

10/12/21

# ASL AT UCONN

Work Group Concerning Issues Affecting Deaf, Hard  
of Hearing, and Deafblind Persons

Diane Lillo-Martin, Ph.D.

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**UCONN** | COLLEGE OF LIBERAL  
ARTS AND SCIENCES

# ASL at UConn – People

**Diane Lillo-Martin, Ph.D.**

Head of Linguistics Department  
BOT Distinguished Professor  
Researcher on ASL Linguistics

**Linda Pelletier, Ph.D., CI/CT, NAD5**

ASL Program Coordinator  
Certified interpreter, interpreter  
educator

**Joan Hanna, M.A.**

ASL Lecturer

**Doreen Simons, M.A.**

ASL and Deaf Studies Lecturer

**Jessica Tanner, M.A.**

ASL Lecturer

Faculty committee of 8 professors  
with interests in supporting and  
expanding the program

# ASL at UConn – Research

- Sign language acquisition by Deaf and hearing children (Lillo-Martin)
  - Bimodal bilingual development with sufficient rich input
- Early language (sign or spoken) is crucial for development of math competence (Coppola)
  - Children who experience delays in access to linguistic input are much more likely to have difficulties with mathematical skills
- DHH children can learn literacy through Strategic and Interactive Writing Instruction (Dostal)
  - Those who sign build on their linguistic knowledge for their second language
- Hearing parents of DHH children need more explicit information about their options (Mauldin)
- Deaf and other disabled people are writers and artists of note (Brueggemann)

# ASL at UConn – Academics

## Major in ASL Studies

- Started Fall 2020
- Courses in ASL language, linguistics, deaf culture, literature, women's studies, etc.
- Currently 21 students (3 honors)

## Minors

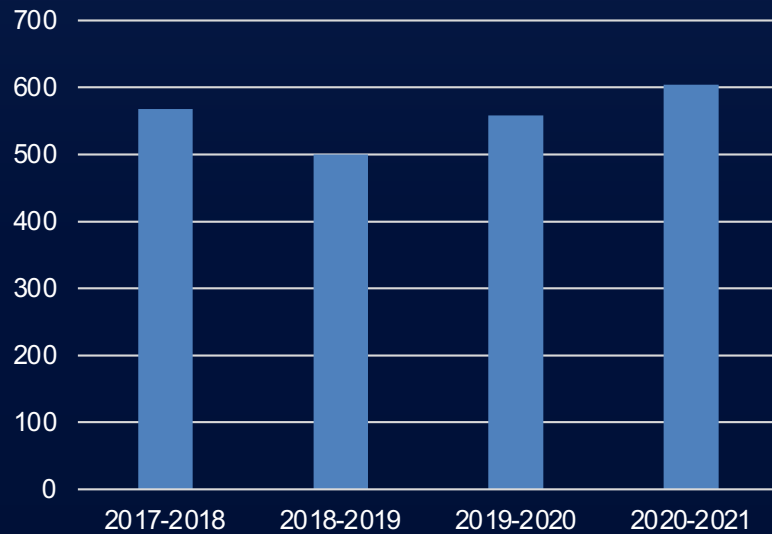
- ASL and Deaf Culture
- Interpreting between ASL and English

## ASL Courses

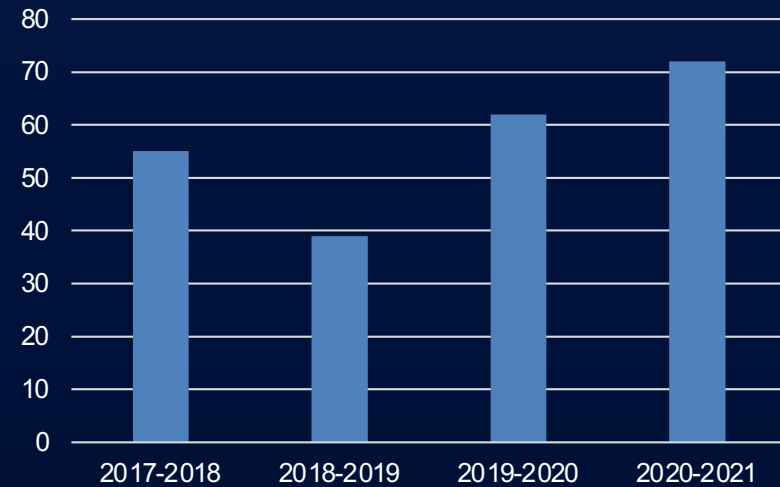
- Started offering ASL language courses in late 1980's
- Continuous demand; offerings have grown over the years
- 10 years ago total annual enrollment of about 350
- Now almost twice that, with repeated requests for more seats

# Enrollment

**Total Enrollment in ASL /  
Deaf Studies Courses at UConn**



**Enrollment in Interpreting  
Courses  
at UConn (4/year)**



Consistent and increasing interest at our current capacity

# Pathways to Interpreter Certification

## National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

- Must have a Bachelor's degree
- Knowledge Exam
  - 47%-90% pass rate past 4 years
- Interview and Performance Exam
  - 29%-39% pass rate past 4 years
- Gap between education and certification ~4 years is common; experience and training lead to better chances for certification

## Requirements in CT if uncertified

- Interpreters may work in CT if they have graduated from an accredited Interpreter Training Program and passed the Knowledge exam
- Many work for up to 5 years before passing the Performance Exam
- Interpreters can work in CT if screened by MCDHH (Mass.)

# ASL at UConn – Future

- Awarded DEI Grant for an event focused on DHH Education and Research at UConn (Spring 22)
- Recently approved ASL Teacher Certification program with Neag
- Requested addition of tenure-track research faculty members
- Possible expansions of current ASL Studies offerings
- Enhancing collaboration between researchers in different areas

## Very Tentative:

- Possible development of an accredited Interpreter Education Program (perhaps at M.A. level)
  - Recommended faculty/student ratio is 12:1 for courses; 10:1 for field experiences; ideal cohort size 10/year
  - Accreditation curriculum requires expanding knowledge competencies
  - Need for opportunities to develop skills competencies (e.g., internships with qualified mentoring)