

TO: Lawrence Williams, Chair
Undergraduate Council

FROM: Richard Scamell
Degree Programs Committee: Programs

SUBJECT: UC 10273 09S: American Sign Language Interpreting Proposal

DATE: April 15, 2009

APPROVED APR 22 2009
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The Committee met on Wednesday, April 15 to consider proposed catalog language for the recently approved American Sign Language Interpreting Program. Participating in the discussion were committee members Betty Barr, Roger Blakeney, Partha Krishnamurthy, Iain Morrison and Richard Scamell. Michael Bienenstock attended the meeting as a guest.

Background

The proposal for a new Bachelor of Arts in American Sign Language Interpreting (UC 9271 07S) was endorsed by the Undergraduate Council on April 18, 2007 and subsequently approved on February 6, 2009, effective January 1, 2009, by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. UC 10273 09S contains the proposed catalog language for the program. The remainder of this report contains the catalog language from UC 10273 09S and includes revisions in wording suggested by members of the Degree Programs Committee.

Overview of the American Sign Language Interpreting Program

The University of Houston American Sign Language Interpreting (ASLI) program is designed to prepare undergraduates to be certified interpreters for the Deaf. Interpreters for the Deaf facilitate communication between the Deaf and typically hearing impaired individuals and groups in a vast array of settings such as: schools, courtrooms, hospitals, television and video relay stations.

Courses are taught by both deaf and hearing instructors. Students interact with professional interpreters and the deaf community throughout their program of study in a variety of interpreting experiences. Graduates of the ASLI program must be proficient in both English and American Sign Language and will complete all University of Houston requirements for a Bachelor of Arts degree. The goal of the program is for graduates to be qualified to pass the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (national) and/or Board of Evaluation of Interpreters (Texas) certification exams, and to gain employment in a growing field of high demand.

General Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in ASL Interpreting Program

To obtain a bachelor's degree in ASL Interpreting (ASLI) the following requirements must be completed in addition to university core requirements as well as the requirements of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences for the Bachelor of Arts degree. The following 43 credits constitute the required courses for the major in ASLI: COMD 2301, COMD 2302, ASLI 1310, ASLI 2311, ASLI 2322, ASLI 3311, ASLI 3333, ASLI 3334, ASLI 4335, ASLI 4346, ASLI 4357, ASLI 4489; either ENGL 4300 – Introduction to the Study of Language or ASLI 4368 and either ENGL 4303 – English as a Second Language or PSYC 4397 – Bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition*.

For those planning to major in ASL Interpreting:

1. All students are required to meet with the undergraduate advisor prior to declaring the major.
2. To be accepted into the major, students must
 - a. Complete COMD 2301 or its equivalent with a grade of B- or better,
 - b. Pass a departmental written examination, and
 - c. Pass an ASL Language Proficiency test with a grade of 85 or better.

*The ASLI courses included in this list were approved by the Undergraduate Council during the Fall 2008 semester.

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- The two admissions tests may be repeated only once.
3. A degree plan should be filed once the student has reached junior status and has been accepted in the major. The degree plan must be filed in the semester prior to enrollment in ASLI 4489: Internship in ASL Interpreting.
 4. ASLI students will take one of the following courses to complete the Writing in the Discipline requirement for the core: PSYC 2344 – Cultural Psychology, SOC 2310 – Social Problems, SOC 2325 – American Minority People or SOC 3330 – Introduction to Social Psychology. The course taken for Writing in the Discipline must be completed with a grade of B- or better.
 5. All courses in the major must be completed with a grade of B- or better.
 6. A satisfactory rate of progress toward the degree is required throughout the student's enrollment. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (B) for all ASLI courses attempted is required for continuation in the program. Failure to maintain a 3.00 grade point average may result in a warning. If a student is unable to improve their GPA within one semester, removal from the program is possible.
 7. Prior to enrollment in a class any prerequisites must be completed successfully (grade of B- or better). If a student enrolls in a class for which they are not eligible, they will be dropped. Neither the department nor the university will be responsible for any tuition refunds.
 8. Only two courses in the major can be repeated, and they may be repeated only once.
 9. All undergraduate students must attend all mandatory undergraduate advising meetings. **It is recommended that students meet with their advisor at least once a year.**
 10. Students whose latest ASL class was over 12 months prior must be evaluated for placement in the appropriate ASL level.
 11. Courses in the major that are seven or more years old may not count toward a degree, whether taken at the University of Houston or transferred to the University of Houston unless successfully petitioned.
 12. A minimum of twelve hours of advanced ASLI courses must be taken in residence at the University of Houston.

Degree Plans

To file a degree plan the student:

1. Must complete COMD 2302 or equivalent and 15 hours in the department, with a minimum grade of B- for each course.
2. Must have achieved junior status having completed at least 60 credits with an overall grade point average of 2.5 or better.
3. Must have successfully completed the following core classes:
 - 6 credits in Communications
 - 6 credits in Math Reasoning
 - 6 credits in Natural Science
 - 6 credits in United States History
 - 6 credits in American Government

All students should see their ASLI advisor for assistance in determining their full program of study which includes university and college core course requirements. ASLI and COMD courses are typically offered once a year and must be taken in sequence to accommodate prerequisites.

Recommendation

The Degree Programs Committee: Programs unanimously supports the catalog language contained in this report.