

World Languages—American Sign Language (ASL) Subject Matter Requirements

Part I: Content Domains for Subject Matter Understanding and Skill in World Languages—American Sign Language (ASL)

Domain 1. General Linguistics

Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the nature, process, and components of language at the postsecondary level, as described in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (2002) and reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates demonstrate both broad and deep conceptual understanding of the subject matter, including the universal characteristics of human languages, both spoken and signed, and the ways in which linguistics describes and categorizes language structures. They analyze the processes by which languages change over time, understand how languages vary geographically, socially, and ethnographically, and recognize the family relationships among different languages. Candidates show an awareness of the communicative functions of language and how those functions vary depending upon the context and purpose of communication. They demonstrate a thorough understanding of language acquisition, including the processes by which additional languages are acquired and the developmental patterns of language learning, and recognize that language acquisition involves the interrelationship of language and culture.

1.1 The Nature of Language

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature, purposes, and uses of language. For example:
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of language structure (i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) and how they are interrelated.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding that languages can occur in different modalities.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles of grammar and what is meant by a productive rule of language.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the distinction between deep structure and surface structure.
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of the development of language and the significance of language change, including the variations that occur within the contexts of time, place, age, gender, and situation. For example:
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the classification of both spoken and signed languages into families and branches.
 - ◆ Describe different perspectives on the study of language (e.g., synchronic vs. diachronic).
 - ◆ Identify the different types of change that languages undergo at all levels (e.g., phonetic, morphological and syntactic, lexical and semantic).
 - ◆ Analyze the mechanisms by which language change occurs (e.g., assimilation, metathesis, contact, borrowing, euphemisms, metaphors, taboo).

1.2 Language Use

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of principles of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and the theory of speech acts. For example:
- ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of how sentences may communicate more than they literally say.
 - ◆ Analyze principles of structure, regularity, and coherence in extended discourse.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of distinctions between different types of speech acts (e.g., direct vs. indirect).
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of distinctions between different varieties of speech acts (e.g., commands, questions, assertions, exclamations).
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the functions of speech acts (e.g., to inform, to amuse, to control, to persuade).
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of pragmatic features (e.g., reference, sense, force, tone, conversational implicature) that affect the meaning of speech acts.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the distinction between performative and constative utterances (language that performs an act, such as apologizing or promising, vs. language that describes facts or provides information).

1.3 Applied Linguistics

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of theories of language acquisition and learning. For example:
- ◆ Analyze potential differences between learning first and second languages.
 - ◆ Identify the developmental stages through which language learners acquire first and second languages.
 - ◆ Analyze similarities and differences between language acquisition in different modalities (e.g., acquisition of a signed language compared with acquisition of a spoken language).
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of cognitive, affective, and social factors that affect second-language acquisition and learning (e.g., the concept of critical period, family and peer attitudes, linguistic interference, the interrelationship between language and power).
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the creativity and recursive character of human languages.

(American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL]: Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers, 1.b, 1.c)

Domain 2. Linguistics of the Target Language—American Sign Language (ASL)

Candidates demonstrate a broad and deep knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL) linguistics at the postsecondary level, as reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates demonstrate an understanding of ASL, including phonological structures, the rules by which lexical items are formed, and the ways in which phrases, clauses, and sentences are structured, and can explain the major levels and features of ASL grammar. They are able to describe ASL phonological features, transcription conventions, morphological rules, syntactic patterns, and semantics. Candidates are able to describe the rules for sign and sentence formation, as well as the structure, function, and meaning of ASL discourse, including pragmatic features, sociolinguistic features, and features for producing coherence in discourse. Candidates are familiar with rhetorical and stylistic devices and the levels of language appropriate for various tasks and communicative purposes. In addition, candidates understand the historical changes in ASL and its variations, including differences in articulation, vocabulary, and grammatical structures, as well as register.

2.1 Language Structures

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the phonology of ASL. For example:
 - ◆ Describe the primary phonological features of ASL (e.g., handshape, movement, location, nonmanual markers, orientation, stress and tempo in sign formation).
 - ◆ Describe the phonological structure of ASL (e.g., hold and movement patterns, eye gaze, nodding).
 - ◆ Describe basic phonological and morphophonemic rules of ASL.
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of the morphology of ASL. For example:
 - ◆ Understand inflectional morphology in ASL (e.g., rules for adding adverbial, numerical, or distributive morphemes to root verbs; rules for forming plurals of nouns).
 - ◆ Understand derivational morphology in ASL (e.g., rules for forming derived and compound signs).
 - ◆ Understand lexical morphology in ASL, including the lexicalization of finger-spelled forms.
 - ◆ Describe strategies for identifying and using new signs in ASL by recombining morphemes.
- c. Demonstrate an understanding of the syntax of ASL. For example:
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the rules that govern the formation of phrases and sentences (e.g., the use of classifiers and classifier predicates).
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of sign order in ASL.
 - ◆ Identify ways in which syntactic patterns in ASL can be used to convey nuances of meaning.
 - ◆ Identify linguistic devices used to create connected and cohesive discourse in ASL.
- d. Demonstrate an understanding of the semantics of ASL. For example:
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of how meaning is structured and communicated in ASL.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural meaning of ASL signs and sentences.
- e. Demonstrate a basic understanding of transcription conventions in ASL. For example:
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of commonly used glossing techniques in ASL.
- f. Describe changes that have occurred in ASL over time.

2.2 Error Analysis

- a. Identify, analyze, and correct grammatical and mechanical errors in ASL.

2.3 Contrastive Analysis

- a. Analyze and contrast linguistic structures of ASL and English.
- b. Compare and contrast how meaning is expressed in ASL and English.

2.4 Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of pragmatic and sociolinguistic features of ASL discourse. For example:
 - ◆ Explain how linguistic choices depend on the setting, goals, and participants in communicative interactions.
 - ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the influence of social and cultural norms on the use of ASL.
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of the origins and social implications of variations within ASL. For example:
 - ◆ Describe variations in articulation, vocabulary, and grammatical structures within ASL.
 - ◆ Describe the factors that account for the variations in ASL (e.g., culture/ethnicity, political background, level and/or background of education, gender, social class).
- c. Demonstrate an understanding of how the history of ASL in the United States and its acceptance as a language have influenced the use of ASL (e.g., how changing attitudes toward ASL have influenced language choice).

Domain 3. Literary and Cultural Texts and Traditions

Candidates demonstrate a broad and deep knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL) and American Deaf culture literary and cultural texts and traditions, and of their contexts, at the postsecondary level, as reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates are familiar with major American Sign Language literary and intellectual movements, genres, creators, and works. Candidates are also familiar with major English-language works written by Deaf people within American Deaf culture. Candidates demonstrate the ability to analyze, interpret, and synthesize ideas as well as critical issues from a wide range of creators and thinkers across a variety of forms and media. They understand the historical, social, and cultural contexts in which literary and cultural texts were created, the influence of these factors on ideas and forms of expression, and the ways in which those texts both reflect and shape American Deaf culture. Finally, candidates use literary and cultural texts to interpret and reflect upon the perspectives of American Deaf culture over time.

3.1 Major Movements, Genres, Writers, and Works

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of major movements, genres, creators, and works in the literature of ASL.
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical, social, and cultural influences on ASL works.
- c. Use knowledge of ASL literary and cultural traditions to interpret changes in American Deaf culture over time.
- d. Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which ASL literary and intellectual works and movements both reflected and shaped American Deaf culture.
- e. Demonstrate an understanding of English-language literary and cultural texts written by Deaf people within American Deaf culture.

3.2 Analysis of ASL and American Deaf Culture Literary and Cultural Texts

- a. Analyze and interpret a wide range of ASL literary and cultural works in a variety of forms (e.g., folk tales, short stories, jokes, sign songs, ABC stories, poetry, personal narratives, drama, biography, history).
- b. Evaluate the use of language (e.g., vocabulary, register, function, tempo, rhythm) in ASL works to convey meaning, to inform, to persuade, or to evoke a response.
- c. Analyze the elements of ASL literary and cultural works (e.g., setting, plot, theme, character, tone, style).
- d. Interpret the use of rhetorical and literary techniques (e.g., rhyme, repetition, metaphor, personification) in ASL literary and cultural works.
- e. Analyze and interpret English-language literary and cultural works written by Deaf people within American Deaf culture.

Domain 4. Cultural Analysis and Comparisons

Candidates possess a broad and deep knowledge of American Deaf culture and demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships among the processes, perspectives, practices, and products of American Deaf culture at the postsecondary level, as reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates recognize culture as a dynamic, interrelated system and employ a variety of processes to identify, analyze, and evaluate cultural themes, values, and ideas. They are able to explore relationships among cultural perspectives and social institutions, and they understand how cultural practices and products exemplify the perspectives of American Deaf culture. Candidates exhibit familiarity with daily living patterns, cultural attitudes and priorities, contemporary and historical issues, social institutions, and significant artistic and literary works in American Deaf culture. They are able to identify the roles and contributions of major figures and notable individuals in American Deaf culture and references made to them. Candidates are able to interpret ideas, values, and beliefs that represent American Deaf culture's traditions and contemporary variations and are able to compare and contrast social, historical, and artistic traditions in American Deaf culture with those of other cultures.

4.1 The Nature of Culture and Cultural Processes

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature and components of culture. For example:
 - ◆ definitions of culture
 - ◆ intragroup (e.g., ethnicity, generations, race, microcultures) and intergroup differences
 - ◆ values, beliefs, and expectations
 - ◆ educational, social, and political systems
 - ◆ roles, identity, and status (e.g., race, gender, ethnicity, social class, age, occupation, educational level, cultural identity)
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of cross-cultural and intercultural interactions. For example:
 - ◆ processes of cultural contact (e.g., assimilation, acculturation, accommodation, enculturation, deculturation, biculturalism)
 - ◆ the nature of pluralism and multiculturalism
 - ◆ the dynamics of oppression (e.g., ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination)

4.2 Cultural Processes in American Deaf Culture

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of how cultural processes exemplify cultural perspectives in American Deaf culture. For example:
 - ◆ processes of cultural contact (e.g., assimilation, acculturation, enculturation, biculturalism) and their role in American Deaf culture, including responses to contact with others (e.g., creation of stereotypes and anti-stereotypes, growth of activism, emergence and creation of unifying themes, promulgation of warnings about others, historical changes in the relationship with others)
 - ◆ processes of cultural development and perspectives within American Deaf culture (e.g., processes that define, categorize, include, and marginalize who is Deaf; processes of linguistic, cultural, and social development among Deaf children; processes of learning to be Deaf at different ages; processes of transmitting Deaf culture across generations)
 - ◆ the nature of pluralism, multiculturalism, and cultural variation within American Deaf culture
 - ◆ the dynamics of audism (e.g., oppression, discrimination) that affect American Deaf culture

4.3 Cultural and Historical Perspectives in American Deaf Culture

- a. Demonstrate familiarity with significant individuals, key eras, and major historical events and developments within American Deaf culture, and analyze their influence on the culture's development and evolution.
- b. Demonstrate familiarity with the formation of ASL and Deaf communities and how they influence the development and evolution of American Deaf culture.
- c. Demonstrate an understanding of how political, social, economic, and educational systems and institutions are shaped by and influence American Deaf culture.
- d. Demonstrate an understanding of how the development of American Deaf culture and the interaction of Deaf and hearing cultures influence the development of ASL.
- e. Demonstrate an understanding of how American Deaf culture employs, influences, and interacts with technology, including attitudes toward technology within American Deaf culture.
- f. Analyze cultural stereotypes and their effects on the perceptions of and attitudes toward American Deaf culture.
- g. Analyze how political perspectives and legislation influence the development and evolution of American Deaf culture.

4.4 Cultural Practices in American Deaf Culture

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of how cultural practices exemplify cultural perspectives in American Deaf culture. For example:
 - ◆ rituals, values, and traditions (e.g., rituals of greeting and leave-taking)
 - ◆ social practices and institutions (e.g., Deaf marriages, Deaf gatherings)
 - ◆ social status and social relationships
 - ◆ rules governing social and communication interactions (e.g., attention getting, sight lines, turn taking)
 - ◆ patterns of work and leisure

4.5 Cultural Products of American Deaf Culture

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of how the products of American Deaf culture exemplify its cultural perspectives. For example:
 - ◆ works of art (e.g., painting, sculpture, handicrafts)
 - ◆ architecture (e.g., design of visual environments)
 - ◆ artistic performance (e.g., storytelling, theatre, dance)
 - ◆ literary works
 - ◆ media (e.g., publications, web sites)
 - ◆ technology
 - ◆ television, video, film
 - ◆ entertainment (e.g., Deaf sporting events, conferences, captioned movies)

Domain 5. Language and Communication: Receptive Comprehension

Candidates demonstrate proficiency in the comprehension of American Sign Language (ASL) discourse as reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates demonstrate the ability to understand ASL discourse for various purposes in different contexts, including a variety of message types and levels of formality, and to accurately comprehend ideas and vocabulary across a range of content, including art, literature, politics, society, and current events, as well as everyday communications and interactions. They demonstrate the ability to comprehend and make inferences about both limited and extended ASL discourse, including monologues, conversations, news reports, narratives and descriptions in various time frames, speeches, and debates. Candidates are not only able to identify the main ideas and supporting details of ASL discourse, but also to infer the meaning of unfamiliar signs from their contexts, understand ASL discourse on a number of levels, analyze it from multiple perspectives, and give detailed personal interpretations that are supported by a broad range of cultural knowledge and understanding. Finally, they demonstrate the ability to think critically about ASL discourse and to evaluate it in relation to stylistic variations and social relationships, as well as the signer's purposes, assumptions, and intended audience.

5.1 Literal Comprehension of ASL Discourse

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the main ideas and significant details of ASL discourse in a variety of authentic contexts, both formal and informal. For example:
 - ◆ Understand the main idea of a signed message.
 - ◆ Respond appropriately to a request for information.
 - ◆ Choose or provide an appropriate response to a signed question or comment.
 - ◆ Recognize a stated cause or effect in a situation described in ASL discourse.
 - ◆ Identify the sequence of steps described in a set of signed directions or instructions.
 - ◆ Recognize localization and spatial relationships as described in ASL discourse.

5.2 Inferential and Interpretive Comprehension of ASL Discourse

- a. Make deductive and inductive inferences based on information contained in both formal and informal ASL discourse. For example:
 - ◆ Draw conclusions based on information presented in ASL discourse.
 - ◆ Characterize the attitude or emotions of one or more signers.
 - ◆ Infer the social relationships among participants in a conversation (e.g., age, social status, gender).

- ◆ Analyze a personal relationship implied but not stated in a conversation.
- ◆ Interpret the cultural context of a message or conversation.
- ◆ Recognize implied cause-and-effect relationships in ASL discourse.
- ◆ Understand figurative language (e.g., metaphors, similes) used in ASL discourse.
- ◆ Analyze ASL discourse to determine a signer's assumptions that are implied but not explicitly stated.

5.3 Critical Analysis of ASL Discourse

- a. Analyze and evaluate both formal and informal ASL discourse in relation to its purpose, context, and point of view. For example:
 - ◆ Analyze a signer's assumptions or point of view.
 - ◆ Analyze the historical, social, or cultural context of ASL discourse.
 - ◆ Evaluate the sufficiency and reliability of evidence presented in support of statements made in ASL discourse.
 - ◆ Evaluate the social and cultural appropriateness of the language used in ASL discourse.
 - ◆ Analyze the communicative and discourse strategies employed in ASL discourse.

Domain 6. Language and Communication: Expressive Production

Candidates demonstrate proficiency in the production of American Sign Language (ASL) discourse as reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in ASL in everyday situations and react competently when asked to respond to a complication or an unexpected turn of events. They communicate clearly and accurately to participate effectively in most formal and informal signed conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics and are able to narrate and describe in multiple dimensions of time, providing detailed accounts and exhibiting good control of aspect. Candidates demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in ASL using correct articulation for various purposes in different contexts and employ a variety of message types. Candidates accurately express ideas in culturally appropriate language across a range of content, including art, literature, politics, society, and current events, as well as everyday communications and interactions. They are able to deliver presentations on a wide range of topics, employing communication strategies and language tailored to the situation, and present narrations and descriptions that relate relevant and supporting facts in extended and cohesive discourse.

6.1 Producing ASL Discourse for a Variety of Purposes in Authentic Contexts

- a. Construct connected ASL discourse that communicates a message effectively in both formal and informal situations, demonstrating fluency and correct articulation, a wide range of vocabulary, and inflectional and linguistic structures. For example:
 - ◆ Communicate appropriately within the context of everyday situations.
 - ◆ Respond to a variety of unexpected situations by explaining or describing events or by requesting assistance.
 - ◆ Narrate or describe a personal experience.
 - ◆ Describe the reasoning behind a personal or professional decision.
 - ◆ Explain the advantages and disadvantages of an idea or a proposed course of action.
 - ◆ Communicate formally and informally about topics of current public and personal interest, demonstrating an ability to use different registers and communication styles in appropriate contexts.

- ◆ Deliver signed presentations on a wide variety of topics to diverse audiences.
- ◆ Formulate and defend a hypothesis in response to a given situation.
- ◆ Take a position on an issue and support it with persuasive evidence.
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively on abstract topics and themes.