

College of Health and Human Sciences
School of Allied Health & Communicative Disorders
M.A., Speech-Language Pathology
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MA in Communicative Disorders (Speech-Language Pathology)

The Master's in Speech-Language Pathology is a clinically-oriented program which prepares students to work in a variety of work settings and with individuals across the lifespan. Graduating students are eligible for national certification from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and state licensure to practice.

The mission of the graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology is to further the understanding of human communication and its disorders and to contribute to the advancement of the field of Speech-Language Pathology through clinical practice, research and professional development. The program strives to prepare Speech-Language Pathologists who provide quality services across the lifespan, engage in intellectual discovery, and give back to the profession and their communities

1. Student Learning Outcomes

*modified and accepted by faculty February 20, 2015

Master's-degree recipients from the Speech-Language Pathology program will be able to:

1. Demonstrate effective and professional oral communication skills
2. Demonstrate effective and professional written communication skills
3. Apply quantitative reasoning skills to inform clinical and empirical decision making
4. Identify, evaluate, and synthesize information technology and related resources to solve problems
5. Identify, discuss, and demonstrate appropriate interpersonal professionalism with diverse groups, cultures, and individuals
6. Apply critical thinking to inform theoretical and clinical decision making
7. Demonstrate mastery of discipline-specific knowledge to effectively engage in evidence-based clinical practice.

2. Curriculum Map

The curriculum map outlines the scope and sequence of courses students typically take and aligns them with the degree program student learning outcomes.

Two maps are outlines below, in line with students' dual roles in fulfilling both academic and clinical coursework.

Academic Coursework

Course	Student Learning Outcome						
	1. Oral communication	2. Written communication	3. Quantitative reasoning	4. Information technology	5. Diversity, interpersonal skills	6. Critical thinking, problem-solving	7. Discipline-specific knowledge integration
COMD 603	B	B	B		B	B	B
COMD 607	B	B	B		B	B	B
COMD 610*	D	D			D	D	D
COMD 671	D		D		D	D	D
COMD 674	D	D				D	D
COMD 676*					D	D	D
COMD 684	P	P	P	D		P	P
COMD 773	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Elective Courses (note: An asterisk denotes courses currently taken by all students in the program to meet external certification and licensure requirements)							
COMD 601			B		B	B	B

Course	Student Learning Outcome						
	1. Oral communication	2. Written communication	3. Quantitative reasoning	4. Information technology	5. Diversity, interpersonal skills	6. Critical thinking, problem-solving	7. Discipline-specific knowledge integration
COMD 602	D	D					D
COMD 605*	B			D			B
COMD 644*						B	B
COMD 670*	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
COMD 673			P	P		P	P
COMD 680		P			P	P	P
COMD 688	P	P				P	P
COMD 772*	P				P		P
COMD 784				P	P	P	P
AHCD 698	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
AHCD 699	P	P	P		P	P	P

Note. Course supports the outcome at the B=beginning, D=developing, or P=proficient level.

Academic Course Title List:

Required Courses:

COMD 603: E Communication Disorders in Early Childhood
COMD 607: Language Disorders in School-Age Populations
COMD 610 - Multicultural Aspects of Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 671: Speech Sound Disorders
COMD 674: Cognitive-Linguistic Disorders of Neurologically Impaired Adults
COMD 676 - Organization and Planning of Speech, Language, and Hearing Services
COMD 684: Swallowing Disorders
COMD 773: Advanced Professional Issues in Speech-Language Pathology

Elective Courses:

COMD 601: Principles of Assessment in Communicative Disorders
COMD 602: Motor Speech Disorders: Assessment and Treatment
COMD 605: Fundamentals of Augmentative and Alternative Communication
COMD 644: Stuttering Management and Remediation
COMD 670: Voice Disorders: Research and Therapy
COMD 672: Craniofacial Anomalies
COMD 673: Instrumentation for Voice Analysis
COMD 680: Medical Aspects of Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 688: Treatment for Cognitive-Communicative Disorders Associated with Acquired Brain Injury
COMD 772: Seminar in Language
COMD 775 Seminar: Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 784: Pediatric Swallowing Disorders
AHCD 698: Directed Individual Study
AHCD 699: Master's Thesis

Clinic Practicum Courses

Unlike the courses listed in the matrix above, our students enroll in COMD 687, the Speech-Language Clinical Practicum course, beginning their first fall semester (Fall 1, Spring 1, Summer 1, Fall 2). During their last semester (Spring 2), they enroll in two external clinical practica, COMD 691 (Advanced Practicum – Educational) and COMD 692 (Advanced Practicum – Clinical).

A comprehensive clinic grade form with specific items matching specific student learner outcomes is used during each semester that a student is enrolled in clinic, across all clinical faculty/supervisors (e.g., in any given semester, a student's total clinic score represents the average of scores generated by each clinical supervisor, weighted for the number of hours the student worked with a particular client or in a particular setting with that clinical faculty member). Clinical expectations are matched to each student's level in the program, such that, for example, the scores required for an "A" during a student's first semester of clinic are lower than those required for that same grade during the final semester.

For assessment purposes, the students' clinical performance will be assessed at three time points: Early (Fall 1), Late (Fall 2), and Final (Spring 2).

Clinical Coursework

Course	Student Learning Outcome						
	1. Oral communication	2. Written communication	3. Quantitative reasoning	4. Information technology	5. Diversity, interpersonal skills	6. Critical thinking, problem-solving	7. Discipline-specific knowledge integration
COMD 687 Fall 1	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
COMD 687 SP 1	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
COMD 687 SU 1	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
COMD 687 Fall 2	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
COMD 691	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
COMD 692	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Assessment Method	Student Learning Outcome						
	1. Oral communication	2. Written communication	3. Quantitative literacy	4. Information Technology	5. Diversity, interpersonal skills	6. Critical thinking, problem solving	7. Discipline-specific knowledge integration
SLP Nonteaching Content Exam (ISBE)							S, D
Graduate Student Exit Interview							S, I *External placement preparation
Alumni Survey							S,I
Employer Survey							S, I
<i>Note.</i> F=formative assessment, S=summative assessment, D=direct assessment, and I=indirect assessment							

Explanation of Assessment Methods

Individual student-level targets are often preset scores on an exam, scores on a rubric, etc. Program-level targets are often expressed as the percent of students demonstrating they meet individual student-level targets.

Method	Description	Timeline	Person Responsible	Objectives Addressed
Course-level Direct Assessment				
Embedded Assessment: Clinic Grade form *Appendix 1	<p>The clinic grade form (attached) is completed for every graduate student each semester by every faculty member supervising clients, assigned to that student, at the NIU Speech-Language-Hearing clinic and/or an external practicum site.</p> <p>Students' clinical grades (COMD 687 for Fall 1, Spring 1, Summer 1, and Fall 2; COMD 691 and 692 for Spring 2) are the weighted average (per hours spent with each client/supervisor) of scores generated by each clinical faculty member.</p> <p>Goal: 100% of graduate students will achieve 90% or more on the clinic grade form by the spring of their second year.</p>	Data from the clinic grade forms will be collected at 3 time points: Early (Fall 1), Late (Fall 2), and Final (Spring 2).	Program Coordinator; all clinical/academic faculty with supervision hours	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
Embedded, course-specific assessment: AAC project (COMD 605)	<p>Students complete a project in COMD 605 (AAC course) to augment and formatively assess their knowledge and skills in applying information technology to solve clinical problems.</p> <p>Goal: 100% of the graduate cohort will demonstrate a minimum of 90% proficiency on the AAC project.</p>	Summer 2	Program Coordinator; Assessment Coordinator, academic faculty teaching COMD 605	4
Program-Level Direct Assessment				
Comprehensive Exam Sequence	Graduate students in the COMD SLP program complete two sets of comprehensive exams. The first set, administered during students' first semester (Summer 1), focuses on foundational aspects of communication and communicative disorders. This is a formative assessment; any areas of	Exams Set 1: Summer of the first year (Summer 1), annually for each new	Program Coordinator, all academic and clinical faculty	All

Method	Description	Timeline	Person Responsible	Objectives Addressed
	<p>weakness identified are remediated individually for students during the course of their program.</p> <p>Finally, all students are required to pass (at 75%; one retake allowed with a 90% passing requirement) a written summative assessment in the final semester of their program. This exam is typically case based and covers multiple areas within the professional scope of practice.</p>	<p>graduate cohort</p> <p>Exams Set 2: Spring of the second year (Spring 2), annually for each graduating cohort</p>		
Speech-Language Pathology Praxis Exam	<p>Graduate students in the COMD SLP program are required to sit for the national Praxis exam prior to graduation and in order to be certified and licensed for clinical practice.</p> <p>Goal: 100% of graduate students will pass the Praxis exam.</p>	Spring of the 2 nd year (Spring 2), annually	Program Coordinator	7
Non-Teaching Content Exam (ISBE)	<p>Graduate students are required to pass the Illinois State Board of Education's Speech-Language Pathology Non-Teaching examination before beginning an external practicum in the schools.</p> <p>Goal: 100% of graduate students will pass ISBE's non-teaching content exam.</p>	Late fall of the 2 nd year (Fall 2), annually	Program Coordinator	7

Method	Description	Timeline	Person Responsible	Objectives Addressed
Program-level indirect assessment				
Exit survey *Appendix 2	<p>Second year graduate students complete a survey – disseminated electronically – to rate their knowledge and skill acquisition over the course of their graduate school (academic and clinical) experience.</p> <p>Item #3: My coursework and clinical experiences prepared me for external placements.</p>	Conducted annually for 2 nd year graduate students during the spring semester	Assessment coordinator and Program coordinator in conjunction with office staff and AHCD Chair	7
Alumni Survey *Appendix 3	Alumni one year post graduation complete a survey – disseminated electronically – to rate how the knowledge and skills they acquired over the course of their graduate school (academic and clinical) experience prepared them for their first job.	Conducted annually one year post graduation	Alumni Association will disseminate the survey and the Assessment coordinator and Program coordinator in conjunction with office staff and AHCD Chair will review.	7
Employer Survey *Appendix 4	Employers of alumni will complete a survey – disseminated electronically – to rate how well NIU alumni are prepared to succeed in their job setting.	Conducted every 4 years	Assessment coordinator and Program Coordinator in conjunction with office staff and AHCD Chair	7