

Western Nevada College

Deaf Studies, AAS; Deaf Studies, Certificate of Achievement

I. Description of Program Reviewed

The Deaf Studies Program at Western Nevada College offers a Certificate and Associate level courses through onsite and online instruction. Students can earn these degrees/certificates as well as meet the four-semester foreign language requirement of four-year institutions around the country.

II. Review Process and Criteria

The 2023 Deaf Studies program review followed the template used by WNC, which was revised in 2020 (in 2024 we implemented a new process for program review in order to capture a more accurate post-COVID picture). This was the template:

Part I: Program Overview

- A. Brief Description/Summary
- B. College and Program Mission
- C. College and Program Goals
- D. Short Description:
 - a. Unique characteristics
 - b. Concerns or trends affecting the program
 - c. Significant changes or needs in the next five years
 - d. Program Student Learning Outcome/ Course Curriculum
- E. Degrees and/or Certificates offered
- F. Niches served

Part II: Program Effectiveness:

- A. Evidence of Effectiveness
 - a. Course Scheduling/Enrollment History Report
 - b. Summary Data Sheet
 - c. Systematic Assessment Five Year Assessment Plan
- B. Evidence of Satisfaction
- C. Certification/Licenses
- D. Enrollment Trends
- E. Need for the Program
- F. Curriculum Review Report
- G. Internal and External Reviewer Reports
- H. Findings and Recommendations

The report has gone through extensive review of involved faculty, Learning and Innovation, division directors, and the VPASA.

III. Major Findings and Conclusions of the Program Review

- 1. Commendations
 - a. The program is one of the only in the country to provide an option to earn an Associate of Arts degree and certificate fully online.
 - b. The program successfully implemented a new series of courses to provide students an alternative path for completing their certificate or degree (AM 140-141 – combined

levels I/II, III/IV or AM 145-146-147-148 – separate levels I, II, III, IV; both sequences can be completed in 2 semesters).

2. Concerns

- a. Current degree offerings are not in alignment with student/institutional needs. The requirements for becoming an interpreter have changed and a Bachelor's Degree is now required for certification. This means that the degrees WNC currently offers in ASL/Deaf Studies no longer serve the workforce needs of our students, NSHE institutions, or the needs of the community.
- b. Available data for the current review did not provide an objective, timely or statistically accurate overview of the program. This includes the absence or limited access to:
 - i. Meaningful assessment data.
 - ii. Transfer/postgraduation data.
 - iii. Evidence of stakeholder relationships.
- c. Multiple agencies/institutions provide certifications for ASL/Deaf Studies and keeping track of new regulations must be a priority in order to maintain the relevance of the program.
- d. Graduation rates have steadily declined in the last five years.
- e. The dissolution of the ASL Club.
- f. Interpreting coursework is not part of the degree. One possible explanation is the challenge of fitting all requirements into 60 credits. Because these courses are not applicable to a degree, this can be a barrier for students relying on Financial Aid to engage in classes that are considered valuable for deaf studies students.
- g. Offering interpreting classes has been limited due to low enrollment.

3. Recommendations

- a. Update program to a transfer certificate/degree (AA/AAS) that aligns with existing programs (CSN, NSU, UNR).
- b. Partner with an NSHE institution that has an existing program to offer a 2+2 or 3+1 that can be completed online to allow students to stay local while completing a bachelors' degree.
- c. Develop and implement a statistically relevant assessment program that provides valid student achievement data.
- d. Review addendum should be completed within 3 years and address changes in educational requirements for interpreter certification and changes in transfer degrees at NSHE institutions.
- e. Implement incoming, degree declaration/change, and graduation surveys.
- f. Provide regular forums for stakeholder engagement.
- g. Market online program nationally to increase program visibility.
- h. Separate Deaf Studies and ASL/Interpreting into separate pathways (certificate/degree focus and course offerings).
- i. Make appropriate curricular changes to ensure all courses are transferable (as required for transfer degrees). Currently AM 215 is not transferable.
- j. Propose AM 253/254 to fulfill a general education requirement to reflect the recent recertification of these courses to fulfill UNR's CO10 – Diversity and Equity requirement.
- k. Update program missions.

IV. Next Steps for this Program Based on Program Review Findings and Recommendations

After review by the Curriculum Committee and College Council, recommendations will go to the division director and VPASA for approval. They will then be sent to the appropriate individuals for planning and implementation. Review of recommendations from this program review cycle will occur during the 2028 review process.

V. Descriptive Statistics

A. Number of students with declared major in the program area:

2023-24	
AAS	<u>28</u>
Certificate of Achievement	<u>20</u>

B. Number of graduates from the program for the following years:

2021-22	
AAS	<u>9</u>
Certificate of Achievement	<u>5</u>
2022-23	
AAS	<u>5</u>
Certificate of Achievement	<u>1</u>
2023-24	
AAS	<u>9</u>
Certificate of Achievement	<u>5</u>

C. Program-level graduation rate using first-time, full-time, degree seeking cohort at 150 percent completion time:

2021-22	<u>14.3%</u>
2022-23	<u>8.3%</u>
2023-24	<u>8.3%</u>

D. Headcount of students enrolled in any course related to the program (duplicated):

Fall 2023	<u>305</u>
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VI. Institutional Reports

Please see report attached.