San José State University  
Connie L. Lurie College of Education, Special Education Department  
EDSE 115-01 (43063) – Introduction to Deaf Culture – Fall 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Everett Smith  
Office Location: On-line  
Email: everett.smith@sjsu.edu  
Phone: 831.740.8360 (voice message) / 831.406.9632 (text message)  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Class Days/Time: Mondays/Wednesdays 2:15PM – 3:30PM  
Classroom: On-line  
Prerequisites: EDSE 14A or EDSE 102

Course Format

For the Fall of 2021 we meet on Zoom twice a week during scheduled time. The Zoom meeting information is provided on the top of the course home page in Canvas.

Important note: Each student who joins the meeting is required to have their video camera on in order to be visible to the instructor for participation.

Except for the required workbook and up to two film rentals, all course materials such as the syllabus, videos, quizzes, assignments, and guidelines are to be found on the course site in Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking our course site in Canvas [http://sjsu.instructure.com] as well as SJSU Email [https://one.sjsu.edu/task/all/my-email] to stay on track and learn of any updates.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to American Deaf Culture and provides a comprehensive analysis of how Deaf people are understood from a cultural perspective. The identities, contributions, and experiences of Deaf people as well as the definition, norms, tensions, diversity, evolution, and history of culture are explored in educational and linguistic context.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain important features of American Deaf culture including American Sign Language (ASL), cultural norms, and identities.

2. Recognize and analyze instances of oppression such as cultural appropriation, audism, linguistic discrimination, non-minority privileges, and ableism.
3. Understand and explain the role of ASL in maintenance and preservation of Deaf culture/community.

4. Demonstrate respect and appreciation of Deaf culture/community by using appropriate language/terms and culturally sensitive behavior when engaging.

5. Identify and describe notable Deaf individuals and their impact on the Deaf community.

6. Identify and trace the history of education and significant events within the Deaf community.

7. Recognize and explain the challenges facing the Deaf culture posed by technology, and through changes in educational policies.

8. Describe and present perspectives on cultural debates occurring within and between the Deaf and hearing community such as the role of cochlear implants, culture vs. disability, and access to language.

9. Discuss the experiences of minority groups within the Deaf community.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook


Films

Each student chooses up to two films to rent, one for each report.

Articles

The instructor will distribute additional peer-reviewed research articles relevant to Deaf culture topics. These selected articles are available on Canvas under course files.

Other - Technology

A computer with high-speed Internet connection is required for Zoom meetings, research purposes, assignment submissions, etc.

Classroom Instruction Method

EDSE 115 students are not expected to possess knowledge of sign language. However, the Deaf instructor will conduct the class in American Sign Language and voice interpreting is provided in each session. It is crucial to understand that interpreters do not serve in the capacity of instructors. Rather, interpreters are provided to facilitate communication between the instructor and the students. Therefore, please address the instructor in the second-person point of view (e.g. “can you please help me?”), not in the third-person (e.g. “can he please help me?”). Likewise, the instructor will address the students directly through interpreters.

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 [http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf].

Assignments

1. Participation (48 pt.): In order to do well in this course, regular class attendance is expected. Each student should come to class prepared and be ready to assimilate new information through lectures, presentations, etc. as well as sharing research findings and individual experiences. Students are expected to engage in discussions and to collaborate with one another when prompted, while being respectful and inclusive of others who have different ideas and/or abilities. Students also might be expected to attend an event or events relating to Deaf culture issues, depending on event schedule/availability during the course semester. One of the important aspects of Deaf culture is face-to-face interaction, and the instructor strives to simulate this aspect in virtual classroom setting.
   a. **Participation includes two-point reading take-aways (2.5 pt. each).** By the end of each course text chapter, the students each compile and post a list of two main points about the chapter personally deemed important/noteworthy. A two-point take-away do not necessarily encapsulate the whole chapter, but each student is expected to upload their concise take-aways to Canvas (1 pt.) and then share at least one of their take-aways with the class for discussion (1.5 pt.).
   b. **Course Text Prompt Response 1.5 pt. each:** Respond to the weekly timed prompt in Canvas by the instructor regarding chapter readings. The written response should be in the length of a paragraph (five sentences minimum) written within the allotted time. You also will have the opportunity to share your thoughts for participation.

2. Cultural Film Reports (4 pt. each, 8 pt. total): Each student will have an opportunity to choose at least four Deaf culture films over the course of the semester. Students each will write one report per film and submit it via Canvas. The report should be a page in length, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman.

3. Final Deaf Culture Poster Project (10 pt.): Each student will select a topic from instructor-compiled list. The topic can be about one of the following: 1) A notable person (living or passed) in the Deaf community, 2) An important event in Deaf history, or 3) An important issue related to a core value of Deaf culture. There will be one person/event/issue per student, with no overlaps. Due to the fact that class is not meeting in person this fall semester, we may utilize any of various ways to visualize our topic through for example PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote, Google Slides, PDF, etc. (including images and captions) which are to be accessed/viewed by other students. I will provide a place in Canvas for you to upload your poster project. Your poster upload is worth up to 7 points. Respond to at least three other posters (2 sentence minimum per response, 1 pt. per response, 3 pt. total)

4. **Deaf Culture Topic Presentation (10 pt.):** This presentation comprises of the Final Deaf Culture Deaf Poster Project. You will do an “oral” presentation on the same topic you selected for the project to help expand the students’ knowledge of your topic. This is worth 6 pt. Each presentation shall be no more than 7 minutes long, with additional 2-5 minutes set aside for discussion and questions. Topic presentation outline is also due to me on the day of presentation (2 pt.; very rough draft is fine). Joining us on each presentation day is worth 1 pt. (2 pt. total).

5. **Examinations (12 points per quiz):** A midterm and a final quiz will be administered on-line in Canvas. These quizzes are composed of multiple choice, fill-in-blanks, and essay questions. They will be based on the course text, selected articles, and lectures. A study guideline will be provided prior to each quiz. Please refer to the course schedule at the end of the syllabus for examination dates.
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points / Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation (two-point summaries, written prompts, discussions, etc.)</td>
<td>48 / 48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Cultural Film Reports</td>
<td>8 / 8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deaf Culture Topic Presentation</td>
<td>10 / 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Deaf Culture Poster Project</td>
<td>10 / 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Quiz</td>
<td>12 / 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Quiz</td>
<td>12 / 12%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>100 / 100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**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 examinations, early examinations, and late assignments will be permitted within reason. Notify me by email (preferred) or phone ASAP if you must miss an examination, assignment, or an in-class activity. You should arrange for your make-up with me within one week of the time the examination was scheduled or otherwise you may not be able to take the make-up or early examination. If you need to take an early examination, you should notify me at least one week before the scheduled examination.
It is your responsibility to contact me if you need a make-up examination, early examination, 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 American Sign Language Curriculum)

Note that University Policy F15-12 [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 course content.

Tardy

1. Be on time for class. Late entrances can cause disruptions/distractions, as well as missing out on in-class discussions/activities.

2. It is especially important to be on time for scheduled examinations/activities. Late arrivals may miss a significant if not entire part of the examination or activity. This can negatively affect your scores.

Cell phones and other electronic devices

Please make sure your devices are turned off or in silent mode during class time. You can check your device outside the classroom especially in an emergency, but you risk missing a portion of the lecture/activity that may help your overall performance.

Contacting Me

Email is the best and quickest method of communication 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 115-01 / Introduction to Deaf Culture, Fall 2021 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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</table>
| 1    | 8/23 & 8/25| Activity:  
• Introduction to the syllabus and Deaf culture.  
• Discussion and questions  
Reading (due before Week 2):  
• Holcomb Ch. One: Introduction (look for PDF in Canvas under Files)  
• Holcomb Ch. Two: Culture Defined (look for PDF in Canvas under Files) |
| 2    | 8/30 & 9/1 | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading discussion on chapter 2  
Activity:  
• Lecture  
• Written response to Chapter 2 prompt  
• Chapter 1 and 2 two-point discussion  
Reading (due before Week 3):  
• Holcomb Ch. Three: Who Are the Deaf People? |
| 3    | 9/6 & 9/8  | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading discussion on chapter 3  
Activity:  
• Lecture  
• Written response to Chapter 3 prompt  
• Chapter 3 two-point discussion  
Reading (due before Week 4):  
• Holcomb Ch. Four: Deafhood: A personal Journey Toward Self-Actualization  
• Holcomb Ch. Five: Early Definitions of Deaf Culture |
| 4    | 9/13 & 9/15| Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading discussion on chapter 4 and/or 5 |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 5    | 9/20 & 9/22| Assignment Due:  
  - Two-point reading discussion on chapter 6  
  Activity:  
  - Lecture  
  - Written response to chapter 6 prompt  
  - Chapter 6 two-point discussion  
  Reading (due before Week 6):  
  - Holcomb Ch. Seven: American Sign Language—The Language of the Deaf Community |
| 6    | 9/27 & 9/29| Assignment Due:  
  - Two-point reading discussion on chapter 7  
  Activity:  
  - Lecture  
  - Written response to chapter 7 prompt  
  - Cultural Film #1  
  Reading (due before Week 7):  
  - Holcomb Ch. Eight: Deaf Lit |
| 7    | 10/4 & 10/6| Assignment Due:  
  - Two-point reading discussion on chapter 8  
  - Cultural film report #1 – Canvas upload  
  Activity:  
  - Lecture  
  - Written response to chapter 8 prompt  
  - Chapter 8 two-point discussion  
  Reading (due before Week 8):  
  - Holcomb Ch. Nine: Deaf Art |
| 8    | 10/11 & 10/13| Assignment Due:  
  - Two-point reading summary on chapter 9  
  Activity:  
  - Midterm Quiz (10/11)  
  - Lecture  
  - Chapter 9 two-point discussion  
  Reading (due before Week 9):  
  - Holcomb Ch. Ten: Rules of Social Interaction |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 9    | 10/18 & 10/20 | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading summary on chapter 10  
Activity:  
• Lecture  
• Written response to chapter 10 prompt  
Reading (due before Week 10):  
• Holcomb Ch. Eleven: The vibrant Deaf Community |
| 10   | 10/25 & 10/27 | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading summary on chapter 11  
Activity:  
• Lecture  
• Written response to chapter 11 prompt  
• Chapter 11 two-point discussion  
Reading (due before Week 11):  
Holcomb Ch. Twelve: The Collision Between Culture and Disability |
| 11   | 11/1 & 11/3  | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading summary on chapter 12  
Activity:  
• Sign-up for Deaf Culture Topic Presentation  
• Lecture  
• Written response to chapter 12 prompt  
• Chapter 12 two-point discussion  
Reading (due before Week 12):  
Holcomb Ch. Thirteen: Diversity in the Deaf Community |
| 12   | 11/8 & 11/10 | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading summary on chapter 13  
Activity:  
• Topic Selection and Sign-Up Finalization  
• Lecture  
• Written response to chapter 13 prompt  
• Cultural film #2  
Reading (due before Week 13):  
Holcomb Ch. Fourteen: The Universality of the Deaf Experience |
| 13   | 11/15 & 11/17 | Assignment Due:  
• Two-point reading summary on chapter 14  
• Cultural film report #2 – Canvas upload  
Activity:  
• Lecture  
• Written response to chapter 14 prompt |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tr>
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<td>• Chapter 14 two-point discussion</td>
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<td>Reading:</td>
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<td>Article by Reagan (1995): <em>A Sociocultural understanding of deafness: American sign language and the culture of deaf people.</em> This article is located in Canvas under Files.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11/22 &amp; 11/24</td>
<td>Activity:</td>
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<td>• Deaf Culture Topic Presentations (you do your presentation via Zoom during class time if you signed up for 11/22)</td>
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<td>Holiday:</td>
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<td>• <em>Non-Instructional Day – No Class</em> (11/24)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>11/29 &amp; 12/1</td>
<td>Assignment Due:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Written response to chapter 15 prompt (asynchronous)</td>
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<td>• Two-point reading summary on chapter 15</td>
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<td>Activity:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Deaf Culture Topic Presentations (you do your presentation via Zoom during class time if you signed up for 11/29)</td>
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<td>• Wrap-Up (12/1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>12/6</td>
<td>Final Deaf Culture Poster Project in Canvas – No Synchronous Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Quiz may be taken online in Canvas at any time during the SJSU Final Examinations week (12/8 – 12/14).</td>
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