

**PROGRAM ADMISSION POLICY FOR THE
SIGN LANGUAGE STUDIES DEPARTMENT
MADONNA UNIVERSITY**

Policy Statement

The Sign Language Studies Department (SLS) at Madonna University strives to provide a quality educational experience which will allow students to fulfill their academic goals and function as an exemplar of the language and culture of Deaf people. The SLS department has produced numerous graduates who have taken important positions in the Deaf Community in such fields as interpreting, education, social services, medicine, law, and other fields where this knowledge has proved vital in providing quality services.

Learning American Sign Language (ASL) is a complex process, requiring a mastery of vocabulary, grammatical structure, linguistic functions, syntax, culture and history of the language. Because our graduates are representatives of Madonna University and the SLS Department, it is imperative to produce graduates who will be equipped to perform successfully in a wide variety of situations.

The key component of the program is language acquisition. Because of this importance, the SLS department instituted an admission policy for students declaring SLS as a major, in order to ensure students entering the field are fully assessed and equipped for the rigorous program. This policy focuses on assessing individual students to determine the necessary language skill level required to successfully complete the SLS program.

Application Procedure

Students who wish to apply for acceptance into the SLS program can do so by completing an application to be submitted to the SLS Department. The application process includes a required handwritten essay and an interview with SLS faculty.

Students must apply for admission into the program during SLS 1020, Beginning American Sign Language II. Applications must be submitted by the completion of SLS 1020. The SLS Department will consider late applications on a case-by-case basis.

At the completion of SLS 1020 (during the semester of enrollment of SLS 2010) and prior to SLS 2020 the SLS Department requires all applicants to interview with the SLS Review Committee. The purpose of this interview is to discuss with the student the expectations of the department and to establish future goals for the student. Students accepted into the program will be notified by mail.

Transfer Credit.

Transfer students may receive transfer credit for language classes passed with a grade of B or better. Lower grades can be accepted for general education credit but will not apply towards fulfilling Sign Language Studies program requirements.

All transfer students must be interviewed and evaluated for placement within the SLS program. If placement is above SLS 1020, the student must also apply for admission to the program and participate in an interview to discuss the expectations of the department and to establish future goals for the student.

Program Continuation

The Sign Language Studies program at Madonna University has a responsibility to the Deaf Community to produce students who demonstrate a linguistic competency and demonstrate an attitude that will contribute positively to the Deaf Community. The following policies have been established to help insure the professional quality of the graduates.

Linguistic competence: According to university policy, a grade earned in a major course that is lower than a C grade is not a passing grade. SLS departmental policy states that a course may be taken a maximum of two (2) times. For example, a student who receives two withdrawal grades, or a withdrawal grade and a grade lower than a C grade, or two grades lower than a C grade, would not be allowed to continue in the major.

Student decorum: Professional behavior and appropriate attitude will be considered when determining admittance or continuation in the program. This includes adherence to Madonna University's Student Conduct Code. If at any time a faculty member has a concern about the decorum of a student, she/he may request the convening of a faculty review committee, with the student, to determine the conditions of continuation in the program.

Interpreting Concentration

In order to continue in the SLS major with an Interpreting Concentration, a student must maintain a minimum GPA average of 3.00 for all SLS courses. A student with a GPA average of less than 3.0 will not be allowed to enroll in SLS 4410.

For those students who maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 average, an interview will be conducted with the SLS Review Committee during a student's enrollment in SLS 3010 to determine the student's potential for success in the interpreting profession.

As a part of the Interpreting Concentration a student will be required to:

- participate in a mandatory field experience,
- Apply for and take the State of Michigan Quality Assurance Written Test prior to or during the final semester. The test will be administered at Madonna University and proctored by SLS faculty
- Join the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and the Michigan chapter of the RID (MIRID). Membership in the RID and the MIRID requires adherence to the RID Code of Professional Conduct.