

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY (MSSLP)

Degree Requirements

The Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (MSSLP) serves either as professional preparation for clinical certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) or as preparation for graduate study leading to the Ph.D. degree. The MSSLP program provides a broad range of basic science courses and specialized offerings emphasizing evaluation and treatment of language, articulation, fluency, voice, swallowing, and neurologically-based communication disorders. Students are prepared for careers as clinicians in schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and community clinics.

Clinical practicum experiences occur at the on-campus Speech and Hearing Center and many affiliated clinics, rehabilitation centers, schools, and hospitals. Within this framework, students must meet the academic and practicum requirements leading to the Clinical Fellowship (CF) that occurs post-graduation. Completion of the CF results in eligibility for national certification, the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC-SLP) awarded by ASHA, and eligibility for State of Alabama Licensure. The MSSLP program is a full-time, in-residence program. For students with a background in communication sciences and disorders, the MSSLP program typically extends for five academic semesters, including one semester of clinical externship. For those students who do not have a background in communication sciences and disorders, the program of study can be expected to last six academic semesters.

Typical Requirements for the Degree

The Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology degree requires:

1. A minimum of five semesters of full-time study. The final semester is spent off campus completing the externship. Students who enter the program without a background in communication sciences and disorders will require additional coursework and six semesters of full-time study.
2. A minimum GPA of 3.0.
3. A passing grade on comprehensive examinations before leaving for the externship, or satisfactory completion of a thesis.
4. Demonstration of academic and clinical competencies as reflected in the 2020 Standards for Clinical Certification in Speech-Language Pathology, verified by the program director. This includes verification of completed coursework in biological science, physical science, social/behavioral science, and statistics. Typically, this coursework is completed at the undergraduate level.
5. Completion of 375 supervised clinical clock hours in the required areas as stipulated by ASHA. Students without an undergraduate degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders or related field must complete 25 hours of clinical observation before beginning the supervised clinical experience to meet the 375 clinical clock hour requirement.

Regular Admission

To be considered for admission, applicants must:

1. Have earned or be in the process of completing a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
2. Demonstrate a preferred minimum 3.0 (A=4.0) overall undergraduate GPA.

3. Complete the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), including analytical writing section, within the last five years and submit according to application instructions.
4. International applicants must submit documentary evidence showing TOEFL test scores of at least 600 (written form), 250 (computer version), or 100 (internet-based version), or bachelor's or graduate degrees earned at accredited United States institutions of higher education. A minimal IELTS score of 7 is considered equivalent to the TOEFL scores required.
5. Provide three references from faculty at the undergraduate institution. Two of these references should be provided by Ph.D. faculty within the applicant's undergraduate department.
6. Include a Personal Essay stating the applicant's reasons for pursuing the degree, and addressing specific questions outlined in the application instructions.

Because the number of applicants is greater than the number of vacancies in the program, admission is competitive, and applicants are evaluated based on the criteria stated above. Details regarding the Admissions process and deadline are available on the Department of Speech-Pathology and Audiology website.

Retention Policies

1. Any term in which a graduate student enrolled in the MSSLP program drops below a 3.0 GPA, the student will be placed on probationary status and has a period of one semester to attain a 3.0 GPA or be dismissed from the program.
2. Any student who receives a grade lower than a "C" in a graduate level course will be dismissed from the program.
3. A "C" in any combination of two or more MSSLP courses will result in academic dismissal.
4. Students whose performance falls below standards in a course or clinical experience may be required to complete additional and/or augmentative coursework or clinical experiences as needed to meet ASHA's standards for clinical certification. As such, graduation could be delayed.
5. If for any reason a student must withdraw from the MSSLP program, re-admission will require approval of the Department Chair and the Dean of the Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions.
6. If a student is dismissed from a program prior to the end of the regular semester and that dismissal occurs after the University's refund deadline, the student will not receive any type of refund even if the next series of classes have not begun.

Typical Course Sequence

Course	Title	Hours
First Year		
SLP 541	Adv Articulation Disorders	3
SLP 532	Clinical Linguistics	3
SLP 521	Advanced Speech Science	3
SLP 510	Intro to Research Design	3
SLP 596	Clin Pract Speech-Lang Pathol	1
SLP 596L	Clin Pract Sp-Lang Path Lab	2
SLP 568	Dysphagia	4
SLP 561	Fluency Disorders	3
SLP 533	Pediatric Language Disorders	3
SLP 566	Aphasia & Neuro Lang Disorders	3
SLP 596	Clin Pract Speech-Lang Pathol	1
SLP 596L	Clin Pract Sp-Lang Path Lab	2
SLP 567	Acq Cognitive Comm Disorders	3

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SLP 588	Audiology for Speech-Lang Path	3
SLP 545	AAC for Indivs w Complex Comm	3
SLP 596	Clin Pract Speech-Lang Pathol	1
SLP 596L	Clin Pract Sp-Lang Path Lab	2
	Hours	43
Second Year		
SLP 565	Neuromotor Disorders of Commun	3
SLP 551	Voice and Resonance Disorders	3
SLP 534	School-Aged Language Disorders	3
SLP 597	Off-Campus Clinical Practicum in Speech Language Pathology	6
SLP 598	Clinical Externship	12
	Hours	27
	Total Hours	70