



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.

Community College of Rhode Island

401-825-2271 v

Mary Earl, Instructor

Maryearl1@aol.com

Nancy Vinacco, Instructor

cwfuller@aol.com

3 Cr. Course

Rhode Island School for the Deaf

401-222-7433 v/tty

Beginner, Intermediate & Advanced ASL

Bristol Community College

Sandy Lygren, Director

sandy.lygren@bristolcc.edu

508-678-2811 x 2748 v

Beginner, Intermediate & Advanced ASL

3 Cr. Course

John F. Spellman Center

Email: JFSpellman@aol.com

ASL Classes & Family Sign Language Class

Bridgemark, Inc.

Deb Raiche, Instructor

draiche@bridgemark.org

401-781-2700 v or 401-354-7640 vp

Beginning sign classes

Corliss Institute

Paul Molloy, Instructor

pmolloy@corliss.org

401-245-3609 v or 401-237-6652 vp

Beginner ASL

Perspectives Corporations

Jim Simon, Director

jsimon@perspectivescorporation.com

401-294-8181 x 152 v

Agnes 16 and up

University of Rhode Island

401-874-5969 v

Sign Language Class

Roger Williams University

401-222-7433 v/tty

3 Cr. Course, Levels 1, 2 & 3

Rhode Island College

401-456-8270 v

3 Cr. Course

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