



NEW PROGRAM PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

STAGE 1

Submitted by
Laurene E. Simms

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Stage 1: New Program: Preliminary Proposal

I. Name of Program:

American Sign Language and English Bilingual Early Childhood
in Deaf Education: Birth to 5

New Program Overview: 21 Credit hours Graduate Certificate Program

The proposed New Program offers two paths for Early Childhood Education (ECE):

1. For those candidates who pursue a licensure in General Education: ECE and K-12 Deaf Education as well as Dual Licensure: ECE K-12 Deaf Education, they are required to successfully complete a minimum of nine graduate credits in order to obtain a special education/early childhood endorsement and/or graduate certificate in the area of Birth to 5. This Program is in compliance with the standards set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (<http://www.naeyc.org>).
2. For those who hold teacher certification and have or are seeking careers as early childhood education professionals, mentors, child care program directors or other positions related to the care and education of children ages birth through 5, they are required to successfully complete 21 graduate credits in order to obtain a certificate in the area of Birth to 5.

We propose that the New Program be designed for both pre-service and in-service professionals that will help make up the size of the class, rather than just focusing on solely Dept. of Ed. candidates who may be a few at certain times. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), there are 140,000 audiologists, speech-language pathologists (SLPs), and speech, language, and hearing scientists as well as special education ECE specialists who may be interested in this new ECE American Sign Language/English program. Deaf Education/ SLPs/Audiology doctoral students and Deaf Education masters programs may be interested in this program as well (<http://www.asha.org>).

Note: In the view of the majority, the so-called “Deafness” is a low incidence disability. While the numbers of birth to 5 deaf children is even lower, due to early newborn screening and early identification, the need for services in early ECE ASL/English bilingual is urgent and critical. This new proposed program will utilize recruitment strategies such as weekend classes, Internet classes, videoconferencing, video streaming, and summer classes in order to increase classroom enrollment. Further recruitment plans will be addressed in the Stage 2: the Feasibility Study.

II. Rationale for Program

The rationale for the New Program is as follows:

- Across the nation, schools serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, ages of 0-5, are reporting a critical shortage of professionals who have the knowledge and skills in an American Sign Language (ASL) (expressive and receptive ASL connected discourse) and English (oracy and emergent literacy) bilingual early childhood education (LaSasso, C., & Lollis, J., 2003; Strong, M., 1995).
- Currently, the Department of Education's Teacher Preparation Program does not address the area of Birth to 5 (0-3 & 3-5) in the field of Deaf Education as the candidates obtain only a licensure in General Education: ECE and K-12 Deaf Education as well as Dual Licensure: ECE/K-12 Deaf Education.
- Since 1998, more than 40 schools and 500 K-12 professionals have implemented training for ASL and English Bilingual Professional Development. However, the training is not designed for the professionals who work with children with ages of 0-5. (Nover, S., Andrews, J., Baker, S., Everhart, V., & Bradford, M., 2002; Nover & Andrews, 1998). Still curriculum, materials and professional development are seriously lacking. Based on the recent National ASL/English Bilingual ECE summit's survey, a large percentage of professionals in the field have unequivocally agreed that there is an urgent need for such training with this age group. Survey results will be enclosed in the Stage 2: the Feasibility Study.
- Despite the recent medical advances in early infant screening and early provision of new auditory technologies (e.g., the cochlear implant), the field of deaf education ECE is stymied because there currently exist no strong ASL/English bilingual education curriculum models and materials for preparing in-service and pre-service ECE professionals in Deaf Education. While, there is an increasing number of families, schools and service agencies who are demanding that their professionals be knowledgeable in this area, there is a critical void in the field. This innovative Program will fill this void by providing pre-service and in-service training to those professionals with theories and applications connected to early childhood multisensory learning, communication and emergent literacy.

III. Goals of Program

Aligning with the Program's mission statement, "The American Sign Language and English Bilingual Early Childhood Education: Birth to 5 (0-3 & 3-5) Program prepares professionals to advocate and educate young Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and families from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds" from Gallaudet University's mission statement, this proposal identifies the following goals of Gallaudet University's Strategic Plan which will be supported by the New Program.

Goal A: Grow Gallaudet's enrollment of full-time undergrads, full-and part-time graduate students, and continuing education students to 3,000 by 2015.

Historically, there has continued to have only a handful of Deaf and Hard of Hearing candidates who pursue a degree or certificate in Early Childhood Education, especially in the field of Deaf Education. The Gallaudet University's Department of Education aims to recruit diverse Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, especially from Gallaudet University and in-service professionals to the New Program, as well as promoting them to become role models for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, families and professionals. In addition to recruitment of a racially or ethnically diverse base of professionals, a goal of the New Program is also to prepare hearing candidates in Deaf Education, Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology to work as a team collaborating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing professionals, and interacting as supportive allies.

To meet the above noted goal, our recruitment plan that will be addressed further in the Stage 2: the Feasibility Study includes innovative and interactive multi-media platforms (i.e., the internet (vlogs/blogs) and desktop videoconferencing) along with the traditional face-to-face approach. Recent research in psycholinguistics, linguistics, child language, and emergent literacy, and multisensory education, visual language, bootstrapping oral/aural language skills with visual language, effective ECE pedagogy and research-based interventions will constitute the backbone of this new Program (e.g., VL-2, 2011; Grosjean, 2008; Snoddon, K., 2008; Schick, B., de Villiers, P., de Villiers, J. & Hoffmeister, R., 2007; Petitto & Kovelman, 2003; Yoshinaga-Itano & Sedey, 2000; Petitto, L. A., Katerelos, M., Levy, B., Gauna, K., et al., 2001).

This Program will be community-based and attract professionals from various ethnic groups representing all Americans in various socio-economic classes. Attending and campaigning at National Organizations of Color such as

National Black Deaf Advocates, National Asian Deaf Congress, Sacred Circle (Native Indians) and National Council of Hispano Deaf and Hard of Hearing and other diverse organizations are considered to be one of the top priorities because it is these communities that are in critical need of effective early intervention and who have been historically excluded from early childhood education efforts in Deaf Education (Simms, L., Rusher, M., Andrews, J., & Coryell, Judy 2008). To this end, Gallaudet University (GU) will be hosting Triennial National Deaf People of Color Conference held on the GU campus in June 2013, in which will be an exciting opportunity to elicit support for this New Program.

Further, the faculty members of the Department of Education are committed to infuse/incorporate aspects and examples of diversity in instruction and field experiences as well as respect for diverse students, their language uses, capitalizing on visual and auditory and communication modalities.

Goal D: By 2015, refine a core set of undergraduate and graduate programs that are aligned with the institutional mission and vision, leverage Gallaudet's many strengths, and best position students for career success.

For the past several decades, the candidates who graduated from the Department of Education have worked with children with ages of 0-5 without any training or knowledge of multisensory early childhood training, and ASL and English Bilingual ECE. Consequently, the majority of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children continue to have devastating and irrevocable language deficits and delays because they are not provided early connected visual language as a base for signacy (ASL), oracy (Spoken English) and literacy (reading and writing). The proposed Program will fill this urgent need by providing the candidates with state of the art training leading to an endorsement and/or graduate certificate in the area of Birth to 5 along with the aforementioned licensure in order to promote the critical pedagogy and best practices in instructional early childhood conceptual strategies, ASL connected discourse and emergent literacy and language development.

Based on the Objective D.3: "Strengthen students' preparation for employment and career success", in reinforcing the New Program and its candidates, the Department of Education (DOE) is currently in the process of arranging a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center and the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School for the Deaf (KDES) in order to promote partnership between these units. According to the document, this MOU serves as a facilitating document toward establishing a

formal cooperative partnership between DOE and the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. In the Gallaudet's undergraduate and graduate programs, the teacher candidates will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge, skills and dispositions of their study to their field experiences and internships at the Center as well as other ECE programs.

Goal E: Establish Gallaudet as the epicenter of research, development and outreach leading to advancements in knowledge and practice for deaf & hard of hearing people and all humanity.

In the New Program, the candidates are expected to exhibit the knowledge of and apply theories, concepts, and practices of ASL and English bilingual early childhood education in ways that are meaningful for diverse Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, their families, and community. With this knowledge and application, they can further research on ASL/English Bilingualism, especially for children with ages of 0-5 through a variety of sources, some which are listed below:

1. Visual Language (VL-2): There are several studies focusing on brain study, early learning and language development done by well-noted researchers, for instance, Dr. Laura Petitto, Dr. Peter Hauser and others.
2. Sign of Literacy: There is a rich data that through appropriate protocol, the candidates and ECE professionals may have the opportunity to use the source for their study.
3. Clerc Center: As mentioned earlier, a part of DOE's MOU, regards the partnership agreements with the Clerc Center including internships that promote the candidates to facilitate research-practice integration to improve diverse children.
4. Partnerships with Universities and Programs: The DOE seeks partnerships with Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas and ECE Programs in Deaf Education.
5. National Organizations:
 - a. Clerc Center's ASL/English Bilingual Language Planning
 - Parent Infant Program-2nd grade teachers have used the Language and Communication Profile in past 2 years. It includes the informal assessments to keep track of each child's language development and communication modalities in order to implement individualized language plan for the child.
 - b. The Cochlear Implant Education Center at Clerc Center that focuses on examining a variety of ideas and strategies for children

- with cochlear implants so that Deaf children can learn ASL as a primary language as well as second language.
- c. Clerc Center's National Outreach Resources, a network for outreach providers serving deaf and hard of hearing children.
- d. American Society for Deaf Children, a non-profit organization for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and families.
- e. National American Sign Language & English Bilingual Consortium for Early Childhood Education is a collaborative effort of professionals, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, parent-educators and researchers whose focus is to improve ECE in Deaf Education. See Appendix A for a brochure describing the organization.

The intent of the New Program is to emphasize the linguistic-cultural aspect rather than narrowly focusing on the medical-audiology model which is necessary, but often limits the language and communication learning potential of Deaf infants by restricting full access to the visual language learning channel. The visual language can support rather than inhibiting the auditory pathway of learning. In addition, emphases will be on multicultural recognition for the birth through five ages as these children more often than not falling between the cracks in service delivery.

In sum, the ultimate goal of the New Program is to initiate a systemic transformation for Early Childhood Education in Deaf Education. There has been an increasing number of individuals who have been admitted to Gallaudet University who do not possess fluency in either, or both, ASL and English. In order to master the languages, as based on the Best Practices utilized in the New Program, fluency must begin with young children.

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Appendix A

National American Sign Language & English Bilingual Consortium for Early Childhood Education



OUR GOALS:

To develop an ASL/English bilingual home and school based curriculum and assessment tools.

To develop educational materials and resources for use in ASL/English bilingual early childhood classrooms and diverse families that promote linguistic, cognitive, communicative, and cultural competence.

To disseminate resources that demonstrate the benefits of ASL/English bilingual early childhood education.

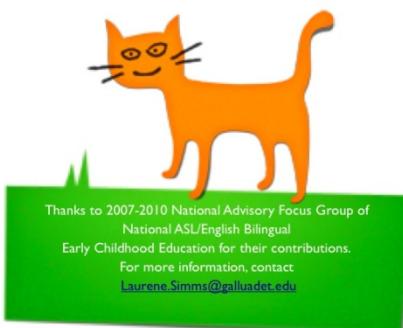
**Working Together To Make Life
Better For**

**Young Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Children**

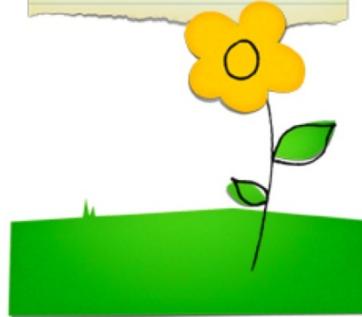


**NATIONAL AMERICAN
SIGN LANGUAGE &
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CONSORTIUM FOR
EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION**

501(c)3 non-profit professional organization



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For more information, contact
Laurene.Simms@gallaudet.edu



The National ASL/English Bilingual Consortium for Early Childhood Education is an organization of professionals who are dedicated to the development, management, and coordination of ASL/English bilingual early childhood programs for children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families.

Our Mission is...

To promote the development, management, and coordination of ASL/English bilingual early childhood education for children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families.

So that...



families are afforded the option of choosing ASL/English bilingual early childhood education for their child.

We work to achieve this mission through...

- Promoting networking and mutual support;
- Providing community education;
- Enhancing professional development;
- Empowering diverse families and advocates in partnership;
- Identifying information gaps and collaborating to meet those needs.



WE BELIEVE

Children can naturally acquire American Sign Language and English for daily learning and literacy through bilingual early childhood education principles and practices.

Children need to establish early communication with their parents and families, develop their cognitive abilities, acquire world knowledge, and communicate fully with the surrounding world.

Children need to develop social/emotional and cognitive abilities that are critical to timely development in all areas.

Spoken English, encouraged and incorporated specific to an individual child's characteristics and goals, is essential for achieving potential in this area of development.

Families and professionals need accurate information and resources about the benefits of ASL/English bilingualism in order to make well-informed decisions.

