

PELLISSIPPI STATE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
MASTER SYLLABUS

**BEGINNING AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE I  
ASL 1010**

**Class Hours: 3.0**

**Credit Hours: 3.0**

**Laboratory Hours: 0.0**

**Date Revised: Fall 06**

**Catalog Course Description:**

An introductory study of the language that deaf adults in America use among themselves. This course includes an introduction to the deaf culture and to the basic structure of its language, as well as the mastery of finger spelling and 400 signs.

**Entry Level Standards:**

Must be able to read and write at the college level.

**Prerequisites:**

None

**Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials:**

*Signing Naturally*, Student Video Text and Workbook, by Smith, Lentz, and Mikos  
*For Hearing People Only* by Moore and Levitan, Deaf Life Press

**I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis:**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Topic</b>  |
|-------------|---|
| 1           | Introduction to the Course<br>(NOTE: Parts of Units 7, 8, 11 & 12 will be integrated into Units 1-6)  |
| 2           | Greeting; Class Outline; Intro to ASL; Ice Breaker; Handouts: Personal Pronouns/Possessives; Deaf Awareness Quiz  |
| 3-4         | UNIT 1: Introductory Signs; Grammar: Question Types, Noun/Verb relationships; Intro to Deaf Community/ Culture & Language Notes; Vocabulary; Handouts: manual alphabet  |
| 5-6         | UNIT 2: Survival Signs; Vocabulary Review; Shapes; Partner Activities; Numbers 1-10   |
| 7-8         | UNIT 3: Sign Review; Grammar: Spatial Agreement, sentence structure: topic/comment, non manual markers, close / far; Vocabulary; Partner Activities: color & shape activity, pair practice / hallway, shape & spatiality activity |
| 9-10        | UNIT 4: Sign Review; Vocabulary; Added Vocabulary: Cities and States; Cultural: when to FS; FS hints; FS loaner signs; Intro into classifiers/descriptives; Number  |

|       |   |
|-------|---|
|       | Review 1-20   |
| 11-12 | UNIT 5: Numbers 21-25; More Finger-spelling; More Classifiers; Vocabulary ; Referents & Spatiality; Negative Responses; Attention-Getters |
| 13-14 | UNIT 6: Vocabulary; Partner Activities ; picture descriptions; Review   |
| 15    | Final Exam Period   |

## II. Course Objectives\*:

- A. Communicate using sign fundamentals effectively--simple declarative sentences, questions, basic vocabulary. I
- B. Read simple hand signs and understand the gist. I
- C. Cultural sensitivity: acquire a respect for differences in language, people, and traditions. IV

\*Roman numerals after course objectives reference goals of the university parallel program.

## III. Instructional Processes\*:

Students will:

1. Use sign language in pairs and do group exercises to exchange information and talk about their feelings. *Communication Outcome, Personal Development Outcome*
2. Complete workbook exercises in understanding sign language. *Communication Outcome, Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcome, Active Learning Strategy*
3. Collaborate in teams to practice verbal exercises and complete written exercises. *Communication Outcome, Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome*
4. Read about the deaf culture, with some analysis of how culture is expressed through language. *Cultural Diversity and Social Adaptation Outcome*
5. Practice elements of work ethic by regularly attending class, being punctual, participating in class activities, and demonstrating good manners. *Personal Development Outcome, Transitional Strategy*

\*Strategies and outcomes listed after instructional processes reference Pellissippi State's goals for strengthening general education knowledge and skills, connecting coursework to experiences beyond the classroom, and encouraging students to take active and responsible roles in the educational process.

## IV. Expectations for Student Performance\*:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Comprehend basic signs. A, B
2. Carry on a basic conversation using sign language. A, B
3. Use vocabulary to obtain essential goods and services. A, B

4. Describe the deaf culture: family life, work, the patterns of daily living that make any group of people unique. C
5. Describe some of the contributions of deaf individuals. C
6. Appreciate and respect the cultural and linguistic differences of various people. C

\*Letters after performance expectations reference the course objectives listed above.

## V. Evaluation:

### A. Testing Procedures:

There will be approximately five or six unit tests. The lowest grade will be dropped. Should you miss a test, that will be the one dropped at the end of the semester when total grades are averaged.

#### Midterm Exam:

All students are required to take the midterm exam. The midterm will be videotaped and by sign up sheet. You must be in the room five minutes prior to your sign-up time, or risk losing a time. A no show to the mid-term without prior arrangements or sufficient emergency proof will result in a zero for the mid-term. The midterm is a 3 minute expressive story on your family. It must include: three finger-spelled names, three places, three classifiers.

#### Final Exam:

The final will have two parts, one part will be a written grammar and cultural test, the second will be off of PSTCC grounds in a tour or signing environment.

#### Exam Exemption:

1. Exceptional attendance (100%) - No absences with the exception of sickness, or death in the family (and the work has been made up);
2. Have a cumulative average of 95 or higher on Unit Tests, and is current in the student workbook, then that student will be exempt from the written portion of the final exam. The tour is required for all students. Exam exemption will be contingent upon a meeting with the instructor to assess the criterion mentioned above in 1 & 2.

### B. Laboratory Expectations:

Every ASL student is required to spend a minimum of four hours in lab per semester. A sign-up sheet is posted on the lab door, each lab is limited to eight students at a time. Students are encouraged to sign up before a lab session to ensure space, however, if the lab is not full you may "drop-in". Lab will consist of activities related to your most recent vocabulary and tutoring. Please be aware that others in the lab may not be at your same course level, for that reason each lab session will have more than one student assistant. When you sign-up, please indicate which level you are at i.e. 1, 2 or 3. Please be courteous to the student assistants running the lab. If you have questions not resolved in lab, please feel free to contact me. You will be required to log in and out (name, section #, and time in & out). Please keep a record of your cumulative time to turn into me as well.

### C. Field Work:

#### Workbooks/Homework:

Workbooks will be checked in class by instructor. Workbooks will be checked and awarded credit per unit if completed. Credit % will be deducted if a workbook or homework is turned in late.

#### Assigned Summary/Journal:

A book report/reaction paper based on the book *For Hearing People Only*. You will write a bi-weekly paper over eight chapters each in essay format, typed, doubled spaced reaction paper to

the book. Please include some comments on the contents, and at least one quote, per paper, per biweekly, from the book which in some way affected you. Write your personal reaction, opinions and feelings about what the author has said. One page in length is due every other week in class!

Activity Report:

All students are required to attend at least two activities involving deaf people. The instructor will also inform you of opportunities during the semester. A one page journal on your feelings, reactions and communication aspects is required.

D. Other Evaluation Methods:

Extra Credit Opportunity:

Write one conversation report/review of three separate experiences you have had with three separate deaf people that you have had this semester. This should be written in first person (since you're describing your experiences), typed (double-spaced), and should focus on your experiences during the conversations. Please include mode of communication, i.e. written notes, signed, used an interpreter etc., as well as if this mode changed during the course of the semester. Things to consider (a) How did you feel during the conversation? (b) What did you learn ? (c) What made you feel in or out of your comfort zone? It is recommended that you converse at the beginning of the course, in the middle and the third at the end of the semester. No late papers will be accepted. If papers are not received by due date, the assignment grade will be zero. Any non-typed paper will automatically drop one letter grade.

E. Grading Scale:

Grade Breakdown:

|                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| 6 UNIT TESTS    | 35%        |
| POP QUIZZES     | 10%        |
| WORKBOOK CHECKS | 5%         |
| BOOK REPORT     | 10%        |
| ACTIVITY REPORT | 10%        |
| ASL LAB         | 10%        |
| MIDTERM         | 10%        |
| FINAL           | <u>10%</u> |
| TOTAL           | 100%       |

Grading Scale:

|    |                |
|----|----------------|
| A  | = 90-100       |
| B+ | = 87-89        |
| B  | = 80-86        |
| C+ | = 77-79        |
| C  | = 70-76        |
| D  | = 60-69        |
| F  | = 59 and below |

**VI. Policies:**

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State Technical Community College expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. Class attendance is mandatory for your skill perfection. Be assured that you will be behind if you miss a class. If you have a doctor's excuse or equal excuse, please talk with the instructor. The student will be held responsible for any material missed during an absence. It

will be possible to trade an absence for a "hands-on" activity, such as attending a "silent night" etc. This must be pre-approved by the instructor.

#### B. Speaking in Class:

This course format will incorporate the use of visual aids, conceptual visual teaching without the use of voice, partner activities without the use of voice, and some lecture with voice. The only appropriate verbal communication by students is outside of the classroom, or during cultural discussions when the instructor allows voicing. No verbal communication is allowed during vocabulary teaching or partner activity.

#### C. Helpful Hints:

Some helpful hints while learning this language are:

- Try to understand the concept or main idea as is it being presented. Do not try to attach one English word to one ASL sign for both receptive and expressive modes.
- Try to visualize while learning a sign or concept verses thinking of an English word.
- Practice as much as possible with other people (Deaf and hearing-both!)
- This is a "hands-on" Language, don't be to use your body to express ideas and concepts!
- When in doubt, verify a sign with a qualified person and do not try to learn only from the book.
- Maintain proper eye contact, do not follow hands!
- When finger-spelling think in words, not letters !
- Do not use finger-spelling as a crutch! That is, do not use it to get out of those tight spots when you're unfamiliar with a sign without finding out the sign also.
- A great deal of time will be spent on non-manual markers - or the affective parameter of American Sign Language. Developing this skill, often referred to as facial expressions, body movement, etc., is critical for signing. Please practice them with signs - not just separately, and give this important area equal time.
- When speaking with deaf/hearing impaired people, if you do not understand something, ask for clarification. Deaf people know when you do not understand.
- This course uses a videotext and workbook for homework and home practice. Work in pencil because you will need to view several times before making your final answer. Bring your workbook to class. You will find it helpful to write extra vocabulary words in your book as well as putting in the word underneath the vocabulary words included in your text.
- Bring workbooks to class in order to fill in vocabulary sections as well as write down any extra words/concepts included in class.
- Extra vocabulary not included in the text will be interspersed throughout the semester. These are to be included into your vocabulary base! You will be responsible for added vocabulary!
- Extra credit opportunities will be available and will be announced as they occur throughout the semester.
- Throughout this course the class will be taught nonverbally: you will be learning visually rather than auditorially. You are encouraged to ask questions everyday through non-verbal means.

#### D. Accommodations for disabilities:

If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform the instructor immediately. Please see the instructor privately after class or in his/her office. Students must present a current accommodation plan from a staff member in Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) in order to receive accommodations in this course. Services for Students with Disabilities may be contacted by going to Goins 127 or 131 or by phone: 694-6751(Voice/TTY) or 539-7153.