



Basic Course Information

Semester:	Fall 2025	Instructor Name:	Liisa Mendoza
Course Title & #:	American Sign Language 1 – AMSL 100	Email:	liisa.mendoza@imperial.edu
CRN #:	11399	Webpage (optional):	N/A
Classroom:	Via ZOOM (Real Time On Line)	Office #:	N/A
Class Dates:	8/11/25 – 12/6/25	Office Hours:	MW 9:00 – 10:00 am via Zoom TR 9:00 – 10:00 am in 312
Class Days:	MW	Office Phone #:	(760) 355-6120
Class Times:	10:15 am – 12:50 pm	Emergency Contact:	Email
Units:	4	Class Format:	Real time, synchronous, online

Course Description

An introduction to American Sign Language and fingerspelling. The course will focus on conversational skills, grammar, and vocabulary as it used in Deaf community. Deaf culture will be examined.

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

Recommended preparation: None

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

- 1) Differentiate between basic similar signs.
- 2) Recognize basic differences between simple ASL and English sentence structures.
- 3) Identify basic differences between Deaf and Hearing cultures.



Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate how to sign numbers zero to one hundred using the cardinal and ordinal numbering systems correctly.
2. Express and receive fingerspelled words at basic skill level.
3. Recall and produce basic sign vocabulary, approximately 25 - 30 signs per week, being able to distinguish between signs that are produced similarly.
4. Recognize and produce specific grammatical structures, including personal and possessive pronouns, directional verbs and noun-verb pairs.
5. Express a basic knowledge of American Sign Language syntax.
6. Sign presentations, following the criteria and topics indicated by the instructor.
7. Participate in in class signing activities - including physical and emotional descriptions, discussing daily routines, and requesting in ASL.
8. Demonstrate a basic use of simple classifiers.
9. Sign using the correct facial grammar and syntax for forming questions in ASL.
10. Discuss basic Deaf culture issues including: differences between Deaf and Hearing cultures; how to navigate a signing environment; appropriate greetings and attention getting behaviors.

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

Required text: : **I've Always Wanted to Learn ASL.** Mendoza, L. and I. Harvard. ISBN 979 -8-38511-504-4.

Here is the link to buy the text:

https://he.kendallhunt.com/mendoza_harvard

Recommended text: **The American Sign Language Handshape Dictionary.** Tennant, R. and M. Brown. ISBN 978-1-56368-444-9.

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

Teaching Strategy:

The instructor will be teaching synchronously via Zoom. This class was listed in the catalog as real time, with time blocks given. **There are many advantages to attending the live class. It is the easiest way to earn lab points, you will have access to the embedded tutor during that time, and some exercises you CANNOT do individually.** Language is about communication and interaction, and you cannot do that signing to yourself into a camera.

The instructor will generally be teaching with a voice off approach, after the first few weeks. This will increase your receptive and expressive comprehension, as you will be asked to respond in ASL. You will be



participating in a variety of class exercises designed to increase both your receptive and expressive skills. Please arrive to class on time, ready to start signing.

The instructor knows that you will not understand 100% of her signing. The necessary information is delivered to you via in class notes accompanying the lecture and information loaded onto Canvas.

We will be introducing new vocabulary weekly, and then applying it through a variety of exercises. **You MUST practice outside of class.** We will also be learning new grammatical structures weekly as we go through the chapters of the book. You will be asked to prepare some ASL assignments outside of class; you will be given clear instructions to follow to produce successful assignments.

You may have to sign individually to your instructor, or in small groups, or in front of the class. We will have presentations this semester, as well as signing labs, small group work, and larger group work. You will not This will require a time commitment, so please read the statement below from the Department of Education.

You will quiz weekly in this class, and will take 3 exams over the course of the semester. A few quizzes will be given in the Zoom classroom. Most quizzes will be given through the Canvas system, but not using the Canvas quiz feature. You will be given the question file and a link to a recording. You will then click on the recording and start the quiz. The exams will be administered the same way. **There are no time limits on exams or quizzes**, as you may need to watch the recordings a few times if your wifi glitches or goes down.

Out of Class Assignments: The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over the span of a semester. WASC has adopted a similar requirement.

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Grading will be based on a standard distribution (see below). **You are allowed to submit one late homework for full credit.** If you are ill, you will make up any in class presentations the day you return to class. If written homework is due the day you are absent, you can submit it via Canvas to the instructor. No other late homework will be accepted.

Grading will be based on a standard distribution (i.e., 90-100% = A, 80-89.9% = B). There will be 1,000 points possible during the course.

Participation	150 (includes participation, no voice, following class rules)
Homework	125 (includes written and signed homework)
Deaf Awareness	50 (project)
Exams	325 (1 @ 75, 1 @ 150, 1 @ 100)
Quizzes	175
Presentations	50 (2 @ 25 points each)
Section finals	70 (2 @ 35 points each)



Interactive final 50 (signing one on one with the instructor)

TOTAL 1,000

You will have the opportunity to attend a Deaf event for extra credit this session. A Deaf event is an event where signing is either the primary mode of communication or where you are observing upper level signers or skilled interpreters. We will have over 30 Deaf event options for you this session: several will be available via Zoom, on campus or local, while several will be in other cities. Some options will be free, and others (like interpreted plays) may have a ticket cost.

Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.

Accessibility Statement

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students, regardless of course modality. Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through DSPS, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

Course Policies

My classroom rules remain the same, regardless of online or on ground:

1 – Pay attention to the best of your ability – Turn on your cameras when in the Zoom room. I need to see you to know if you are even there. If you are having camera tech difficulties, let me know via the Chat or email. If you have to turn off your camera, let me know why. No cell phones, unless I say to use them or you are using them to screen shot the notes. (And then you still need to write the notes down, or you'll never remember the info.)

2 – If you have a question, ask the instructor, not your classmates. Of course you will have an opportunity to discuss things with your classmates in the Zoom classroom, and you may clarify things with each other. But if



you have a significant question, you should probably ask the person who is going to give you the grade, not your classmate. The only stupid question is the one you don't ask – and it will probably show up on the test!

3 – NO CHEATING!!!!!!! There is not a strong enough English word to tell you how I feel about cheating. It is far better to leave an answer blank or to tell me a joke or draw me a picture when you don't know the answer. This is even more important during this time of online learning. I do not want to have to have you record yourself taking exams, or to administer them live to monitor all of you. Please do not make me. Your honor is something that no one can take from you. Don't give it away.

Your instructor's perspective on attending class via Zoom:

Learning via Zoom can be challenging. Many of you will be attending from your home or your workplace. That means there may be many different, important things competing for your attention. I personally don't care if you bring your dog, cat, or baby/younger sibling into the Zoom room. They are a part of your life too.

I don't care if you're in your jammies in the Zoom room – as long as you don't sleep nude! I don't care if you have your makeup on or not. I don't care if you have your hair done or the worst bad hair day ever. I DO care that you make it in to class. (In clothes. Please wear clothes. Something that covers all of you, even if we don't see it!)

Students will be expected to follow IVC's online netiquette policy:

- What is netiquette? Netiquette is internet manners, online etiquette, and digital etiquette all rolled into one word. Basically, netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online.
- Students are to comply with the following rules of netiquette: (1) identify yourself, (2) include a subject line, (3) avoid sarcasm, (4) respect others' opinions and privacy, (5) acknowledge and return messages promptly, (6) copy with caution, (7) do not spam or junk mail, (8) be concise, (9) use appropriate language, (10) use appropriate emoticons (emotional icons) to help convey meaning, and (11) use appropriate intensifiers to help convey meaning [do not use ALL CAPS or multiple exclamation marks (!!!!)].

Other Course Information

Your instructor believes that we can still create a learning community – and a signing community - on Zoom. We will be interacting, and you will get to know your classmates and possibly make some new friends. ASL belongs to the Deaf community, and the Deaf community is a friendly group of people, who enjoy interacting.

You don't have to be a "people person" to take ASL. You do have to be willing to communicate with your classmates. There will be times that your grade will depend on your classmates and your interaction with them. Make sure that you are polite and supportive: EVERYONE is learning, and ANYONE can be having a bad day, and may not be signing as well as they can.



IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.

Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! In order to continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at finaid@imperial.edu.

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

MH = Mendoza and Harvard (your text)

Please do not submit work via Google Docs or Pages. Convert them and then send. Canvas will not open Pages, and Google Docs requires I go in with my personal email.

MH stands for Mendoza and Harvard, the authors of your required text. MH simply refers to your text, and the chapter. (MH 1 – is chapter 1 of your text)

DATE	IN CLASS	HOMEWORK
8/11 (M) <i>Week 1</i>	Syllabus, course expectations, ASL v English Signer's perspective, shapes Introduction to fingerspelling Parameters	Buy text Read syllabus, note questions Practice fingerspelling Complete Initial Questions
8/13(W)	Quiz #1 (Shapes, syllabus, class rules) Shapes, fingerspelling MH 1 manual alphabet Parameters reviewed Deaf culture concepts Definitions	Read MH 1 Practice MH 1 fingerspelling List of 10 items for F/S Self-care plan for 6 areas of health Life schedule with ASL time
8/18 (M) <i>Week 2</i>	NMMs, sentence types Deaf Intro – Part B Fingerspelling Numbers 1-10 Labs: Deaf Intro, Fingerspelling, Numbers	Practice Deaf Intro Practice PH 1 vocab Read PH 2 Practice fingerspelling and numbers
8/20 (W)	Quiz #2 (fingerspelling, PH 1 vocab) NMMs, sentence types MH 2 vocab Practice Deaf Intro – Part B Labs: Deaf Intro, Fingerspelling, Numbers Numbers 11 – 20	Take Quiz #2 Read MH 2 Practice MH 2 Practice Deaf Intro Part B Practice fingerspelling and numbers



8/25 (M) <i>Week 3</i>	ASL Grammar (MH 3: Syntax) Deaf Intro – Part A PH 1 & 2 review MH 3: Vocab Labs: Presentation #1 practice, MH 1-3 Numbers 21 – 30	Gloss Practice Sentences Read MH 3 Practice MH 2 & 3 vocab Practice Presentation #1 Practice numbers 1 – 30 Question you would answer no to
8/27 (W)	Quiz #3 (MH 1 & 2, NMMs) Practice Sentences due and corrected MH 3 Grammar: Noun-Verb pairs, Verb pairs MH 3 Grammar: Directional verbs, Spatial verbs Practice Presentation #1 Extra vocab for Presentation #1 Labs: MH 3, Presentation #1 practice	Take Quiz #3 Practice MH 3 vocab Practice Presentation #1 Practice Presentation #1 Review MH 1-3
9/1 (M) <i>Week 4</i>	NO CLASS: LABOR DAY	As assigned
9/3 (W)	Presentation #1 Study guide for Exam #1 MH 4: Vocab MH 4: Compound sign rule, pronominalization	Read MH 4 Practice MH 1- 4 vocab Study for Exam #1 Practice for Exam #1
9/8 (M) <i>Week 5</i>	Quiz #4 (MH 1-4, ASL Grammar) MH 4: Vocab review and questions Practice Exam #1 MH 4: Who whats Labs: Preparation for Exam #1	Review for Exam #1 Study for Exam #1 Questions regarding Exam #1 Practice MH 1-4
9/10 (W)	Questions answered regarding Exam #1 MH 5: The agent MH 5: Vocab Numbers 31 – 66 Labs: Prep for Exam #1	10 Who Whats you can sign Read MH 5 Practice MH 5 vocab Practice numbers 1- 66 Lab exercises as assigned
9/15 (M) <i>Week 6</i>	MH 5: Simple request structure MH 5: Educational options for Deaf people MH 5: Verb pairs and trios Labs: MH 4, who whats EXAM #1 (MH 1-4, ASL syntax, NMMs, fingerspelling, shapes, numbers 1- 30)	Take Exam #1 Gloss 5 requests you can sign Practice MH 5 vocab Practice fingerspelling Practice Numbers 1-66 Lab exercises as assigned
9/17 (W)	Quiz #5 (MH 5: Requests and vocab) Lecture: Connecticut School (start) Labs: Who whats, requests Review MH 5 vocab MH 5 vocab questions and review MH 6: Vocabulary	Take Quiz #5 Practice MH 1-5 vocab Read MH 6 Practice lab exercises as assigned Practice fingerspelling and numbers Lab exercises as assigned Practice MH 6 vocab
9/22 (M)	Lecture: Connecticut School (finish) MH 6: Negation in ASL, modals	Practice MH 7 vocab Practice MH 1-7 vocab



<i>Week 7</i>	MH 7: Vocab Quiz #6 (Connecticut School)	Practice lab exercises as assigned Take Quiz #6 Review notes; note questions
9/24 (W)	Quiz #7 (MH 6 Vocab and Grammar) Questions regarding Connecticut School MH 7 Grammar: Time signs MH 7: Number incorporation MH 7: When What Whos Labs: MH 5-7	Take Quiz #7 Gloss 10 When What Whos you can sign
9/29 (M)	Study Guide for Exam #2 MH 7 grammar: FLS Labs: MH 7, Review for Exam #2 Physical description sequence introduced Supercharacter list introduced	Review notes, note questions Review for Exam #2 Practice for Exam #2
<i>Week 8</i>		
10/1 (W)	Quiz #8 (MH 7: When What Whos) When What Whos due Labs: Review for exam Physical description sequence reviewed Supercharacter list reviewed MH 8: Vocabulary	Review for Exam #2 Practice for Exam #2 Study for Exam #2 Read MH 8 Supercharacter Visuals: start collecting
10/6 (M)	Interactive Section Finals Practice Exam Physical description sequence (outfits) Supercharacter list reviewed Classmate sequence, Supercharacter sequence, Presentation #2 sequence Presentation #2 discussed Glossing a Supercharacter MH 8 vocab review MH 10 Grammar: Classifiers	Question re: Exam #2 Supercharacter visuals Review and practice for Exam #2 Practice MH 8 vocab Gloss 3 Supercharacters List of extra Supercharacter vocab
<i>Week 9</i>		
10/8 (W)	EXAM #2 (MH 5-7, Who whats, ASL requests, When what whos, Connecticut School, FLS, fingerspelling, numbers 1-66) Exam #2 questions	Take Exam #2
10/13 (M)	Supercharacter visuals due Classmate sequence, Supercharacter sequence, Presentation #2 sequence Presentation #2 discussed Glossing a Supercharacter MH 8 vocab review MH 10 Grammar: Classifiers	Gloss 3 Supercharacters Read MH 10 Supercharacter vocab needed
<i>Week 10</i>		
10/15 (W)	Quiz #9: Classmates MH 9: Vocabulary Extra Supercharacter vocabulary MH 10: Classifiers	Gloss Presentation #2 Read MH 9 Practice MH 8 & 9 vocab Practice Supercharacters



	Review: Supercharacters, physical description sequence Classmate sequence, Supercharacter sequence, Presentation #2 sequence Lecture: Glossing Presentation #2 Labs: Describing classmates, describing outfits, describing body frames, describing faces	Practice lab exercises as assigned Start practicing Presentation #2
10/20 (M) <i>Week 11</i>	Quiz #10: Outfits MH 9: Vocabulary Presentation #2 Vocab MH 9: Navigating a Signing Environment MH 10: Vocabulary	Gloss Presentation #2 Start practicing Presentation #2 Practice Supercharacters Extra credit practice if you want Practice MH 9 vocab Read MH 10
10/22 (W)	Quiz #11: Faces Extra Credit Opportunity CL review and clarification MH 9 vocabulary review MH 10 review Lab #8: MH 8 -10, Presentation #2 practice Study guide for Exam #3	Practice MH 8 – 10 vocab Practice Supercharacters Practice Presentation #2
10/27 (M) <i>Week 12</i>	Quiz #12 (Supercharacters: Liisa picks) Labs: MH 1-10 Prepare for Big Quiz and Exam #3	Practice Presentation #2 Study for Big Quiz Practice for Big Quiz Review for Big Quiz
10/29 (W)	Big Quiz (Physical description, Supercharacters, Who Whats, When What Whos, Presentation #2)	Record Presentation #2
11/3 (M) <i>Week 13</i>	Interactive Section Finals #2 Practice Exam #3	Study for Exam #3 Practice for Exam #3 and final interactives Review for Exam #3
11/5 (W)	EXAM #3 (MH 1-10, focus on 8-10, classifiers, numbers 1-100, FLS, routines, Supercharacters, etc.)	Read MH 11 Finish Deaf Awareness Project Get grocery flyer Come back to class
11/10 (M) <i>Week 14</i>	MH 11: Vocab Numbers 67-100 Grocery shopping list pattern Signing money	HW: Grocery shopping list Practice signing money Practice list
11/12 (W)	Grocery shopping list due Grocery shopping list practice Begin cumulative review Deaf Awareness Project due Sunday 11/16 at 11:59 pm (NO LATE PROJECTS ACCEPTED)	Prepare for quiz Review Deaf Intro Review and practice



11/17 (M) <i>Week #15</i>	Quiz #14 (MH 11) Practice for interactive finals Sign up for finals	Prepare for final
11/19 (W)	Prepare	
11/14, 11/26	NO CLASSES: THANKSGIVING BREAK	Practice for finals
12/1, 12/3	ONE ON ONE FINALS During class time By appointment only	

*****Tentative, subject to change without prior notice*****

Very little extra credit will be given in class during the session. Extra credit opportunities will consist of either attending an event where you use your ASL, or you observe upper level signers using their ASL. These are called Deaf events, as there are usually Deaf people attending. There will be at least 30 Deaf events during this semester, some offered by Zoom and the others by in person attendance.