based on communicative competency, comprehension, language proficiency, and fluency. More details and holistic rubric will be provided on eclass.

### **Final Exam:**

The cumulative final exam will be composed of receptive/comprehension skill and written components, based on the lecture/material contents taught in classes.

### **Class participation/attendance/conduct:**

Attendance, active participation in class, homework, conduct/attitude, etc. will be assessed. Students are encouraged to do homework and come to class prepared. The classroom (a fully visual environment) is an *ASL zone* in which we 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. See more notes in “**Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components**” below.

### **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 (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behaviour that 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 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 all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

### ***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.”  
(from the beginning of the Calendar).

***University of Alberta Sexual Violence Policy:***

The Sexual Violence Policy was approved by GFC in June 2017. It plays a vital role in ensuring a safe and respectful learning and working environment.

As defined in the policy, **sexual violence** is any sexual act or act of a sexual nature, or act targeting sexuality, whether physical or psychological, committed without consent. **Sexual violence** is a complex and serious problem in society and on university campuses. Sexual violence can affect individuals of all gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations, as well as those from all ages, abilities, racial, cultural and economic backgrounds. Through this policy, the University of Alberta recognizes its responsibility to reduce sexual violence in the University community. The university aims to do so by fostering a culture of **consent** and support through education, training and policy. The University recognizes the possible effects of trauma on those who have experienced sexual violence and supports the efforts of individuals to seek support and recover.

To read the policy in more detail, please visit:

<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Policies/Sexual-Violence-Policy.pdf>

***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 one absence regardless of the reasons (excusable or not) for the entire term. Beyond one excused absence, 1.5 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 2 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:** (1 – 80 SUB)

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:** (1-80 SUB)

[The Academic Success Centre](#) offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

**The Centre for Writers:** (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)

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.

**Health and Wellness Support:** There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the [Health and Wellness Support](#) webpage.

**Office of the Student Ombuds:**

The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.

**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. | <b>A+</b>    | 4.0               | <b>97-100</b> |
|   | <b>A</b>     | 4.0               | <b>93-96</b>  |
|   | <b>A-</b>    | 3.7               | <b>90-92</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>B+</b>    | 3.3               | <b>87-89</b>  |
|   | <b>B</b>     | 3.0               | <b>83-86</b>  |
|   | <b>B-</b>    | 2.7               | <b>80-82</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>77-79</b>  |
|   | <b>C</b>     | 2.0               | <b>73-76</b>  |
|   | <b>C-</b>    | 1.7               | <b>70-72</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>65-69</b>  |
|   | <b>D</b>     | 1.0               | <b>60-64</b>  |
| <b>Failure.</b>   | <b>F</b>     | 0.0               | <b>0-59</b>   |

## Course Outline:

- Unit 1: Introducing Oneself
- Unit 2: Exchanging Personal Information
- Unit 3: Discussing Living Situation
- Unit 4: Talking about Family
- Unit 5: Telling about Activities
- Unit 6: Storytelling