



## Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

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**Semester:** *Fall*

**Year:** 2025

**Course Prefix:** American Sign Language

**Course and Section #:** 3400-002

**Course Title:** *Visual-Spatial Grammar*

**Credits:** 3

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### ***Course Description***

Studies the use of visual space in ASL productions and how to visualize and describe spatial relationships using ASL. Emphasizes skills necessary to describe space from different angles and points of views, focusing on areas typically difficult for English speakers. Provides extensive instruction and opportunity for students to improve both comprehension and production. Taught in ASL.

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### ***Course Attributes***

This course has the following attributes:

\* General Education Requirements

- ☐ Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- ☐ Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- ☐ Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- ☐ Elective Core Requirements in Program
- ☐ Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

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### ***Instructor Information***

**Instructor Name:** *Professor Matthew Spurgeon*

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### ***Student Learning Outcomes***

1. Describe the complexity of space within various ASL registers.
2. Exhibit an increased mastery of advanced use of linguistic space.
3. Indicate an increased fluency in using visual-spatial language in video format.

4. Produce enhanced ASL fluency in conversational language, storytelling, and public speaking.
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### ***Course Materials and Texts***

- Hill, Brandon. *SignLens Basics*, SmartASL, LLC
  - This is an ebook available for Apple Books or Kindle. The Apple Books version much preferred because it includes a variety of animation and video features that the Kindle platform does not allow. (Kindle has links to online versions.) This book is now required for all ASL classes at UVU. It is a one-time purchase that works across all Apple devices and will always automatically update any time there is a new release. There will never be an additional charge for upgrades.
    - **Purchase *SignLens Basic* here:**
      - Apple Books (preferred): <https://books.apple.com/us/book/signlens-basic/id1580650900>Links to an external site.
      - [Links to an external site.](#)  
Kindle: [https://www.amazon.com/SignLens-Basic-Brandon-R-Hill-ebook/dp/B09DM77WB4/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=3UKFYRERV7JKX&dib=eyJ2IjojMSJ9.R6HPB5RR8rJYf1eWKRYWiQ.8dT1CvKtFO2ZwAAYO-Qa3SvBd0TLqsmJ-e9EFFs6P6M&dib\\_tag=se&keywords=signlens+basic&qid=1724090065&srefix=signlens%2Caps%2C110&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/SignLens-Basic-Brandon-R-Hill-ebook/dp/B09DM77WB4/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3UKFYRERV7JKX&dib=eyJ2IjojMSJ9.R6HPB5RR8rJYf1eWKRYWiQ.8dT1CvKtFO2ZwAAYO-Qa3SvBd0TLqsmJ-e9EFFs6P6M&dib_tag=se&keywords=signlens+basic&qid=1724090065&srefix=signlens%2Caps%2C110&sr=8-1)Links to an external site.
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- Instructor-selected supplemental readings, articles, videos, and similar materials are the required texts for this course. These materials are available in each learning module. Quiz and exam materials and well as class discussions and postings will come from these resources.

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### ***Course Requirements***

**Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy**

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**Course final grades are determined by combining:**

- **scores on all of the submitted assignments**
- **in-course participation**
  - **This includes your participating in class as part of your learning.**
  - **While I do not have attendance as "points" for the course, you will have 3 free absences. The 4th will result in a one-letter-grade drop for the course.**

**Scoring criteria are clearly defined in rubrics; you'll know what you need to do to earn the grade you want. Ultimately, your grade is a reflection of your personal effort and internalization of concepts learned in the course.**

### **Assignments Breakdown**

**There are no papers required for this course; assignments are tailored to help expose you to the principles of deafness and disability through a variety of learning styles. Your grade is dependent on well-reasoned, well-researched interactive discussion responses. Furthermore and as such, your grade is dependent on your ability to demonstrate how well you've learned these principles.**

**Because this is a new course, the instructor is still tweaking assignment descriptions. Students will be completing the following projects (all via video work): pre & post tests, public discourse (public speaking), storytelling, visual grammar, and a final project. Each category has its own weighted group in the table below.**

| <b><u>Assignment</u></b>     | <b><u>Qty</u></b> | <b><u>% of Overall Grade</u></b> | <b><u>Notes</u></b>                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Pretest - Skills assessment  | 1                 | 0                                | Required before being awarded other points  |
| Posttest - Skills assessment | 1                 | 0                                | Required before being posting final grades. |
| Public Discourse             | 4                 | 40%                              |                                             |
| Storytelling                 | 3                 | 15%                              |                                             |
| Visual Grammar               | 2                 | 20%                              |                                             |
| Final Project                | 1                 | 25%                              |                                             |
| <b>Total:</b>                |                   | 100%                             |                                             |

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### Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

All required readings use chapters from the course text that align with the lectures below.

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### General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

1. *Mime: The Knowledge of Movement*
  2. *Mime: The knowledge of Distance*
  3. *Mime :The Knowledge of Smelling*
  4. *Mime: The Knowledge of Tasting and Touching*
  5. *Mime: The Knowledge of Hand shape, Classifiers, and Movement*
  6. *Mime: The Knowledge of Hearing*
  7. *Mime: The Knowledge of Harmony*
  8. *Visual Vernacular: Storying*
  9. *Public Discourse: Public Speaking*
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### ***Required Course Syllabus Statements***

**Generative AI**

This course requires you to complete assignments that assess your understanding and application of the material. You are expected to do your own work, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as chatbots, text generators, paraphrasers, summarizers, or solvers, is strictly prohibited for any part of your

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assignments. Using these tools will be considered academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the university's policy. If you have questions about acceptable use of AI tools, please consult the instructor before submitting your work.

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#### **Using Remote Testing Software**

\* This course does not use remote testing software.

□ This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

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### ***Required University Syllabus Statements***

#### **Accommodations/Students with Disabilities**

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uvu.edu) or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at [DHHservices@uvu.edu](mailto:DHHservices@uvu.edu)

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

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#### **Academic Integrity**

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

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### **Equity and Title IX**

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – [TitleIX@uvu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@uvu.edu) – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

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### **Religious Accommodation**

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uvu.edu). If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.