Dear Potential Practicum/Internship Site,

As a part of our Masters’ degree in Sign Language Education program requirements, our students are required to amass professional field experience prior to graduation. There are two courses that involve field experience requirements in our program. They are:

*ASL 752: Sign Language Teaching Practicum (3)* This course is a required professional field experience in the Sign Language Education program consisting a minimum of forty-five (45) observation and/or assisting hours. During this experience, the practicum student observes (and when appropriate, assists) sign language education. A required seminar is conducted regularly to review theoretical and practical applications of teaching, lesson planning, activities and assessment techniques. An important component of this course also includes preparing for the upcoming student teaching internship.

*ASL 790: Sign Language Teaching Internship (3)* This course is the final professional experience in the Sign Language Education program and is a required field experience consisting a minimum of forty-five (45) consecutive teaching hours. During this experience, the student teacher is mentored by an *on-site faculty* and by an *university supervisor*. Students with extensive sign language teaching experience, and with approval of the department, may undertake an on-the-job internship placement without an on-site faculty. A required internship portfolio will be developed which includes theoretical and practical applications and useful teaching techniques.

We would be grateful if you could allow our practicum students to observe (and assist, when appropriate) your expert faculty as they work in the field of sign language education. Our students are required to complete a practicum time log sheet, and the only commitment from your faculty would be to sign the practicum time log sheet verifying the number of hours.

As for our internship students, they have two options: obtain a non-paid student teaching internship role within a class with an expert faculty to act as a mentor, in other words, on-site faculty. This would require some minor collaboration between the university supervisor, the on-site faculty, and the student intern.

The other option for our internship students is to obtain a paid teaching position, where they would be the sole teacher of a course, required to report to the university supervisor for regularly scheduled seminars with other interns and have their lessons and assessment tools reviewed and improved throughout the course.

The number of ASL students has increased exponentially in the last 10 years, and the pool of qualified ASL teachers remains painfully small. You would be supporting a very important component of professional education preparation for graduate students in Sign Language Education. If you have any questions about the program, please feel free to contact me.

With sincere thanks, Dr. Raychelle Harris, Director of the Masters of Sign Language Education program