

New Mexico State University

Speech-Language Pathology Master's Program Standards

OVERVIEW

The Communication Disorders (CD) Program at New Mexico State University (NMSU) is partnered with the Special Education (SPED) Program under the College of Education. The SPED/CD Department is governed by the Department Head and each program (SPED and CD) is headed by a Program Director.

The degree which is conferred after completion of the graduate CD Program is a Master of Arts in Education with a major in Communication Disorders and specialization in speech-language pathology and indicates that the recipient is prepared to function at a professional level in the field. Program tracts available to CD graduate students include the 2-Year Traditional Program, and the Leveling Program for students who do not have an undergraduate degree in Communication Disorders. These programs are designed for persons who are interested in becoming speech-language pathologists in schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, community-based clinical facilities, residential centers, and private practice.

Our program is designed to provide academic background and clinical practicum experiences for meeting the requirements of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's (ASHA) Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP), and for professional licensure by the State of New Mexico. When you come on campus to begin your graduate studies, you will meet with the Communication Disorders faculty member who is assigned as your academic advisor to develop an individual plan of study.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM

As described in the document entitled *Selection Guidelines*, admission to the graduate program in speech-language pathology is based on assessment, by the Communication Disorders (CD) graduate faculty, of a portfolio of materials submitted by the prospective student.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

2-Year Traditional Program: The 2-year Traditional Program is designed for individuals who have received an undergraduate degree in communication disorders from a U.S. institution or from a foreign institution approved by the Graduate School. The Traditional Program typically involves six terms of academic and clinical coursework. The first two terms (Fall and Spring) include coursework on campus as well as clinical practicum in the NMSU Speech and Hearing Center. The first summer (Summer Term I and Summer Term II) involves continued clinical

experience in the NMSU Speech and Hearing Center. The final two terms (Fall and Spring) contain on-campus academic coursework and clinical experiences that are completed in external sites (medical, school-based, etc.). A second summer may be used to complete academic and/or clinical requirements, if necessary.

Leveling Program: The Leveling Program is designed for individuals who have received an undergraduate or graduate degree in a major other than Communication Disorders from a U.S. institution or from a foreign institution approved by the Graduate School. Students must be admitted to the Graduate School and be accepted into the CD Graduate Program to take Leveling courses. The Leveling Program typically involves two additional terms of academic preparation which provide foundation coursework for the Traditional Communication Disorders graduate program.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION POLICIES

The student's academic and clinical performance will be reviewed each semester. Failure to meet the established performance criteria may lead to provisional status or dismissal from the Program. The criteria include:

1. Satisfactory performance and acquisition of required knowledge and skills in both academic coursework and clinical practicum.
2. An overall 3.0 GPA.
3. A grade of "B" or higher in ALL courses within the speech-language pathology major.
4. Successful clinical performance in at least three different practicum sites (i.e., NMSU Speech & Hearing Center and two external placement sites).
5. Completion of ASHA clinical practicum clock-hour requirements.

THESIS OPTION

You have the option to complete a Master's thesis under the direction of a CD graduate faculty member. We encourage all incoming students to consider this opportunity. You will receive specific information on thesis requirements during your first semester in the program.

MASTER'S WRITTEN EXAMINATION

At the beginning of the graduate program, you will receive a list of the knowledge, skills and outcomes expected of program graduates. A written comprehensive examination will be completed during your final term in the program. The examination will include a case study and

a multiple choice examination that covers graduate coursework content and clinical practicum experiences as they relate to program outcomes.

For students who opt to do a master's thesis, the written comprehensive examination will not be required. Instead, they will present their thesis in an oral examination with a faculty committee. This oral examination will include discussion of the thesis as well as academic and clinical coursework. Students will not be permitted to schedule either oral or written examinations unless they are within 25 clinical clock hours of completing the minimum requirements 400 clinical clock hours necessary to qualify for certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and/or licensure by the State of New Mexico.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Graduate Assistantships (GAs): Students who apply for a graduate assistantship will be considered for an award if they meet the following eligibility criteria: (a) enrolled as a full-time student in the Traditional graduate program (students in the Leveling Program are eligible to apply once they have completed all Leveling coursework), and (c) maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in all graduate work with no grade below B-. Students are required to re-apply for the graduate assistantship *each semester* in order to be considered for continued work beyond the first semester of assignment.

CD Program Awards: The program has scholarship money that is awarded annually in the Spring (with payment beginning in the following Fall term). Each year students are notified of scholarship opportunities and given guidelines for applying for awards for the following year. Awards are made through a competitive process established by the CD faculty.