

American Sign Language & Deaf Studies

DIVISION OF
BEHAVIORAL
SCIENCES

PROGRAMS OF STUDY:

- B.A. in American Sign Language (ASL) & Deaf Studies
- B.A. in ASL & Deaf Studies with Mental Health track
- B.A. in ASL & Deaf Studies with Teacher Licensure
- Minor in ASL & Deaf Studies

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Knoxville Center of the Deaf
- Tennessee Association of the Deaf (Knoxville)
- Tennessee School for the Deaf

GRADUATE SCHOOL PLACEMENTS

- Gallaudet University
- University of Tennessee-Knoxville
- University of Texas-Austin Xavier University

JOB PLACEMENTS

- Community Advocacy Network
- Knoxville Center of the Deaf
- New York Department of Education
- Open Arms Corporation
- Sorenson Communications

ON-CAMPUS RESOURCES

Our Deaf consultants support both the ASL Deaf Studies and ASL English Interpreting programs, ensuring an immersive and engaging learning environment.

The MC Sign Language Club is a vibrant campus organization where students network and share their journeys while immersing themselves in American Sign Language.



MARYVILLE
COLLEGE
IN THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

Why study ASL & Deaf Studies at Maryville College?

Are you captivated by the rich tapestry of Deaf culture and the power of American Sign Language (ASL) as a language? Begin your transformative journey with Maryville College's ASL & Deaf Studies program, where passion meets purpose. At Maryville College, we believe in fostering deep connections and understanding within the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing (DDBHH) communities. The program equips you with critical thinking skills and hands-on experiences to bridge the gap between ASL as a language and the vibrant Deaf culture.

Dive into interdisciplinary research and language advocacy to explore the historical, sociological and multicultural aspects of DDBHH communities. The ASL-Deaf Studies program prepares you for a range of rewarding careers, including ASL teaching, neuroscience, law, speech pathology, audiology, social work, school counseling, psychology and more. In addition, by laying the foundation to apply graduate-level study dedicated to serving and supporting DDBHH communities, the program prepares students for graduate programs in ASL teaching, Deaf Education, and related areas.

MEET A CURRENT SCOT

Kaliyah Washington

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia, and Alcoa, Tennessee



Kaliyah has lived all over the United States, most recently in Alcoa. Starting her college search while a resident of Atlanta, Georgia, she saw that ASL was offered as a major at MC and applied right away. She plans to pursue a master's degree after graduation and work with the Deaf community.

She said she enjoys learning something new every day and the rigor of the program. "Being able to meet people in the Deaf community (she volunteers for the Knoxville Center for the Deaf) and how the major pushes me to get comfortable with being uncomfortable and learning how to be more confident in myself," brings her the most enjoyment, she added.

MEET A RECENT GRAD

Kelton Bloxham '24

Currently: Pursuing a Master's Degree in Higher Education Leadership & Policy at the University of Texas at Austin



Kelton chose MC as he knew he wanted to study ASL but wasn't sure what his career path could be. "Maryville College prepared me because it truly gave me the space to explore all of my options," he said. It was this exploration that led Kelton to connect his passions for ASL and the Deaf community with his passion for higher education and law. As a Bonner Scholar, Kelton served in more than 10 internships throughout his time at MC, including one at the Tennessee School for the Deaf.

In addition to pursuing his master's degree, Kelton also works as a graduate research assistant at the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

visit maryvillecollege.edu/asl or call 865.981.8092

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First offered in fall 2025, the **American Sign Language & Deaf Studies with Mental Health track** builds on existing courses in Deaf Studies, Psychology and Sociology. Students who major with this emphasis will be equipped with the necessary skills to support and advocate for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in traditionally underserved settings. This specialized training enables graduates to remove barriers and promote equity in health services, creating professionals who are well-prepared for entry-level roles in social services and behavioral health or for graduate programs in counseling, social work, and psychology. Practice in communication is enhanced by audio-visual materials that are accessible for individual study of a broad cross-section of communication methods, interactions with D/deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, and regular practice using video equipment.

Successful graduates of the ASL studies major with Mental Health track will be able to comfortably communicate in ASL receptively and expressively and to interact comfortably and appropriately in the Deaf community at entry level.



Our new **American Sign Language (ASL) & Deaf Studies with Teacher Licensure program** is the region's first Bachelor of Arts degree of its kind offered through a private institution in the South, providing students the opportunity to become licensed to teach ASL as a World Language in grades 6–12. This innovative program is the result of a dynamic collaboration between the Division of Education and the Division of Behavioral Sciences, combining deep cultural and linguistic understanding with the rigor of professional teacher preparation.

Students in this program will engage in extensive field experiences that begin early and continue throughout their coursework, ensuring they are classroom-ready from day one. Through immersive learning and mentorship, candidates will be prepared to foster inclusive classrooms where ASL flourishes as a vibrant, living language. Graduates will be prepared to meet the growing demand for ASL educators and to expand access for Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing communities across educational and workforce settings.