

Wichita State University
Bachelor of Arts in American Sign Language
Program Approval

I. General Information

A. Institution Wichita State University

B. Program Identification

Degree Level: BA
Program Title: American Sign Language
Degree to be Offered: Bachelor of Arts in ASL
Responsible Department or Unit: Modern & Classical Languages & Literatures
CIP Code: 16.1601
Modality: TCI or Hybrid
Proposed Implementation Date: Spring 2023

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours for the Degree: 120

II. Clinical Sites: Does this program require the use of Clinical Sites? No.

III. Justification

The proposal for a baccalaureate program in American Sign Language (ASL) is consistent with Wichita State University's applied learning and research vision and addresses our stated mission to be an essential educational, cultural, and economic driver for Kansas. It also meaningfully addresses our core value to make the campus inclusive and accessible for everyone. In cooperation, the colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) and Health Professions (CHP) propose this new degree to enable both deaf and hearing students to advance in their chosen careers. Indeed, candidates requesting to sit for the Certified Deaf Interpreter Examination now must have a bachelor's degree: our Interpreting Methods track provides the best preparation for this exam of any plan of study at Wichita State. Precisely because of this new requirement, Johnson County Community College closed its interpreter-training program; KU (Edwards campus) now offers a pathway from the JCCC associate degree to the BA/BGS. Their initiative shows, moreover, that an *ASL-specific* bachelor's degree is the only one that truly prepares sign language professionals for the workforce.

Because of increasing demand in south-central Kansas for sign language coursework, KBOR previously approved Wichita State's proposal for a minor in Signed Languages (AY 2018-2019). Offered through the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (Health Professions), this minor ensures proficiency in standard foundation courses (ASL I-IV) with additional hours in Interpreting, Deaf Culture, and Nonverbal Communication. Our joint proposal now offers a truly interdisciplinary and comprehensive degree: a research-focused BA in ASL together with a high-quality interpreter education program. Furthermore, since there is a preference in the sign language discipline for bachelor's degree programs accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE), Wichita State developed this new program in accordance with CCIE accreditation standards (knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary to enter the field of professional interpreting). Wichita State's advanced program will be one of only two in Kansas where learners can train to become certified ASL interpreters. Building upon instruction provided by Lecturers reappointed through Modern & Classical Languages (LAS), our unique feature will be to teach ASL linguistics and conduct research on the same in accordance with the following summary:

- THE STRUCTURE OF LANGUAGE: the nature of language, language acquisition, and ASL linguistics;

- LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN CONTEXT: historical foundations of the interpreting profession, deaf culture, deaf studies, social justice, language in society; interpreting needs of deaf, deafblind, and hearing consumers;
- INTERPRETING METHODS: theories of interpretation and translation along with ethics and protocols for interpreting in a variety of settings — legal, medical, and educational.

Creating a new bachelor’s degree with these three content tracks fortifies the integrated and interdisciplinary nature of ASL education in Kansas. This rich, interprofessional learning experience will enhance the training of BA graduates by providing advanced technical and professional skills suited to the workplace of the future.

According to the position statement on ASL issued by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the National Institute of Health and the National Science Foundation both identify American Sign Language as a complete, non-English language associated with its own culture. Wichita State thus proposes to house this new BA program in the Department of Modern & Classical Languages & Literatures. The Modern Language Association classifies ASL as the third most popular language of study in higher education, after Spanish and French. The number of employed sign language interpreters in south-central Kansas is on the rise: our aim is to offer a high-quality program for regional practitioners and provide additional levels of research expertise to Wichita State’s already strong programs in linguistics, world languages, and cultural anthropology.

IV. Program Demand

The only university in Kansas offering a bachelor’s degree in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies is the University of Kansas, in collaboration with Johnson County Community College. The BA and BGS degrees in ASL and deaf studies are offered in four tracks: Deaf Studies and Social Justice, Advanced ASL, Becoming an Interpreter, and Professional Interpreting. Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, Pittsburg State University, and Kansas State University offer neither a major nor a minor in ASL. The new BA degree program at Wichita State builds on an existing ASL minor.

A. Survey of Student Interest

Number of surveys administered:	104
Number of completed surveys returned:	104
Percentage of students interested in program: ...	56%

An online/paper survey was given to 104 current ASL students at WSU Haysville, WSU Main, and WSU West campuses. Fifty-one percent of the respondents were in their senior year; 49% were female and 10 percent male. Ninety-five percent of the students who took the online/paper survey had previously taken an ASL class at WSU; 100% recommend ASL classes to their friends. Ninety-one percent responded that the major will benefit students at WSU. Fifty-six percent would be interested in the major at WSU and 83% will recommend the major to their friends. Fifty percent would be interested in an ASL interpreting license after completing an ASL major at WSU.

B. Market Analysis

The Datausa website shows that 647 ASL degrees were awarded in 2017. It is a major with a growing demand as there is a need for a program of study offering students opportunities to examine and focus on several aspects of ASL, such as the linguistics of ASL, deaf culture and social justice, and ASL interpretation. It is a known fact that to work in healthcare, many students need to have specialized degrees. There is a growing demand for ASL interpreters in South-Central Kansas and a need to make communication accessible to all. Career paths for individuals completing this degree include social work, education, interpreting, human resources, and counseling.

V. Projected Enrollment for the Initial Three Years of the Program

Year	Total Headcount Per Year		Sem Credit Hrs Per Year	
	Full- Time	Part- Time	Full- Time	Part- Time
Implementation (AY 2023-2024)	15	0	450	0
Year 2 (AY 2024-2025)	30	0	900	0
Year 3 (AY 2025-2026)	50	0	1500	0

VI. Employment

Website for job listings	Number of ASL interpreting jobs listed
Glassdoor	378
Ziprecruiter	371
Indeed	727
SimplyHired	1,183

Students graduating from the BA degree program can work in jobs as diverse as interpreting, finance, market research, healthcare, counseling, special education, and social justice fields. The interdisciplinary tracks in the program offer education and training for a wide variety of careers. The U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated there were 81,400 jobs in 2020 for ASL interpreters and translators. The projected job growth for ASL interpretation is 24% between 2020-2030, greater than average. The median salary for ASL interpreting jobs with a bachelor's degree is \$49,110 or \$23.61 per hour.

Some specific career opportunities for ASL majors are:

- a. Childcare worker
- b. Audiologist
- c. Psychologist
- d. Sign language interpreter/translator
- e. Speech language pathologist
- f. Counselor

These organizations regularly hire ASL majors:

- a. Healthcare—hospitals and clinics
- b. Mental health clinics
- c. Hearing and speech agencies
- d. Government institutions
- e. Schools

VII. Admission and Curriculum

A. Admission Criteria

Freshmen are assured admission to Wichita State if they meet the following:

1. Have a cumulative 2.25 or higher GPA on a 4.00 scale, OR
2. Achieve an ACT composite of 21 or higher OR a minimum combined SAT ERW+M score of 1060 (test optional for admission)

And, if applicable, achieve a 2.0 GPA on all college credit taken in high school.

Students who do not meet the guaranteed admission requirements are still encouraged to apply. The application will be reviewed individually.

Students who graduated from a non-accredited high school or were homeschooled must:

1. Achieve an ACT of 21 or higher, OR a minimum combined SAT ERW+M score of at least 1060, have a cumulative 2.25 or higher GPA on a 4.00 scale.

If students enroll in college courses while in high school, they must also achieve a 2.00 GPA or higher in those courses.

If a student obtained a GED, they must:

1. For GED tests from 2002-2013: Have a minimum score of 510 on each sub test and an overall score of 2550 to be admitted.

2. For GED tests from 2014 and on: Have a minimum score of 150 on each sub test and an overall score of 680 to be admitted.

Curriculum

120 hours are required for graduation, and students must earn a 2.0 overall GPA, a 2.0 Wichita State GPA, and a 3.0 GPA in the major. Students must also complete all courses required for Liberal Arts and Sciences General Education. In addition, Foreign Language courses (or the equivalents) are required for every BA degree in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. See Appendix A for three focus areas: Structure of Language track, Language and Culture in Context track, and Interpreting Methods track.

American Sign Language – Generic Plan for all Tracks

Year 1: Fall

ENGL 101	College English 1	3
FYS	First-Year Seminar Humanities or S&B Science*	3
MATH 111	College Algebra	3
Gen Ed	Fine Arts	3
CSD 270	American Sign Language I	3

Year 1: Spring

ENGL 102	College English 2	3
COMM 111	Public Speaking	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science ¹	3
TRACK COURSE	Varies depending on track	3
CSD 370	American Sign Language II	3

Year 2: Fall

Literature	Counts as Humanities General Education	3
HIST 131/2 or POLS 121	Fulfills LAS Civics requirement and Humanites/S&B Science Gen Ed*	3
Gen Ed	Humanities	3
TRACK COURSE	Varies depending on track	3
CSD 470	American Sign Language III	3

Year 2: Spring

Gen Ed	Natural Science – Biological Science	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 480	American Sign Language IV	3

CSD 518	Deaf Culture	3
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Year 3: Fall

Gen Ed	300-Level Social and Behavioral Science	3
Gen Ed	Natural Science – Physical Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
TRACK COURSE	Varies depending on track	3
CSD 490D	Intro to Signed Language Interpreting (cross-listed w/CSD 490D)	3

Year 3: Spring

Gen Ed	300-Level Natural Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 520	ASL Nonverbal Communications	3

Year 4: Fall

Elective	Open Elective	3
TRACK COURSE	Varies depending on track	3

Year 4: Spring

Elective	Open Elective	3
TRACK COURSE	Varies depending on track	3

Total hours

120

VIII. Core Faculty

Note: * Next to Faculty Name Denotes Director of the Program, if applicable

FTE: 1.0 FTE = Full-Time Equivalency Devoted to Program

Faculty Name	Rank	Highest Degree	Tenure Track Y/N	Academic Area of Specialization	FTE to Proposed Program	FTE Salary
Wilson Baldrige	Professor and Chairperson	PhD in French Literature	Y	French Literature	0.25	Salary: \$20,403 Fringe: \$2,703
Mythili Menon	Assistant Professor	PhD in Linguistics	Y	Syntax, Semantics, Morphology, Psycholinguistics, Language Documentation	0.25	Salary: \$13,940 Fringe: \$2,703

Rachel Showstack	Associate Professor	PhD in Hispanic Linguistics	Y	Sociolinguistics	0.25	Salary: \$14,803 Fringe: \$2,703
Andrew Hippisley	Professor and Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences	PhD in Linguistics	Y	Computational Linguistics, Morphology, Syntax, Typology, Historical Linguistics	0.25	Salary: \$49,731 Fringe: \$9,081
Jens Kreinath	Associate Professor	PhD in Anthropology	Y	Anthropological Linguistics, Fieldwork	0.25	Salary: \$14,780.25 Fringe: \$2,703
James Clark Kimberly Hoffman Lorita Slieter Melody Manlove	Adjunct Lecturers	Master's Degrees in ASL and Interpreting	N	American Sign Language	4.00	Salaries: \$99,000 Fringe: \$8,600
New Hire in Linguistics (In First FY)	Associate Professor	PhD in or Edd in Signed Languages	Y	American Sign Language	1.0	Salary: \$62,000 Fringe: \$11,000

IX. Expenditure and Funding Sources

A. Expenditures	First FY	Second FY	Third FY
Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions			
Adjunct Faculty	\$99,000	\$99,000	\$99,000
Existing Faculty reassigned .25	\$113,657	\$113,657	\$113,657
Graduate Assistants			
Fringe Benefits (total for existing faculty)	\$19,893	\$19,893	\$19,893
Fringe Benefits (total for adjuncts)	\$8,600	\$8,600	\$8,600
Other Personnel Costs -			
Total Existing Personnel Costs – Reassigned or Existing	\$241,150	\$241,150	\$241,150
Personnel – New Positions Coordinator ASL			
Faculty (Program Coordinator of ASL)	\$62,000	\$62,000	\$62,000
Administrators			
Graduate Assistants			
Support Staff for Administration (Graduate Staff Assistant)			
Fringe Benefits (total for all groups)	\$11,000	\$11,000	\$11,000
Other Personnel Costs (lecturers)			
Total Existing Personnel Costs – New Positions	\$73,000	\$73,000	\$73,000
Start-Up Costs – One-Time Expenses			

Library/Learning Resources			
Equipment/Technology			
Physical Facilities: Construction or Renovation			
Other: Online Course Development			
Total Start-Up Costs			
Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses			
Supplies/Expense (Cards Letter Head Advertisement)	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Library/Learning Resources			
Equipment/Technology			
Travel – to off West and South campus locations	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Other			
Total Operating Costs	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Grand Total Costs	\$316,650	\$316,650	\$316,650
B. FUNDING SOURCES	1 st FY 15 new students	2 nd FY 15 new students +15 previous =30	3 rd FY 20 new students +30 previous =50
Tuition/State Funds (\$228)	\$102,600	\$205,200	\$342,000
\$667.41 per student per semester (\$1,334.82 annual)	\$20,022	\$40,044	\$66,741
Mandatory Student Fees \$20.75 per credit hour	\$9,338	\$18,676	\$31,125
LAS Student Fee \$7.75 per credit hour	\$3,487	\$6,975	\$11,625
Other Sources			
Grand Total Funding	\$135,447	\$270,894	\$451,491
C. Projected Surplus/Deficit (+/-)	-\$130,559	-\$45,756	+\$134,841

X. Expenditures and Funding Sources Explanations

A. Expenditures

Personnel – Reassigned, Existing, & New Positions

Several current faculty in the Linguistics program and the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literature (MCLL) will be reassigned to courses in the new ASL program. The only additional cost is one new tenure track faculty member who will serve as coordinator of the American Sign Language program, to be hired in the first year. This tenure track position would have responsibilities for teaching four courses (two in the fall and two in the spring), advising, administering the scheduling of courses, and recruitment and retention of students.

B. Revenue: Funding Sources

Tuition and fees will be the primary source of funding for the program. Projected tuition revenues were calculated using online and in-state tuition rates of \$228 per credit hour multiplied by the number of credit hours projected to be earned by students enrolled in courses leading to a degree in American Sign Language (ASL). The fees listed include mandatory fees assessed to all students and fees assessed to students taking courses in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Although not included in the revenue described above, ASL courses currently attract over 100 students who minor in Sign Language or who take ASL to meet language requirements in the College of Liberal Arts and

Sciences. These students generate approximately 1,500 student credit hours per year. If multiplied by tuition and fees, this would provide approximately \$385,000 in additional revenue generated from the American Sign Language courses taken by students meeting degree requirements and minoring in American Sign Language.

Projected Surplus/Deficit

The proposed new ASL degree program is projected to have a revenue surplus by year three, with enrollment growth expected over the next several years.

XI. References

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (2019); National Science Foundation (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/american-sign-language> and https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/linguistics/sign.jsp

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:(2022, May); Occupational Outlook Handbook. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/interpreters-and-translators.htm>

Appendix A

American Sign Language – The Structure of Language Track

Year 1: Fall

ENGL 101	College English 1	3
FYS	First-Year Seminar Humanities or S&B Science*	3
MATH 111	College Algebra	3
Gen Ed	Fine Arts	3
CSD 270	American Sign Language I	3

Year 1: Spring

ENGL 102	College English 2	3
COMM 111	Public Speaking	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science ¹	3
LING 151	The Nature of Language	3
CSD 370	American Sign Language II	3

Year 2: Fall

Literature	Counts as Humanities General Education	3
HIST 131/2 or POLS 121	Fulfills LAS Civics requirement and Humanites/S&B Science Gen Ed*	3
Gen Ed	Humanities	3
MCLL 351	Linguistics and Foreign Languages	3
CSD 470	American Sign Language III	3

Year 2: Spring

Gen Ed	Natural Science – Biological Science	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
LING 315	Intro to English Linguistics	3
CSD 480	American Sign Language IV	3

Year 3: Fall

Gen Ed	300-Level Social and Behavioral Science	3
Gen Ed	Natural Science – Physical Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 490D	Introduction to Signed Language Interpreting (cross-listed w/CSD 490D)	3

Year 3: Spring

Gen Ed	300-Level Natural Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 520	ASL Nonverbal Communications	3

Year 4: Fall

Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
ANTH 352	Anthropological Linguistics	3
CSD 518	Deaf Culture	3

Year 4: Spring

Elective	Open Elective	3
ASL 670	Interpreting Interaction: Translation and Consecutive Interpretation	3

Total hours

120

American Sign Language – Language and Culture in Context Track

Year 1: Fall

ENGL 101	College English 1	3
FYS	First-Year Seminar Humanities or S&B Science*	3
MATH 111	College Algebra	3
Gen Ed	Fine Arts	3
CSD 270	American Sign Language I	3

Year 1: Spring

ENGL 102	College English 2	3
COMM 111	Public Speaking	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science ¹	3
LING 151	The Nature of Language	3
CSD 370	American Sign Language II	3

Year 2: Fall

Literature	Counts as Humanities General Education	3
HIST 131/2 or POLS 121	Fulfills LAS Civics requirement and Humanites/S&B Science Gen Ed*	3
Gen Ed	Humanities	3
MCLL 351	Linguistics and Foreign Languages	3
CSD 470	American Sign Language III	3

Year 2: Spring

Gen Ed	Natural Science – Biological Science	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 480	American Sign Language IV	3
CSD 518	Deaf Culture	3

Year 3: Fall

Gen Ed	300-Level Social and Behavioral Science	3
Gen Ed	Natural Science – Physical Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 490D	Introduction to Signed Language Interpreting (cross-listed w/CSD 490D)	3

Year 3: Spring

Gen Ed	300-Level Natural Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
LING 663	Languages and Language attitudes in the US	3
CSD 520	ASL Nonverbal Communications	3

Year 4: Fall

Elective	Open Elective	3
ANTH 352	Anthropological Linguistics	3

Year 4: Spring

Elective	Open Elective	3
MCLL 670	Interpreting Interaction: Translation and Consecutive Interpretation	3

Total hours

120

American Sign Language – Interpreting Methods Track**Year 1: Fall**

ENGL 101	College English 1	3
FYS	First-Year Seminar Humanities or S&B Science*	3
MATH 111	College Algebra	3
Gen Ed	Fine Arts	3
CSD 270	American Sign Language I	3

Year 1: Spring

ENGL 102	College English 2	3
COMM 111	Public Speaking	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science ¹	3
LING 151	The Nature of Language	3
CSD 370	American Sign Language II	3

Year 2: Fall

Literature	Counts as Humanities General Education	3
HIST 131/2 or POLS 121	Fulfills LAS Civics requirement and Humanites/S&B Science Gen Ed*	3
Gen Ed	Humanities	3
MCLL 351	Linguistics and Foreign Languages	3
CSD 470	American Sign Language III	3

Year 2: Spring

Gen Ed	Natural Science – Biological Science	3
Gen Ed	Social and Behavioral Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 480	American Sign Language IV	3
CSD 518	Deaf Culture	3

Year 3: Fall

Gen Ed	300-Level Social and Behavioral Science	3
Gen Ed	Natural Science – Physical Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
MCLL 370	ASL Elocution	3
CSD 490D	Introduction to Signed Language Interpreting (cross-listed w/CSD 490D)	3

Year 3: Spring

Gen Ed	300-Level Natural Science	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
Elective	Open Elective	3
CSD 520	ASL Nonverbal Communications	3

Year 4: Fall

Elective	Open Elective	3
MCLL 570	American Sign Language and English Translation	3

Year 4: Spring

Elective	Open Elective	3
MCLL 670	Interpreting Interaction: Translation and Consecutive Interpretation	3

Total hours**120**