

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**  
<https://ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

**2020-2021 ASL 111: Beginners' American Sign Language I  
(Fall Term)**

*Note: Remote Delivery*

**Section A4      M/W 10:00am – 10:50am      T/R 9:30am – 10:50am**

Instructor: Rouzbeh Ghahreman  
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Office location: Remote  
Office Hours: by appointment

**Bachelor of Arts / Major in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:**  
<https://www.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies/undergraduate-program-information/prospective-undergraduate-students>

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**Course Prerequisite:**

None. This is a fundamental ASL course designed for students who have little or no prior knowledge of ASL. Students who have previously taken ASL courses (i.e. in high school), have immersion experience, or have fluent ASL skills, must consult the department for a placement assessment to ensure that they will obtain credits for the course they register in. It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

**Technology requirements (minimum):**

This course will be taught via remote delivery format. It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate technology such as computer, laptop, and Internet a reliable Internet connection for the course.

**Experiential Learning Component**

- this course has a significant experiential learning component (15% or more of the course grade)

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

- Yes       No, not needed

**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

**Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:**

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.

**Course Format:**

The objectives of this course will be learned from a combination of formal lectures, PowerPoints, clips, audiovisual links, and online group practices in Zoom.

**Texts:**

**Required Texts:** Signing Naturally Student Workbook: Units 1-6 Set (2008, including DVD) Authors: Cheri Smith, Lentz Ella Mae and Ken Mikos). Units covered: all units 1-6. Additional materials or handouts may be provided on the course website (eclass).

**Optional Texts (Resources):** Handspeak Website: Sign Language – ASL Dictionary  
<https://www.handspeak.com/>

**Additional Course Fees**

Yes       No

**Important Dates:** [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 1, 2020

Add/Delete Date: September 15, 2020

50% Withdrawal Date: October 2, 2020

Fall Term Reading Week: November 9-13, 2020

Withdrawal Date: November 30, 2020

Last Day of Class: December 7, 2020

Final Exam Date (if applicable): December 18, 2020 at 2:00pm

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): Please consult the following site:

[https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=33&navoid=9816&hl=%22academic+regulations%22&returnto=search#examinations\\_exams](https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=33&navoid=9816&hl=%22academic+regulations%22&returnto=search#examinations_exams)

Deferred Final Examination: For information on how to apply for a deferred exam see [“I Missed my Final Exam, Now What?”](#)

### **Components of Course Grade (see “Explanatory Notes”):**

Participation/attendance/conduct	10%	
Test	10%	Wednesday, September 23, 2020
Assignments	20%	
a) Assignment #1		Due: Thursday, October 1, 2020
b) Assignment #2		Due: Thursday, November 5, 2020
Midterm exam	20%	Wednesday, October 21, 2020
Oral final exam	20%	Between Monday, November 30, 2020 and Friday, December 4, 2020 (communicative competency)
Final exam	20%	Friday, December 17, 2020 at 2:00pm

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

#### **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 and receptive skills in natural one on-one conversations with the instructor for up to 10 minutes. The mark will be based on communicative competency, comprehension, language proficiency, fluency, and knowledge of the materials. More details and holistic rubric will be provided on eClass.

#### **Final Exam:**

The cumulative final exam will be composed of comprehensive/receptive skill, written component, and expressive skill based on lecture/material content. No exceptions will be made for planned holidays, etc.

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

Attendance, active participation in class, conduct, and the use of ASL in class will be assessed. Students are encouraged to take notes on their homework and come to class prepared. 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](#) 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 and Translation 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 work and study 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](#).

***Sexual Violence Policy:***

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

***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).

***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. Late excuses will not be accepted for any reason.

***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

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