

Board of Governors, State University System of Florida
 Limited Access Program Request
 Reference: BOG Regulation 6.001, Admissions

University:	University of North Florida	Degree(s) offered:	BS
Program:	American Sign Language/English Interpreting	Six digit CIP code:	16.1603

1. Will the entire program be limited access or only a specific track?

Yes, both concentrations will be limited access to enter the junior-level course sequence

2. If only a track is limited access, please specify the name of the track. N/A

3. How many students will the program plan to accommodate?

Students may declare a major in ASL/English Interpreting upon admission to UNF. Actual program admission occurs at the end of the sophomore year in the form of a 'Rising Junior Admission Screening' (proposed here), which is administered to transfer students as well as UNF native students.

Annual program admissions to Junior-level courses are projected at:

35

4. When do you propose to initiate limited access? (please specify the effective term and year)
 Fall 2016

5. What is the justification for limiting access?

Minimum Language Competency

The language of instruction for junior-and senior-level skills courses at UNF is American Sign Language, thus comprehension and expression in ASL is imperative for student success. The interpreting process, in general, requires the interpreter to be bilingual (American Sign Language and English). True bilingualism is not a requirement for program entry, but minimum language competency and specific cognitive processing skills are needed to acquire the ability to interpret. Likewise, the ability to process English and analyze a text for the main idea and salient points is a requirement for starting in the interpreting program.

If a student does not bring the prerequisite language competency to the junior- and senior-level skills-based courses, he or she is not ready to acquire the complex skills associated with simultaneously working between two languages. If the UNF interpreting program admits students who are not assessed to be linguistically ready to learn the interpreting process, it is a disservice to the students and results in unnecessary struggles at a great cost (financially and personally). Readiness to learn the interpreting process can be assessed with a basic screening tool.

Program Attrition Rate

From 2007 to present, the interpreting program has had an annual 17% attrition rate due to students not successfully meeting course learning outcomes. Whereas students enter Junior status by transferring from one of five two-year interpreting programs in Florida (AS to BS Concentration) OR by starting the 120-hour-program as freshmen at UNF (Community Interpreting Concentration), have

difficulty communicating fluently and accurately in written, spoken, and signed modalities. Remedial resources are available at UNF; however, these cannot be forced upon students and do not resolve the problem completely.

Faculty-Student Ratio

The Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE, accrediting body of interpreter education programs) designates the maximum enrollment ratios for interpreting skills courses to be 1:12. In an effort to comply with this standard, the capacity to accommodate junior-level students entering the skills component of their program of study is limited by the number of available faculty (currently four full-time). An additional concern involves the ability of the program to place student interns if the student population exceeds 35 new admissions each year.

6. By what means will access be limited? Please provide a description of the program's admissions requirements and procedures, and indicate how these requirements and procedures ensure equal access for Florida community college Associate of Arts degree graduates in the competition for available space in the program.

Admission to the interpreting program requires students to have advanced conversational fluency in American Sign Language and the ability to engage in a dialogue about home, work, travel, and family. Students must be able to articulate their professional goals, the role of an interpreter, and the strengths and competencies they bring to the interpreting program. Students should bring to the interpreting program foundational cognitive processing skills such as paragraphing, identifying gist, delayed repetition, and extracting the salient points of an English or ASL narrative.

Access is limited to applicants who demonstrate these competencies:

- a. Score of 80% or higher on paraphrasing, outlining, summarizing paragraphs, and delayed repetition tasks (cognitive processing)
- b. Score of 80% or higher in assessment of American Sign Language communication,
- c. Score of 80% or higher proficiency in assessment of basic English writing,
- d. Minimum 2.75 cumulative GPA, and
- e. Completion of *Introduction to Interpreting, ENC 1101, ASL I, ASL II* foundation courses with a 'B' or better.

There are additional 'pre-interpreting' competencies, dispositions, and cultural awareness that students must have to successfully exit the program; however, the program does not have the predictive evidence necessary to justify screening out applicants who might develop these characteristics during their upper-level courses. Therefore, if the program assesses these attributes prior to admission, the results will only be used for advising students about services, mentorships, or other supports until sufficient data are obtained.

Admission Screening Procedure:

- *English Proficiency Screen*
 - Written: Developed in conjunction with the UNF Writing Center, this assessment involves a professional goal statement, an essay requiring critical thinking about communication access for persons who are Deaf production of American Sign Language, communication and interaction with Deaf community members)
 - Spoken: This evaluation will be conducted in an English interview.
- *American Sign Language Communication Screen*
 - Expressive: This evaluation consists of a prepared presentation in ASL and an ASL interview to assess fluency, structure, and message accuracy.
 - Receptive: Students will be evaluated on their ability to comprehend and summarize ASL messages, identifying salient points, intent of presenter, and register of presentation. [NOTE:

Students are not evaluated on interpreting skills, only language comprehension and use.]

- *Cognitive Processing Screen*
 - Critical thinking, paraphrasing, outlining, paraphrasing, identifying gist, and delayed repetition

Equal Access for Florida State College Associate of Arts Degree Graduates

The ASL/English Interpreting program at UNF relies on transfer students from five associate-level (AS or AA) programs housed in institutions within the Florida State College system. Some of these feeder programs have exit competencies related to linguistic proficiency, and we have not experienced a major discrepancy between the feeder programs. However, the attrition of students who could not successfully manage the linguistic requirements at UNF could have been prevented if admission screening had been in place at the time of their entry. Instead, students started the program with transcripts that did not indicate a cause for alarm, only to discover they were ill prepared for the program rigors. All students transferring into UNF's program have been given equal access since the program began in 2007 as a '2+2 AS/AA-BS articulation program', and students will continue to have equal access after the implementation of Limited Access.

The Community Interpreting concentration of the BS degree is UNF's 'home grown' interpreting program, starting students with their first language course (ASL 1) as freshmen and matriculating through the program entirely at UNF. This concentration was approved in 2014 and it is currently operating with its first cohort. All students, whether transferring in with an associate's degree in Interpreting or starting the program at UNF, enter the same course plan for the Junior and Senior-level courses. The proposed Limited Access policy applies to all students entering the Junior year.

Admission Cap

The benefit of becoming a Limited Access program is that students will save money and time until they are ready to enter the program. Should an excess of 35 apply to the program in a given year, the program will evaluate its resources (full-time and part-time faculty) to determine if additional admissions are possible. If more students cannot be accommodated, students will be admitted based on screening scores and GPA.

7. Present the current race and gender profiles of the students in the program. Discuss the impact of the proposed action on the race and gender profiles. Cite sources used for discussion. What strategies, should they be necessary, will be used to promote diversity in the program?

The Interpreter Education Program is underrepresented by linguistic and cultural minorities, as is the entire profession. The field and student population is heavily weighted with females; thus recruitment of males, and persons of color, is a priority. The program also prioritizes the admission of students who are Deaf and who seek to become interpreter educators and Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDI) for specialized interpreting with interpreters who are not Deaf regardless of race, gender identity/expression, sex or any other factor. Currently, the student body demographics for all undergraduates in the interpreting program are:

Female	83.75%
Male	16.25%
African American	5.00%
Hispanic:	3.75%
White	71.20%
Other	1.25%
Not reporting:	1.25%
Reporting two or more	17.50%

The program's accrediting body, Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education, requires programs to prioritize diversity in student recruitment and retention as well as faculty hire. The program has a strong advisory steering committee that is devoted to monitoring the program to ensure unconditional positive regard for all prospective and current students. This system of checks and balances, with an external steering committee structure that provides guidance for improving the program's practices and policies, works in favor of students who represent diverse populations. Steering Committee members will participate in the admission screening process.

8. Are the graduates of the program in high demand? If so, and if the program is to be limited due to lack of adequate resources, provide a justification for limiting access to the program rather than reallocating resources from programs with low market demand.

The program currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate 35 new Juniors each fall; however, if the demand for the program exceeds capacity, additional faculty may be needed. The demand for 'highly qualified' interpreters under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 is the motivation behind implementing admission standards that allow the program to generate graduates who are most likely to achieve national certification as the highest qualification possible in the field. As Florida moves toward interpreter licensure for educational interpreters (proposed for upcoming legislative session) and general practice interpreters, UNF's program has the most robust curriculum to supply the demands for credentialed interpreters.

Request Initiated by:	Sherry Shaw Professor, Program Director, ASL/English Interpreting
EEO Officer's Signature:	<i>Cheryl Gonzalez</i>
Provost's Signature:	<i>Earle C. Ignash</i>
University Board of Trustees Approval Date (please include a copy of the UBOT agenda with this form)	15 October 2015

Send the completed form to:

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