

Assessment Report M.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders 2023-2024

The Master of Science (M.S.) in Speech-Language Pathology in the Communication Sciences and Disorders program ensures that degree candidates meet the minimum academic and clinical practicum requirements for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Program goals are based on the knowledge and skills recommended by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Graduate students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to the

- 1) foundations of communication and professional practice
- 2) screening, assessment, evaluation, and diagnosis of communication disorders and
- 3) planning, implementation, and evaluation of treatment.

Students must pass a comprehensive exam administered by the program and a national Praxis examination in speech-language pathology to qualify for licensure and certification. Graduate students must also earn a minimum of 400 clinical clock hours during their program, with a final minimum competency rating of “3” on a 4-point scale on each of 205 skills.

Final data for employment of the 2023-2024 cohort are not available at the time of this report.

Academic Assessment for 2023-2024

Program Goals Learning Outcomes and Student Performance

The student will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of communication and swallowing disorders and differences, including the appropriate etiologies, characteristics, anatomical/physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates in articulation, fluency, voice, resonance, language, hearing, cognitive aspects of communication, social aspects
- Differentiate between normal and disordered articulation, language, voice, resonance, swallowing, fluency, and pragmatics.

Student Outcomes:

- 2022-2024 Cohort; CDIS Comprehensive exam – 100% pass
- 2022-2024 Cohort; Praxis Exam in SLP – (24/24) 100% pass; 2 students passed in the second retaking of the exam.
- 2022-2024 Cohort Coursework; 100% (24/24) Passed all completed coursework with 80% accuracy or higher.
- 2023-2025 96% (31/32) Passed All coursework with 80% accuracy or higher.

Clinical Education Outcomes

Program Goals Learning Outcomes and Student Performance

The student will:

- Identify appropriate methods of evaluating a variety of speech, language, and swallowing disorders.
- Demonstrate knowledge of processes used in research and of the integration of research principles into evidence-based clinical practice.
- Evaluate the current evidence base for a variety of assessment and intervention strategies.
- The student will complete clinical experiences sufficient in breadth and depth to achieve adequate skills in evaluation, intervention, and interaction/personal qualities.
- Demonstrate competency in obtaining both subjective and objective measures of speech, language, and hearing ability.
- Demonstrate competency in assessing speech and language abilities/disorders for clients of varying ages, genders, and cultures.
- Demonstrate competency in planning and performing intervention for a variety of communication disorders with clients of varying ages, genders, and cultures.

Between May 2023 and May 2024, the graduate students participated in:

- 9,704 graduate level clinical education training hours for the 2024 graduating cohort.
- 4,448 graduate level clinical education training hours for the 2025 graduating cohort.
- CDIS 5383, Summer 2023: (24 students) yielded 66 graduate credit hours
- CDIS 5183, Fall 2023: (32 students) yielded 96 graduate credit hours
- CDIS 5483, Fall 2023: (32 students) yielded 96 graduate credit hours
- CDIS 5663, Spring 2024: (32 students) yielded 66 graduate credit hours
- CDIS 5283, Spring 2024: (24 students) yielded 96 graduate credit hours
- Total Graduate Credit Hours completed for Clinical Education = 432

Student Outcomes:

2021-2023 Cohort Final Clinical Skills Ratings 3+ – 100% at 3 or higher

2021-2023 Cohort Clinic Practicum Grade – 100% at 80% or higher

2022-2024 Cohort Clinic Practicum Grade -100% at 80% or higher

Assessment Plan: A curriculum change was implemented for the 2023-2025 cohort that moved CDIS 5243, Language Disorders in Adults, to the semester 1; CDIS 5122 and CDIS 5121L Feeding and Swallowing to semester 2; and the offering of CDIS 5143, Cognitive-Communication Development and Disorders as an elective in semester 2. These changes reflect the need to move medical and adult-focused graduate level coursework to earlier in the program of study so that students can be placed in medical

and adult-based clinical placements earlier in their program. This has worked well this year.

Based on the assessment results, no changes in the assessment process are planned for the next academic year. CDIS faculty reported a concern in the availability of clinical faculty workload to cover the needed clinical education for graduate students. A new clinical instructor is in the process of being hired.