

# *What's Your Sign?*

*By: Jessica Whiting & Tytiana Sykes*

Two popular classes that Polk State offers for a foreign language are ASL 1140 and ASL 1150. Some Polk State students have already taken these classes. Deaf culture is very different from the hearing culture. According to the World Health Organization, over 5% of the world's population – 360 million people – has disabling hearing loss. According to Wikipedia, Deaf culture has social beliefs. Deaf culture has its own art, literary traditions, history, values, and shared institutions of communities. According to the World Federation of the Deaf, Deaf community includes deaf and hard of hearing people. However, Deaf culture also includes family members, sign language interpreters, and people who identify and socialize with the Deaf community.

According to Gallaudet College, ASL (American Sign Language) is a visual/

gestural language that has no vocal component. ASL is a complete, grammatically complex language. American Deaf culture centers on the use of ASL and identification and unity with other people who are deaf.



## **American Sign Language fingerspelling how to spell ASL in Sign Language.**

Here at Polk State you can participate and join the Deaf culture by joining the ASL club and/or taking ASL 1140 and ASL 1150. The students who have participated in the ASL club and/or took the ASL classes were a wealth of information to us. They wish to remain anonymous and the results of our interview with them are below.

**“American Sign Language is a visual/gestural language that has no vocal component.” ~Gallaudet College**



**“I love you” in American Sign Language.**

**Q: Who is the advisor of the ASL club?**

**A:** The advisor of the club is Michele Smith, who is also the American Sign Language teacher.

**Q: Would you recommend people who want to learn Sign language to join this club?**

**A:** Yes, I would recommend students who are interested in learning Sign language to join this club. There are many events that ASL sponsors that are so much fun for the participants to take part in.

**Q: Are there any requirements to join this club? If so what are they?**

**A:** No, there are no requirements and you don't even need to know Sign language to join this club.

**Q: Is it difficult for the teacher to teach the students who know nothing about Sign language?**

**A:** Depending on the student, it can be, especially at the beginning of ASL 1.

**Q: What are ways the professor teaches Sign language?**

**A:** The textbook used for the course has a DVD attached to help students do their homework.

**Q: What are some other ways students can improve their Sign language?**

**A:** Study by using Quizlet, go to the TLCC tutor for help, and make sure to pay attention in class.

**Q: How did the professor communicate with her students?**

**A:** If the student knew enough Sign language, then of course, she would use sign. When students were first learning, she would write down what she was saying.

If you are currently enrolled at Polk State College, we recommend you join the ASL club or even take the classes. If you have any further questions about the ASL club or ASL 1140 and ASL 1150, you can email the advisor and teacher of both the club and the class, Michele Smith: [michydew@aol.com](mailto:michydew@aol.com)



**Kayla Valle, 20 years old, graduated from Collegiate High School in 2015. Her advice for students who are interested in American Sign Language is to “get involved in Deaf community.” If you have any questions or concerns, contact her at: [10kayla101013@gmail.com](mailto:10kayla101013@gmail.com).**



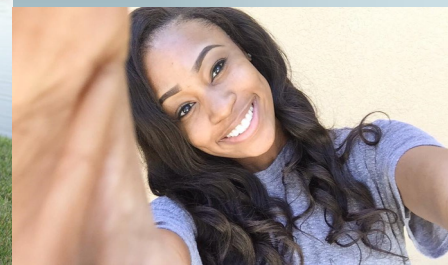
**American Sign Language finger-spelling how to spell LOVE.**

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