

Palo Verde College

Program Outline Report

Program Basics

Program Title:	American Sign Language
Program Status:	Active from 2026-2027 Fall (2026FA)
Department:	American Sign Language
Award Type:	Certificate of Achievement (Credit)
Program/Catalog Description	Certificate of Achievement in American Sign Language The American Sign Language (ASL) program provides students with a foundational understanding of ASL and Deaf culture, preparing them for careers working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals or pursuing roles as sign language interpreters. This program also offers valuable continuing education opportunities for professionals such as teachers, nurses, and emergency service personnel who wish to enhance their communication skills and cultural awareness. Through the knowledge and skills gained in this program, students may qualify for entry-level positions assisting Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. Additionally, there is a growing demand for sign language interpreters across agencies, educational institutions, and organizations that must comply with the communication access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Control Number:	45958
Credential ID:	No value
Transferability:	Transferable to both UC and CSU
(SP01) Program TOP Code:	0850.00
(SP01) Program TOP Code:	Sign Language
(SP02) Student Program Award:	Certificate requiring 16 to fewer than 30 semester units
Maximum Credits:	16
Minimum Credits:	16
Curriculum Committee Approval Date:	12/11/2025
Board of Trustees Approval Date:	01/13/2026
External Review Approval Date:	01/13/2026

Proposal Details

Proposal Start:	2026-2027 Fall (2026FA)
What changes have been made to the program:	The ASL courses have been revised from 3 to 4 units to better meet student learning needs and to align with comparable programs at other community colleges. Additionally, the program has been updated from a Career Preparation Certificate to a Certificate of Achievement to reflect its expanded academic rigor, increased unit requirements, and enhanced transfer and career relevance.
Program Justification:	There is a growing demand for sign language interpreters across agencies, educational institutions, and organizations that must comply with the communication access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Submission Rationale

- New Program

Program Requirements

Required Core Courses (Total 16)

Complete all of the following

ASL131 - American Sign Language I	4
ASL132 - American Sign Language II	4
ASL134 - American Sign Language III	4
ASL135 - American Sign Language IV	4

Recommended Sequences

New Sequence

Term 1 (Total 4)

Required Core Courses	ASL131 - American Sign Language I	4
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Term 2 (Total 4)

Required Core Courses	ASL132 - American Sign Language II	4
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Term 3 (Total 4)

Required Core Courses	ASL134 - American Sign Language III	4
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Term 4 (Total 4)

Required Core Courses	ASL135 - American Sign Language IV	4
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Program Outcomes

American Sign Language

PSLO	Performance
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Upon successful completion of the Certificate of Achievement in American Sign Language, students will be able to demonstrate conversational proficiency in ASL, apply knowledge of Deaf culture and community norms in appropriate contexts, and effectively communicate with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in educational, professional, and community settings.	70
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Students will also be able to recognize the ethical considerations and professional standards relevant to sign language interpretation and related fields.

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Acquired fundamental understanding of the principles and practices of American Sign Language

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Program Narrative

Narrative Item 1. Program Goals and Objectives

The American Sign Language (ASL) program is designed to:

1. Provide students with a strong foundation in ASL communication, including vocabulary, grammar, and conversational fluency.
2. Introduce students to Deaf culture, community norms, and the history and values of the Deaf community.
3. Prepare students for careers working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals or for further study in sign language interpretation.
4. Offer continuing education opportunities for professionals—such as teachers, nurses, and emergency service personnel—who seek to enhance their ability to communicate effectively with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.
5. Support workforce needs by preparing students for entry-level positions in educational, social service, or community settings that require ASL communication skills.
6. Promote awareness of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its impact on accessibility and communication rights.

Narrative Item 2. Catalog Description

The American Sign Language (ASL) program provides students with a strong foundation in ASL communication, Deaf culture, and community norms. It prepares students for careers working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals and serves as a pathway toward professional sign language interpreting. The program also offers valuable continuing education for professionals such as teachers, nurses, and emergency service personnel who wish to improve their ability to communicate and serve within the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Narrative Item 3. Program Requirements

To earn the Certificate of Achievement in American Sign Language, students must successfully complete all required courses with a grade of "C" or better. Coursework emphasizes both language proficiency and cultural competence.

Narrative Item 4. Master Planning

The **Certificate of Achievement in American Sign Language** supports the institution's mission and Educational Master Plan by:

1. **Advancing Access and Equity:**
 - Promotes inclusive education by preparing students to communicate effectively with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, ensuring equitable access to services and learning environments.
 - Supports the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) principles and the college's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).
2. **Workforce and Career Preparation:**
 - Aligns with the master plan's goal of developing career-ready graduates by equipping students with marketable language and cultural competencies.
 - Meets regional workforce needs in education, healthcare, human services, and emergency response fields where ASL skills are increasingly in demand.
3. **Community Engagement and Partnerships:**
 - Strengthens partnerships with local schools, healthcare providers, and community organizations serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing populations.
 - Encourages civic engagement and cultural awareness through interaction with the Deaf community.
4. **Pathways and Student Success:**
 - Creates clear academic and career pathways, from introductory ASL study to professional interpreting programs and related degrees.
 - Supports student retention and success through culturally relevant curriculum and experiential learning opportunities.

Narrative Item 5. Enrollment and Completer Projections

The American Sign Language (ASL) Certificate of Achievement is expected to attract steady student interest due to the growing demand for ASL skills across education, healthcare, and community service sectors. Based on enrollment patterns in introductory ASL courses and regional workforce needs, the following projections are anticipated:

- **Estimated Annual Enrollment:** 20–25 students
- **Estimated Annual Completers:** 15–12 students

Narrative Item 6. Place of Program in Curriculum/Similar Programs

The American Sign Language (ASL) program occupies a vital place within the college's Humanities and Communication curriculum. It complements existing programs in languages, education, human services, and communication studies by expanding access to linguistic and cultural studies beyond spoken and written modalities.

Narrative Item 7. Similar Programs at Other Colleges in Service Area

Although similar programs are offered at other colleges in the region, these campuses are a minimum of two-hours' drive from our campuses. Palo Verde College is located in Blythe, CA, with a satellite campus in Needles, CA; both communities are small, rural towns situated in the desert region on the Eastern edge of California.