

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SPECIAL EDUCATION – Sign Language Interpreting Strand

The College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services offers a sign language interpreting strand as part of the Special Education program. This is a non-licensure course of study. There are two tracks within the sign language interpreting strand, the educational track and the community track. A total of 90 undergraduate quarter credit hours are required for the strand of study, plus general education course requirements of 91 undergraduate quarter credit hours. Sign language interpreting courses are delivered using a unique blend of online instruction with webcam technology.

Admission to the last two years of the Special Education Sign Language Interpreting strand involves admission into the professional cohort. This occurs once the candidate's portfolio has been submitted and reviewed and a personal interview has been evaluated. Admission into the professional cohort is competitive and enrollment in this strand is limited.

What can I do with a baccalaureate degree in Special Education–Sign Language Interpreting?

While a baccalaureate degree will not be required by the national certifying body, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) until 2012, a baccalaureate degree does provide an opportunity for further knowledge and skill development. Some positions, state requirements, and organizations are increasingly acknowledging degrees in conjunction with experience and certification.

Can I teach when I get this degree?

This is currently a non-licensure degree. It is suggested that you inquire with the Ohio Department of Education regarding licensure requirements for teaching.

Can I teach American Sign Language with this degree?

This degree is not designed for teaching American Sign Language. It is suggested that you inquire with the Ohio Department of Education regarding licensure requirements for teaching American Sign Language.

Is this strand offered completely online?

Yes. The strand is designed using both synchronous and asynchronous course delivery methods. Students are not required to physically come to campus, however are able to use the on-campus sign language lab as needed.

What does synchronous and asynchronous mean?

Synchronous course meetings use software (paid for by the University) that will enable you to have real-time, face-to-face interaction using webcam technology. This does require regularly scheduled meetings (approximately 2-3 per quarter, per course). The times for the meetings will be designed to meet the needs of the students and will be determined with the input of the entire cohort. There will be multiple options (2-3 times) for each meeting to choose from.



Asynchronous course work is the traditional online format of working independently using software such as Blackboard.

Technology expertise is NOT required. Training sessions will be conducted to help students become familiar and comfortable with the technology before the courses begin.

Since this strand is available using synchronous and asynchronous delivery methods, what are the technology requirements to participate in the strand?

1. The technology requirements are:
 - Computer meeting one of the operating systems requirements listed:
 - Windows 98, 2000, XP
 - Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher
 - Mozilla Firefox 1.5
 - Netscape Navigator 7.1
 - AOL 9
 - Mac OS X 10.2, 10.3, 10.4
 - Safari 1.1 or higher
 - Mozilla Firefox 1.5
 - Linux
 - Mozilla Firefox 1.5
 - Solaris
 - Mozilla 1.7
 - Web camera [30 frames per second (fps). Logitech and Creative Labs suggested.]
 - Headset with microphone (USB or Firewire)
 - Broadband internet access
 - Flash player (free to download 6.0.79 or higher or 7 or higher for Linux and Solaris)
- Aforementioned operating systems are acceptable; Windows can be most readily supported.

What is the cost of the software, web camera and headset?

There is no fee associated with the software for students. The only purchase (aside from computer and broadband internet access – if you don't currently have either), is the headset and web camera. Approximate total cost for both items range from \$60-80.

Is an associate's degree in interpreting required for entry into the cohort?

No, but students must have foundational knowledge in interpreting in addition to deaf culture and American Sign Language. Currently, we are discussing options with UC students to acquire the necessary foundational interpreting courses from Cincinnati State for eligibility for the cohort. This does require meeting with an Academic Advisor for assistance.

How do I apply to this strand?

A portfolio must be submitted and an interview completed with the Sign Language Interview Committee in order to be admitted to the strand.



The portfolio must include:

- A) A written essay (1500 words or less) addressing the following questions:
 - Why are you applying to this strand?
 - What are your academic goals?
 - What are your professional goals as a result of completing this strand?

- B) VHS/DVD materials demonstrating the following competencies:
 - A discussion of an issue using American Sign Language
 - Sign-to-voice interpretation (unrehearsed)
 - Voice-to-sign interpretation (unrehearsed)

- C) Two letters of reference:
 - One from an interpreter or interpreter educator
 - One from a deaf or hard-of-hearing consumer

- D) Copy of passing Praxis I scores or completed waiver form (available at the CECH Student Services Center) with ACT/SAT documentation. Praxis I scores are needed to enter the strand, so you may submit these at a later date but prior to September 19, 2007.

After portfolio review, an invitation admissions interview with the Special Education Sign Language Interpreting Interview Committee will be extended.

Other admission requirements:

- Minimum 2.5 GPA from all previous college coursework.
- Minimum of two years of American Sign Language courses (6 quarters or 4 semesters)

Send portfolio to:

Student Services Center
c/o Sign Language Interpreting Strand
College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services
University of Cincinnati
PO Box 210014
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0014

When is the portfolio due?

Portfolios are accepted on a rolling admission basis. Portfolios will be reviewed in a timely fashion and scheduled for an interview to complete the process. Applicants are notified within two weeks of the interview.

Will equipment and lab materials be available to assist in the development of the required portfolio?

Yes. To schedule equipment and assistance, please contact Suzanne Ehrlich-Martin at 513-556-1670. A scheduled time will be arranged to assist you in completing the portfolio requirements.



What content is required for the discussion portion of the portfolio? Can it include more than one person?

The topic you choose for your discussion is at your discretion. This piece should best represent your skills in American Sign Language. Topics can include anything from your thoughts on the war in Iraq to your educational journey, or any other topic that you find interesting. Be creative. You may include another person in the discussion but be sure that the lighting and camera positioning is clear enough to see your expressive skills.

Can I videotape myself at my job for my portfolio performance?

Yes. It is important to have consent from all visible participants and that the lighting and camera positioning is clear. Video segments that are blurry, misaligned, etc. will not be accepted.

Praxis Testing

What is the Praxis I?

The Praxis I is a Pre-Professional Skills Test. It is designed to provide information regarding basic proficiency in communication or computational skills. It is required for all incoming students who have not achieved an ACT composite of 22 or higher, or a total SAT score of at least 1000 in the verbal and math sections combined.

What are the required scores on the Praxis I?

173 in Reading; 172 in Writing; and 172 in Math
*Please note these scores are subject to change.

If I have the required ACT or SAT scores, how do I waive the Praxis I?

You must include a waiver application as well as a copy of your ACT or SAT scores as part of your portfolio.

Is there a Web site I can refer to find out more about taking the Praxis exam?

Yes. The Web site is www.ets.org. You will find additional information regarding testing sites, payment options, practice exams, and reference materials.