MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are licensed professionals who work to assess, diagnose, treat, and help prevent speech, voice, language, cognitive-linguistic, and swallowing disorders across the age-span.

The Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (MS-SLP) degree program (http://uthscsa.edu/shp) is a two-year (5 semesters) graduate study grounded on integration of academic coursework with clinical experience. Having the program embedded in the School of Health Professions enables this program to have its emphasis in medical speech-language pathology. Coursework is particularly designed and sequenced to provide students with the scientific and professional education for work as speech-language pathologists in diverse medical settings. The program is unique in its curricular specification and application of knowledge within a community-based clinical education framework. Training in a health science campus environment with direct access and constant exposure to the medical community provides graduates with medically-based training to serve children and adults with health care and educational needs.

Graduates of the MS-SLP degree program will be eligible to apply for ASHA’s Certificate of Conical Competence (CCC), and compete effectively for entry-level positions in speech-language pathology, particularly in medical settings. The graduates of the MS-SLP program will be prepared to become productive in complex clinical settings such as acute or rehabilitation hospitals for adult patients or institutions where children with medical challenges are integrated into school settings.

The MS-SLP program is a Candidate for Accreditation by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. This is a “pre-accreditation” status with the CAA, awarded to developing or emerging programs for a maximum period of five years. This accreditation allows the program to matriculate and graduate students with medically-based training to serve children and adults with health care and educational needs.

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
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Phone: (800) 498-2071
Email: accreditation@asha.org
Website: http://caa.asha.org/

Admission Requirements
The admission requirements for the MS-SLP degree program align with the general requirements of UTHSCSA for graduate education. All required application information, including official transcripts from all institutions attended, must be submitted for an applicant to be considered by the MS-SLP program Admissions Committee. Specifically, the following prerequisites must be met:

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution in the United States
- Required pre-requisite coursework of basic human communication include:
  - Introduction to audiology
  - Phonetics and normal articulation
  - Normal language development
  - Anatomy and physiology of speech and hearing
  - Speech and hearing science
- Required pre-requisite coursework of basic science include one course each in behavioral/social sciences, biological sciences, physical sciences (physics or chemistry), and statistics. Students are allowed to co-enroll up to two basic science courses with the exception of statistics while working to complete graduate study requirements. Students must have all requirements completed no later than the end of their fourth semester in the master’s program.
- Minimal grade point average (GPA): An overall GPA of 3.0
- Competitive scores on GRE tests up to five years old (no pre-determined minimum score requirement). GRE code for CSDCAS is 2156.
- Letters of recommendation: Three letters of recommendation are required attesting to the applicant’s readiness for graduate level studies.

Application Process
Applicants will submit online applications through the Communication Sciences and Disorders Centralized Application Service (CSDCAS) provided by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD). CSDCAS is a state-of-the-art, web-based application system that offers applicants a convenient way to apply to any number of participating clinical education programs in the speech-language pathology concentration by completing a single application. It provides a streamlined and user-friendly approach to the application process; it provides faculty with one web-based recommendation protocol; and it provides the MS-SLP program maximum exposure to the applicants anywhere in the country. The CSDCAS operational cycle is from September of year 1 – April of year 2 (e.g., September 2016-April 2017).

Degree Requirements
The Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology curriculum consists of 66 semester credit hours taken over 2 years (5 semesters) of study. Students will be required to complete a minimum of 400 supervised clinical hours obtained from culturally diverse settings to be eligible to apply for ASHA’s Certificate of Conical Competence (CCC).

Sample Plan of Study
The Student Progress Committee of the MS-SLP degree program will ensure that the following schedule is followed by MS-SLP students to make appropriate progress towards their degree. The Student Progress Committee will grant exceptions from this schedule only under extenuating circumstances.

All students in the MS-SLP program must complete the following course of study:
First Year

Fall
- MSLP 5000: Neurological Bases of Speech, Hearing, and Language 3
- MSLP 5001: Speech Production and Speech Perception 3
- MSLP 5002: Speech Sound Disorders 3
- MSLP 5003: Audiological Service Delivery in Speech-Language Pathology Laboratory 1
- MSLP 5004: Research Methods 3
- MSLP 5005: Clinical Methods in Speech-Language Pathology 1 2

Spring
- MSLP 5006: Aphasia and Related Disorders 3
- MSLP 5007: Motor Speech Disorders 3
- MSLP 5008: Language Disorders in Children: Preschool and School Age 3
- MSLP 5009: Dysphagia in Adults and Children 3
- MSLP 5010: Clinical Methods in Speech-Language Pathology 2 2
- MSLP 5011: Evidence-Based Practice, Professional Issues, and Ethics 3

Summer
- MSLP 5012: Cognition and Communicative Disorders 3
- MSLP 5013: Voice and Resonance Disorders 3
- MSLP 5014: Fluency Disorders: Theory and Practice 3
- MSLP 5015: Speech-Language Pathology Practicum 1 4

Second Year

Fall
- MSLP 6000: Augmentative and Alternative Communication 2
- MSLP 6001: Aging, Cultural and Linguistic Diversity 3
- MSLP 6002: Head Neck Cancer, Tracheostomy, and Mechanical Ventilation 3
- MSLP 6003: Applied Topics in Communication Disorders and Sciences 2
- MSLP 6004: Speech-Language Pathology Practicum 2 4

Spring
- MSLP 6005: Speech-Language Pathology Advanced Practicum 8

Total Credit Hours: 66.0

Objectives/Program Outcomes

The MS-SLP curriculum will achieve three main objectives: 1) to educate and train a diverse student body to become critical thinkers and research-driven clinicians who apply the best practices in the health care setting; 2) to prepare students to serve as strong future leaders in their communities through faculty-guided clinical practica and community outreach activities; and 3) to foster opportunities for student scholarships, and prepare graduates to be competitive candidates for advanced training programs (e.g., Ph.D.) in order to help address the national faculty shortage dilemma.

For future program improvement, program outcomes will be evaluated based on several benchmarks. First, the passing scores on the first trial of the ASHA Praxis examination will be tracked. The Praxis examination in speech-language pathology assesses the beginning practitioners’ understanding of essential content and current practices. The examination is also required for the state credentialing and ASHA certification. Second, data pertaining to educational pursuits (e.g., Ph.D.), career opportunities (hiring rates), and the type of employment (e.g., medical setting or public school) will be collected and analyzed. Third, feedback obtained from a variety of sources will be elicited to assess students’ learning experience and readiness for employment.

The sources of feedback may include, but are not limited to: exit surveys of graduating students, interviews of students’ clinical supervisors in the community, online surveys of past alumni, and communication with graduates’ employers. Periodic contact through the School of Health Professions Director of Development will allow data collection of program satisfaction and readiness for employment via short surveys.

Courses

- MSLP 5000. Neurological Bases of Speech, Hearing, and Language. 3 Credit Hours.
  - This course presents neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and the structure and function of the central and peripheral nervous system that form the neurologic foundation for speech, hearing, and language.

- MSLP 5001. Speech Production and Speech Perception. 3 Credit Hours.
  - This course addresses the physiology of speech production, the acoustic characteristics of speech, the relationship between articulation and acoustics and the processes by which listeners perceive speech. Theories of speech production and perception are discussed. The lifespan issues related to speech, dialectal and/or cultural characteristics of normal speech and the acoustic and perceptual characteristics of abnormal speech are also addressed.

- MSLP 5002. Speech Sound Disorders. 3 Credit Hours.
  - This course addresses development and disorders of articulation and phonology in pediatric populations. Relevant assessment skills are developed. Theories, current assessment batteries, and procedures of contemporary interventions are discussed.

- MSLP 5003. Audiological Service Delivery in Speech-Language Pathology Laboratory. 1 Credit Hour.
  - This course reviews the anatomy and physiology of hearing and the basics of hearing science. Content areas covered include types of hearing loss, forms of hearing assessment, and principles of intervention and rehabilitation. Skills related to participating in hearing screening, hearing assessment and intervention for practicing speech-language pathologists are addressed in lab-based activities.

- MSLP 5004. Research Methods. 3 Credit Hours.
  - This course addresses the skills in understanding and critiquing research reports. Principles and criteria for evaluating published research, including statistical analyses, issues of validity and evidence-based practice are discussed. Students will begin the development of a research project which must be completed prior to graduation.

- MSLP 5005. Clinical Methods in Speech-Language Pathology 1. 2 Credit Hours.
  - This is the first of the two courses taught in simulated student clinical lab. This course emphasizes basic clinical methods and skills for beginning graduate students in speech-language pathology with an emphasis on assessment. Students will practice administering, scoring and interpreting common standardized tests. Clinical note-writing and documentation are modeled and discussed.
MSLP 5006. Aphasia and Related Disorders. 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines adult onset aphasia and related language disorders. The content areas covered include theoretical foundations, pathophysiology, symptomatology, assessment and diagnosis, and clinical management.

MSLP 5007. Motor Speech Disorders. 3 Credit Hours.
This course addresses motor speech disorders: Apraxia of Speech and Dysarthria. The content areas covered include theoretical models, neuropathophysiology, symptomatology, various instruments and tests for assessment and differential diagnosis as well as clinical management of both developmental and adult-onset motor speech disorders.

MSLP 5008. Language Disorders in Children: Preschool and School Age. 3 Credit Hours.
This course addresses language development and disorders of both preschool and school-age children, and adolescents. Both primary and secondary language disorders are included. The content areas covered include underlying etiologies, clinical characteristics, assessment batteries and evidence-based intervention strategies.

MSLP 5009. Dysphagia in Adults and Children. 3 Credit Hours.
This course addresses swallowing disorders in both adult and children in various populations across the age span. Content areas covered include normal anatomy and physiology of swallowing, evaluation of disordered oropharyngeal swallowing using both instrumental and noninstrumental examination tools with special emphasis on videoflouroscopic swallow study (VFSS) procedures and analysis, and evidence-based treatment strategies for swallowing disorders.

MSLP 5010. Clinical Methods in Speech-Language Pathology 2. 2 Credit Hours.
This is the second of the two courses taught in simulated student clinical lab. This course emphasizes more advanced clinical methods and skills for beginning graduate students in speech-language pathology with an emphasis on intervention. Topic areas covered include various published and evidence-based clinical protocols and operational procedures in management.

MSLP 5011. Evidence-Based Practice, Professional Issues, and Ethics. 2 Credit Hours.
This course provides an overview of professional issues for speech-language pathologists. Content areas include principles of evidence-based practice, regulatory, licensure and scope of practice issues, professional ethics, health care reimbursement, risk management, and other current professional and legal issues related to practicing speech-language pathologists.

MSLP 5012. Cognition and Communicative Disorders. 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines normal cognition and the effects of aging and dementia to the nondominant cerebral hemisphere as well as traumatic brain injury on communication. Both assessment and management of communication disorders arising from these conditions are addressed.

MSLP 5013. Voice and Resonance Disorders. 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines the acoustic, perceptual and physiological dimensions of normal and abnormal voice and resonance. For voice, differential diagnosis and management of hyperfunctional, psychogenic and organic voice disorders are addressed. For resonance, embryology, anatomy and physiology of normal and abnormal development of orofacial structures, cleft-palate and craniofacial anomalies associated with various syndromes and their effects on speech, hearing, and language development are addressed.

MSLP 5014. Fluency Disorders: Theory and Practice. 3 Credit Hours.
This course addresses childhood-onset and adult-onset fluency disorders. Content areas include identification of characteristics of typical and atypical dysfluency in children, determination of various linguistic, developmental, physiological and psychological aspects associated with the onset and maintenance of developmental stuttering, and the process of differential diagnosis of adult-onset neurogenic and psychogenic stuttering. Anatomical and functional changes associated with fluent and stuttered speech in recent neuroimaging studies are discussed. Evidence-based treatment approaches are explored.

MSLP 5015. Speech-Language Pathology Practicum 1. 4 Credit Hours.
This is a clinical practicum designed to help beginning student clinicians meet the American Speech-Language Hearing Association’s (ASHA) required number of clinical hours in different practicum settings. The clinic coordinator is responsible for procuring appropriate placements to best match the needs between students and clinical practicum sites. Practicum settings may include hospitals, medical centers/clinics, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, public and private schools, special needs schools, charter schools, and private practices.

MSLP 6000. Augmentative and Alternative Communication. 2 Credit Hours.
This course provides an introduction to current methods and basic strategies associated with the use of augmentative and alternative communication aids and approaches in patients with varying types of communicative disorders. The course addresses the knowledge and skills required for assessment and identification of potential AAC users, decision making, and instructional development and implementation.

MSLP 6001. Aging, Cultural and Linguistic Diversity. 3 Credit Hours.
This course addresses the cultural and linguistic diversity relevant to clinical practice in the profession of speech-language pathology. Students acquire a knowledge base regarding the interaction of culture, dialects, and bilingualism with communication disorders and learn to apply it to clinical situations.

MSLP 6002. Head Neck Cancer, Tracheostomy, and Mechanical Ventilation. 3 Credit Hours.
This is a two-part course. Part I covers assessment and management of speech, voice and swallowing disorders resulting from treatment for head and neck cancer. The voice and speech changes expected in patients receiving head and neck surgeries and treatment strategies are discussed. Part II covers the unique challenges of evaluation and treatment of speech and voice impairments demonstrated by patients requiring tracheostomy tube placement and/or ventilator support. Basic understanding of various tracheostomy tubes, one-way speaking valves and ventilators/ventilator settings are reviewed. Short- and long-term options for communication are discussed.

MSLP 6003. Applied Topics in Communication Disorders and Sciences. 2 Credit Hours.
In this course, scientific, clinical and professional issues in speech-language pathology are examined using a variety of formats including guest speakers in student development sessions, clinical rounds, and journal club. Development of oral presentation skills as well as analytical and clinical problem-solving skills is emphasized. The course meets two hours weekly.
MSLP 6004. Speech-Language Pathology Practicum 2. 4 Credit Hours.
This is a clinical practicum designed to help graduate student clinicians meet the American Speech-Language Hearing Association’s (ASHA) required number of clinical hours in different practicum settings. The clinic coordinator is responsible for procuring appropriate placements to best match the needs between students and clinical practicum sites. Practicum settings may include hospitals, medical centers/clinics, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, public and private schools, special needs schools, charter schools, and private practices.

MSLP 6005. Speech-Language Pathology Advanced Practicum. 8 Credit Hours.
This is a full-time externship designed to help students meet the American Speech-Language Hearing Association’s (ASHA) required number of clinical hours in different practicum settings. The clinic coordinator is responsible for procuring appropriate placements to best match the needs between students and clinical practicum sites. Practicum settings may include hospitals, medical centers/clinics, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, public and private schools, special needs schools, charter schools, and private practices.