# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
CmDis/Ling 286XW: Basic Sign Language
Spring 2011 (January 10 – May 5, 2011)

## INSTRUCTOR:
H. S. Venkatagiri, Ph. D.
3248 Pearson Hall
515 - 294 - 6476

## OFFICE HOURS:
There are no office hours for this Internet-based course. You may contact me during the duration of the course through the email. I will usually respond within 24 hours during the weekdays.

For general questions and comments, write to: gir@iastate.edu. Quizzes and tests are submitted through WebCT.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:
To access this course at the beginning of the Spring semester (January 10th or later), log into WebCT using your Iowa State University user name and password at http://www.iastate.edu/. If you are registered for this course, you will find a link to the course website on the WebCT page.

This is an on-line course (delivered exclusively over the Internet) designed to impart basic skills in the use and understanding of Signed English (SE), Signed Pidgin English (SPE), and American Sign Language (ASL) using video clips and text. SE, SPE, and ASL are different ways of signing. All of them use the same signs and, therefore, you will be learning only one set of 500 signs useful for everyday communication. The three ways of signing differ in sentence construction. SE is useful for communication with young deaf children (or children with intellectual or cognitive disabilities such as children with Down syndrome or autism) who are learning English as well as signing. SPE and ASL are more appropriate when communicating with deaf adults.

There are 45 lessons in this course. Each lesson will take approximately 50 to 75 minutes to complete depending on your learning style and pace. During the 16-week Spring semester, you will need to complete 3 lessons per week. See "Course Calendar" for the due dates for the completion of the lessons.

## 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.
4. Knowledgeable in the history of the development of manual communication and ASL.
5. Acquainted with the types, causes, and consequences of hearing impairment and with deaf culture.
6. Able to explain the differences between Manual English (ME), Signed Pidgin English (SPE), and ASL and when to use each of these modes of communication.

## TEXTBOOK:
There is no textbook for this course. Information is presented using video clips and text in 45 separate lessons over the Internet. **There are firm deadlines for completing lessons and quizzes.** For details, please see "Course Calendar" below.
**LESSON FORMAT:**

Please complete the lessons in the order in which they are listed in the course homepage because the successful completion of later lessons will require knowledge gained in the earlier lessons.

Each lesson consists of:

1. 10 to 15 new signs to learn;
2. A quiz that tests your ability to recognize signs you learned in the current lesson as well as selected signs from the previous lessons;
3. A practice/quiz unit consisting of a set of signed sentences or a brief conversation to develop and test your ability to understand short signed sentences;
4. A brief text-based unit that discusses an aspect of hearing loss, the Deaf culture and history, the grammar of SE, SPE, or ASL, or the education of hearing impaired children;
5. A multiple-choice quiz to test your knowledge of information covered in Item 4 above. Each of these five parts should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

It is very important that, in addition to learning to recognize the signs and signed sentences presented in each lesson, you should practice signing the vocabulary items and the practice sentences included in the lessons to develop skill in using SE, SPE, and ASL to communicate. In fact, signing signs presented video clips of signs and sentences is the best way to remember the signs. You are learning by doing!

**TESTS AND GRADING:**

**TESTS:** In addition to the quizzes you will complete as part of each lesson, you will also take 3 tests.

Each test will consist of video clips of 20 signed sentences. You may view each video clip twice and then select a sentence from among four written sentences that corresponds to the signed sentence.

Unlike quizzes, you may take each test only once. The three tests together will account for 40% of your grade and the quizzes will make up the remaining 60%.

Of the four choices presented for each video clip, one sentence will be completely accurate (3 points if you pick that as the answer), one will be completely inaccurate (0 points if picked), one will have one word wrong (2 points if picked) and one will have two incorrect words (1 point if picked). Each test will,

You will complete three quizzes during each lesson by clicking on "Assessments" and selecting the appropriate quiz from the list.

The lessons are structured in such a way that you learn by completing quizzes. Because the quizzes are a part of the learning process, if you are not satisfied with your performance, you may take the quiz again one more time. Please note, however, that in computing grades the points earned in the second attempt will be used even if it is less than the points earned in the first attempt. Attempt a quiz a second time only after you have reviewed the lesson carefully and are confident that you will do better.

Each lesson has three quizzes and each quiz has 10 items for a total of 30 items and 30 points for each lesson. Forty-five lessons times 30 points equals 1350 points for the quizzes. These points will constitute 60% of your grade.

Each quiz will be available during a two-weeks window as listed in the Course Calendar below. If you fail to complete the quiz during this two-weeks window, you will lose points for that quiz.

Three tests, taken approximately 5 weeks apart, will each carry 60 points for a total of 180 points. These points will account for 40% of your grade. Your letter grade is based on the following percentages:
therefore, have 60 points (20 sentences X 3 points each)

Dates by which the tests should be completed (Tests will be available approximately two weeks before the completion dates listed below):

**Test 1:** Take this test on or before February 28. This test covers signs learned in the first 15 lessons.

**Test 2:** Take this test on or before April 9. This test covers signs learned in the first 30 lessons.

**Test 3:** Take this test on or before May 5. This test covers signs learned in all 45 lessons.

|
| Quizzes)*0.6) + (Points Earned in Tests/Total Points for Tests)*0.4)*100 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| A = 93%*        | A- = 90%        |
| B+ = 87%        |  B = 84%       |
| B- = 81%        |  C+ = 78%     |
| C = 75%         |  C- = 72%     |
| D+ = 69%        |  D = 66%     |
| D- = 63%        |  F = < 63%    |

* Minimum percentage required for the grade.

**COURSE CALENDAR:**

**PLEASE NOTE:** You have a grace period of one week from the dates shown to complete the quizzes associated with the lessons 1 through 33. For example, you have until January 24 to complete quizzes for Lessons 1, 2, and 3 and so on.

While you are allowed to complete the lessons and the quizzes ahead of the dates shown at right, for maximum learning and retention of information, it is best to pace the lessons as suggested.

You will lose points for the quizzes not completed by the dates shown (+ one week grace period for Lessons 1 - 33).

Complete the lessons and the associated quizzes by the dates indicated. You will learn and retain information better if the lessons are spread out over the entire semester rather than completing them in a short time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 17: Lessons 1, 2, 3</th>
<th>January 24: Lessons 4, 5, 6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 31: Lessons 7, 8, 9</td>
<td>February 7: Lessons 10, 11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14: Lessons 13, 14, 15</td>
<td>February 21: Lessons 16, 17, 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 28: Lessons 19, 20, 21</td>
<td>March 7: Lessons 22, 23, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14: Lessons 25, 26, 27</td>
<td>* ENJOY SPRING BREAK *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28: Lessons 28, 29, 30</td>
<td>April 4: Lessons 31, 32, 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11: Lessons 34, 35, 36</td>
<td>April 18: Lessons 37, 38, 39</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25: Lessons 40, 41, 42</td>
<td>May 2: Lessons 43, 44, 45</td>
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**ALL LESSONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY MAY 3, 2011 (Lessons 34 through 45 do not have the full one week grace period; be sure to complete these lessons by the dates indicated above)**
**RESOURCES:**

**Check out these interesting websites:**

- [http://www.signingsavvy.com/trial](http://www.signingsavvy.com/trial)
- [http://www.nad.org/issues/issues-resources](http://www.nad.org/issues/issues-resources)

**Recommended Dictionaries:**


**Note:** These dictionaries contain illustrations as well as descriptions for signs. Illustrations are useful for visualizing signs. While you are not required to purchase these dictionaries, they are highly recommended.

**Videotapes available at the Iowa State University Parks Library Media Center:**

- *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 may find them useful. Your local public library may also have visual media available.