



INFORMATION SERIES

Where can I take Sign Language Classes?

What to be aware of when selecting a sign language class.

What is ASL?

American Sign Language (ASL) is the natural, native visual-gestural language primarily used by members of the Deaf culture in the United States and Canada. It is the fourth most commonly-used language in the U.S. ASL is not based on, nor is it derived from English or any spoken language. It has its own grammar, lexicons, facial expressions and body shifts. It is not a universal language, nor does it have a written form.

What is Signed English?

Signed English refers to coding systems which attempt to represent English visually. These systems are usually referred to as forms of Manually Coded English. There are several forms of Manually Coded English or Signed Systems (for example, Signed English, SEE I, SEE II, and others). These Signed Systems borrow signs from ASL but use them with English sentence structure. Some of the Signed Systems also invent new sign symbols to represent English words and grammatical markers such as 'ed', 'ness', and so on. Unlike ASL, facial expression or body movement to indicate grammatical functions are not used with signed systems.

This list is provided for informational purposes only. Inclusion or exclusion of sign language courses or programs on this list does not constitute approval or disapproval by the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH). Send additions, corrections or deletions to the RICDHH office.

Colleges/Universities/K-12		
Roger Williams University Anthony Hollingsworth ahollingsworth@rwu.edu www.rwu.edu 401-254-3344 v Levels 1, 2 & 3, 3 Credit Course	Rhode Island College Maureen McEntee, Instructor mmcentee@ric.edu www.ric.edu 401-456-8270 v ASL1 and ASL 2, 4 Credit Course	Bristol Community College Sandy Lygren, Director sandy.lygren@bristolcc.edu www.bristolcc.edu 508-678-2811 x 2748 v Visual-Gestural Communication for 1 Credit Course Beginner, Intermediate & Adv. for 3 Credit Course Beginner also available as online
Community College of RI 401-825-2271 v https://www.ccri.edu/asl.html 3 Credit Course	RI School for the Deaf www.rideaf.net 401-222-3525 v/tty Beginner 1 evening/week	

Social Service Agencies	
Bridgemark, Inc. Deb Raiche, Instructor draiche@bridgemark.org www.bridgemark.org 401-781-2700 v 401-354-7640 vp Beginner sign classes	Perspectives Corporations Jim Simon, Director jsimon@perspectivescorporation.com www.perspectivescorporation.com 401-294-3990 ext.152 v 401-372-3075 vp

Business/Private
ASL Academy Manuel Martin, Director learnasl@aslacademy.org www.aslacademy.org 401-722-1022 v Beginner, Intermediate & Adv.

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