

# Deaf Culture

**Pre-requisites:** Students must have completed ENGL F111x and ASLG F202 or have Instructor Permission

**Instructor:**

Kelly Harrigan

**Contact:**

You can email me at [kharriga@alaska.edu](mailto:kharriga@alaska.edu) or you can send a text message to 907-750-7394. I will do my best to respond as soon as possible.

**Class Meetings:**

W 6-9pm

**Materials:**

Padden, Carol and Tom Humphries, *Inside Deaf Culture*.  
Bauman, H-Dirksen, *Open Your Eyes*.

**Class Description:**

This course explores the Deaf-World through the various lens provided by the multidisciplinary field of Anthropology, Sociology, History and Cultural Studies. Students will be asked to inquire into the diversity, complexities and commonalities of Deaf cultural experiences through rigorous questioning of fundamental issues pertaining to cultural practices, ideology, power, identity, and heritage.

**Attendance and the Classroom Environment**

ASL is a visual language that uses physical stamina and coordination, as well as agile visual/mental processing and prolonged visual attention. There is no use of voice during the ASLG class periods, therefore students must be able to sustain physically demanding activity in order to participate and learn.

This is an advanced ASL/Deaf Studies course. I expect you to come to class prepared. If, for some reason, you are not able to come to class, please let me know in advance.

You are expected to attend classes regularly; unexcused absences may result in a failing grade. If an unforeseen circumstance prevents you from attending class you are expected to contact the instructor via email or phone prior to the start of class. You are allowed one unexcused absence. More than one unexcused absence will result in point deduction from your final grade.

If you are required to participate in either (a) military or (b) UAF-sponsored activities that will cause you to miss class, you must notify your instructor as soon as possible of your absence. You must notify your instructor of all scheduled UAF-required absences for the semester (e.g., travel to athletic events) during the first week of classes.

As this is an advanced ASL/Deaf Studies course, I expect the environment to be voice-off. If you do not know a sign I use, *please* ask. You can write it on the board and I will show it to you. Chances are if you are unfamiliar with a sign, your classmates are unfamiliar with it too. We are here to learn from each other.

### **Disability Services**

The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and ensures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. I will work with the Office of Disabilities Services (208 WHITAKER BLDG, 474-5655) to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.

### **Course Objectives:**

This course introduces a broad array of issues and dimensions within the Deaf-World and cultural studies. It will encourage students to form a critical exchange between the two overlapping fields; they will explore ways that cultural studies add insights to Deaf Studies and vice versa. In this course, students should

- Develop understanding of the various models of analyzing culture that may best describe the Deaf-World.
- Become familiar with fundamental notions of cultural studies, such as ideology, reading the world as text, subjectivity and shifting dynamics of power.
- Gain appreciation for the diversity, complexities and commonalities of Deaf lives.

### **Student Learning Objectives:**

- Become aware of cultural issues facing the Deaf community
- Identify significant sources of Deaf identity
- Identify significant features of Deaf culture in various parts of the world
- Identify audism and ways and means to combat such a term

### **Blackboard:**

Please check Blackboard before every class. If I post any changes in class or announcements, it is your responsibility to read them.

### **Homework:**

Assignments are due the date listed on the syllabus. There are two group projects. You may select your group based on your area of interest. I may, however, rearrange the group members in case there is a lack of availability in a given area. I understand group projects are not a favorite. The purpose is to learn how to work together in the production and dissemination of knowledge. If you are having trouble with a group member, please contact me and I will handle the situation with confidentiality.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

Grading percentages are as follows:

Class participation and Attendance	15%
Facilitation	15%
Thought papers	10%
Group project	20%
Final project	40%

### **Class participation and Attendance**

This class depends on YOUR engagement. You must come to class and be mentally and physically alert. Showing up and not being alert and attentive will result in point deduction. Participation includes actively paying attention during class, interaction between instructor and classmates, asking questions, and knowing the relevant course material per class.

We will subject the assigned weekly texts to close readings before class, and engage in an extended intellectual discourse on the texts and ideas contained within them in our class sessions. You are expected to be prepared to contribute to this intellectual discourse. Class participation is judged by your reading of class texts before class and your participation in class discussion.

### **Facilitation**

Each student will be asked to be asked to facilitate parts of **three class sessions** during the semester. Each class discussion is worth 5% of your grade, for a total of 15%. Facilitation should last a minimum of 30 minutes. The remaining 5% will be based on your participation in class discussion during other weeks.

**250-300 word thought papers:** For the three weeks identified on the syllabus, you will submit a 250-300 word thought paper on the week's readings. A Thought Paper is a reflection on the required readings for that day. It is important that you show in your thought paper that you've read all the assigned readings for that class. You should reflect on the main ideas in each reading and in the readings as a whole. What ideas are the authors trying to convey, what ideas does this set of readings tell you about Deaf people, Deaf Studies, and/or society? A 250 to 300 word essay is very brief so be careful of how you use your words, make sure every sentence conveys a particular idea and advances your discussion of the themes of that week's readings. Use quotes sparingly, if at all, and use Chicago citations for all your quotes.

(See [www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/chicago-turabianstyle.pdf](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/chicago-turabianstyle.pdf) for a guide on Chicago style footnotes).

The three papers together are worth a total of 10% of your class grade.

**Group Projects.** Part of contributing to the intellectual environment takes place in groups. We can all learn from each other. Group projects should be thoroughly researched and presented in a professional manner. Participants will be asked to evaluate how their fellow members contribute to group work. Presentations should be a minimum of thirty (30) minutes in length with fifteen (15) minutes of discussion.

### Final class project:

An important part of academic training is the ability to see the forest even as one both harvests and plants numerous trees. In this paper, I want you to discuss the field of Deaf Cultural Studies *as a whole*. After having gone through the readings in this class and working on the class projects, how do you understand the field of Deaf Cultural Studies? What areas do you find of interest for your own potential future research? Give me an overview of important articles and books in your particular corner of the field of Deaf Cultural Studies.

There are two options for the final project:

**Option 1:** Your paper should be approximately 10-15 pages in length (excluding bibliography), typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt font, and have proper reference format (Chicago or Turabian). Either footnotes or endnotes are acceptable, and you must have a bibliography with your paper.

**Option 2:** You may make a 20 minute DVD video of yourself signing your selected topic. Video must be edited. Turn in a hard copy of your bibliography using Chicago or Turabian style for citation, Times New Roman 12 pt font.

**For either option, semester projects are due the final day of class.**

### Class Schedule:

#### Week 1

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- Intro
- What is culture?
- What is Deaf? What is deaf? What is hearing?

#### Week 2

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- Padden, Carol: "The Deaf Community and the culture of Deaf people."
- Humphries, Tom: "Culture Talking and Talking Culture"

#### Week 3

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- Bahan, Ben, "Sensory Orientation" Deaf Studies Digital Journal (DSDJ)
- **Thoughtpaper due**

#### Week 4

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- Padden and Humphries, *Inside Deaf Culture*, chapters 1-2

#### Week 5

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- Padden and Humphries, *Inside Deaf Culture*, chapters 3-4

#### Week 6

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- Padden and Humphries, *Inside Deaf Culture*, chapters 5-6

### Week 7

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- Padden and Humphries, *Inside Deaf Culture*, chapters
- **Thought paper due**

### Week 8

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- No formal class. Use the time to prepare for presentations

### Week 9

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- Deaf Lives around the World Group Presentations
  - o Africa
  - o Asia
  - o Central and South America
  - o British Commonwealth countries: India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa

### Week 10

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- Bahan, Ben: "On the Formation of a Visual Variety of the Human Race", *Open Your Eyes*

### Week 11

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- Gertz, Genie, "Dysconscious Audism," *Open Your Eyes*

### Week 12

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- Lane, Harlen, "Do Deaf People Have a Disability?" *Open Your Eyes*
- **Thoughtpaper due**

### Week 13

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- Bauman, Dirksen and Joseph Murray, "Deaf Gain"

### Week 14

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- Final Presentations and wrap Up