San José State University  
Connie L. Lurie College of Education, Special Education Department  
EDSE 14A-01 (21128) – American Sign Language (ASL) I – Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:  Everett Smith
Office Location:  Sweeney Hall (SH) 221
Email:  everett.smith@sjsu.edu
Phone:  (408) 217-6289
Office Hours:  By appointment.
Class Days/Time:  Mondays/Wednesdays 10:30AM – 11:45AM
Classroom:  Sweeney Hall (SH) 230
Prerequisites:  None.

Course Format
We meet in class twice a week, but all course materials such as the syllabus, lecture notes, assignments, and guidelines are to be found on the Canvas website. The URL for Canvas is http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking our course site, as well as checking with the messaging system through MySJSU (Canvas and SJSU Email) at https://one.sjsu.edu to stay on track and learn of any updates.

Course Description
Introductory course covering basic vocabulary and grammatical structures, appropriate cultural and linguistic behaviors within the Deaf community and basic information about the Deaf community.

Course Content
The development and cultivation of receptive and expressive skills are absolutely crucial in successful acquisition of ASL. As per Signing Naturally lessons, the following skills will be covered: Unit 1 – Introducing Oneself; Unit 2 – Exchanging Personal Information; Unit 3 – Discussing Living Situations; Unit 4 – Talking About Family; Unit 5 – Telling About Activities; Unit 6 – Storytelling (optional).

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate basic expressive and receptive proficiency in ASL for basic conversation with other signers.
2. Demonstrate basic knowledge and awareness of Deaf Community and Culture in contextual settings.
3. Demonstrate basic proficiency in, and understanding of, introduced vocabulary and grammar.
4. Reasonably express thoughts and ideas, as well as describing objects/concepts, in ASL.
5. Use signs and facial expressions in a conceptually accurate fashion.
6. Comprehend, reproduce, and respond to statements and/or questions in ASL with reasonable accuracy.

7. Replicate/adapt basic ASL stories, and perform your own storytelling.

All of these course goals are embedded in our course activities, assignments, and lectures.

**Required Texts/Readings**

**Textbook**


DVD should be included with the textbook. However, if DVD is damaged or not included, you may subscribe to the Signing Naturally online video library at [https://www.dawnsign.com/subscribe/signing-naturally-1-6](https://www.dawnsign.com/subscribe/signing-naturally-1-6)

Important note: If buying a used Signing Naturally textbook, please ensure it is the correct edition (2008)!

**Other - Technology**

A computer with Internet connection is required. Additionally, a DVD player is strongly recommended for the interactive Signing Naturally DVD that should be included with the student textbook. The DVD or online video subscription is necessary for practice and the completion of homework assignments outside classroom.

**Course Requirements and Assignments**

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.” More details can be found from University Syllabus Policy S16-9 at [http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf).

1. For optimized contribution to and alignment with the learning outcomes of this introductory ASL course, please use only signs that are taught in class or covered in Signing Naturally workbook. While some of you might already possess some signing skills, fully utilizing the Signing Naturally and lecture content helps avoid ambiguity and confusion. The sign(s) you know might not match what is learned in this course. **The development of receptive skills is of paramount importance. If you use sign(s) that you and your classmates did not learn in this course, your classmates might not be able to understand you; therefore, communication as well as their developing reception would be hindered.**

2. For a successful immersion in visual-based environment, do make every effort (challenge yourself) to **refrain** from mouthing English words, or using voice in any way, while signing. If your partner can hear you or read your lips, she/he will lose the opportunity to not only improve her/his receptive skills, but also lose the ability to pick up on new signs by a Deaf signer.

3. It is highly impractical to attempt to speak, whisper, or mouth English and sign in ASL simultaneously. It does not improve, but can debilitate, ASL skills. In other situations, one does not speak two spoken languages at the same time.

**Assignments**

**Homework (ungraded)**
As part of regular review and study outside class, homework will be assigned at end of each class. These homework assignments are found in Signing Naturally workbook. Homework will not be graded. However, these assignments will provide an opportunity to drastically enhance receptive and expressive skills, as well as knowledge of ASL and Deaf Culture. Homework is also expected to increase class preparedness and participation, and improve performance on the exams. Participation and exams are graded.

**Participation (graded)**

I will assign in-class exercises/activities throughout the semester for participation points.

**Exams (graded)**

1. Comprehension exams evaluate your ability to comprehend what is being signed to you. Three comprehension exams will be administered in this course. The third (final) exam is cumulative (units one through five). See Final Exam below. More information will be provided before each comprehension exam.

2. For the production exam, you will present your own story using the vocabulary and grammar learned so far in class (Units 1 – 4). The production can be in several different forms: monologue, dialogue, signing skit, etc. More specific guidelines will be provided later in the semester.

3. The Interview consists of brief, one-on-one conversation with your instructor who will evaluate your ability to hold a brief conversation in ASL. This presents an opportunity to assess and review your first-level ASL knowledge and skills overall. Each student will be prompted to sign up for an individual time slot to meet with me in SH 230 during one of three available class sessions close to end of semester. More information will be provided later in the semester.

**Final Exam (graded)**

1. The final cumulative exam aka third comprehension exam (mentioned above) covers units one through five. It will be in a similar format as the first two comprehension exams, but with additional questions. More information will be provided closer to the end of the semester.

University policy on final examination can be found in University Policy S17-1 (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S17-1.pdf), which states that:

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

**Grading Information**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points / Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>16 / 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exam #1 (Units 1 &amp; 2)</td>
<td>16 / 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exam #2 (Units 3 &amp; 4)</td>
<td>16 / 16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Production Exam 16 / 16%
Interview (One-on-One) 18 / 18%
Final Comprehensive Exam (Cumulative) 18 / 18%

Total: 100 / 100%

Grading Scale (percentage = letter grade)

93 percent - 100 percent = A
90 percent - 92.9 percent = A minus
87 percent - 89.9 percent = B plus
83 percent - 86.9 percent = B
80 percent - 82.9 percent = B minus
77 percent - 79.9 percent = C plus
73 percent - 76.9 percent = C
70 percent - 72.9 percent = C minus
67 percent - 69.9 percent = D plus
63 percent - 66.9 percent = D
60 percent - 62.9 percent = D minus
0 percent - 59.9 percent = F

Extra Credit: No extra credit offered in this course.

Late Policy / Make-Up Exams

Make-up exams, early exams, and late assignments will be permitted within reason. Notify me by email (preferred) or phone ASAP if you must miss an exam or an in-class activity. You should arrange for your make-up with me within one week of the time the exam was scheduled or otherwise you may not be able to take the make-up or early exam. If you need to take an early exam, you should notify me at least one week before the scheduled exam. It is your responsibility to contact me if you need a make-up exam, early exam, or make up a missed assignment. You should be able to provide a university-approved verification, written note from physician, or other legitimate reason(s) to document need for these alternatives.

Classroom Protocol

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 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 know you will be absent from class make arrangements for a classmate to take notes and collect handouts for you.”
(Excerpt from Signing Naturally syllabus)

Note that University Policy F15-12 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf states that “Students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein, and active participation is frequently essential to ensure
maximum benefit to all class members. In some cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives; 
for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class. Attendance is the 
responsibility of the student. **Attendance shall not be used as a criterion for grading.**

**Classroom behavior**

I will always be respectful and considerate of my students’ needs, and I expect to be afforded the same 
courtesy. However, if I find a student or students engaging in distracting or disruptive classroom 
behavior that hinders other students’ opportunity to learn, I will have to ask the student(s) in question to 
take a break outside the classroom, and return when ready to focus on ASL lessons.

**Tardy**

1. Be on time for class. Late entrances can cause disruptions/distractions.

2. It is especially important to be on time for scheduled exams. Late arrivals may miss a significant if 
not entire part of the exam. This can negatively affect exam scores.

**Communication**

Our classroom adopts a visual environment that is as closely representative of the Deaf world as 
possible. We will rely on our ability to communicate visually and using our hands, body language, and 
facial expressions without using our voice. During each class session, please maintain a respectfully 
silent but vividly visual atmosphere for all who are here to learn ASL.

Keeping our voices turned off enable us to:

1. Experience what it is like for Deaf individuals who primarily rely on ASL to communicate.

2. Prepare our minds to immerse and function in a visual environment, with increased motivation to 
express ourselves in ASL in the absence of a spoken language.

3. Develop respectful awareness of, and communication etiquette in, the presence of Deaf signers.

**Cell phones and other electronic devices**

Please make sure your devices are turned off or in silent mode during class time. You may check your 
device outside the classroom especially in an emergency.

**Contacting Me**

Email is the best and quickest method of communication outside class for this course. I check my email 
often and will respond within 24 hours during weekdays. I generally do not respond to emails on the 
weekend unless it is an urgent situation.

- When you email me, it is helpful for you to include the course title in the subject line. I teach several 
classes and I have difficulty remembering what course you are in, especially at the beginning of the 
semester.
- Please feel free to schedule an appointment to meet me in my office when you have additional 
questions or need help.
- You may try calling me on the telephone, but if you need to leave a message, indicate who you are and how to contact you, as well as specifying the class you are taking from me.

**University Policies**

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc.

**EDSE 14A-01 / American Sign Language I, Spring 2020 Course Schedule**

**Course Schedule** (subject to change with fair notice)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>Introduction – Syllabus – American Deaf Culture Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>Lessons 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Lessons 1.5, 1.6, 1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Lessons 1.8, 1.9, 1.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>Lessons 1.11, 1.12; Unit 1 Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>Lessons 2.1, 2.2, 2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/17</td>
<td>Lessons 2.4, 2.5, 2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>Lessons 2.7, 2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/24</td>
<td>Lessons 2.9, 2.10, 2.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/26</td>
<td>Lessons 2.12; Unit 2 Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>Comprehension Exam #1 (Units 1 &amp; 2)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Lessons 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>Lessons 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>Lessons 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12</td>
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<td>Lessons 3.13, 3.14, 3.15</td>
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<td>Lesson 3.16; Unit 3 Review</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/23</td>
<td>Lessons 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4</td>
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<td>3/25</td>
<td>Lessons 4.5, 4.6, 4.7</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3/30</td>
<td>Spring Recess – No Class</td>
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<td>Spring Recess – No Class</td>
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<td>Lessons 4.8, 4.9, 4.10</td>
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<td>Comprehension Exam #2 (Units 3 &amp; 4)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/20</td>
<td><strong>Production Exam</strong></td>
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<td>4/27</td>
<td>Lessons 5.4, 5.5, 5.6</td>
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<td>4/29</td>
<td>Lesson 5.7, 5.8, 5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td><strong>Interview Day</strong></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td><strong>Interview Day</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/11</td>
<td><strong>Interview Day</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>5/15 (9:45AM – 12:00PM)</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam: Comprehension Exam #3 (Cumulative)</strong></td>
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<td>For the SJSU final exam schedule, please refer to <a href="http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/final-exam-schedule-spring.html">http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/final-exam-schedule-spring.html</a></td>
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