

Beginning American Sign Language I
Fall 2211
Online Synchronous

MLAS 201 - Section 01	MLAS 201 - Section 04
Mondays and Wednesdays	Mondays and Wednesdays
10:10 AM – 12:05 PM	2:30 PM – 4:25 PM
Synchronous Zoom Meeting ID: 959 7030 3467	Synchronous Zoom Meeting ID: 945 3201 3667

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Jodie Ackerman

Email: jmanss@rit.edu

Communication:

- All information regarding assignments and course materials is provided in myCourses. Students are responsible for reading all information in myCourses, including announcements in myCourses.
- If students need to communicate with the instructor, they may send an email to request an appointment to meet with their instructor online. [The instructor will respond to emails within 24-48 hours \(expect longer waiting times on weekends and holidays\).](#)

Online Office Hours: By appointment via email request

- You can request a one-on-one meeting on the Zoom online meeting platform during office hours or outside of scheduled office hours by emailing two suggested times in the Eastern time zone; for example, if you are three hours behind EDT and you would like a 10 AM appointment in your time zone, you should request an appointment at 1 PM EDT.
- For clarity, tell your instructor which time zone you are in, as well as indicating the appointment request in EDT time. Your instructor will confirm the time and send you a link invitation for the meeting through email.

Course Description

American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual-spatial language rather than an auditory one. This is the first course of a two-course sequence at the beginning level. The course emphasizes developing receptive skills (perceiving and comprehending), and initial expressive skills (signing with grammatical and affective facial expressions and other non-manual grammatical signals) needed to understand and communicate with others. The Beginning ASL I course introduces the basic linguistic features, cultural protocols, and core vocabulary for students to function in simple ASL conversations. This course is designed for students who have no or minimal knowledge of basic American Sign Language. **Class 4, Credit 4 (F, S, Su)**

Credit Hours: 4

Goals of the Course

1. Develop basic conversational ability in ASL using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and cultural behaviors
2. Gain a basic understanding of various perspectives on the Deaf experience, cultural, linguistic, educational, medical, social, and political, and how these various perspectives interact with each other and impact on Deaf people and their language
3. Develop reading, writing, and critical thinking skills related to ASL
4. Interact with members of the Deaf community at a novice-mid level in some very familiar everyday contexts

Topics Covered

- Introduction to ASL
- Time and Activities
- Relationship
- Places of Residence
- People and Places on Campus
- Shopping

Learning Outcomes and How They Will Be Assessed	
Course Learning Outcome	Assessment Method
<i>Develop basic, conversational ability in ASL using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and cultural behaviors.</i>	
Comprehend and express a targeted set of vocabulary terms	Online Lectures Homework Tests
Comprehend and express a targeted set of numerical items	
Comprehend and express fingerspelled letters at a moderate to a normal rate	
Use a targeted set of semantically correct vocabulary	
Demonstrate receptive and expressive mastery of targeted context-specific commands, questions, and statements in ASL	
Express short dialogues in ASL	
Comprehend and express a targeted set of classifier items	
Use a targeted set of non-manual signals	
<i>Gain a basic understanding of various perspectives on the Deaf experience; cultural, linguistic, educational, medical, social, and political and how these various perspectives interact with each other and impact on Deaf people and their language.</i>	
Comprehend written information on the following topics: the history of ASL, Deaf culture, the Deaf community, and significant topics found in Deaf Culture and the Deaf community	Quiz on article content Written report on reading content
Write a report reacting to articles related to the selected topics	Written report

Cont'd Learning Outcomes and How They Will Be Assessed

Course Learning Outcome	Assessment Method
<i>Develop reading, writing, and critical thinking skills related to ASL.</i>	
Comprehend written information on the following topics: the history of ASL, Deaf culture, and the Deaf community, and significant topics found in Deaf culture and the Deaf community	Quiz on article content Written report on reading content
Write a report reacting to articles, which relate to the selected topics	Written report
<i>Interact with members of the Deaf community at a novice-mid level in some very familiar everyday contexts</i>	
Create short dialogues in ASL incorporating basic grammar and cultural protocols.	In-class activities

Course Structure and Delivery

Synchronous Online Course

Starting the first week of the semester, this course will follow synchronous online course delivery:

- All students will attend a synchronous (live) Zoom meeting with the instructor during the designated class time.
- The course will follow an online delivery mode where 100% of instruction is delivered synchronously. Your instructor will post all notes, lectures, and course materials in myCourses.
- The course schedule provides due dates when you are expected to review the instructional materials and complete course assignment and activities.
- In addition, except for tests, you will be meeting with the instructor and your peers through the Zoom online meeting platform one time a week at a specified time to review and clarify the learned information.

- Your instructor will assign you to a breakout group to practice and apply learned information with your peers on Zoom.
- You are expected to view the short video lectures and notes in myCourses to learn the new information before meeting on Zoom.

Assignment Activities

- Submit expressive practice assignments in GoReact
- View instructor feedback in GoReact
- Complete comprehension check assignments in myCourses
- Complete Deaf Culture assignments in myCourses
- Complete reflection paper by incorporating readings and experiences taking ASL I class
- All assignments and course schedule are posted in <https://myCourses.rit.edu> and may include readings and e-Curriculum videos
- You are responsible for all course information in myCourses, including announcements posted in your **Course FrontPage** and course **Tabs**

Course Activities

- This online course is a 4-credit college-level course, which means that students are expected to do at least 9 hours of course-related work or activity each week during the term.
- It will take at least 9 hours per week to watch instructional videos, attend synchronous class meetings, complete all assigned activities, study for quizzes and tests, interact with the instructor and with students, prepare video assignments, and perform other course-related tasks.

Course Schedule

The course schedule and assignment due dates are posted in myCourses.

Required Textbooks, Materials, and Activities

Required Textbook and Readings

- You are not required to purchase a textbook for this course.
- All the readings for this course are provided in myCourses. Readings include PowerPoint slides, selected book chapters, and scholarly articles related to various issues in Deaf Culture and Community.

Readings for ASL Reflection Paper

Baker, C., & Cokely, D. (1980a). What is a "Language". In *American Sign Language: A teacher's resource text on grammar and culture*. Silver Spring, MD: T. J. Publishers, Inc., 31-45.

Baker, C., & Cokely, D. (1980b). What is American Sign Language? In *American Sign Language: A teacher's resource text on grammar and culture*. Silver Spring, MD: T. J. Publishers, Inc., 47-61.

Kemp, M. (1998). Why is learning American Sign Language a Challenge?, *American Annals of the Deaf*, 143(3), 255-259.

Videos

You will find links to ASL e-Curriculum videos in the RIT course management system (<https://myCourses.rit.edu>).

You are required to adhere to the RIT [Intellectual Property Policy \(C3.0\)](#). Do not copy or save any instructional videos or materials to a computer, mobile device, USB storage device, or any cloud service.

GoReact for MLAS Beginning ASL I

GoReact is an online feedback tool that provides the instructor and student with the ability to record videos and provide feedback in ASL.

- All students are required to register for a GoReact account.
- The cost is \$29.99 per course. **[Please wait for the invitation link from your instructor.](#)** When you click on the link, you'll be prompted to register and pay with your credit card.
- Once you register, you will be able to view the course expressive activities in GoReact.
- To view instructions on how to create your account and begin using GoReact, your instructor will provide instructions.

Cont'd Textbooks, Materials, and Activities

Technology

myCourses, GoReact, and Zoom are used for this course, you must fulfill those requirements before starting the course:

1. A computer or laptop with a built-in or attached webcam OR an iPad/tablet with a webcam
2. An internet connection
3. [System requirements](#) for myCourses
4. [System requirements](#) for GoReact
5. Updated Zoom software – see for [specific requirements](#)

You are required to use your rit.edu email address to log in for Zoom classes and evening activities.

You are required to adhere to the RIT [Intellectual Property Policy \(C.3\)](#). Do not copy or save my instructional videos or materials to a computer, mobile device, USB storage device, or any cloud service.

Assignments

Homework assignments:

All assignments are to be submitted through myCourses unless otherwise specified.

The instructor will provide specific instructions using GoReact video as well as assessment rubrics given for each assignment.

Reflection Paper:

You are to put some of your critical thinking skills into practice to synthesize what you have learned from reading articles and present your reflections on learning ASL and Deaf Culture with details.

You are required to follow the American Psychological Association (APA) citation format for your reflection paper. For details on how to cite sources using APA, visit <https://library.rit.edu/citations/apa-format>.

Cont'd Assignments

Late Assignments

- Students are expected to submit course assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course activities according to the published class schedule. Late assignments will not be accepted.
- Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact your instructor before the due date so both of you can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.
- Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.
- **Exception:** cases of documented serious illness or documented emergency.

Extra Credit

There are no extra credit assignments.

Extended Responsibilities

- Learning ASL is similar to learning other languages. You should expect it to be challenging and to require a lot of practice, memorization, and developing skills in real communication situations.
- You will need time outside of class meeting times to record homework assignments and to get feedback on your assignments from your instructor.
- Assignments will also include writing a reflection paper, readings, tests, watching videos, and recording videos.
- You will need to practice outside of class to be successful, and it is **best** to practice with others. You are encouraged to form small practice groups and meet for two hours per week with your group via Social Media (e.g., *Zoom and/or GoReact*). Try to meet with different class members each week to practice your signing skills.
- You must watch **ALL** online videos for this course, including vocabulary and grammar videos. They will be available at all times throughout the course and they will benefit you greatly in keeping up with the coursework and preparing for the tests.

Cont'd Extended Responsibilities

- You must check all the myCourses Assignments, including course activities, readings, and videos, to succeed in the course. The coursework averages at least 9 hours per week. The course schedule indicates specific assignments to be completed and to be handed in on time.
- You are responsible for reviewing course Announcements, tabs in this course (including videos), and your Grades in myCourses. Submitting your assignments to the myCourses Assignments folder(s) and your receptive tests on time is also your responsibility.
- Each of your expressive tests needs to be submitted on time in GoREACT as indicated on the test study guidelines. The instructor will leave signed (and possibly written) feedback on your completed expressive tests in GoREACT, and you are encouraged to review the feedback and rubric to improve your ASL skills. You are responsible for reviewing your expressive videos and comparing them to the model videos provided.
- [Working in study groups, repeatedly reviewing course resource materials, and practicing in real conversations is strongly recommended.](#)

Graded Assignments

The final grade will be determined by averaging the grade earned for each evaluation given.

Receptive Tests

- Test #1: Introduction to ASL & Time and Activities
- Test #2: Relationship & Places of Residence
- Test #3: People and Places on Campus & Shopping

60%

Expressive Tests

- Test #1: Introduction to ASL & Time and Activities
- Test #2: Relationship & Place of Residence
- Test #3: People and Places on Campus & Shopping

20%

	Homework Assignments Comprehension Receptive Practice, Expressive Practice, and Deaf Culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1: Introduction to ASL • #2: Time and Activities • #3: Relationship • #4: Places of Residence • #5: People and Places on Campus • #6: Shopping 	10%
	Reflection Paper	10%
	Total of Student Evaluation:	100%

Grading Scale			
	Percentage	Grade	Quality Points
	94.00 – 100%	A	4.0
	90.00 – 93.99%	A-	3.67
	87.00 – 89.99%	B+	3.33
	84.00 – 86.99%	B	3.00
	80.00 – 83.99%	B-	2.67
	77.00 – 79.99%	C+	2.33
	74.00 – 76.99%	C	2.00
	70.00 – 73.99%	C-	1.67
	60.00 – 69.99%	D	1.00
	0 – 59.99%	F	0.0
Important note concerning grades: Students must receive a grade of C- or better to continue in this ASL course sequence.			
Final Course Grade: Do not ask your instructor to round up your grade. Rounding will not take place after your final grade (score) has been calculated.			
Turnaround for Grades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty members are required to provide feedback for all submitted work within two weeks of the submission deadline. • You will find your grades posted in the myCourses Gradebook. 			

Course Policies

Online Class Communication

- Our primary mode of communication will be signing in ASL. We will use ASL for all communication while online class is in session and will maintain a signing environment at all times.
- All of us will be responsible for making sure everyone understands us. If a student or the instructor signs something you do not understand, it is up to you to respectfully ask for clarification.
- To maximize your own enjoyment of the online class and the learning experience, please feel free to ask questions. The instructor will use ASL and different communication strategies to foster your understanding of what is being taught in the course. You are also encouraged to utilize different communication strategies other than speaking to communicate with other students and the instructor if you are not able to express something in ASL.
- This policy also applies to Zoom meetings, the instructor can mute the audio for everyone, eliminating the possibility of a student communicating with voice.

Communication Outside of Online Class

- It is highly recommended that you communicate with your peers, preferably in person, to practice your ASL skills.
- Another way to enhance your ASL skills is to use your preferred social media (*e.g., Zoom online meeting, GoReact, etc.*) to interact without having to be physically present.

Course Expectation

1. Course Format:

This course consists of recording video assignments and viewing video lectures, vocabulary videos, grammar, and cultural videos.

2. Student Responsibilities:

Students are expected to actively participate by attending synchronous class meetings and completing assigned activities; participate in video discussions; complete assignments on time; respect diverse perspectives and opinions; and support your opinions and answers with reasons, explanation, documentation from a variety of sources.

3. Expectations for Communication in an online course:

- Since ASL is a visual-spatial language, the use of spoken English or of speaking and signing simultaneously ("sim-com") is **not** allowed during synchronous class meetings.
- Students using voice or signing/voicing simultaneously will be asked to re-do video assignments.

4. Peer Network:

- Each student is responsible for getting access to and understanding what is expected of each assignment.
- Please form a strong network with your peers.
- If you miss a class, go to myCourses for assignments and ask other classmates to find out what you missed.

5. Deadlines:

- Assignments not submitted on time will receive a zero grade.
- Video assignments will not be accepted past due dates.
- Allowance will be made in the event of an unforeseen situation on the instructor's end.

6. Homework Quizzes:

- Homework includes, but is not limited to, Comprehensive Receptive Practice to be done in myCourses Quizzes.
- Spontaneous Expressive Practice for each unit is done in GoReact.
- Each comprehensive receptive practice is worth 10 points. You can take these comprehensive receptive practice assignments **twice** before the due dates to receive the highest grade.

Cont'd Course Expectation

7. Tests:

- Tests must be completed the week they are assigned on the course schedule.
- Students will take tests online. Your instructor will provide instructions with links to each test in myCourses Quizzes.
- There are no make-ups for tests allowed unless **prior arrangements** have been made with your instructor.
- [Other than students with Disability Services Agreements, no extensions will be approved.](#)

8. Phone and Laptop:

- Laptops/Computers must be used for all coursework. Smartphones may not be compatible with myCourses and GoREACT for viewing and recording videos for this course.
- Laptops/Computers must have a built-in webcam or be connected to an external webcam in order to submit assignments on time.
- Your internet connection must have adequate bandwidth to play and upload videos.
- Internet problems will not be accepted as an excuse for late assignments. You must make sure to test the bandwidth **BEFORE** the assignment due date.
- When taking tests, it is your responsibility to make sure that your laptop is functioning properly; it must have a working camera, be connected to the Wi-Fi network, and be fully charged.
- [This policy applies to Zoom meetings. Be sure to minimize any physical or technological distractions around you during the meetings so the full focus can be achieved.](#)

Policies and Procedures

Online Communication and Participation Policy:

Our primary mode of communication will be signing in ASL. We will use ASL for all communication with partners and for all assignments in myCourses.

- To maximize your own enjoyment of the class and the learning experience, please feel free to ask questions via email.

- We will be using email and myCourses frequently for announcements, information, questions, discussions, etc. You are expected to check your email and myCourses on a daily basis.
- If you wish to communicate with the instructor, please contact your instructor via email to arrange for a time to meet on Zoom.

Student Grievance Procedure:

Complaints about course grade must first be resolved through your instructor, then the program coordinator, the department chair, the college dean, and the Provost—in that order—until a resolution is reached. You will be asked if you complied with this procedure when filing a grievance.

Student Withdrawal Request:

If you need to withdraw from the course for any reason, you will need to contact your academic advisor and instructor. There will not be any refunds for course withdrawals after Week 12.

Additional information about course withdrawal can be found here:
<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d060>)

Academic Adjustments

RIT is committed to providing reasonable academic adjustments to students with disabilities. If you would like to request adjustments such as testing modifications due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Office. It is located in the Student Alumni Union, Room 1150; the web site is www.rit.edu/dso.

After you receive an approved Disability Services Agreement, it is imperative that you contact your instructor so that both of you can work out whatever arrangement is necessary.

It is critical that you communicate with your instructor in terms of your accommodations.

Academic Integrity

As an institution of higher learning, RIT expects students to behave honestly and ethically at all times, especially when submitting work for evaluation in conjunction with any course or degree requirement. You are expected to be truthful in all aspects of this online course. Any written work turned in as a student's work must have been created by that student.

Any case of cheating, plagiarism, or duplicate submission of work (submitting the same work, in whole or in part, for two different courses) will result in a zero for that assignment or an "F" for the online course, depending upon the severity. Please be familiar with the [RIT Honor Code](#) and with [RIT's Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and is also a violation of intellectual property law. Make certain that you understand what constitutes proper use of sources and what constitutes plagiarism. You commit plagiarism if:

- You borrow an idea or a fact from a source without providing a citation;
- You directly copy sentences or a string of words from a source without placing the quotation in quotation marks and providing a citation (with page number); or
- You borrow a sentence from an author and just change around a few of the words and phrases.
- For a more in-depth explanation, read [What is Plagiarism?](#)

Civility and Respect

The RIT Honor Code states that members of the University are expected to demonstrate civility, respect, decency, and sensitivity towards our fellow members of the RIT community, and recognize that all individuals at this university are part of the larger RIT family, and as such are entitled to that support and mutual respect which they deserve. Students are expected to demonstrate civility and respect to each other, in the classroom and online.

Your activities on social media as well as access to Intellectual Property are included in the RIT Honor Code. Any inappropriate activity, comments, or use of someone else's work will be addressed;

consequences range from failing an activity to failing the online course to dismissal from the program/university.

A Safe Learning Environment

RIT is committed to providing a safe learning environment, free of harassment and discrimination as articulated in our university policies located on our [governance website](#).

RIT's policies require faculty to share information about incidents of gender-based discrimination and harassment with RIT's Title IX coordinator or deputy coordinators, regardless of whether the incidents are stated to them in person or shared by students as part of their coursework.

If you have a concern related to gender-based discrimination and/or harassment and prefer to have a confidential discussion, assistance is available from one of RIT's confidential resources on campus (listed below).

Resource	Location	Phone Numbers
The Center for Women & Gender	Campus Center, Room 1760	585-475-7464
Campus Advocacy, Response, and Support (CARES)	August Health Center Room 2100	585-475-2261 (during business hours) 855-436-1245 (after business hours, weekends/holidays)
RIT Student Health Center	August Health Center 1 st Floor	585-475-2255
RIT Counseling Center	August Health Center Room 2100	585-475-2261
The Ombuds Office	Student Alumni Office Room 1114	585-475-7200 or 585-475-2876
The Center for Religious Life	Schmitt Interfaith Center Room 1400	585-475-2137