IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

CmDis 286: Basic Sign Language
T–Th 9:30 - 10:45 AM – Carver 074 – Fall 2006

3248 Pearson Hall By appointment at other times.
Email: gir@iastate.edu Telephone: 294 – 6476 (You may leave a voice mail message)

DESCRIPTION: The course is designed to impart basic skills in the use and understanding of Signed English.

OBJECTIVES: After the successful completion of this course, you will be:
1. Familiar with the American English Manual Alphabet.
2. Familiar with the commonly used signs of the American Sign Language (ASL).
3. Able to communicate through finger spelling, Signed English and Signed Pidgin English.
5. Acquainted with the types, causes, and consequences of hearing impairment and with deaf culture.
6. Able to explain the differences between manually coded English (MCE), Signed Pidgin English (SPE) and ASL.

A reading list for the final examination is also available on the web site.
Web Site: https://webct.ait.iastate.edu/ISUtools/webhtml/login.html Your course grade is posted to the web site with your five-digit ISU student ID number as shown at left. Web site also contains practice materials, the final examination reading list, a video dictionary and many useful external links; visit it often.

GRADING: Grading is on a percentage basis as follows: (Total points for the course: 260)
A = 95 - 100% A- = 91 - 94
B+ = 88 - 90 B = 84 - 87 B- = 80 - 83
C+ = 77 - 79 C = 74 - 76 C- = 70 - 73
D+ = 67 - 69 D = 64 - 66 D- = 60 - 63

TESTS: Due to the unusual nature of the tests given in this class, permission to make up tests will be given only for documented medical and family reasons. Bring a clean sheet of paper with no "frizzies" (tattered edges) to each quiz. There will be a penalty of 10 points for make-up tests without adequate documentation.

TEST FORMAT: In receptive tests, the instructor will sign sentences in Signed English. Each sentence will be signed twice. You will write them down in English. Each quiz will have 10 sentences (3 points per sentence). In expressive signing tests, you will sign sentences given by the instructor. On either type of test, if you miss or misplace one word, you will receive two points; if you miss or misplace two words, you will receive one point; if you miss or misplace more than two words, you will receive no points for that sentence. Expressive signing is by individual appointment. You must sign up during the week of November 14 for this test. Once signed up, no changes are allowed except in the most unusual circumstances (10 points penalty for rescheduled or missed appointments). Expressive test will be in my office located in 366, Carver Hall. The written test will consist of a set of multiple-choice questions.

ATTENDANCE: Class attendance and participation are essential for success in this course. Throughout the semester, there will be several unannounced in-class signing practice activities. Each practice session is worth two EXTRA CREDIT points. Note that you cannot make up these practice sessions later. If you miss a session, for whatever reason, you miss the points for that session.
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: Please refrain from reading newspapers and other reading materials or making private conversations during class lectures. You are, of course, encouraged to ask questions and make public comments intended for the entire class.

DISABILITY STATEMENT: If you have a disability that requires special arrangements, please bring a SAAR form from the Disability Resources Office (294-7220; 1076 Student Services Building) specifying the accommodation(s) you will need.

COURSE CALENDAR: The course calendar provided below is tentative and subject to change (with notice!). The number of and the dates for quizzes are also tentative and may change with adequate notice.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

August
22  Course Description and Calendar; Tests and Grading
   Introduction to Manual Communication
   Common Hand Shapes
24  Manual Alphabet and Finger Spelling
29  Signing Conventions
31  Grammatical signs

September
  5  Greeting
  7  Emergency  (Quiz #1; 30 Points; Receptive Signing)
 12  Family
 17  Feelings
 19  People
 21  Action  (Quiz #2; 30 Points; Receptive Signing)
 26  Places
 28  Direction

October
  3  Time
  5  Attributes  (Quiz #3; 30 Points; Receptive Signing)
 10  Quantity; Money
 12  Travel
 17  Things
 19, 24  Food
 26  Health  (Quiz #4; 30 Points; Receptive Signing)
 31  Education

November
  2  Clothing
  7  Recreation
  9  Religion  (Sign-up for expressive signing test)
14  Nature  (Expressive signing test by appointment begins; 30 points)
28  Hearing Loss
30  Manually Coded English

December
  5  American Sign Language
  7  Deaf Culture.  (Course evaluation; Bring a #2 pencil; Your suggestions and comments are greatly valued!).
14  Final Written Examination  (80 points; Bring a #2 pencil to this test). Tentative; 9:45 – 11:45 AM; 80 multiple-choice questions. The final examination reading materials will be posted to the course web site by October 12.

Recommended Dictionaries
(Note: There are also many good books on signing and ASL available in libraries and book stores)


Note: These dictionaries contain illustrations as well as descriptions for signs. Illustrations are useful in visualizing signs. These two dictionaries are highly recommended.

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Videotapes available at the Parks Library ((Media Center in the basement)

The Signed English Starter Videotape  (Vide 002 163);
Say It By Signing  (Vide 002 604);
Sign Language for All Ages  (Vide 000 600)

Note: You are not required to view these videotapes; however, if you are looking to gain additional knowledge and skill in the use and understanding of signing, you are strongly encouraged to make use of these audiovisual materials).