

# Be Something...

## American Sign Language Program

### What preparation will this program give me?

The program will prepare you to become proficient in ASL for work-related use or personal need such as parenting a deaf child, being a deafened adult, or desiring to learn another language.

American Sign Language is the fourth most used language in the United States. It is the major language that the American Deaf population uses. The ASL Program focuses on understanding Deaf culture, acquiring communicative skills and grammar, and understanding the communications process between the Deaf and hearing communities. As part of your classes, you fully experience Deaf culture, apply what you learn to everyday situations, and meet and interact with members of the Deaf community.



### What kind of job will I be qualified for when I finish?

A bilingual ASL speaker can become a sign language interpreter. Sign language interpreters facilitate communication between people who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who can hear. Interpreters must be able to listen to another person's words and inflections and simultaneously convey them in sign language. Interpreters work in many settings including medical, legal, religious, mental health, performing arts and business. Schools, government agencies, hospitals, court systems and private businesses employ interpreters.

Interpreters generally are either employed by an agency, free-lance, or contracted. Salaries vary tremendously depending on location, education, experience and expertise.

There are also many jobs in which bilingual ability is either necessary or helpful, such as being a bilingual teacher or a bilingual service provider.

### Sign Language Interpreting is a rapidly expanding field, experiencing an increase in demand for qualified interpreters!

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition*

### What classes will I take?

| Required Courses:           |  | Units     |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------|
| ASL 50                      | American Sign Language I                         | 4         |
| ASL 51                      | American Sign Language II                        | 4         |
| ASL 52                      | American Sign Language III                       | 4         |
| ASL 53                      | American Sign Language IV                        | 4         |
| ASL 55A                     | History and Culture of Deaf People in America I  | 3         |
| ASL 55B                     | History and Culture of Deaf People in America II | 3         |
| ASL 57                      | Structure of American Sign Language              | 3         |
| ASL 200B                    | Classifiers II                                   | 2         |
| ASL 201                     | American Sign Language Field Experience          | 3         |
| ASL 202B                    | Fingerspelling & Numbers II                      | 1         |
| <b>Total Required Units</b> |  | <b>31</b> |

"Our instructors wrote a curriculum which is used throughout the world, so you learn from the best and develop language and cultural skills necessary to communicate and interact with the Deaf community. The classes help you develop a very strong feeling of community and sharing."

— Nancy Cayton, ASL Program Graduate, Interpreter and Staff Assistant, Berkeley City College

### What degree will I receive and how many course credits will I need?

Students can obtain either a Certificate of Completion or an Associate in Arts Degree. A Certificate of Completion is given after satisfactory completion of the 31 units of required coursework. An Associate of Arts degree is given after satisfactory completion of the 31 units of required coursework plus 29 additional general education and elective course units.

### Where do I get more information?

Contact Berkeley City College American Sign Language program at (510) 981-2903

