

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 = ASL; 16.1603 = Sign Language Interpreting / Translation
Modality: TCI or Hybrid
Proposed Implementation Date: August 2022

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, 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, NIH and NSF both identify American Sign Language as a complete, non-English language associated with its own culture.¹ 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: Select one or both of the following to address student 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. In the fall of 2021 there were 115 minors in sign language.

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. 51% of the respondents were in their senior year; 49% were female and 10 percent male. 95% of the students who took the online/paper survey had previously taken an ASL class at WSU; 100% recommend ASL classes to their friends. 91% responded that the major will benefit students at WSU. 56% would be interested in the major at WSU and 83% will recommend the major to their friends. 50% 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	Headcount Per Year		Sem Credit Hrs Per Year	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full- Time	Part- Time
Implementation (AY 2023-2024)	15	0	540	0
Year 2 (AY 2024-2025)	15	0	1080	0
Year 3 (AY 2025-2026)	20	0	1800	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 76,100 jobs in 2018 for ASL interpreters and translators. The projected job growth for ASL interpretation is 19% between 2018-2028, faster than average. The median salary for ASL interpreting jobs is \$51,830 or \$24.92 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

If you are a freshman Kansas resident (under 21 years of age) graduating in 2015 or later, you must:

1. Achieve an ACT composite score of 21 or above OR a minimum combined SAT-I score of 1080, OR
2. Rank in the top 1/3 of your high schools' graduating class, AND
3. Complete the **Kansas Qualified Admissions Pre-College Curriculum** with at least a 2.00 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.00 scale. Out-of-state residents must earn a 2.50 or higher GPA on a 4.00 scale.

If you graduated from a non-accredited high school or were homeschooled, you must:

Complete coursework equivalent to the **Kansas Qualified Admissions Pre-College Curriculum** with a 2.00 GPA and achieve an ACT score of 21 or above or a combined SAT-I score of at least 980. If you enroll in college courses while in high school, you must achieve a 2.00 GPA or higher in those courses.

If you obtained your GED, you must:

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.

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.

Please note, if you do not meet the guaranteed admission requirements, you are still encouraged to apply. Your application will be reviewed individually.

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.

Track #1: The Structure of Language

Year 1: Fall

SCH = Semester Credit Hours

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 101	ASL I	3
LING 151	The Nature of Language	3

Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 102	ASL II	3
MCLL XXX	Intro to Deaf Studies (Brien created draft)	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 201	ASL III	3
MCLL 351	Linguistics and Foreign Languages	3

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 202	ASL IV	3
LING 315	Introduction to Linguistics	3

Year 3: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 490D	Introduction to Signed Language Interpreting [cross-listed w/CSD 490D]	3

Year 3: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
LING 659	Languages and Language Attitudes in the US	3

Year 4: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
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ANTH 352	Anthropological Linguistics	3
MCLL 370	ASL Elocution	3

Year 4: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 560	Practicum in ASL	3

Total number of credit hours in the major

[39]

Track #2: Language and Culture in Context

Year 1: Fall

SCH = Semester Credit Hours

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 101	ASL I	3
LING 151	The Nature of Language	3

Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 102	ASL II	3
MCLL XXX	Intro to Deaf Studies (Brien created draft)	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 201	ASL III	3
MCLL 351	Linguistics and Foreign Languages	3

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 202	ASL IV	3
CSD 518	Deaf Culture	3

Year 3: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 490D	Introduction to Signed Language Interpreting [cross-listed w/CSD 490D]	3

Year 3: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
LING 659	Languages and Language Attitudes in the US	3
MCLL 353	Language Policy and Advocacy (Rachel created draft syllabus)	3

Year 4: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ANTH 352	Anthropological Linguistics	3

Year 4: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 560	Practicum in ASL	3

Total number of credit hours in the major [39]

Track #3: Interpreting Methods

Year 1: Fall **SCH = Semester Credit Hours**

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 101	ASL I	3
LING 151	Nature of Language	3

Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 102	ASL II	3
MCLL XXX	Intro to Deaf Studies	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 201	ASL III	3
MCLL 351	Linguistics and Foreign Languages	3

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 202	ASL IV	3
LING 315	Introduction to Linguistics	3

Year 3: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 490D	Introduction to Signed Language Interpreting [cross-listed w/CSD 490D]	3
MCLL 370	ASL Elocution	3

Year 3: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
MCLL 570	ASL and English Translation	3

Year 4: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
MCLL 670	Interpreting Interaction: Translation and Consecutive Interpretation	3

Year 4: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH....
ASL 560	Practicum in ASL	3

Total number of credit hours in the major [39]

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	Salary: \$103,500 Fringe: \$8,988
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	\$103,500	\$103,500	\$103,500
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)	\$8,988	\$8,988	\$8,988
Other Personnel Costs -			
Total Existing Personnel Costs – Reassigned or Existing	\$246,038	\$246,038	\$246,038
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	\$321,538	\$321,538	\$321,538
B. FUNDING SOURCES	1 st FY 15 new students	2 nd FY 15 new students	3 rd FY 20 new students
Tuition/State Funds	\$402,516	\$402,516	\$536,688
Student Fees (program fee) \$35 per credit hour majors and minors taking ASL courses	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$77,000
Student Fees (mandatory course fee)			
Student Support Services Fee			
Other Sources			
Grand Total Funding	\$472, 516	\$472, 516	\$613,688
C. Projected Surplus/Deficit (+/-)	+\$150,978	+\$230,960	+\$292,150

X. Expenditures and Funding Sources Explanations

A. Expenditures

Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions

Currently, the American Sign Language Program employs four adjunct lecturers to teach 17 courses per semester at the cost of \$56,994 per semester. Currently, these courses generate approximately 1,750 student credit hours per year. As the program moves from a minor to major more credit hours will be generated each year as the program becomes more established. One-hundred credit hours per semester was a conservative estimate for the increase in the first year with 200 in the third year of the new program.

Several current faculty in the Linguistics program and the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literature will be assigned courses in the new program to mitigate the overall costs of hiring new faculty.

A coordinator of the American Sign Language program is proposed this would be tenure track line with a two / two teaching load. The role of the coordinator would be to teach courses in the program, advise students, administer the scheduling of courses, and sustain enrollments.

B. Revenue: Funding Sources

Tuition and fees will be the primary source of funding for the program. Projected tuition revenue was calculated by using online and in-state tuition rates of 228.09 per credit hour multiplied by the number of credit hours currently earned by the American Sign Language courses at approximately 2000 per FY. This number would increase by at least 200 per year in subsequent years of the major being established.

A student support services fee of \$35 per credit hour will be assessed for students taking courses in American Sign Language Courses generation in excess of \$70,000 per FY.

C. Projected Surplus/Deficit

The proposed new ASL degree program is projected to have a revenue surplus each year of \$250,000 per FY.

ⁱ 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