

American Sign Language and Deaf Culture

Instructor: Mary Phillips
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Mondays, 1:45-3:30PM

American Sign Language is the third most common language used by adults in the United States. This class will introduce the fundamentals of ASL as well as familiarize you with cultural issues which accompany its use. Manual dexterity is not required. Curiosity and willingness are all you need to take the first steps toward the appropriate use of this fully-developed and naturally-occurring language.

Instructor Mary Phillips is a retired certified sign language interpreter who hosted a bilingual talk show about deaf resources in Southern Nevada. She employed, trained, and coordinated sign language interpreters in the Las Vegas Valley for many years in a variety of educational, entertainment, government, employment, and conference settings.

Week 1, February 3, 2020

Language: The importance and difficulty of fingerspelling; Conceptual language
Culture: Language, Culture, and Community
Vocabulary: Alphabet, Numbers 1-10

Week 2, February 10, 2020

Language: The five parameters of sign language; Pronoun point
Culture: The importance of native signers to the study of ASL
Vocabulary List, Numbers 10-25

PRESIDENTS DAY—NO CLASS FEBRUARY 17, 2020

Week 3, February 24, 2020

Language: Is sign language universal?; Possessive hand
Culture: Endogamy and Deaf Culture
Vocabulary List, Number 25-100

Week 4, March 2, 2020

Language: Self hand; Agent suffix
Culture: The Continuum—Hearing, Hard-of-Hearing, Deaf
Vocabulary List, Alphabet, Numbers

Week 5, March 9, 2020

Language: Noun/Verb Pairs
Culture: Cochlear implants
Vocabulary List

SPRING BREAK March 16-20, 2020 NO CLASSES

Week 6, March 23, 2020

Language: Time

Culture: ADA; The difference between signing and interpreting

Vocabulary List

Week 7, March 30, 2020

Language: Sentence structure

Culture: But which way is the RIGHT way to sign it?

Vocabulary List

Week 8, April 6, 2020

Language: Questions

Culture: Deaf President Now

Vocabulary List

Week 9, April 13, 2020

Language: Directionality

Culture: Dialects and idioms; Cultural, legal, and ethical caveats

Student-Generated Vocabulary