

Interpreter Education

Becoming an American Sign Language - English Interpreter

Students who wish to become qualified sign language interpreters must develop fluency in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. The Interpreter Education curriculum prepares individuals to work as entry-level ASL - English interpreters making it possible for Deaf and hearing people to communicate with one another in a variety of interactive settings.

The AAS in Interpreter Education (A55300) is a 70-credit program that typically takes up to five semesters to complete because foundational ASL skills must be acquired before learning to interpret between ASL and English. The full-time program is spread out over five semesters, with most semesters requiring between 12 and 17 credits hours of study. Because of course sequencing, students wishing to complete the AAS in Interpreter Education are strongly encouraged to begin their studies with ASL and IPP course in the Fall term. Students should seek academic advising directly from the program faculty regarding their course sequence and career.

Certificate in Basic ASL Communication

Some students take ASL classes to satisfy foreign/modern language requirements in other degree programs and only take two or three semesters of ASL instruction. Some students seek more in-depth ASL instruction but do not wish to become ASL-English Interpreters. For those students, a Certificate in Basic ASL Communication Skills (C55300-C6) is available to document a social level of ASL proficiency for a variety of employment or personal reasons. Please note: A certification in Basic ASL Communication will not provide the qualifications to work as a sign language interpreter, but can be obtained as a preliminary step to completing the AAS degree in Interpreter Education. ASL 111, ASL 181, ASL 112, ASL 182, ASL 211, ASL 281, ASL 212, ASL 282 are transferable courses under the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement.

Employment Opportunities

Entry-level employment for professional interpreters is available in a variety of community and educational settings. Interpreters may consider part-time, full-time, self-employment, and independent contracts or apply American Sign Language skills to other related areas of human services such as Support Service Providers.

AAS in Interpreter Education graduates interested in working in the K-12 educational setting can qualify to enter the workforce in NC Public Schools by obtaining a 3.3 or higher on the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA). To qualify for a provision license to interpret in NC, a 3.5 on the EIPA is needed.

For specific information about potential positions and wages in interpreter education employment, visit the Central Piedmont Career Coach website.