

C O U R S E S Y L L A B U S

Community Interpreter Training

Course Overview

This course trains individuals to work as community interpreters across education, healthcare, legal, and social service settings. Students learn all three modes of interpretation — consecutive, simultaneous, and sight translation — and develop the ethical grounding and professional conduct required to do the job well. The course uses structured exercises, reflective practice through the Kolb Learning Cycle, and a 21-day practice program to build lasting skill. Live instructor appointments are available throughout.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define community interpreting and distinguish it from other interpreting and translation services
- Use consecutive, simultaneous, and sight translation modes in community settings
- Apply ethical standards and codes of professional conduct across medical, legal, and educational contexts
- Use the AIM method and notetaking techniques to support consecutive interpretation
- Apply shadowing and decalage practice to build simultaneous interpreting skill
- Navigate encounters in school, medical, legal, and social service settings
- Manage vicarious trauma and maintain professional quality of life
- Reflect on and improve performance using the Kolb Learning Cycle
- Identify certification pathways and career opportunities in community interpreting

Module 1

An Overview of Interpreting — Classes 1–3

#	Class	Title	Topics Covered
1	1	An Overview of Interpreting 101	Introduction and course overview; defining interpreting and its modes; history of interpreting and the profession. Homework: Quiz 1
2	2	An Overview of Interpreting 102	Community interpreting and its significance; adversarial vs. collaborative interpreting in community settings. Homework: Research assignment
3	3	An Overview of Interpreting 103	Kolb Learning Cycle in interpreting; first consecutive exercise and self-assessment. Homework: Schedule instructor appointment for feedback

Module 2

Codes of Professional Conduct — Classes 4–7

#	Class	Title	Topics Covered
4	4	Codes of Professional Conduct 101	Introduction to codes of ethics and professional conduct; differences between medical and legal codes in community interpreting. Homework: Complete assigned tasks
5	5	Codes of Professional Conduct 102	Educational codes of ethics in community settings; ethical scenarios and solutions activity. Homework: Quiz 2
6	6	Code of Professional Conduct 103	Effective interpreter positioning in community settings; IEP consecutive practice exercise; reflective learning using Kolb Cycle. Homework: Prepare for next session
7	7	Code of Professional Conduct 104	Conduit vs. incremental intervention in community interpreting; appropriate settings for each approach. Homework: Quiz 3

Module 3

Skill Building — Classes 8–18

#	Class	Title	Topics Covered
8	8	Skill Building 101	Consecutive interpretation using the AIM method; attention and notetaking (inscription); attention exercise. Homework: Complete assigned tasks
9	9	Skill Building 102	Memory techniques in the AIM method; consecutive practice; reflective learning using Kolb Cycle. Homework: Consecutive interpreting exercise
10	10	Skill Building 103	Introduction to sight translation in community settings; reading comprehension and chunking exercises. Homework: Quiz 4
11	11	Skill Building 104	Effective delivery in sight translation; sight translation exercise. Homework: Complete assigned tasks
12	12 – 13	Skill Building 105, 106	Simultaneous interpreting and decalage in community contexts; practice with expanding, compressing, and word/meaning substitution. Homework: Quiz 5
13	14 – 15	Skill Building 107, 108	Sight translation as a foundation for simultaneous interpretation; glossary building and practice exercises. Homework: Quiz 6
14	16	Skill Building 109	Shadowing to improve decalage; implementing the 21-day practice program. Homework: Prepare for next session; schedule instructor appointment for feedback
15	17	Test — Skills & Professional Conduct	Mid-course test covering all skill-building and codes of professional conduct content. Score of 70% required to pass.
16	18	Skill Building 110	Test review and glossary building. Homework: Prepare for next session

Module 4

In-Depth: Education — Classes 19–21

#	Class	Title	Topics Covered
17	19	In-Depth: Education 101	Overview of the US educational system and its impact on interpreting; typical encounters in school settings for community interpreters. Homework: Prepare for next session
18	20	In-Depth: Education 102	Commonly used documents in school settings; advocacy and cultural competency in educational interpreting. Homework: Prepare for next session
19	21	In-Depth: Education 103	Incremental intervention in educational settings; consecutive teacher-parent conference exercise; reflective learning using Kolb Cycle. Homework: Quiz 7

Module 5

In-Depth: Medical & Legal — Classes 22–27

#	Class	Title	Topics Covered
20	22	In-Depth Medical and Legal 101	Legal and medical codes in community interpreting; managing vicarious trauma in community settings; Professional Quality of Life Scale exercise. Homework: Quiz 8
21	23	In-Depth Medical and Legal 102	Legal encounter scenarios for community interpreters; glossary building exercise. Homework: Prepare for next session
22	24	In-Depth Medical and Legal 103	Medical encounters in community interpreting; glossary building exercise. Homework: Quiz 9
23	25	In-Depth Medical and Legal 104	Mental competency evaluations: legal or medical encounters? Homework: Prepare for next session
24	26	In-Depth Medical and Legal 105	Federal vs. state legal systems in community interpreting; interpreting in social settings (religious, social events, political); consecutive mental competency evaluation exercise. Homework: Prepare for next session
25	27	In-Depth Medical and Legal 106	Conference interpreting in community settings; simultaneous practice in an educational conference. Homework: Schedule instructor appointment for feedback

Module 6

Professional Development & Final Assessment — Classes 28–30

#	Class	Title	Topics Covered
26	28	Professional Development 101	Employment opportunities for community interpreters; working with interpreting agencies. Homework: Prepare for next session
27	29	Professional Development 102	Importance of certification for community interpreters; resources and associations for professional development; test review and preparation. Homework: Prepare for next session
28	30	Final Test	Final assessment covering all course topics. Score of 70% required to pass. Optional: schedule a mock exam with instructor.

Instructor

Agustín Servin de la Mora is the president of DE LA MORA Institute of Interpretation. He was born and raised in Mexico City, Mexico, and has been a professional freelance and staff interpreter for the last 28 years. He is one of the Supervisor Raters for the National Center for State Courts and has been a lead rater for the federal and consortium oral exams for court interpreters. He was the lead interpreter for the Ninth Judicial Circuit for over a decade, served as member of the Project Advisory Committee responsible for the creation of the National Standards for Healthcare Interpreter Training Programs for the NCIHC. He was a member of the Florida Court Interpreter Certification Board and a voting member of the Technical Committee of the National Consortium for Interpreter Certification. He is a state and federally certified court interpreter, as well as a certified medical interpreter. He has been a consultant for the Administrative Offices of the State Courts, conducting orientation seminars and advanced skills workshops for interpreters in at least 15 states. He has been featured as a speaker and presenter in several national conventions, including those of NAJIT, ATA, IMIA, and NASCA.