

**J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College  
Course Content Summary**

**Course Prefix and Number:** ASL 220

**Credits:** 3

**Course Title:** Comparative Linguistics: ASL and English

**Course Description:** Describes spoken English and ASL (American Sign Language) on five levels: phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and discourse. Compares and contrasts the two languages on all five levels using real-world examples. Documents similarities between signed languages and spoken languages in general. Describes the major linguistic components and processes of English and ASL. Introduces basic theories regarding ASL structure. Emphasizes ASL's status as a natural language by comparing and contrasting similarities and unique differences between the two languages. Prerequisites: ASL 295 – Topics in ASL: American Sign Language III and ENG 111. Lecture 3 hours per week.

**General Course Purpose:** To introduce intermediate-level ASL students to the similarities between signed languages and spoken languages in general by describing the major linguistic components and processes of English and ASL.

**Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:**

**Prerequisites:** ASL 295 – Topics in ASL: American Sign Language III and ENG 111

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to

- a. Identify, describe, and provide examples of sequential, phonologic contrast in English and ASL;
- b. Identify, describe, and provide examples of free and bound morphemes in English and ASL;
- c. Describe the lexicon, including lexical building processes;
- d. Demonstrate the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structures of English and ASL;
- e. Describe the relationship between the “movement” of SVO structures in ASL and non-manual signals (i.e., eyebrow movement, head tilt, and body lean);
- f. Elaborate on the similarities and differences of discourse elements in English and ASL;
- g. Describe a sign using Stokoe notation; and
- h. Describe a sign using the Movement-Hold theory.

**Major Topics to Be Included:**

- a. Phonology
- b. Morphology
- c. Lexicon
- d. Syntax
- e. Discourse

**Effective Date of Course Content Summary:** April 10, 2009