



THE SCHOOL OF
**Speech, Language, Hearing,
& Occupational Sciences**
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Academic Handbook

2019

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Welcome to the Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program!

This Academic Handbook speaks to the academic components of your graduate training and includes everything you will need to successfully complete the academic expectations of the University of Montana's Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program.

At the end of this manual is a contract noting that you have read and understand all policies, procedures, and requirements associated with academic training components in the Speech Language Pathology Graduate Program outlined in this handbook. Please review this Academic Handbook thoroughly and contact the Graduate Program Director or School Chair with any questions or concerns.

Upon completion of your review of this Academic Handbook you will need to:

- Sign the contract noting your thorough review and understanding, and
- Submit that signed contract to the Graduate Program Director.

Introduction

Overview

The master's degree is the terminal degree required to practice as a speech-language pathologist. In addition to the master's degree in speech-language pathology, individuals must complete an additional supervised clinical fellowship (CF) year to become certified by the American Speech Language Hearing Association ([ASHA](#)).

Upon completion of the Masters of Science Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program at the University of Montana, graduates will be prepared to complete their CF year to become a certified speech-language pathologist, able to assess and treat infants, children, and adults with acquired or developmental speech, language, and/or swallowing disorders. Our program is fully accredited by the **Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA)** of ASHA and meets the clinical and academic standards for Certification of Clinical Competence in Speech Language Pathology ([CCC-SLP](#)) by ASHA and [licensure requirements in Montana](#) and many other states.

We are committed to providing students with high-caliber academic and clinical training experiences with a focus on inter-professional education and research. Our goal is to prepare students with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective speech-language pathology services for diverse populations in all relevant environments.

Mission Statements

University Mission

The University of Montana transforms lives by providing a high-quality and accessible education and by generating world-class research and creative scholarship in an exceptional place. We integrate the liberal arts and sciences into undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies to shape global citizens who are creative and agile learners committed to expanding the boundaries of knowledge and to building and sustaining diverse communities.

College Mission

The College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences prepares students to serve in the health professions including speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, public health, social work, and pharmacy. Our academic units and clinics provide an interprofessional training zone: students have opportunities to interact with colleagues from other disciplines, both within the College and the University, with whom they will practice when they enter their respective professions. Students also have opportunities to participate in research projects with faculty who are committed to academic excellence.

The College has a dedicated and talented faculty with collective expertise in instruction, research and service, all committed to providing a superior academic experience in the classroom, the research laboratory, and in the field. Working in state-of-the-art laboratory environments, many members of the faculty have not only a national but also an international reputation. The College is a dynamic place to do basic, clinical, and translational research.

School Mission

The mission of the School of Speech, Language, Hearing & Occupational Sciences is to prepare students for progressive, collaborative, and research-minded careers in speech-language pathology, audiology, and related fields through rigorous academic and clinical training. We strive to be innovative in the use of technology and program delivery to provide services to traditionally under-served regions and populations. Through our emphasis on typical and atypical speech, language, cognition, swallowing, and hearing function, students gain knowledge and skills along with ethical and culturally competent values that foster a commitment to lifelong learning and civic engagement.

Equal Opportunity – Non-Discrimination

The University of Montana provides to all people the equal opportunity for education, employment, and participation in University activities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, creed, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), veteran status, sex, age, political ideas, marital or family status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. Responsibility for effecting equal opportunity accrues to all University administrators, faculty, and staff. This responsibility includes assurance that employment and admission decisions, personnel actions, and administration of benefits to students and employees rest exclusively upon criteria that adhere to the principle of Equal opportunity. The University prohibits retaliation against a person for bringing a complaint of prohibited

discrimination, for assisting someone with a complaint of discrimination, or for participating in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a complaint of discrimination.

Essential Functions and Technical Standards for Program Admission and Continued Enrollment for the Graduate SLP Program

The Essential Functions and Technical Standards for program admission and continued enrollment describe the expectations and requisite abilities considered necessary for professionals in the field of speech-language pathology. The School of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at the University of Montana is committed to preparing all qualified individuals who are capable of performing the essential functions required of the profession, including persons with disabilities, with or without reasonable accommodation. In complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students and applicants with disabilities, no otherwise qualified and competent individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities solely on the basis of the disability.

Essential Functions

SLHOS graduate students are to achieve the level of competency required for graduation and practice as applicable. It is recognized that degrees of ability vary widely among individuals. Admission candidates who feel they may not be able to acquire the essential functions set forth are encouraged to contact the SLHOS School. Any admission candidates who may require academic modification to fulfill the essential functions and technical standards due to a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Services for Students Office](#) at (406)243-2243.

To be successful in the graduate speech-language pathology program and perform the roles of this profession, a student must consistently:

1. Communicate effectively in English with clients/patients and professionals from a variety of cultural backgrounds.
2. Have the ability to learn complex information, be able to perform clinical problem solving, synthesize and apply information from the discipline of Communicative Sciences and Disorders and related disciplines to formulate diagnostic and treatment judgments.
3. Possess sufficient abilities to perform routine client/patient care in speech-language pathology.
4. Have the capacity to maintain composure and emotional stability during periods of high stress.
5. Demonstrate affective skills and appropriate demeanor and rapport that relate to professional education and quality client/patient care.

6. Demonstrate flexibility and the ability to adjust to changing situations and uncertainty in an academic or clinical environment.
7. Have the ability to reliably and critically self-evaluate their professional, technical, and personal skills that contribute to positive client outcomes.
8. Have the ability to accept constructive criticism and respond by appropriate modification of behavior.

Technical Standards for Admission and Continued Enrollment

The technical standards for admission to and continued enrollment in the UM SLP Graduate program reflect the essential qualities and abilities that are considered necessary to a student's academic and/or clinical performance. Ability to meet these technical standards is required for admission and must be maintained throughout a student's progress in the SLP graduate degree program. Students should carefully review the technical standards below to determine if assistance is needed to perform any of the required tasks.

Communication Skills

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate effectively and efficiently in English at a level sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands. (See [*Students and Professionals Who Speak English with Accents and Nonstandard Dialects: Issues and Recommendations*](#).)
- Effectively communicate judgments and treatment information and to observe, recognize and understand non-verbal behavior.
- Elicit information, gather information, and describe findings. This communication should be comprehensible by clients/patients, professionals, and lay-persons.
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with clients/patients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds. (See [*Cultural Competence in Professional Service Delivery*](#).)

Psychomotor Skills

A student must possess adequate skills to:

- Execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in small places, use equipment, materials and technology (*i.e.* microphones, hearing aids, computers, AAC devices, etc.) as needed to provide clients with appropriate general care.
- Access transportation to and from clinical and academic placements.
- Participate in classroom and clinical activities for the defined workday.

Intellectual / Cognitive Abilities

A student must possess adequate, ethical, emotional, and cognitive skills to:

- Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, and apply information sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.
- Identify relevant findings from history, evaluation, and data to formulate a diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment plan.
- Solve problems, reason, and make sound clinical judgments in patient assessment, diagnostic planning, and therapeutic planning consistent with the principles of evidence-based practice in speech-language pathology.
- Develop and exhibit a sense of ethics and recognize and apply pertinent legal and ethical standards.
- Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skills.

Sensory / Observational Skills

A student must possess adequate skills to complete the following:

- Accurately observe clients and interpret and analyze their behaviors to recognize communication disorders.
- Adequately visualize anatomic structures and discriminate findings on various imaging studies, as well as to discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.
- Adequately treat clients using the equipment and materials of the profession safely and appropriately.

Behavioral / Social Skills

A student must possess adequate behavioral and social attributes to:

- Display mature, empathetic, and effective interpersonal professional relationships by exhibiting compassion, integrity, and concern for others.
- Recognize and show respect for individuals of different ages, genders, races, religions, sexual orientations, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, and disabilities.
- Recognize when a client or client's family does or does not understand the clinician's written and/or oral communication.
- Maintain emotional and mental health to fully utilize their intellectual abilities and exercise good judgment including prompt completion of all academic and clinical responsibilities.
- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and professionalism.
- Maintain confidentiality of client/patient information.

Professional Responsibility

A student must have the capacity to:

- Manage the use of time effectively and systematize actions to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic time constraints.
- Adhere to policies of the University, their program, and clinical sites including professional dress and behavior, attending to the program's academic schedule, which may differ from the University's academic calendar and be subject to change at any time.
- Learn and demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the code of ethics of their profession and behavior that reflects a sense of right and wrong in the context of care.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with other students on assigned projects, and participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation of abilities and reasoning skills.
- Meet the challenges of any medical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems (e.g. CPR certification, evacuation procedures, infection control, and universal precautions).

Candidates for the SLP graduate degree program in the SLHOS School who have been accepted for admission will be required to verify that they understand and meet these essential functions. Admission decisions are made on the assumption that each candidate can meet and fulfill essential functions. When a disability is present, the applicant should contact the Disability Services for Students office at UM. That office will review a student's request for modification and confirm that the stated condition qualifies as a disability under applicable laws.

If an applicant states he/she can meet the essential functions with modification, the SLHOS School may review the modification to ensure it does not fundamentally alter the program, cause an undue burden, or cause harm to a fellow student or client. At any time in the course of a student's enrollment in the School, the student can request accommodation through the Disability Services for Students office. However, retroactive accommodation requests do not have to be honored.

SLP Graduate Program Objectives and National Standards

The UM SLHOS program strives to meet the objectives and [Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology 2017](#) set forth by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) for Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

Objectives

Upon graduation, students will demonstrate competency in following objectives:

1. Graduate students will develop their professional attributes of accountability, integrity, effective communication skills, clinical reasoning, evidence-based practice, concern for individuals served, cultural competence, professional duty, and collaborative practice.
2. Graduate students will develop their ability to recognize typical and atypical human development and etiology, characteristics, anatomical/physiologic characteristics, acoustic characteristics, associated psychological characteristics, developmental nature, linguistic characteristics and cultural characteristics pertaining to articulation, fluency, voice and resonance, receptive and expressive language, hearing, swallowing, cognitive aspects, social aspects of communication, and augmentative and alternative communication.
3. Graduate students will demonstrate skills in prevention and identification of communication and swallowing disorders and differences as well as prevention.
4. Graduate students will develop their skills to evaluate for communication and swallowing disorders and differences in the areas of articulation, fluency, voice and resonance, receptive and expressive language, hearing, swallowing, cognitive aspects, social aspects of communication, and augmentative and alternative communication.
5. Graduate students will develop their ability to minimize the effects of change in the communication and swallowing mechanisms to assist clients to engage in their environment as fully as possible when impacted by articulation, fluency, voice and resonance, receptive and expressive language, hearing, swallowing, cognitive aspects, social aspects of communication, and augmentative and alternative communication.
6. Graduate students will work within their scope of practice by synthesizing the interdependence of speech, language, and hearing, engage in relevant issues and advocacy, actively engage in clinical education process, practicing professionalism, developing interaction and communication skills and self-evaluate their own practical effectiveness.
7. Graduate students will recognize and account for issues related to diversity.
8. Graduate students will implement and explain evidence-based practices to clients, families, and caregivers.
9. Graduate students will participate in timely recordkeeping and administrative tasks relevant to billing, coding, and credentialing.
10. Graduate students will hold clients' welfare in highest regard by respecting clinical educator choices, implementing evidence based practice, and participating in ethical conduct.
11. Graduate students will meet expectations commensurate with their level of experience and clinical setting.

CAA and ASHA Standards

In order for students to be eligible to complete a clinical fellowship, students must first complete a Master's degree of Speech-Language Pathology that includes the following:

1. **Academic Course Work:** A total of 75 semester credit hours in the professional area (combined from undergraduate-level prerequisite and graduate-level coursework). At least 36 hours must be completed at the graduate level.
2. **Supervised Clinical Observation and Clinical Practicum:** Students must earn 400 clock hours of clinical practicum in order to qualify for the MS degree.
3. **Clinical Observation:** 25 hours must be completed prior to the SLHOS 571 clinical practicum.
4. Students may receive credit for up to 50 clinical practicum hours earned under the supervision of an SLP professional with CCC-SLP from ASHA during their undergraduate or post baccalaureate education.
5. At least 325 of 400 hours must be completed while engaged in graduate study in an accredited program.
6. **Clinical Education/Practicum:** 375 hours. Clinical clock hours must be sufficient in breadth and depth to achieve demonstrated skills outcomes in the areas of evaluation, intervention, and client interaction. Up to 20% (i.e., 75 hours) of direct contact hours may be obtained through alternative clinical education (ACE) methods. Only the time spent in active engagement with the ACE may be counted. ACE may include the use of standardized patients and simulation technologies (e.g., virtual patients, digitized mannequins, immersive reality, task trainers, computer-based interactive programs).

Program Delivery Options

Given the critical shortage of SLPs in rural areas, the University of Montana Graduate SLP Program is committed to providing accessibility to the graduate program for individuals who cannot move to the Missoula campus for training, and for those who partake in clinical externship experiences that are outside of the local regional area. As such, the SLHOS School simultaneously broadcasts of all graduate didactic courses. That is, students accepted into a distance program can access graduate courses live (at the time they are taught) and partake in a class simultaneously with on-campus students via a software platform. Students apply and are accepted into the on-campus or distance program. Distance program seats are limited, and thus students cannot switch to be in the graduate distance program once accepted into the on-campus program. There are, however, opportunities for students accepted into the on-campus program to access didactic courses via distance in the second year of their graduate studies if these students choose to complete externships in nonregional areas that are close to Missoula.

On-Campus Program

- Students follow a traditional classroom structure by attending courses face-to-face on the UM campus (with the exception of some distance courses in year two if a nonregional externship is chosen).

- Practica/externships are completed every semester throughout the graduate program and begin as a clinical practicum in the University of Montana's RiteCare Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic their first semester in the graduate program.
- Subsequent off-campus practica/externships (typically after the first two semesters of graduate school) take place in off-campus sites.
 - Practica or externships can be arranged throughout the state and country if preferred with didactic distance course offerings.
- Typically students complete the degree in a minimum of 4 semesters and 1 summer term.
- Part-time options are available for students who applied and were initially accepted for a part-time graduate program. Typically students complete 3 years of graduate school according to individualized plans of study.

Distance Graduate Program

- Students participate **synchronously** in all academic courses with students on campus via web-broadcasting.
- Students begin clinical practicum at the University of Montana's RiteCare Clinic on the University of Montana campus in the summer term following two semesters of academic study.
- Practica continue throughout the remainder of the graduate program in off-campus sites (and can be arranged throughout the state and country).
- Typically, students complete the program in a minimum of 4 semesters and 2 summer terms.
- Part-time options are available for students who applied and were initially accepted for a part-time graduate program. Typically students complete 3 years of graduate school according to individualized plans of study.

SLP Graduate Program Prerequisites

Students enter the University of Montana Master's degree program with 1) an undergraduate degree with a communicative sciences and disorders (SLHOS) undergraduate major, or 2) an undergraduate degree in a non-SLHOS area with the additional completion of leveling SLHOS leveling courses. The SLHOS prerequisite courses include the following ([full descriptions found in the UM Course Catalog](#)):

- CSD/SLOS 210 Speech & Lang Development
- CSD/SLOS 222 Intro to Audiology
- CSD/SLOS 320 Phono Devel & Phonetics
- CSD/SLOS 331 Neuroanatomy and Physiology
- CSD/SLOS 365 Acquired Speech and Language Disorders
- CSD/SLOS/BIOH 330 Anatomy & Physiology
- CSD/SLOS 405 Clinical Processes

- CSD/SLOS 420 Speech Sciences
- CSD/SLOS 450 Aural Rehab
- CSD/SLOS UG 460 (formerly SLHOS 345) Language Assessment and Treatment: Birth-Preschool

In addition to the required SLOS/CSD courses, in order to apply for ASHA certification, SLP students must complete a course in a 1) physical science (physics or chemistry), 2) biological science, 3) social/behavioral science, 4) statistics, and 5) multicultural diversity. Thus, the following general undergraduate-level courses are prerequisites and described as follows:

Physical Science (3 credits): Physics or chemistry.

Biological Science (3 credits): Science of living things (human or animal): biology, general anatomy & physiology, neuroanatomy & neurophysiology, human genetics, or veterinary science (must be non-SLHOS courses)

Social/Behavioral Science (3 credits): Psychology, sociology, anthropology, or public health.

Statistics (3 credits): Prerequisite for SLHOS/CSD Research Methods. Psychology, Math, or Social stats; stats also meets the previous math course category. One stand-alone course is required. UM's graduate Research Methods SLHOS/CSD course does not count for stats.

Multicultural (3 Credits) a cross-cultural course with an emphasis on more than one culture
*Advanced placement, CLEP, or exam of equivalency may be used, but transcripts must be provided.

* Other courses in which multiple cultures are studies may be acceptable based on School syllabi approval.

At UM, SLOS/CSD UG 480 Multicultural Issues, fulfills the multicultural prerequisite

Prior to the start of graduate school, the Graduate Advisor will review each student's communication sciences and disorders undergraduate or leveling work to determine whether all prerequisite courses are completed prior to the start of graduate school. If some coursework is not completed in a student's undergraduate or leveling training prior to the start of graduate school, then the Graduate Advisor will work with a student to determine how best to integrate the required courses into each student's Plan of Study. Typically, students will take a course as an elective during their graduate studies and careful planning will be made to ensure a prerequisite course or courses are taken prior to/or concurrently with accompanying graduate coursework that requires associated foundational knowledge. It should be noted, however, if a student has a significant amount of prerequisite coursework that is not completed in an undergraduate and/or leveling post-baccalaureate studies, additional semester(s) of coursework may need to be completed and related extended plans of study may be required for full training completion.

Transfer of Credits to the University of Montana Graduate Program

Students may petition the UM Graduate School and follow the [graduate school policy](#) for the transfer of up to 9 graduate credits of which they earned an A or B into their graduate program at UM. After a semester of satisfactory work in a graduate program at UM, the student can ask

the SLHOS program to make a written request to the Graduate School to accept transfer credits. An official copy of the student's transcript of the courses for transfer and catalog course description should accompany the recommendation.

SLP Graduate Plans, Degree Options

Student Advising

In the SLP Graduate Program an assigned Graduate Advisor helps to monitor students' academic progress in accordance with the ASHA standards. All graduate students are assigned to be advised by a SLHOS Graduate Advisor prior to their start of graduate school. Graduate Advisement and Clinical Practica/Externship placements are closely coordinated within a student's plan of study in the SLP Graduate Program. Based on a transcripts review and an initial survey preference results, each student is assigned a plan of study. During orientation, each student reviews their assigned plan of study individually, in-person, with the graduate advisor. Additionally, in orientation all students receive group advisement regarding program structure, sequence, practicum, and advising processes. Following initial orientation individual and group advisement sessions, students are encouraged to make individual appointments with the Graduate Advisor if further advisement is needed. On-going group advisement occurs each semester within the key clinical courses of SLHOS/CSD 570 (Fall and Spring Year 1), SLHOS/CSD 575 (Fall Year 2), and SLHOS/CSD 675 (Spring Year 2). Individual advising occurs in-person or virtually and/or via email or phone during all semesters including Summer and when students are off-campus in Clinical Placements. Advisement includes a focus on continuous evaluation and updates of each student's plan of study. When and if a student requires a significant alteration of a plan study, a new plan of study is created and reviewed with the student accordingly. All students are encouraged to meet regularly with their Graduate Advisor and Clinical Externship Coordinator via in-person and/or virtual meetings (distance students) to ensure appropriate progress and ultimate student success.

Plans of Study:

Prior to the start of the SLP Graduate Program, students complete a survey provided by the Graduate Advisor to gain insight into students' experiences, interests, and preferences regarding final a practicum setting (medical, schools) for their final full-time externship. Based on the results of that survey, students are then assigned 1 of 2 plans of study which help pace, prioritize, and track students toward their final externship. Although, regardless of the plan of study, students will complete all the same courses and clinical requirements, one plan starts with a focus on SLP developmental disorders, and the other starts with an acquired disorders focus. The Graduate Advisor will meet with each student to determine whether the assigned Plan of Study is aligned with student goals.

Degree options:

Thesis Option: 71 total graduate credits (35 graduate program course credits, 30 graduate practicum credits, and a minimum of 6 thesis credits, which may require an additional semester)

Non-thesis Option: 68 total graduate credits (35 graduate program course credits, 30 graduate practicum credits, and 3 graduate capstone/portfolio project credits)

SLP Graduate Curriculum

The following credits and courses are included in the plans of study (see appendix) to complete the graduate degree in speech language pathology Courses in red with an * are changes in course numbers or credits that are effective for the graduate cohort starting in 2018 ([full descriptions found in the UM Course Catalog](#)):

Required Academic Coursework and Credits (38 – 41 credits total)

- 35 credits of graduate program courses, a majority of which focus on developmental and acquired communication and swallowing disorders.
- Either a graduate thesis (6 credits) or graduate non-thesis portfolio project (3 credits option).
- Some students will have additional electives if there is a need to complete multiple undergraduate or Standard IV area requirements (not completed prior to graduate school) such as *SLHOS/CSD UG 460 Language Assessment and Intervention for Children Birth to Preschool* or *SLOS/CSD 480 Multicultural Issues in order to be eligible for ASHA certification*.

Required Clinical Education Coursework and Credits (30 credits total)

- 30 credits of clinical practicum—includes specialty clinics and direct experiences communication disorders across multiple settings (see clinical education coursework)
- working with children and adults with developmental/acquired/swallowing 3 practicum levels that develop clinical skill and competency across multiple sites
- a minimum of 375 supervised clock hours ([25 hours of observation must be completed before beginning clinical practicum](#))

Curriculum Specifics

Required Graduate Core Curriculum Courses

SLOS/CSD G 520 Artic & Phono Disorders

SLOS/CSD G 530 Voice and Motor Speech Disorders

SLOS/CSD G 560 Language Assessment Intervention for School-Age Children and Adolescents, 3 credits

SLOS/CSD G 580 Diagnostics- 3 credits

SLOS/CSD 591 EBP Practices 1 credit (effective Fall 2018)*

SLOS/CSD G 540 Fluency Disorders
SLOS/CSD G 565 Aphasia & Acquired Apraxia of Speech
SLHOS /CSD G 566 Cognition
SLOS/CSD G 600 Research Methods
SLOS/CSD G 640 Swallowing Disorders
SLOS/CSD G 570 Clinical Processes in Professional Practice I (2 credits total)
SLOS/CSDG 571 Foundational Applied Clinic in Service Learning I (6 credits total)
SLOS/CSD G 575 Advanced Clinical Processes in Professional Practice (1 credit)
SLOS/CSD G 576 Advanced Applied Clinic (6 credits total)
SLOS/CSD G 675 Externship Practicum (12 credits total)
SLOS/CSD 545 Autism: Complex Communication Disorders 2 credits (
SLOS/CSD 546 AAC: Complex Communication Disorders, 1 credit

Capstone Option

SLOS/CSD G 688 MS Capstone Portfolio 3 credits

Thesis Option

If a student decides to complete a thesis (SLOS/CSD G 699 Thesis) for a total 6 credits, then SLOS/CSD 688 Capstone will not need to be completed. Students wishing to complete a thesis should choose this option by the end of the Fall semester in their first year of graduate school. In order to complete a thesis, students must work with an academic faculty member of the SLHOS School to develop a project proposal and project as directed by the [thesis policy and procedures outlined by the University of Montana Graduate School](#). The SLHOS Faculty member will become the Chair of the Graduate Student Thesis Committee. The SLHOS Faculty member Thesis Chair, student, and Graduate Advisor will then work together to determine how to integrate the 6 thesis credits into a student's plan of study.

In order to provide ideal mentorship, the SLHOS faculty typically mentor a limited number of students in a thesis option each year. Thus, it is encouraged that students meet individually with faculty with whom they are interested in studying with early in the Fall semester to determine whether a thesis is an available option with a professor.

Technology Requirements

Electronic Tracking System

The SLHOS School uses a web-based tracking system (CALIPSO) as a tool to document ASHA standards and graduate work. The School will provide access to instructions, tutorials, training, and support for graduate students, both on and off campus, in the use of required web-based tracking systems.

Broadcast Platform

The SLHOS School simultaneously broadcasts all graduate didactic courses. That is, distance students access graduate courses live (at the time they are taught) and partake in a class

simultaneously with on-campus students via a software platform. The School will direct students how to access courses via distance broadcast using a chosen software program (e.g., Zoom).

Teaching Learning Platform

All classes provide their syllabi, course content, and communications via an electronic learning platform (Moodle). Faculty will upload course content to Moodle and students will be expected to check regularly, download, and access this content for course participation. [Moodle 101 for Students](#) is a self-paced tutorial that will familiarize you with the general course layout and key features of your online courses. It takes approximately 30 minutes to work through the tutorial. You should consider enrolling yourself if you are new to Moodle. Technical support for Moodle is available through the UOnline Support Desk, 8am - 5pm, Monday through Friday at (406) 243-4999 or by email at umonline-help@umontana.edu.

Graduate Policies and Procedures

Grades of C+ and Dismissal

- Any student that earns two grades of C+ or lower will be dismissed from the graduate program.
- If a student earns a C+ or lower in a class then a Student Remediation Committee will convene to determine the remediation for the student. (See Remediation section for details and processes.)
- Any student that earns one grade of C+ or lower in a graduate class must retake the class or take an independent study to demonstrate competencies associated ASHA standards of knowledge and skills. Retaking a course will not result in the replacement of the C+ or lower grade. If a C+ or lower is earned in this subsequent class, the student will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Competency and Remediation

In graduate courses each student will be provided with an opportunity to demonstrate required knowledge and/or skills. These knowledge and skills will be assessed as delineated in course syllabi. The American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) has specified that in order to be eligible for a clinical fellowship, the student must achieve a level of 80% or better on each knowledge-and-skills standard. Regardless of the course grade, if the student does not achieve required competencies, he/she will be provided with one additional opportunity to demonstrate this knowledge and/or skill. If the student does not pass the competency a second time, further course of action will be determined by the School and may result in program dismissal. If a student fails to attain competency, the Certification for Clinical Practice Verification by Program Director Form required for ASHA certification will not be signed regardless of an acceptable course/clinic grade.

Regardless of final grades, students must achieve a level of 80% or better to be considered competent on each ASHA knowledge and skills standard. If competency is not achieved, an individualized formal remediation plan will be implemented (see formal remediation procedures in this handbook for details). If a student fails to demonstrate competency following a remediation then a student is placed in formal academic or clinical probation. If a student is placed in academic and/or clinical probation over two times then the student will be dismissed from the graduate program.

- If remediation requires a student to repeat a course or a section of a course, then the student will complete an independent study of the course for the specified credits the semester that the course is repeated. The repetition of the course will not result in a change of grade from the original course.
- If a student fails to successfully remediate, the student will be placed on School probation. A student remediation committee assigned to the student will then determine the actions and timeline required for the student to end probation. Students can be on School probation for a maximum of one semester. If a student fails to complete the required probationary steps within the assigned timeline then he/she may be dismissed from the graduate program.

PRAXIS EXAM

All SLP and Audiology graduate students must take the ASHA national exam by ETS called the Praxis Audiology exam, which is part of the Praxis II series, and report their scores to the School in order to graduate from the School of Speech, Language, Hearing and Occupational Sciences. Students are required to take the national exam by the end of the final semester of the graduate program. Students are encouraged to take the test by March 15 of their final semester for scores to be received and recorded in time for graduation.

GRADUATE PROGRAM COMPLETION

A graduate student will officially graduate at the end of the semester in which all academic coursework, Praxis exam, and all clinical coursework is complete. If a student does not successfully complete all requirements by the end of the last semester listed on the student's program of study, the student will continue as a graduate student, until all graduation requirements have been met. The "degree conferred" semester will be the semester that the student actually completed all degree requirements and final grades were posted. Students will not receive a letter confirming program requirement completion before the degree is awarded.

Plans of Study and Leave of Absence

The SLHOS School expects graduate students to maintain and register according to their plan of study established at the beginning of their graduate studies. A graduate student who experiences unexpected health problems or other compelling personal circumstances which affect the ability to successfully maintain full-time status may request a leave of absence by petitioning the School Chair. The School Chair will work with the student to determine the

length of the leave of absence which is typically assigned a semester at a time and is no longer than one year.

The student:

- may only petition for one leave of absence during their graduate program
- is responsible for any missed courses and/or clinical practicum which may extend the graduate program and result in a change of plan of study
- may not petition for a leave of absences as a means of avoiding low grades in academic courses or clinical practicum
- is expected to resume the program at the end of the approved leave of absence. If the student is unable to return, it may be recommended that the student be removed from the program. Should the student wish to reapply to the graduate program, he/she may do so on a competitive basis according to the School's regular graduate admission deadlines and procedures.

Professional Expectations

Professional Conduct

Graduate students are speech-language pathologists in training and thus SLP graduate students will be held to the highest standards of integrity and ethical principles. Our guiding principles for professional contact come from the [2017 ASHA Code of Ethics](#) , [ASHA Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology](#) and the [UM Student Code of Conduct](#). As an ASHA accredited program, the ASHA Code of Ethics [2017 ASHA Code of Ethics](#) binds the faculty, staff, and students of the UM Speech Language Pathology Program. The principles will be addressed throughout the training program, both in academic classes and in clinical practicum. Students should become well acquainted with the Code of Ethics so that the judgments and decisions they make as a graduate student form a solid, ethical foundation for their future as a professional speech-language pathologist. If students have any questions or concerns regarding the Code of Ethics or its application, they should discuss them with their clinical educator, advisor, or the Director of Clinical Education.

Confidentiality Compliance and HIPAA Training

Confidentiality compliance and HIPAA training are part of the University of Montana Research and Creative Scholarship Compliance Oversight. One principle covered in the ASHA Code of Ethics, as well as the mandated HIPAA requirements, involves the protection of clients' rights to confidentiality. This practice includes issues of release of information, digital and auditory recording and observation of sessions, and maintenance of client records. In general, clinicians should err on the side of caution when considering confidentiality.

Opportunities for Learning and Remediation Plan

Additional opportunities for learning and subsequent remediation is required when a student does not meet ASHA knowledge and skills course or clinical objectives. These knowledge and

skills are assessed by learning opportunities such as case studies, demonstration, testing, papers, and/or other assignments, and must reflect a minimum of 80% achievement or grade of B-.

Informal Opportunities for Learning: Within class or clinic, if a student earns a grade of less than 80% on an assignment and/or inadequately demonstrates a particular knowledge or skill, the clinical educator or professor will attempt to address the competency challenge within the class or clinical experience by providing an additional learning opportunity. This can be done through the provision of opportunities such as rewriting an assignment, completion of a new assignment, or additional demonstration of a skill following scaffolding. Note that the additional opportunities (e.g., redoing an assignment) do not necessarily change a student's grade.

Formal Remediation: Following the completion of opportunities for learning, if a student in a course or clinic does *not* achieve or demonstrate competency (80% or higher) on associated ASHA knowledge and skills, then the formal remediation process is initiated. Note that competency achievement is not necessarily equivalent to the final course grade.

Formal Student Remediation Process

Step 1. A Student Remediation Committee (SRC) is formed.

The Committee is made up of:

- **The Chair of the SRC, the clinical educator/professor who initiated the remediation.** This person is responsible for managing the remediation and seeing it through to its conclusion.
- **Faculty** who are appropriate to the needs and challenges of the student (*only if appropriate and can be requested by a student*),
- At least **one of the following** (depending on student needs)
 - **School Chair/Graduate Program Director**
 - **Director of Clinical Education**
 - **Graduate Advisor**

Step 2. The SRC Chair completes the **ASHA Knowledge and Skills Remedial Plan** and coordinates the formal remediation meeting which includes the full SRC committee and the student. In the meeting, the student and committee discuss the competency concern, note the ASHA standard in question, and determine a measurable goal and plan of remediation that includes a timeline of when remediation will be completed. At the conclusion of this meeting the student and SRC Chair sign and agree to the plan and follow up is completed according to the plan.

Step 3. At the completion of the remedial plan timeline, the SRC Committee Chair initiates a follow-up meeting to be attend by the student and SRC Committee. The achievement of the remediation goal is measured and reported on.

- **Step 3a.** If the student successfully meets his/her competency and the remediation goal is met, then successful completion is noted on the ASHA Knowledge and Skills Remedial Plan, and the form is signed a second time by the student and SRC Chair signature, noting the completion of the plan and follow-up second meeting.
- **Step 3b.** If the student does not successfully meet his/her competency and the remediation goal is not achieved, the SRC Chair invites the School Chair to the follow up remediation meeting (if not already part of the committee) and the student, School Chair, and SRC Committee document the next steps for the remedial Plan on the ASHA Knowledge and Skills Remedial Plan form. The committee and student will discuss and document why the plan was not successful. Following this discussion, the Chair decides whether another remediation is warranted and the student is typically placed on formal academic or clinical probation. The subsequent remediation plan with a measurable goal and timeline is agreed upon and consequences are clearly provided. Note that possible program dismissal may be discussed as a consequence if appropriate.

Step 4. At the conclusion of the subsequent remediation plan timeline, the SRC Chair will follow up and initiate another remediation/academic probation meeting with the SRC Committee, School Chair, and student. The achievement of the remediation goal is measured and reported. The student and committee document the level of competency achievement regarding the completion of the remediation goal on the student's original ASHA Knowledge and Skills Remedial Plan.

- **Step 4a.** If the student successfully meets his/her competency and the remediation goal is met, then successful remediation completion is noted on an addendum to the ASHA Knowledge and Skills Remedial Plan and this form is signed by the student and SRC Chair -noting the completion of the plan. At this time the student is taken off academic/clinical probation.
- **Step 4b.** If the student does not successfully meet his/her competency and the remediation goal is not met, the student is dismissed from the program.

Note that according to School policy, students can only be on academic probation for a maximum of one cycle or semester.

Conflict Resolution and Grievances

Conflict Resolution and Formal Grievances

Conflicts arise in many situations. Most conflicts can be resolved by remaining thoughtful, respectful, and courteous with the other party. You can communicate to us in many ways, such as:

- Having a conversation with a staff or faculty member
- Sending an email to your Graduate Advisor
- Meeting with the Director of Clinical Education or a trusted Professor/Clinical Educator

- Working with a student organization (NSSLHA)
- Completing course evaluations and exit surveys

In the event that a conflict cannot be resolved, the following procedures are recommended:

- Contact the School Chair
- If the Chair is unable to resolve the matter or is unresponsive to your requests contact the Dean or Associate Dean of the College of Education and Human Services.
- If the Dean or Associate Dean is unable to resolve the matter or is unresponsive to your requests contact the Provost of the University or the Council for Academic Accreditation

The Council for Academic Accreditation also has a process in place for complaints to be filed against the CAA. Before filing a complaint, it is strongly recommended that you read Chapter XIII: Complaints in the [Accreditation Handbook](#). Complaints against the CAA must be filed within 1 year of the date the conduct being complained about occurred, and must relate to the content or the application of the [Standards for Accreditation of Entry-Level Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology](#).

REFERENCES

[American Speech-Language Hearing Association](#)

Anderson, J. (1988). The supervisory process in speech-language pathology and audiology. Boston, MA: College-Hill.

[Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders](#)

[Council on Academic Accreditation](#)



The College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences

School of Speech, Language, Hearing & Occupational Sciences

Curry Health Center

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Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program

University of Montana

I have fully read, understand and agree to the terms and conditions outlined in
the
2018 Academic Graduate Student Handbook.

Graduate Student Printed Name

Graduate Student Signature

Date

Graduate Program Director Signature

Date