

# **Stephen F. Austin State University**

James I. Perkins College of Education

Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership



## **Speech-Language Pathology Student Handbook**

**Please Note:**

The material contained herein is subject to change from time to time without notice and this publication cannot be considered an agreement or contract between individual student clinicians and the school. The Speech-Language Pathology Program reserves the right to alter or amend the terms, conditions, and requirements contained herein, and to eliminate programs or courses as necessary.

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## Overview

Welcome to the Speech-Language Pathology graduate program at Stephen F. Austin State University. This program prepares students to be leaders in the clinical management of communication and swallowing disorders. The Master of Science (M.S.) education program in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. The SLP program offers both residential and distance education options in a cohort setting by the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership in the James I. Perkins College of Education.

The purpose of both programs is to prepare knowledgeable caring professionals committed to educating the public, properly diagnosing and effectively treating persons with communication and swallowing disorders across the lifespan, thereby improving their quality of life. The M.S. in SLP requires 53 credit hours of coursework, which includes 18 hours of coursework in clinical practicum across multiple settings.

### **Licensure and Certification**

The Master of Science in SLP program at SFASU prepares students for licensure by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) as a Speech-Language Pathologist. The program also prepares students for national certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

**Licensure as a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)** requires meeting TDLR rules, which includes a graduate degree in speech-language pathology, passing the National SLP Examination (PRAXIS), and passing the Texas State Jurisprudence Examination.

TDLR rules are updated frequently and can be located on the Texas Department of Regulations and Licensing (TDLR) website. It is the responsibility of the student to remain informed of these changes. TDLR has set rigid deadlines and guidelines that students should review carefully to be well prepared for the licensure process. The most up to date information on licensing is found on the TDLR website at <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov> or you may contact TDLR at:

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation  
920 Colorado  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(800) 803-9202

**Certification** – The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) offers the Clinical Certificate of Competence (CCC) to its members who meet requirements. Students are expected to apply for and receive the CCC. All students are required to take and pass the PRAXIS examination prior to certification application. Application information may be found at <https://www.asha.org/certification/slpcertification/>.

### **Cohorts:**

All residential and distance students accepted for a summer 2022 start will navigate their courses simultaneously, through both face-to-face and virtual formats. Students in the residential program will begin clinical coursework at the Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders and/or Nacogdoches Head Start during the fall semester of their first year, while students in the distance cohort will begin clinical coursework through their place of employment.

### **Application and Information**

Currently, our program accepts a new cohort of residential students each spring and distance students every other spring (2024 is next cycle). The application process is competitive, but we encourage applications from

all those interested in being leaders in the field that possess the following: high academic achievement in undergraduate studies, writing and research capability, and a passion to serve those with communication and/or swallowing impairments.

This handbook will provide a plethora of information regarding admission requirements and processes, program mission and vision, degree plan, and much, much, more. The material in this handbook should serve as a guide beginning with your application process and continue throughout the entire graduate program. It is suggested that you use it as your first source of reference for any questions you may have.

## Program Vision and Mission

### **Vision:**

The SFASU Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology program will be a recognized leader in graduate education, providing students a transformative training experience that will prepare students to serve individuals with communication and swallowing disorders within a diverse, rural community.

### **Mission:**

The mission of the Speech-Language Pathology Program is to prepare knowledgeable caring professionals committed to educating the public, properly diagnosing and effectively treating persons with communication and swallowing disorders across the lifespan, thereby improving their quality of life. To meet this mission, the program embraces cultural and linguistic diversity, emphasizes the importance of evidence-based practice, critical thinking skills, interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical principles and continued professional development throughout one's career.

## Program Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with a Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology will be able to:

1. Students will recognize and articulate the foundational skills related to communication and its disorders.
2. Students will analyze, interpret, and synthesize clinical findings in the management of speech disorders
3. Students will analyze, interpret, and synthesize clinical findings in the management of language disorders
4. Students will analyze, interpret, and synthesize clinical findings in the management of swallowing disorders.
5. Students will analyze, interpret, and synthesize clinical findings in the management of hearing disorders.
6. Students will integrate research principles and processes in planning Capstone projects and in clinical practice.
7. Students will communicate professionally and demonstrate comprehension of professional and ethical responsibilities of speech-language pathologists.

## Program Setting

Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program  
Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership  
PO B 13019  
Nacogdoches, Texas 75962  
(936) 468-1252

# Program Faculty and Staff

## Full-Time Faculty and Instructors

Name	Rank	Office	Email
Jessica Conn MS, CCC-SLP	Visiting Instructor	205 B	connjl@sfasu.edu
Layne DeBardelaben MA, CCC-SLP	Clinical Instructor	205 H	debardellj@sfasu.edu
Amy Durham MS, CCC-SLP	Clinical Instructor	205 H	durhama@sfasu.edu
Kelly Jobe AuD, CCC-A	Clinical Audiologist	203 J	jobekd@sfasu.edu
Erin Keeling MS, CCC- SLP	Clinical Instructor/Externship Coordinator	205 E	keelingee@sfasu.edu
Deena Petersen MS, CCC-SLP	Clinical Instructor/Clinic Director	205 A	petersend@sfasu.edu
Nandhakumar Radhakrishnan PhD, CCC/SLP	Associate Professor	205 C	radhakrin@sfasu.edu
Lydia Richardson SLPD, CCC-SLP	Associate Professor/Program Director	205 F	lprichardson@sfasu.edu

## Adjunct Faculty/Instructors

Name	Rank	Office	Email
Elizabeth Buell PhD, CCC-A	Adjunct Professor	n/a	Elizabeth.Buell@sfasu.edu
Robert J. Lowe PhD, CCC-SLP	Adjunct Professor	n/a	Robert.Lowe@sfasu.edu
Diane Morton MS, CCC-SLP	Adjunct Clinical Instructor	205 K	Karen.Morton@sfasu.edu

## Support Staff

Name	Rank	Office	Email
Shafia Bowker	Clinic Secretary	202	Shafia.Bowker@sfasu.edu
Jennifer Fry	Administrative Assistant	205 G	Jennifer.Fry@sfasu.edu

# Admissions

Admission to the graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) at SFASU is a competitive process. While we have many qualified applicants, many times the number of applications exceeds the number of students the program can accept for the cohort. Therefore, acceptance into the SLP graduate program is not guaranteed. Be sure to complete your application materials carefully and thoroughly prior to the February 1 deadline. Final decisions regarding acceptance are based upon the quality of the application and appropriateness to the program by the SLP faculty.

## Admission Process

### Applicants must possess

- an undergraduate degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSDS) or its equivalent from an accredited college or university or;
  - minimum of 18 hours of undergraduate coursework in CSDS if undergraduate degree is in an unrelated field;
- a minimum 3.0 (4.0 scale) GPA for all undergraduate coursework
- evidence of success in a graduate program.

### Applicants must submit

- Graduate School Application online at <https://www.applytexas.org> (includes an application fee and official transcripts)
- CSDCAS application online at <https://csdcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login> (includes an application fee and the following required documents)
  - Letter of Intent
  - Resume
  - Three recommendation letters (will be submitted by each of your recommenders)
  - Sponsorship agreement (distance program ONLY)

**Note:** An applicant from a foreign country must meet the same requirements for admission as a student from the United States. If any applicant's primary language is not English, the applicant must present satisfactory scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

## Admissions Review Process

- Once the Graduate School receives all documentation and requirements outlined for the Graduate School have been met, the Graduate School Notice of Application (NOA) is sent to the program coordinator.
- Simultaneously with the first bullet above, the applicant should complete the CSDCAS application and upload all required documentation.
- The program admissions committee uses the program admissions rubric to assign point value to the application material.
- Prospective students are then selected for an interview at which time they will also submit a writing sample.
- The committee submits the recommendations to the unit head for the admission of the top applicants (25 residential; 10 distance).
- Once a decision has been reached, all applicants are notified in writing regardless of the admission decision.

# Curriculum

**Stephen F. Austin State University**  
**Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership**  
**Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology**

<b>First Year</b>			
Summer I	Summer II	Fall	Spring
	SPHS 5303 – Professional Writing for the SLP <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5300 – Neurogenic Language Disorders <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5306 – Dysphagia <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>
	SPH 5301 – Speech Sound Disorders in Children <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5311 – Aural/Oral <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i> Or SPHS 5307 – Speech Science <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5308 – Neuropathologies of Speech <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>
		SPHS 5314 – Clinical Practicum Early Childhood Intervention <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5109 – Capstone Proposal <i>(1 Credit Hour)</i>
		SPSY 5331 – Quantitative Research Methods <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5324 – Clinical Practicum Medical Cases <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>

<b>Second Year</b>			
Summer I	Summer II	Fall	Spring
SPHS 5334 – Clinical Practicum Contemporary Issues/AAC <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5344 – Clinical Practicum Counseling <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPHS 5305 – Lang Dis/Multicultural <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPH 5364 – Clinical Practicum: Supervision <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>
SPHS 5312 – Voice Disorders and Craniofacial Anomalies <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>		SPHS 5302 – Fluency Disorders <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPH 5310 – Special Topics – Behavioral <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>
		SPHS 5354 – Clinical Practicum Case Management <i>(3 Credit Hours)</i>	SPH 5119 – Capstone Experience <i>(1 Credit Hour)</i>



## Additional Resources

### **Program and Course Information**

#### **Cohort Membership**

The SLP graduate program is offered as a cohort design, which precludes self-selection into any required course related to the program of study. All students granted admission to the degree program will be members of a cohort and must complete all coursework as a member of the cohort for which they were admitted in the related academic year of admission. In the event of withdrawal from the cohort program by the student, and upon election by the student to seek re-entry to the program, a student must re-apply to the graduate program during the next application cycle. Applications will be considered by the faculty during the reapplication process. Readmittance to the program is not guaranteed.

#### **Transfer of Credit on Master of Science in SLP**

The degree program requires that each student enter the program with an undergraduate degree in CSD or its equivalent and that each student must complete 53 hours of graduate coursework. Transfer from another university of six (6) hours for graduate level credit as approved by the program coordinator is available to the student. In all matters pertaining to the degree program, the program faculty will review individual student cases in accordance with the program and Research and Graduate Studies policy and procedures. A transfer grade lower than a B will not be accepted.

#### **English Proficiency**

A student for the Master of Science in SLP must demonstrate an acceptable level of verbal and written proficiency with the English language to the satisfaction of the graduate faculty. In the case of a student (either international or from within the United States) failing to meet the requirements for spoken and written English, the graduate faculty will determine a course of action that may include a separate course in English as a second language. All international applicants must submit an English test score or a waiver of equivalency as part of the complete application. Test scores from the TOEFL, IELTS, and DET will be accepted.

#### **Clinical Practicum**

Clinical experience is an integral component of the program. Each student will be required to successfully complete six rotations of clinical work. The clinical experience must include a minimum of one placement in the public schools and one placement in a medical setting. The other experiences may include placement at the on-campus clinic, home health facilities, private clinics, rehabilitation centers, etc. All clinical experience policies and procedures are provided to students in the clinic handbook upon admission to the program.

#### **Grades**

Throughout the program, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Per the Graduate Bulletin, "During any semester or summer session that the grade point average falls below a B, the student with clear admission to graduate study will be placed on academic probation; the student with probationary admission will be placed on academic suspension." The graduate school allows for two grades of C during the duration of a graduate program. A student who obtains an additional C will be dismissed from the program. If a student makes a grade below a C (i.e., D or F), the student will immediately be dismissed from the program.

## **Withheld Grade (WH)**

The program will defer to university policy 5.5, Course Grades, regarding a grade of a WH. There must be unavoidable circumstances for a student to receive a WH and the student must submit the request in writing using the appropriate paperwork PRIOR to grades being submitted. If a WH is given, there must be a written contract with the instructor of the course on what is expected and the timeline for completion. The contract must be signed by the student and the instructor then it must be filed with the program and unit head. Additionally, if the work is not completed by the designated time, a grade of an F will replace the WH on the student's transcript. If the student completes the work in the allotted time, the instructor will complete the necessary paperwork for the grade change.

## **Advising**

### **Degree Plan**

A degree plan is a plan of study developed prior to admission in the doctoral program. The plan must be reviewed and signed for approval and sent to the Graduate Dean. A copy of the approved plan of study is forwarded to the student and a copy is kept in the student's program file. Any changes to the degree plan must be approved by the faculty advisor and the program director. The new degree plan change form must be submitted to the Dean's Office.

### **Faculty Advising**

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor upon admission SLP graduate program. The advisor will support the student in a variety of ways including course scheduling, corrective intervention, career advice, etc.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

Prior to graduation, the student must demonstrate competence in successful completion of a written comprehensive examination. The faculty within the graduate program consider comprehensive exams as a critical point of assessment for degree completion. The student will take comprehensive exams during the Fall semester of the second year. The student must be enrolled at the university the semester completing comprehensive exams. The program coordinator will provide information the semester prior to comprehensive exams.

## **CAPSTONE Project**

Each student in the graduate SLP program will be required to complete a research-based CAPSTONE project for degree completion. The CAPSTONE project (CP) provides an opportunity for students to engage in high-level work focusing on an area of interest within the profession. The CP will be inquiry and practice-centered and aim to bridge theory and aim to impact the professional life of students. Students are provided coursework (SPSY 5331, SPHS 5109, SPHS 5119) to aid in the completion of these projects. Guidelines for the project are distributed to students at the onset of the SPHS 5109 course.

## Course Listing

**Neurogenic Language Disorders (SPHS 5300):** This lecture course develops an understanding of the etiology, symptomatology, assessment, remediation and recovery patterns of acquired neurogenic language disorders, including aphasia, traumatic brain injury, right hemispheric impairment and dementia.

**Speech Sound Disorders in Children (SPHS 5301):** This lecture course is an in-depth study of the areas of speech sound disorder, which include the identification, assessment and treatment of articulation disorders, phonological disorders, and childhood apraxia of speech. In this course, students will consider impairment/disorder arising at phonological and articulatory levels. Specifically, the course will impart knowledge about problems and issues relating to the distinction between disorders of articulation and disorders of phonological processing, how best to characterize them through broad and narrow transcription, their appraisal and treatment.

**Fluency Disorders (SPHS 5302):** This lecture course develops an understanding of the theories, etiology, assessment, personal impact and therapeutic intervention of fluency disorders in children and adults.

**Diagnostic and Clinical/Research Writing for the SLP (SPHS 5303):** This course is designed to teach students how to analyze data and use basic writing skills to produce assessment reports, treatment plans, progress reports, professional correspondence, and research reports.

**Language Disorders and Multiculturalism (SPHS 5305):** This lecture course advances an understanding of language development and language disorders with an emphasis on the assessment and treatment of language disorders in children and how communication development relates to multicultural backgrounds.

**Dysphagia (SPHS 5306):** This lecture course addresses anatomy and physiology of normal swallowing as well as the etiology, symptomatology, assessment (including instrumentation) and remediation of dysphagia across the lifespan.

**Speech Science (SPHS 5307):** Physical bases and processes of the production and perception of speech, language, and hearing, including biomechanics and the source-filter theory of speech production.

**Neuropathologies of Speech (SPHS 5308):** Etiology, symptomatology, assessment (including instrumentation), processes involved in arriving at a differential diagnosis, and therapeutic intervention for the dysarthrias and apraxia of speech associated with acquired or progressive neurogenic disorders and diseases.

**Special Studies in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (SPHS 5310):** A study of current topics in speech-language pathology and audiology.

**Aural/Oral Habilitation of the Hearing Impaired (SPHS 5311):** This course includes advanced studies of the principles and procedures in the habilitation and rehabilitation of hearing-impaired children and adults.

**Voice and Resonance Disorder (SPHS 5312):** This lecture course provides an advanced study of normal versus abnormal anatomy and physiology of the respiratory, phonatory and resonatory system (including review of source-filter theory) that can lead to various types of etiologies, along with assessment and treatment of the resulting communication impairments.

**Research Core:**

**Research Methods (SPSY 5331):** Advanced study of research procedures.

**Capstone Proposal (SPHS 5109):** This course provides students with an opportunity to develop critical-thinking, scholarly-writing skills and research abilities while developing their capstone proposals. Students will develop and submit an acceptable research/project proposal by the end of the course.

**Capstone Experience (SPHS 5119):** This course provides students with an opportunity to continue to develop critical-thinking, scholarly-writing skills and research abilities while completing the capstone project. Students will successfully complete their capstone project and present their findings by the end of the course.

### **Clinical Experience Core:**

**Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology: Early Childhood Intervention (SPHS 5314):** This course is a clinical practicum with a focus on early intervention services (birth to 3 years). Emphasis is given to enrollment and clinical management in early childhood intervention, including strategies for goal attainment and family involvement. Special attention is given to usage of appropriate materials for the age 0-3 population. Students will obtain a minimum of 35 hours at the Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders on the SFA campus and/or affiliated facilities, including Nacogdoches Head Start, Early Childhood Laboratory, and St. Cyprian's Episcopal School. The duration of the practicum experience will extend the duration of the semester registered for the course.

**Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology: Clinical Management in Medical Settings (SPHS 5324):** This practicum course will introduce students to the practice of speech-language pathology in various medical settings. By the end of the course students will demonstrate an understanding of the collaborative role of the SLP on professional teams and apply clinical ethics in decision making to medically complex patients. Students will obtain a minimum of 35 clinical clock hours at the Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders on the SFASU campus and/or affiliated facilities including Nacogdoches Head Start. The duration of the practicum experience will extend the duration of the semester registered for the course.

**Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology: Contemporary Issues and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (SPHS 5334):** This clinical practicum focuses on the study of contemporary issues in the field of speech-language pathology and augmentative alternative communication. The clinical management of individuals with complex communication needs will be explored. Students will obtain a minimum of 50 direct clinical hours at a university approved practicum facility under the direct supervision of an ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist. The duration of the practicum experience will extend the duration of the term registered for the course.

**Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology: Counseling and Interviewing Skills for the SLP (SPHS 5344):** This clinical practicum focuses on counseling in speech-language pathology. An overview of theory and practice of counseling methods and techniques used by speech-language pathologists in a variety of settings with both adult and pediatric populations will be presented. Students will obtain a minimum of 25 direct clinical hours at a university approved practicum facility under the direct supervision of an ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist.

**Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology: Seminar in Clinical Management (SPHS 5354):** This course is a clinical practicum with a focus on clinical management across a variety of disorders. Simulated clinical case studies across disorders are explored. Students will interpret clinical information in the development and implementation of assessment and treatment procedures. In addition, a thorough review of procedures and expectations for the PRAXIS exam is provided. Students will obtain a minimum of 75 direct

clinical hours at a university approved practicum facility under the direct supervision of an ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist. The duration of the practicum experience will extend the duration of the semester registered for the course. This course is a clinical practicum with a focus on clinical management across a variety of disorders. Simulated clinical case studies across disorders are explored. Students will interpret clinical information in the development and implementation of assessment and treatment procedures. In addition, a thorough review of procedures and expectations for the Praxis test is provided.

**Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology: The Supervisory Process (SPHS 5364):** This practicum course will introduce students to the supervisory process in speech-language pathology. Supervision methodology and guidelines pertaining to both state supervision and ASHA requirements will be presented. Various supervision styles and their effectiveness will be explored. Students will obtain a minimum of 75 direct clinical hours at a university approved practicum facility under the direct supervision of an ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist.

## Classroom Expectations

Courses in the Master of Science SLP program are delivered in both face-to-face and video conferencing (ZOOM) options, depending on the instructor and classification of the student (residential, distance). The following guidelines for course participation and etiquette for students and instructors creates course structure.

### Scope of Policy:

Students and instructors collaborating in a course that utilizes Zoom or other video conferencing tools follow etiquette guidelines increasing course structure and establishing a productive course environment.

### *Policy:*

1. Choose a location with low noise level, few distractions, and good connection to the internet. The connection should be made using a computer, not a phone. A landline connection is preferred. If the student's internet connection is unstable, they may be marked absent.
2. Students should display their first and last name. Preferred first names (e.g., Tom instead of Thomas) may be used as long as it is identifiable for faculty.
3. When attending synchronous classes, your video feed (i.e., camera) **must** stay on for the duration of the course period unless otherwise stated in the expectations in the course syllabus or as directed by the instructor for specific activities. Students attending the course or other event should ensure the background captured by the camera is appropriate (e.g., not in a bed or bathroom, at a sporting event, restaurant, or other place of business) and not distracting to others in attendance (e.g., movement of people or pets). Failure to have your camera on will result in an absence.
4. Background noise should be minimized. It may be recommended to join the meeting muted (check individual syllabi for each professor's preference). Use the mute function unless talking. If possible, use a headset with a microphone when talking to decrease distracting background noise. If it is not possible to use a headset, minimize noise distractions (e.g., lawn maintenance, noisy pets, other individuals in the house). If unable to move away from the loud or distracting environment, mute the microphone while not actively speaking so as to minimize distractions to others.
5. Wear appropriate clothing. Clothing suitable for in-person classes is appropriate for attending online classes (e.g., pajamas are not appropriate attire). Appropriate attire could range from casual to smart casual for class meetings.
6. Use appropriate language and gestures when participating in course discussions. Attempt to take turns during discussions and not talk over others.
7. Use the chat option to ask questions, if appropriate. Just as in face-to-face classes, use appropriate language that is not offensive or vulgar and refrain from making off topic comments.
8. If the video meeting platform has a "Raise Hand" function, use that function to indicate you have something to say, as appropriate.
9. Do not multitask during the course period unless directed to find information related to the course by the instructor. Wait until after class to read emails, watch videos, or work on other course material.

10. Ask faculty for permission to record the class.
11. When taking an exam, your video feed must be on. Your video view must be of yourself and your work area. Failure to display yourself or your work area may result in a score of 0 for the exam.
12. Certain courses may have additional requirements specific to the nature of the course, which can be found in the course syllabus.

*Parties and Responsibilities:*

Students are responsible for adhering to the above procedures when participating in courses provided through Zoom or video conferencing platforms. Violations of procedures are addressed by faculty.

## University Policies

University policies can be found at the following website: <https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/>. Many of the guidelines and practices of the graduate program in SLP are related to policies found on this site. Below you will find a few policies that are directly related to our program.

[Credit and Contact Hours, Policy 5.4](#)

[Course Grades, Policy 5.5](#)

[Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, Policy 6.1](#)

[Final Course Grade Appeals by Students, Policy 6.3](#)

[Commencement, Policy 6.8](#)

[Graduate Student Advising, Policy 6.13](#)

[Graduate Admission, Policy 6.17](#)

[Human Research Subjects Protects, Policy 8.4](#)