SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION DIPLOMA

Purpose

As Deaf individuals increasingly access education, career and community services, the demand for Sign Language Interpreters is growing across the country. If you are skilled in American Sign Language (ASL), the Diploma in Sign Language Interpretation will prepare you for a dynamic career in a rapidly expanding field.

You will learn how to facilitate communication between hearing people and Deaf or hard of hearing people in a variety of settings. Upon program completion you will be able to provide meaning-based interpretation, to communicate well in ASL and in spoken English, to understand and adhere to Deaf cultural norms when required, to act ethically, to work collaboratively with others, and to use appropriate business skills.

This sign language interpreter program emphasizes practical experience and community work, giving you many opportunities to practice what you are learning. You will complete three one-month practicum placements during your final term, where you will be mentored by professional interpreters in their work settings.

Duration

The program is taught full-time over two years. The maximum time for completion is seven years.

Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the Program of Sign Language Interpretation will be able to demonstrate: Meaning-based Interpreting; Versatility in ASL; Versatility in English; Cultural Competence in Deafhood; Awareness of Self and Positionality; Professional Communication and Collaboration; Ethical Decision Making; and Commitment to Learning and Growth.

Meaning-based Interpreting – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Apply a cognitive model of interpreting in which the interpreter actively constructs meaning based on cues provided by others
- Identify the goals of the setting and of each speaker/signer
- Attend to the source message, screening out external distractions (e.g. auditory or visual noise) and internal distractions (e.g. fatigue or personal disagreement)
- Analyze the source message, considering contextual, cultural, linguistic and paralinguistic factors
- Identify content that is explicitly stated and/or implied as well as the intent and affective components
- Drop source language form and construct meaning
- Create a target language message, applying contextual, cultural, linguistic and paralinguistic features of the target language
- Produce a target language message that conveys the constructed meaning and intent, maintaining the cohesiveness of the interpreted discourse
- Monitor one's own interpreting performance and make corrections as needed
- Use effective interaction management strategies such as deciding when/how to interject

- Make appropriate decisions regarding the use of consecutive and/or simultaneous interpreting modes
- Co-interpret effectively during teamed interpreting assignments
- Adapt signed message output across the spectrum of ASL and Contact Sign Varieties in order to meet the linguistic needs of a variety of consumers
- Critically analyze the effectiveness of interpretations by self and others
- Demonstrate knowledge of interpretation theories and their implications for the work of interpreters

Versatility in ASL – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Comprehend and fluently produce grammatically correct ASL discourse on a wide variety of topics and across the range of linguistic registers
- Communicate comfortably in ASL with users of all ages
- Communicate effectively in ASL in one-on-one exchanges, small interactive groups, and large audience settings
- Demonstrate versatility across the visual language spectrum to meet the needs of a variety of D/deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-Blind people.

Versatility in English – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Comprehend and fluently produce grammatically correct English discourse on a wide variety of topics and across the range of linguistic registers
- Communicate comfortably in spoken English with users of all ages
- Communicate effectively in English in one-on-one exchanges, small interactive groups, and large audience settings
- Comprehend and produce written English at a college undergraduate level

Cultural Competence in Deafhood – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Interact socially in the Deaf community, in a range of contexts and settings, appropriately adhering to norms for social interaction and exhibiting cultural sensitivity
- Demonstrate respect for the values, history, traditions and goals of the Deaf community
- Interact with individuals who are Deaf-Blind in culturally appropriate ways
- Make appropriate decisions about one's own social interactions and language use when in a culturally mixed group of Deaf and non-Deaf people
- Apply the value of reciprocity to interactions with the Deaf community
- Apply a schema for Deaf-related local, regional, national and international organizations
- Demonstrate respect for the diversity of identities, experiences and pathways into Deafhood

Awareness of Self and Positionality – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Recognize one's own intersectionality, power, privilege and potential for bias
- Apply a schema for the systemic effects of audism on Deaf people's access and inclusion
- Exhibit developing allyship, working collectively in support of the Deaf community's goals

- Use effective strategies for maintaining wellness and balance in one's own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health
- Use effective time management strategies
- Recognize stress and implement effective strategies to manage it
- Be aware of and respectful of one's own limitations and needs
- Establish effective personal and professional support networks

Professional Communication and Collaboration – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Use effective, respectful and timely interpersonal communication strategies
- Be well prepared, reliable and on time
- Seek out and utilize preparation resources for interpreting assignments
- Present self with professional demeanour and attire appropriate for the setting
- Understand power dynamics in professional relationships and work effectively within systems
- Engage in constructive feedback discussions, pre/post-brief consultations, and shared analyses
- Contribute positively to effective teamwork
- Follow standards of practice related to negotiating fees and contracts, self-marketing, invoicing and accounting
- Communicate effectively in standard written business English
- Use social media in a judicious and responsible manner

Ethical Decision Making – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Apply the values and guiding principles of the *Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct* of the Westcoast Association of Visual Language Interpreters (WAVLI) (https://wavli.com/code-of-ethics/) and Canadian Association of Sign Language Interpreters (CASLI) (https://www.casli.ca/Code-of-Ethics/)
- Understand and uphold Occupational Title Protection and its purpose(s)
- Apply effective decision-making processes consistent with theoretical models
- Apply relevant laws, regulations and workplace policies to professional decisions
- Think critically, act responsibly and be accountable when making decisions
- Actively honour diversity and respect the autonomy of others
- Act professionally in relationships with consumers, colleagues and others, maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Articulate a personalized professional philosophy related to working as an interpreter
- Demonstrate conscientiousness in managing the power inherent in the role of an interpreter

Commitment to Learning and Growth – *The INTR graduate is able to:*

- Reflect regularly on one's own practice and professional development
- Set practical goals for continuing to build interpreting skills and achieve higher credentials
- Outline a personal plan for ongoing education and growth as a socially conscious interpreter
- Seek learning opportunities and feedback from consumers, mentors and peers

- Maintain membership in interpreting associations and contribute actively to the professional community of practice

Admission Requirements

- Successful completion of ENGL 1100, or equivalent
- Successful completion of the ASL and Deaf Studies Certificate (https://www.vcc.ca/programscourses/sign-language/asl-and-deaf-studies/), or equivalent
- Proficiency in American Sign Language (ASL) and English, and an understanding of the Deaf community, Deaf culture, and the field of Sign Language interpreting, as demonstrated during the screening and selection process

Program Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
INTR 2100	Positionality Deaf Community	2.5
INTR 2120	Foundations of Practice 1	3
INTR 2140	Interpretation 1: Translation	3
INTR 2150	Deaf Comm. Service Learning 1	2.5
ASLD 2180	American Sign Language 8	3
INTR 2210	Ethics & Prof. Decision Making	2.5
INTR 2220	Foundations of Practice 2	2
INTR 2240	Interpretation 2	3
INTR 2250	Deaf Comm. Service Learning 2	2.5
INTR 2260	Deafhood Identity & Diversity	2.5
ASLD 2290	American Sign Language 9	3
INTR 2340	Interpretation 3: Community	3
ASLD 2310	American Sign Language 10	3
INTR 3110	Self & Community of Practice	3
INTR 3120	Interpreting in Educ Settings	3
INTR 3140	Interpretation 4	5
INTR 3150	Advanced ASL for Interpreters	3
INTR 3210	Sign Language Practicum Ready	1.5
INTR 3220	Sign Language Practicum 1	4.5
INTR 3230	Sign Language Practicum 2	4.5
Total Credits		**60**

Evaluation of Student Learning

Students are evaluated on their performance on practical assignments, special projects, written assignments, oral presentations, and tests.

Before graduation, students will demonstrate the skills and readiness to enter the interpreting field by compiling a capstone portfolio showcasing their achievements. During a capstone week at the end of the program, students will perform interpretations and presentations, and be assessed by members of the Deaf community, professional interpreters and program faculty.

Students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 'B plus' (3.33) upon completion of all program courses to graduate, and a minimum program term grade point average of 'B plus' (3.33) to advance into subsequent courses/terms in the program.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Prior learning assessment and recognition is not available for this program.

Transcript of Achievement

The evaluation of learning outcomes for each student is prepared by the instructor and reported to the Student Records Department at the completion of semesters.

The transcript typically shows a letter grade for each course. The grade point equivalent for a course is obtained from letter grades as follows:

Grading Standard

Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
A+	90-100		4.33
A	85-89		4.00
A-	80-84		3.67
B+	76-79	Minimum Progression Grade	3.33
B	72-75		3.00
B-	68-71		2.67
C+	64-67		2.33
C	60-63		2.00
C-	55-59		1.67
D	50-54		1.00
F	0-49	Failing grade	0.00
S	70 or greater	Satisfactory – student has met and mastered a clearly defined body of skills and performances to required standards	N/A
U		Unsatisfactory – student has not met and mastered a clearly defined body of skills and performances to required standards	N/A
I		Incomplete	N/A
IP		Course in Progress	N/A
W		Withdrawal	N/A
Course Standings			
R		Audit. No Credit	N/A
EX		Exempt. Credit Granted	N/A
TC		Transfer Credit	N/A

Grade Point Average (GPA)

1. The course grade points shall be calculated as the product of the course credit value and the grade value.
2. The GPA shall be calculated by dividing the total number of achieved course grade points by the total number of assigned course credit values. This cumulative GPA shall be determined and stated on the Transcript at the end of each Program level or semester.
3. Grades shall be assigned to repeated courses in the same manner as courses taken only once. For the purpose of GPA calculation of grades for repeated courses, they will be included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA.