Deaf Community Events Policy
Bakersfield College ASL Program

Throughout its nearly 40-year history, the ASL Program at Bakersfield College has worked closely with Bakersfield’s Deaf Community to host and participate in events where students can interact with Deaf adults and children in Bakersfield. This mutually beneficial interaction helps students to improve their signing fluency and aids their understanding of concepts taught in the classroom.

To help maintain our high standards and to ensure student safety, the BC ASL Program has a number of rules and advisories related to students attending Deaf Community Events. Be sure you read and understand these rules and advisories before attending any events.

RULES:
1. Under no circumstances may students consume alcohol or be under the influence of any controlled substances while attending Deaf Community Events. From the BC Student Handbook:

“The Board of Trustees, the college President or designee may suspend a student for good cause.” . . . which includes “. . . the use, sale, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any other controlled substance prohibited by law, on campus or at any function sponsored or supervised by the College.”

Some students believe that if they are of legal drinking age this policy does not apply to them. That is incorrect. This policy applies to all students, regardless of age. If a student violates this policy, he or she may be sanctioned, up to and including being suspended from the college.

2. Students will not talk or use their voices while in the presence of Deaf Community members.
Students attending Deaf Community Events agree to do so with the understanding that, while these events are social, they are for their educational benefit. Students will sign—to the best of their ability—while present at Deaf Community Events.

3. Students who knowingly turn in falsified Deaf Community Event Reports (a report for an event that the student did not attend) will lose all accrued hours and will forfeit the right to earn more hours during that semester.
4. **You may only earn credit by attending Deaf Community Events listed on the ASL Program’s website.**

If you wish to attend an event not listed there and wish to earn credit, you must secure your instructor’s approval prior to attending. Events where alcohol is served (i.e. a bar) or illegal controlled substances are consumed will not be approved under any circumstances.

**ADVISORIES:**

1. **Deaf Community Events** are attended by BC students and members of the general public. Deaf community members in attendance are neither screened nor endorsed by the college. **Treat Deaf strangers as you would any stranger— with caution.** We recommend that you don’t offer rides to, go to isolated areas with, or divulge personal information to people you don’t know, whether they are Deaf or hearing.

Most members of Bakersfield’s Deaf Community are known to us and are upstanding citizens; however, we don’t know everyone and have no way of controlling the movements of individuals. Please exercise caution and common sense and keep your safety foremost in your thoughts.

2. **Deaf Community Events** are held for you, the student, and are to assist you in improving your ASL fluency.

   If you are an ASL 1 student, try to be assertive in introducing yourself and joining in conversations. People are expecting you at these events and are there, generally, to assist you.

   If you are an advanced ASL student, reach out to newer, less experienced signers and help them to feel welcome. Don’t sit and chat with only groups of your friends. Assisting a newer student will reinforce and improve your own knowledge as well. If you have a Deaf friend, introduce him or her to newer students. Remember, we all attend these events to learn, and members of our Deaf Community don’t “belong” to anyone. Remember, too, that you were new once.

   If you are a new student or advanced, remember, don’t use your voice. If you see other students talking, approach them and engage them in a signed conversation. If they
still continue to talk, report that behavior to an instructor and the Deaf person in charge of the event. It is imperative that we maintain a signing environment that promotes learning, values ASL, and — most importantly — respects the members of Bakersfield’s Deaf Community.