INTRODUCTION TO SIGNED LANGUAGE...FALL 2026

Monday/Wednesday 3:00-4:15 PM SIGN 2125-501 CRN 73033

Instructor: Margie J Zamora

BS Sign Language Interpreting; Education, MA/Multicultural SpEd; Licensed Educational Diagnostician

Office Hours: M/W 2:45–3:00 / 4:15-4:30 and by appointment

Phone: ***Text Only*** (505)385-1129, mvillell@unm.edu

Student Learning Objectives: By the end of this **3 credit** hour course

1. Students will effectively communicate-expressively and receptively- at a basic level with the Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals representing a cross-section of the Deaf community. (CCIE 7.1, 5.2, 5)

2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the basic education and access issues faced by the American Deaf community. (CCIE 6.3, 6.4)

3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the differences between American Sign Language (ASL) and manually coded English sign systems. (CCIE 7.4)

4. Students will identify basic linguistic principles and describe the history of the recognition of American Sign Language. (CCIE 7.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1)

5. Students will describe the cultural diversity and dynamics of the Deaf Community. (CCIE 5.5, 6.3)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides an overview of signed languages, including American Sign Language (ASL), signed English as well as signing systems that are used by deaf people. Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural information is discussed with the primary focus on ASL, signed English and fingerspelling. This course exposes students to the most common manually coded signed systems and discusses their historical relevance in the education of deaf people. Historical figures and linguists are highlighted and recognized for the development and use of American Sign Language in the United States.
In addition to the acquisition of basic vocabulary and grammar, this course emphasizes knowledge of the characteristics and values of Deaf Culture.

*******UNM STUDENT EMAIL********

In order to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), UNM students must correspond with me using their UNM email account and/or the communication feature of our class learning management system (for example Canvas). To protect student privacy, I cannot respond with any information contained in educational records from emails received from non-UNM accounts. For information on

FERPA, please visit http://ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.htmlLinks to an external site..

Please maintain and check your UNM email daily. All notices and reminders about this course will be posted only to your UNM email.

Notices, Handouts and reminders etc. will be posted as needed through UNM CANVAS.

*No Food or drinks in Classrooms/Valencia policy.

Textbooks

O'Rourke, Humphries, & Padden, *A Basic Course in American Sign Language*.

Wilcox & Wilcox, *Learning to See: American Sign Language as a Second Language*.

DEAF/HH VISITORS Deaf/HH children and adults from the community are invited to attend the class to add input and to make certain that no stereotyped image of the "typical" deaf person prevails. Students will be asked to prepare questions for these dates that will be announced later in the semester.

Additional Activities and Topics:

Discussion on the challenges facing families with deaf members.
Discussion of singing/music in signed language. Number subsets in ASL
Historical and linguistic background of ASL. Pioneers of ASL linguistic research.

Supplementary Readings: Available on CANVAS are Brief History of Signed Language, Signed Systems, Various appropriate articles on linguistics of ASL, linguistic research, Deaf Culture .

Graded Activity Target Dates Percentage Worth

Exam # 1 (receptive).....**Wednesday...SEPT 23...** ..... **15 %**

Exam # 1 (written)**.....Wednesday...SEPT 23.....10%**

Exam # 2 (written).....Wednesday.....OCT 28.....5%

Exam # 2 (receptive).....Wednesday.....OCT 28..... 15%

Partner Reports/Class Participation/Dialogues/Homework .....4 %

Assignments (due at instructor's request) Total = 10 %

LTS/ASL History questions (2.5%)

Classifier Group Assignment (2.5%)

Who is a Signer? (1%)

Will You Please Sign? (1%)

Receptive activity 1 (1%)

Receptive activity 2 (1%)

Receptive activity 3 (1%)

ATTENDANCE (1%)

Partner Reports: due each Wednesday BEFORE 11 PM in UNM CANVAS
Final Exam (written/receptive)……..Wednesday…DEC 2 ……10% & 10%

Final Exam (expressive)……Monday…DEC 7 ……20%

TOTAL ……100%

This is a three credit-hour course. Class meets for two 75-minute sessions of direct instruction for fifteen weeks during a semester. Please plan for a *minimum* of six hours of out-of-class work (or homework, study, assignment completion, and class preparation) each week.

This is an accelerated course that requires a great deal of discipline and practice both inside and outside of class time. Please come to class prepared to communicate and participate in group activities using the signs you are learning. Class sessions are Face to Face during the scheduled time and day. Additionally, resources and assignments are posted on CANVAS. https://canvasinfo.unm.edu/support/index.html

You are required to have at least one practice partner that you connect with outside for one (1) hour per week to have conversations using your developing skills. This is critical in developing your expressive and receptive skills. Each week you will submit a report summarizing what you and your partner talked about and reflect on your personal growth. The reports will follow a provided template and will be submitted on CANVAS every Thursday before 11 PM. Template is included in this syllabus.

Assignments

Students will be asked to complete a few required assignments to support the learning objectives of this course. A written assignment, following the reading of the *Learning to See* text, will be assigned during the first six weeks of the semester. The **ASL**

History Written Assignment provides students the opportunity to reflect, synthesize, and review important topics that will be covered on the first and second written exam.
A **Classifier Assignment**, due around the middle of the semester, will ask students to complete a minute long recording of themselves describing an event using all classifiers. Students will be placed in groups online and asked to engage with each other about each person's video through the discussion board application in Canvas. Prior to each receptive exam (3 total), students will be assigned a **Receptive Review Assignment** to help them prepare for each exam. It will be the responsibility of students to remain caught up with all vocabulary taught in class prior to these assignments. Students will watch a video of the instructor signing sentences using various vocabulary learned and asked to translate the sentences in English to turn in. This assignment mimics the format of a receptive exam and provides a focused way of studying for these exams. Lastly, there are a few **Reflection Assignments** that will follow short reading assignments and class discussions requiring students to answer open ended questions and/or multiple-choice questions about what they have learned. These assignments are due toward the end of the semester and assist students in preparing for final exams. The culmination of assignments completed in this course are worth 10% of the student's total grade. All assignment requirements and details will be made available in Canvas.

ATTENDANCE

In person attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken daily. Three late arrivals will reflect on your grade as one absence. This includes arriving late or leaving class early.

Students who miss **4 consecutive classes** may be dropped from the course as per UNM Pathfinder. However, students should not assume that non-attendance will result in being dropped from class. It is the student's responsibility to initiate drops or complete withdrawals within published deadlines utilizing the appropriate process. Any missed activities, quizzes/tests, or assignments cannot be made up without a documented excuse. **All make-up exams must be scheduled within two days of the original date, taken within a week of the exam date and may be subject to 10-point deduction from final score. Again, documentation must be provided to schedule a make-up exam.**

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation is essential in class. The key advantage of class participation is that it encourages each student to be well-prepared and thus become an active, rather than a passive learner. Participation also provides you with the opportunity to gain from the experiences and talents of everyone in the class. Please feel free to ask questions,

provide supportive comments, or challenge constructively what has been said. Those who participate regularly and well will benefit. If you are within one point of the next higher grade level, you will earn the higher grade. For example, if a student had an 89 average and had participated regularly and well the student would receive an A- rather than a B+ for the course. This does not apply for grades between an A and an A+ (check grading chart below).

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Respectful Conduct Expectations: I am committed to building with you a positive classroom environment in which everyone can learn. I reserve the right to intervene and enforce standards of respectful behavior when classroom conduct is inconsistent with University expectations [and/or classroom community agreements]. Interventions and enforcement may include but are not limited to required meetings to discuss classroom expectations, written notification of expectations, and/or removal from a class meeting. Removal from a class meeting will result in an unexcused absence. Three or more unexcused absences may result in permanent removal and a drop from the course (see attendance policy). The University of New Mexico ensures freedom of academic inquiry, free expression and open debate, and a respectful campus through adherence to the following policies: D75: Classroom Conduct, Student Code of Conduct, University Policy 2240 – Respectful Campus, University Policy 2210 – Campus Violence.

No Toleration policy for obscene language, sexual harassment, and threatening behavior towards students or instructor. There is a process in place to handle complaints…report to The Chair of CHESS and to the Dean of Instruction.

https://handbook.unm.edu/d75/

GRADING CHART

Grades are determined from the total test scores accumulated, signing skills, class participation, completed assignments and weekly partner reports.

Grading system may be subject to modification. Final grades are NOT rounded up. Additionally, the use of Artificial Intelligence, AI, including ChatGPT will result in zero credit for any assignment where it is detected. I am interested in your personal growth and journey, not that of a bot. The use of AI is prohibited on all assignments.

Grading Scale

100-98 – A+ 88-89 – B+ 78-79 – C+ 68-69 – D+

94-96 – A 84-87 – B 74-77 – C 64-67– D

90-93 – A – 80-83 – B – 70-73– C – 60-63 – D – 0-59 F

The grade of INCOMPLETE (INC) is given only when extenuating personal circumstances prevent completing the work by the official ending date of the course (as per UNM Faculty Handbook).

EXAMS

Students are eligible to take a make-up exam if they (in UNM handbook) 1. Have an emergency that prevents them from taking the regularly scheduled exam; 2. Alert the instructor to the emergency prior to the regularly scheduled exam 3. Obtain the instructor's agreement that this is an emergency and that the regularly scheduled exam cannot be taken. If you miss an exam without the permission of the instructor a score of zero will be assigned. Make-up exams are granted at the discretion of the instructor, only with prior arrangement, and must be completed prior to the next class meeting (unless circumstances involved make this clearly impractical).

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero for the exam or assignment in question. UNM Plagiarism Policy
http://unm.edu/~unmvclib/handouts/somplagiarism.pdf

https://pathfinder.unm.edu/code-of-conduct.html

**Use of Electronic Devices (cell phones/recording audio & video) is not permitted in class. Cell phones are very disruptive to class. As a matter of courtesy, all audible signals of communication devices should be turned off or disabled during class. Individual discretion should be used in determining when exceptions should be made relative to emergency or personal situations.

Respectful and Responsible Learning: We all have shared responsibility for ensuring that learning occurs safely, honestly, and equitably. Submitting material as your own work that has been generated on a website, in a publication, by an artificial intelligence algorithm, by another person, or by breaking the rules of an assignment constitutes academic dishonesty. It is a student code of conduct violation that can lead to a disciplinary procedure. UNM preserves and protects the integrity of the academic community through multiple policies including policies on student grievances (Faculty Handbook D175 and D176), academic dishonesty (FH D100), and respectful campus (FH CO9). These are in the *Student Pathfinder* (https://pathfinder.unm.edu) and the *Faculty Handbook* (https://handbook.unm.edu).

PARTNER REPORTS

Required outside classroom participation: selection of a partner from within the class. The pair should meet a **minimum of one hour** each week to practice signing without their voices. A Journal entry is expected from each partner specifying the names of the signers, location of practice, time, a brief summary and a prompt to answer. Reports are collected weekly on THURSDAYS throughout the semester before 11 PM.

Partner reports will NOT be accepted if late.

Sign 2125-501 Partner Report Template. Reports are in the ASSIGNMENTS Module. Please Copy and Paste and make this your entry WEEKLY before 11 PM Wednesdays.

You will receive full credit if you do the following:

These are weekly partner reports that are due every week by Wednesdays **11:59pm** and submitted through Canvas. More detailed information here: Partner(s) Report Expectations

You will meet with a partner or two from this class for a **minimum of 1 hour each week** outside of class time so it is important you have the contact information for your partner so you can arrange a time to meet.

These meetings are to be conducted with NO speaking- using your acquired signing skills only. Quiz your partner with the 5 sentences that you created prior to meeting up.

During the partner(s) weekly meetings, you will be communicating using sign language only. There is to be no talking throughout the duration of your meeting. These are meant to be conversations using your acquired language and **not review/study time.**

You will receive full points if you do the following:

- Submit the document to Canvas on time
- Complete the report with thorough effort
- Submit a report that is unique to you and completed by you without the aid/use of AI or copied from your partner
- Write the report using complete sentences and grammatically correct English

UNM – Valencia Syllabus Target Dates INTRO to SIGN 2125

Wk 1… Syllabus, Introduction to Text, Manual Alphabet, ASL Lecture/ Deaf Community, Name Signs, Assign Introductions

Wk 2… Ch 1 Text, FS Activities, ASL Lecture: Deafness, Language Variation in Deaf Community, Partners, Continuum, Numbers 1-10 , WH words, Student Introductions, *Learning to See* CH 1

Wk 3… Ch1 exercises, FS Activities, CH 2, ASL Lecture/History of Deaf Education Timeline, Numbers 11-20, Fused Construction, ASL vs SE, Homonyms. *LTS* CH 2

Wk 4…CH 2 Exercises ASL Lecture, Sign Systems, Receptive activities, Foods, Researchers, *LTS* CH 3, Text CH 3 signs, **Timeline Activity sheet**

Wk 5…Ch 3 (adj), FS activities, ASL Lecture/ Classifiers, Review numbers 1 -20, WH review, Give Review Sheet for TEST H/O, Animals , Practice test,
Wk 6 …Review all Lecture materials, Q&A, Review Sheet due, Ch 1, 2, 3 activities, **EXAM** EXAM 1 WRITTEN Dialogue, ASL Lecture/Time markers, Cities, Time and Money PPT, YES/NO Wk 7… Ch 4, , Classifier activity, Numbers, Questions. Assign Classifier Story.

Wk 8 **BREAK** …

Wk 9… CH 4 DIALOGUE, Numbers, Time, Money, Cities H/0, Ch Activities

Wk 10…. Foods/Animals/Cities/States/Countries, Review,.CH 1- 5 activities, videos

Wk 11…Review / EXAM # 3, Introduce CH 6 , Assign "**Will You Please Sign**" Refection paper

Wk 12… Ch 6 activities and Review Food sheet, Number activities EXAM # 2

Wk 13… ♫, "**Who is a Signer…Activity**" Give H/O, Discuss H/O 1 - 6 activities, NMM, WH?, States, Numbers activities discuss interpreting,

Wk 14…Chapter Reviews / Give H/O Review for Final, Dialogue 2 , "God Bless America" Review sheet HO

Wk 15…Activities Numbers / Money /Time, Review Sheet

FINAL Multiple **Choice/Receptive Finals during class Wednesday DEC 2 3:00PM**

Wk 16… **Finals Week: Expressive Final Monday DEC 7 3-5 PM ***

SUPPORT:

UNM-Valencia Tutoring Services:

Tutoring is available to you in math, science, writing, and other subjects through the Learning Commons: Tutoring Services - Learning Center and Writing Center. In person tutoring and Zoom tutoring are available in these centers in the LRC (the building that also has the library). For writing, tutoring through email is also available.
Making use of tutoring is a fantastic way to use your resources and set yourself up to learn deeply and well in your courses.

To schedule an appointment, please go to: Learning Commons Bookings. If you are making an email appointment with the Writing Center, email your draft to tutor@unm.edu after you fill out the form above.
If you have difficulty with the scheduling link above, would like an appointment in a subject not listed at that link, or have a question, email tutor@unm.edu. You will receive a response during business hours Monday through Friday.

The webpage, with more details about available hours, is here: Learning Commons Tutoring webpage.
At UNM Albuquerque, you may contact: Center for Academic Program Support (CAPS).

Advisor https://valencia.unm.edu/students/advisement/index.html

TRIO : http://valencia.unm.edu/students/sss-trio/index.html

PASOS Resource Center (505) 925-8546, : http://valencia.unm.edu/campus-resources/pasos/pasos-resource-center/resource-guide.html

The Resource Center is an on-campus center that serves as a "one-stop" for all non-academic needs of UNM-Valencia students.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations: UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact Accessibility Resource Center at arcsrvs@unm.edu or by phone at 505-277-3506. The UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at sjclawson@unm.edu.

Support: Contact me at bflett@unm.edu or text me at 505 480 0731 or in office/check-in hours and contact. The UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at sjclawson@unm.edu., Or

Accessibility Resource Center (https://arc.unm.edu/) at mailto:arcsrvs@unm.edu (505) 277-3506.
http://valencia.unm.edu/students/advisement/equal-access-faqs.html

Support:

JOBS: https://valencia.unm.edu/students/financial-aid/student-employment.html

FOOD: http://valencia.unm.edu/campus-resources/pasos/pasos-resource-center/campus-food-pantry.html

Resources to support study skill and time management are available through

Wellness and Health and Awareness.

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please do not come to class. If you have a positive COVID-19 test, please stay home for five days and isolate yourself from others, per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

If you do need to stay home, please communicate with me at TEXT 505 480 0731 or email bflett@unm.edu ; I can work with you to provide alternatives for course participation and completion. UNM faculty and staff know that these are challenging times.

Support: valencia.unm.edu/

UNM COVID-19 requirements are subject to change relative to guidance from the New Mexico Department of Health. Thank you for keeping the Lobo community safe!

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students must submit written requests for accommodation to course instructor. The student should submit the request by the end of the second week of the semester. The request should include the date, times, and specific event for which accommodation is being requested.

CAMPUS POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Title IX: Our classroom and our university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. Should you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access the resources available to you on campus. Please note that, because UNM faculty, TAs, and GAs are considered "responsible employees" by the Department of Education, any disclosure of gender discrimination (including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence) made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported by that faculty member, TA, or GA to the university's Title IX coordinator. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, please see:

https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html. Support: LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center and the support services listed on its website, the Women's Resource Center and the LGBTQ Resource Center all offer confidential services and reporting. http://lgbtqrc.unm.edu/

https://women.unm.edu/

Citizenship and/or Immigration Status

All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose not to disclose your status. As for all students in the class, family emergency-related absences are normally excused with reasonable notice to the professor, as noted in the attendance guidelines above. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration's welcome is found on our website: http://undocumented.unm.edu/.

Campus Safety

UNM maintains a Threat Assessment Team (TAT) comprised of qualified professionals trained in mental health, law enforcement, emergency response, and university resources and policy. The TAT convenes in a rapid response to address potential threats to the campus community and maintains communication with local and federal law enforcement, as well as the CARE team. In cases of emergency, call the UNM-Valencia Police Department (505) 925-8570 (phone number on the back of your Lobo ID) or your Health and Health Sciences or branch campus security. You may also call 911. Practice situational awareness: note the nearest building exit to your classroom and identify the nearest Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for use in an emergency by a trained individual. In an emergency, such as response to a fire alarm, you will be able to direct your students to the safest building exit and reassembly point. The interactive campus map visualizes building layout and adjacent spaces for all UNM campuses.