

**West Los Angeles College**  
Fall 2014  
ASL 001: Beginning American Sign Language  
Instructor: Andy Lim

*Syllabus is open to change at instructor's discretion*

**West Los Angeles College Mission Statement**

The mission of West Los Angeles College is to serve the students and the community by providing quality instructional and support services including programs, facilities, and open access for all who can benefit from its instruction.

**Lecture/Lab Meeting Days:** Tuesdays and Thursdays  
**Lecture/Lab Times:** 6:45 PM to 9:20 PM  
**Lecture/Lab Meeting Room:** FA 306

**Instructor Contact Information**  
Office Hours: By Appointments  
E-Mail: [ABL25@hotmail.com](mailto:ABL25@hotmail.com)  
(Type **ASL 001** in Subject heading for E-mail)

**Required Textbook**

*Title: Signing Naturally Units 1-6 Student DVD and Workbook*  
*Author: Cheri Smith, Ella Mae Lentz, and Ken Mikos*  
*Edition: 1<sup>st</sup>, ISBN: 978-1-58121-210-5*

**Course Description**

Develops basic vocabulary and grammar of American Sign Language. Emphasis is placed on receptive and comprehension skills. Incorporates vital aspects of the Deaf culture and community.

**Course Prerequisites**

None

**Course Objectives**

Students will learn (*at least one of the following*):

1. Spontaneously generate simple American Sign Language sentences and short interactive dialogues.
2. Deduce meaning and respond appropriately to simple commands and questions.
3. Demonstrate comprehension of short stories with embedded grammatical features that include classifiers, verbs, time indicators, locatives, and nouns.
4. Prepare and report on contemporary topics or issues of current concern in the deaf community and how they impact the culture.
5. Reproduce non-manual markers and mouth morphemes embedded in sentences.
6. Demonstrate and comprehend fingerspelling and numeric concepts.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of these courses:

- A. **Communication:** Effectively communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic words, family, and community settings.
- B. **Civic responsibility:** Apply the principles of civility to situations in the contexts of work, family, community, and the global world.

- C. Demonstrate comprehension and communicative competence in ASL (American Sign Language) related to oneself, family, academic, and real-world surroundings.
- D. Use and understand appropriate phonology, facial grammar, sign vocabulary, classifiers, and fingerspelling for expressive and comprehensive skills.

### **Assessment Activities**

The following activities will be used to assess students' learning:

1. Participation
2. Tests and final exam
3. Topical report

### **Evaluative Criteria**

1. ASL sentence structures
2. Classifiers and facial grammar
3. Sign vocabulary
4. Quality information in topical report

### **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 five hours a week to maximize your language learning. The instructor 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. First, 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 a good number of your instructors will be Deaf and 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 be.

***All cell phones, pagers, laptops, or other electronic devices must be turned off in class.***

## Grading

Test (2): Units 1 to 2, Units 3 to 4	50
Final Exam: Units 1 to 6	30
Insight on Deafness Report	10
Participation	10
Total Possible Points:	100

### Note:

There are no make-up exams.

### Homework

You will have homework after every class, anywhere from 1 to 2 hours of work. It is important that you do the homework because the next class builds on the material covered.

### Insight on Deafness Report Due by December 16, 2014 - Tuesday

In addition to a cover page as required, write a 2-page, double-spaced report on your perspective on deafness. Are there any differences on your views of deaf people generally before and after you entered into this course? What are the differences? Do you feel that you are well justified to communicate with deaf people? What will you do with your signing skills in the future? Free feel to add any comments.

### Participation

The goal for students is to become an active signer. You will learn how to refine your signing skills as well as expressive and receptive communication skills. Your facial expressions will eventually become more natural. Your body language will be better utilized necessary to communicate in ASL. By just sitting down and observing will not enhance your signing skills. I will be around to communicate with you as well as watching your practice in signing. Lack of participation will affect your grade.

### Important Information

As with learning any new language, you may often feel frustrated. Though it may be not comfortable, some frustration is indicative of your dedication and motivation to learn. But don't let your frustration get the best of you (don't give up the ship). Learning pace varies from one to another as you grow within the "deaf culture".

Anytime you have a question regarding to sign language, an aspect of Deaf Community or Deaf culture, please feel free to bring it up in class. No question is unimportant.

To view signs and/or fingerspelling through video via Internet, go to:

1. ASL Pro – Main Dictionary (excellent viewing)
2. ASL.ms
3. Lifefprint.com
4. [www.start-american-sign-language.com](http://www.start-american-sign-language.com)

**Caution:** Because of regional variation, signed demonstrations may be slightly different although they may be similar in handshapes, movements, locations, and/or palm orientations. Refer to your textbook for cross-examination.

### **Cheating**

If I caught you looking at another student's test while taking your test, then you will receive an "F" grade on your test. Such cheating includes mouth movements, manual movements, or eye-head movements.

### **Attention**

No cell phones, pagers, laptops, or tablets used in class. No food allowed in classroom.

### **Attendance and Absences**

Participation in class activities is crucial to your success in this class. The class forms a small community and your effort or lack of 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 miss 3 classes, you will be dropped from class.** If you know you will be absent from class, please make arrangements for a classmate to take notes and collect handouts for you.

### **Children in Classrooms**

Children are not permitted in classrooms while class is in session. Attendance in class is limited to officially enrolled students and authorized visitors or guests. In addition, students must not allow children to be left unsupervised or unattended anywhere on campus.

### **Special Accommodations**

Any student who has a disability and has special needs is to alert me of this so that special accommodations can be made.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students who choose to perform dishonestly in class during the exams will receive a zero credit and will face a disciplinary action.

### **Disclaimer Statement**

Students will be notified ahead of time when and if any changes are made to course requirements, schedule, or policies.

**Important Note:** Syllabus is open to change at the instructor's discretion.

**Semester Schedule**

1	Sept 2	Tue	Units 1 – 2	Roster, Orientation
2	Sept 4	Thu	Units 1 – 2	
3	Sept 9	Tue	Units 1 – 2	
4	Sept 11	Thu	Units 1 – 2	
5	Sept 16	Tue	Units 1 – 2	
6	Sept 18	Thu	Units 1 – 2	
7	Sept 23	Tue	Units 1 – 2	
8	Sept 25	Thu	Units 1 – 2	
9	Sept 30	Tue	Units 1 – 2	
10	Oct 2	Thu		Test: Units 1 – 2
11	Oct 7	Tue	Units 3 – 4	
12	Oct 9	Thu	Units 3 – 4	
13	Oct 14	Tue	Units 3 – 4	
14	Oct 16	Thu	Units 3 – 4	
15	Oct 21	Tue	Units 3 – 4	
16	Oct 23	Thu	Units 3 – 4	
17	Oct 28	Tue	Units 3 – 4	
18	Oct 30	Thu	Units 3 – 4	
19	Nov 4	Tue	Units 3 – 4	
20	Nov 6	Thu	Units 3 – 4	
21	Nov 11	Tue	Campus Closed; Veteran's Day	
22	Nov 13	Thu		Test: Units 3 – 4
23	Nov 18	Tue	Units 5 – 6	
24	Nov 20	Thu	Units 5 – 6	
25	Nov 25	Tue	Units 5 – 6	
26	Nov 27	Thu	Campus Closed; Thanksgiving Day	
27	Dec 2	Tue	Units 5 – 6	
28	Dec 4	Thu	Units 5 – 6	
29	Dec 9	Tue	Units 5 – 6	Vocabulary Review for Final Exam
30	Dec 11	Thu	Units 5 – 6	Vocabulary Review for Final Exam
31	Dec 16	Tue	Final Exam on Units 1 to 6 at 7 p.m.; Insight on Deafness Report Due (Hard Copy Only!)	

Last Day to Drop with a "W": Friday, November 21, 2014