

Introduction to Modern Language Programs – Visual

American Sign Language (ASL) is a vibrant language used by people of all ages to communicate everyday life experiences, needs, thoughts, and abstract ideas but in a visual way. ASL has a rich culture and heritage. ASL is the predominant language most commonly used by the Deaf community in the United States and Canada. In addition, other countries have their own signed languages, like Mexican Sign Language and French Sign Language (LSF).

In 2007, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed legislation (§ 115C-81.3) recognizing ASL as a modern language that fulfills the UNC Minimum Admissions requirement for foreign language at our state's colleges and universities. Manually Coded English (MCE) systems, such as Signing Exact English and Seeing Essential English (SEE), do not meet the requirement.

Since ASL is a visual language, the communication modes involve different skills:

- Interpretive Listening is labeled Interpretive Receptive, meaning that information is received visually, not auditorially.
- Interpretive Reading is fingerspelling, which is a series of individual hand shapes that represent the alphabet and letter combinations.
- Presentational Speaking is Presentational Expressive, because information is being conveyed visually through signs, not verbally.
- Presentational Writing is now Presentational Glossing or writing ASL on paper. Glossing is a written system to indicate which signs and other non-manual makers, such as facial expressions and body movements, should be used.

Modern Language Exit Proficiency Expectations for Visual Languages such as ASL

Level and → total hours	I or *135- 150 hours	II or *270- 300 hours	III or *405- 450 hours	IV or 540- 600 hours	V or 675- 750 hours	VI or 810- 900 hours	VII or 945- 1050 hours	VIII or 1080- 1200 hours
↓MODE & Skill								
INTERPRETIVE Receptive	Novice High	Int. Low	Intermediate Mid		Int. High	Adv. Low	Advanced Mid	
INTERPRETIVE Receptive- Fingerspelling	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low		Int. Mid	Intermediate High		Adv. Low
INTERPERSONAL Interactive	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low		Int. Mid	Int. High	Advanced Low	
PRESENTATIONAL Expressive	Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate Low		Int. Mid	Int. High	Adv. Low	Adv. Mid
PRESENTATIONAL Glossing	Novice Low	Novice Mid	Novice High	Int. Low	Int. Mid	Int. High	Advanced Low	

* Indicates accumulation of instructional hours that may vary for FLES and middle school programs, based on the structure of the program and the developmental level of the students. This will impact initial placement into courses earning high school graduation credit.