Miami-Dade College
ASL 2400 - Linguistics of American Sign Language

Catalog Description:

The course provides an in-depth exploration of the linguistics of ASL, including phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. An overview of the various systems of manual communication used in the U.S. is presented along with their placement on the Sign Language Continuum. The course is designed for persons with intermediate to advanced level understanding of ASL principles. (3 hr. lecture)

3 Credits

Prerequisites: ASL 2160C

Course Competencies:

Competency 1: The student will demonstrate a knowledge of the background and historical development of American Sign Language (ASL) by:

    a. describing the historical development of ASL
    b. describing how the visual orientation of deaf persons has influenced ASL
    c. demonstrating how conceptual accuracy is an integral part of ASL

Competency 2: The student will demonstrate a knowledge of the study of language and the field of linguistics by:

    a. describing the nature and characteristics of language
    b. explaining the major sub fields of linguistics, such as phonology, morphology, semantics, pragmatics and syntax

Competency 3: The student will identify and explain the various linguistic principles of ASL such as:

    a. classifier predicates
    b. locative verbs
    c. numeral incorporation
    d. yes-no questions
    e. wh-questions
    f. temporal aspect
    g. lexicalized fingerspelling and loan signs
    h. non-manual signals
    i. conditional sentences
    j. topicalization
    k. the function of space

Competency 4: The student will compare and contrast key linguistic features in ASL and English such as:

    a. deriving nouns from verbs
    b. subject-object agreement
    c. pronouns and determiners
    d. development of compounds
    e. basic sentence types

Competency 5: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the various invented systems of manual communication by:

    a.   explaining the sign language continuum and locating various systems of manual communication on it
    b.   explaining the rationale behind the invention and use of systems of manually coded English
    c.   identifying the various systems of manual communication and giving their historical development
    d.   performing commonly used English manual markers used in various systems of manually coded English