The Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences
M.A. in Speech-Language Pathology (SPLA)

# Program Handbook

Updated 8/23/25

# Table of Contents


| | |
|---|---|
| **PROGRAM OVERVIEW** | 5 |
| **ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM** | 5 |
| **PRE-REQUISITE COURSE REQUIREMENTS** | 5 |
| **GOALS OF THE PROGRAM** | 6 |
| **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS** | 7 |
| **ACADEMIC CURRICULUM** | 9 |
| **CLINICAL PRACTICUM** | 21 |
| **STUDENT CONDUCT** | 23 |
| **QUESTIONS & GRIEVANCES** | 24 |
| **FUNDING & GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP POLICIES** | 26 |
| **UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL DEADLINES FOR GRADUATION** | 26 |
| **APPENDICES** | 28 |
| **Cultural and linguistic diversity emphasis program** | 28 |
| **Bilingual Certificate in Speech-Language Pathology** | 29 |
| **Comprehensive Examination- Further Information** | 31 |
| **After Graduation: ASHA Certification and Related Information** | 40 |
| **Special circumstances: Leave of Absence** | 41 |
| **Special circumstances: Delay in Graduation** | 41 |
| **Special circumstances: Switching from Thesis to Candidacy Paper** | 42 |
| **Special circumstances: Non-Degree Options** | 43 |
| **Combined M.A. and Ph.D. track** | 43 |

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The program leading to the Master of Arts degree in ***Speech-Language Pathology*** **(henceforth MASLP)** is an academically based, clinically oriented, full-time 2-year program (including intervening winter and summer terms) designed primarily to prepare Speech-Language Pathologists for professional practice. The program's primary goal of the ***Speech-Language Pathology Program is to provide knowledge about essential competencies in communication disorders such as*** speech, language, voice, swallowing, cognition, and fluency. The secondary goal is to provide students with minimal competencies in the measurement of hearing and the habilitation/rehabilitation of individuals with hearing disorders. While information about communication disorders comprises the central focus of the degree, education about the typical processes of speech, language, cognition, swallowing, and hearing is considered an integral part of the program.

The M.A. program in Speech-Language Pathology contributes substantially to the academic and clinical practicum requirements for the *Certificate of Clinical Competence (C.C.C.)* granted by the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA). Nearly all employers and jurisdictions require the prospective Speech-Language Pathologist to hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence. Information about additional requirements for the CCC can be obtained at www.asha.org. The Council on Academic Accreditation accredits the MASLP program at the University of Maryland in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, Maryland 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5700.

# ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Admission to the graduate programs in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences is on a very competitive basis. The Department usually receives 250-300 applications for admission to fill approximately 25 available spaces in the M.A. program in Speech-Language Pathology. The Admissions committee evaluates all applications carefully, and considers the applicant's entire application holistically, rather than scores in any one domain. Successful applicants represent a well-rounded student who demonstrates academic excellence, professionalism, and service. Potential applicants should visit http://hesp.umd.edu/landing/Graduate for more information. Additionally, they can email (hespadmissions@umd.edu) or call (301-405-4214), the Department office.

Graduate students are admitted to a specific degree program (i.e., M.A. in Speech-Language Pathology, Au.D. or Ph.D. in Hearing and Speech Sciences). Students seeking a combined degree (i.e., MA-PhD) should apply to the PhD program, as this is their terminal degree intent. Students seeking to switch degree programs must submit a written petition to the Departmental Admissions Committee. This petition will be evaluated against usual departmental admission standards and the cohort of pending applicants to the semester of intended admission. All applications are subject to program space availability, which is extremely limited for mid-year entry. Applicants for program transfer must apply by the Graduate School deadline for application to graduate degree programs. The Departmental committee will provide a written response to the applicant in a timely fashion.

# PRE-REQUISITE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is a list of required undergraduate preparatory courses that must be completed before starting the MASLP program. In order to meet ASHA certification requirements, students must complete coursework

in basic human communication processes, including the anatomy and physiology of communication, the physical and psychophysical bases of communication, and the linguistic/psycholinguistic bases of communication. Students are required to take these courses before beginning their graduate curriculum (both academic and clinical). Additionally, at least one course in each of the biological, physical, behavioral, and/or social sciences and statistics is required for ASHA certification and must be completed ***before commencing your clinical fellowship year*** (at the latest). See http://www.asha.org/Certification/2014-Speech-Language-Pathology-Certification-Standards/

| Course Name & Number |
|---|
| 1. Anatomy & Physiology of the Speech Mechanism (HESP 305 or HESP 309)<br>2. Anatomy, Physiology & Pathology of the Auditory System (HESP 311 or HESP 309)<br>3. Intro to Phonetic Science (HESP 403)<br>4. Speech and Language Development (HESP 400)<br>5. Introduction to Audiology* (HESP 411) **HESP 606 may be substituted for HESP 311/411*<br>6. Neurobiology of Speech and Hearing (HESP313) *This could be a stand-alone course or a significant part of another course*<br>7. Aural Rehabilitation and Habilitation (HESP413)<br>8. Principles and Methods in Speech-Lang. Path. and Audiology (HESP 417) |

Typically, students complete the pre-requisite courses as part of their undergraduate degree. Students without an undergraduate degree in hearing and speech sciences may complete this sequence of courses through the **Hearing and Speech Sciences in the Evening (HESPIE) program** offered through the Office of Extended Studies: https://oes.umd.edu/graduates-post-baccalaureates-professionals/post-baccalaureate-programs/hearing-speech-evening-hespie.

## GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

The MA in Speech-Language Pathology program is designed to facilitate students' knowledge and skills in seven main areas. These goals include:

1. Demonstrate cultural knowledge, responsiveness, and humility

Apply knowledge towards best practices in diagnosing and treating individuals within the context of their culture and build relationships with individuals, families, schools, and communities.

2. Mastery of core knowledge of communication and its disorders

Demonstrate knowledge of theoretical foundations, etiology and symptomatology, differential diagnosis, current best evidence for diagnosis and treatment, unanswered issues, and future directions

3. Integration of research into evidence-based clinical practice

Demonstrate knowledge of processes used in research, including the ability to locate, evaluate and synthesize credible scientific information for application to clinical practice throughout their professional career

4. Application of academic/clinical knowledge and technical skills

Integrate and apply knowledge of communication disorders and clinical methods to prevention/screening, assessment, intervention, and counseling

5. Use of oral and written communication skills

Demonstrate effective, culturally responsive oral and written communication skills through academic course assignments, clinical interactions/documentation, and scholarly program requirements

6. Implementation of Problem-solving/critical thinking

Use knowledge of communication disorders to analyze, adapt, and justify emerging theoretical perspectives, research findings, and clinical decision-making on assessment and treatment procedures

7. Demonstration of Professional competence

Exhibit knowledge of clinical certification/licensure requirements, contemporary professional issues, and standards of ethical conduct. Demonstrate personal characteristics that support successful clinical practice

# PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## Length of Program

The expected time frame for completing the MASLP program is four academic semesters, plus intervening winter and summer terms.

## Determination of full-time status

The MASLP is a full-time program; HESP does not accept part-time students. Graduate education in this discipline requires timely and concurrent registration in both academic and clinical experiences. Full-time registration is formally defined by the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences as enrollment for 12-15 credits per semester in year 1 and 9-12 credits in year 2. In the first year of study, this will typically consist of three to four graduate courses and 2-3 credits of clinical practicum per semester. The second year will typically consist of two graduate courses, 3 credits of clinical practicum per semester, and registration in either thesis or candidacy paper research. Full-time commitment and course sequencing are critical because graduate courses are offered only once per academic year, and course content is closely tied to clinical practicum assignments. Enrollment in clinical practicum places significant time demands on students during the work week. Students registered for clinical practica will devote approximately 20-30 hours per week to preparing, implementing, and analyzing clinical experiences.

The Graduate school has specific policies regarding registration, and students are encouraged to be familiar with these policies. Of particular relevance are the following:

- Full-time status for graduate students is a minimum of 48 units per semester (36 units for students who hold a half-time Graduate Assistantship). 600-800 level courses carry 6 units per credit hour, and 799 carries 12 units per credit hour.
- Graduate students must be registered for courses in every one of the program's academic (fall/spring) semesters.
- **Students must be enrolled for at least one credit, regardless of credits already accumulated, in the semester of graduation**, even for summer graduations. Students may wish to consider this when enrolling in variable credit assignments (e.g., thesis, candidacy paper) over more than one semester.

## Transfer of graduate credits

The University automatically allows the transfer of up to six credits (e.g., two courses) of eligible graduate coursework taken before enrollment or at another institution into a graduate program. In special circumstances (e.g., Non-Degree Seeking Student), the Graduate school allows departments to exercise discretion in raising this number to twelve credits (four courses). Students wishing to transfer up to twelve credits must petition the HESP faculty for consideration of these additional credits; it is not common for the department to accept more than 6 transfer credits.

## Academic Planning

All students are assigned an academic advisor at the start of their MA program. Students will meet with their advisor at least once per semester to plan their overall program of study, particularly for the upcoming semester. In addition to discussing specific coursework, your academic advisors are guides to ensure your overall success in the program, including questions about full-time status, capstone requirements, forms for graduation, and academic challenges. It is the students responsibility to register for the correct courses after meeting with their advisor. The University add/drop deadlines apply to courses where students do not register on time. Failure to register for required courses may result in delayed graduation.

Students are restricted from registering for courses in the upcoming semester unless they have met with their academic advisor.

## Satisfactory Progress and Academic Standing

Students should be familiar with the departmental and graduate school policies regarding satisfactory progress and academic standing.

### Satisfactory Progress

1. The continued admission of all graduate students is at the discretion of the HESP Graduate Director and the Dean of the Graduate School, consistent with the policies and practices of the Graduate School and graduate program. A student must make satisfactory progress in meeting programmatic requirements, demonstrate the ability to succeed in their course of studies or research, and attain performance minimums specified by the graduate program in all courses; otherwise, their enrollment will be terminated.
2. For the M.A. program, satisfactory academic progress is defined as the timely completion of all programmatic requirements (earning a final grade of B- or better in all courses and clinic practica). Clinical requirements (a final grade of B- or better) must be completed by the end of each semester.
3. Incomplete grades have a limited time window for completion, as discussed in the section below, unless the student has taken an official leave of absence (see below). A student may have an Incomplete grade for *no more than two courses* at a given time. Students are expected to complete the work no more than *12 months from the beginning of the term that the course was initiated or before graduation (whichever comes first)***.** The mark of incomplete in 600- and 700-level courses will automatically roll-over to the original letter grades if the work is not completed by the specified date.

### Incomplete grades

An incomplete is a mark that an instructor may award to a student whose work in a course has been

**qualitatively satisfactory** (passing the course) but who cannot complete some portion of the work required because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control. The determination of "qualitatively satisfactory" is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are encouraged to communicate with their instructor to determine if they are eligible for an Incomplete as early as possible. An Incomplete may not be offered if the student is not demonstrating satisfactory performance (passing the course).

In awarding the "I" mark for graduate courses, instructors must complete an "Incomplete Contract for Graduate Students." The grade 'I' is not entered until the contract is signed and returned to the instructor. The 'I' is removed when the contract requirements are fulfilled. The student is responsible for providing a copy of the contract to their program's graduate studies director. Students are expected to complete the work no more than **12 months from the beginning of the term that the course was initiated or before graduation (whichever comes first)**. Students are advised to consult the graduate school policies on incomplete grades.

A student may not concurrently hold an Incomplete grade for more than two courses. If, due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., emergency during final exam week), a student needs to hold an Incomplete for more than two courses, they need to immediately contact their academic advisor, as they will need to petition the department for approval of an exception.

Please note: some courses that continue for more than one semester (HESP601) will provide an "incomplete" grade for earlier semesters if a student registers before the final semester; these departmental incompletes do not count towards this 2-course limit.

In the M.A. SLP program, incomplete grades may also be assigned for courses completed over multiple semesters (e.g., HESP638, HESP799, HESP601). These courses do not require an "Incomplete Contract" as this is not a student exception but part of the course structure.

## Retakes of Multi-semester/1-credit Courses

When students do not meet the minimum requirements for passing a multi-semester course, such as HESP601, there may be an option to retake the course in a condensed, 1-semester fashion, by observing previously recorded class sessions/lectures and completing all assignments in the semester following the unsuccessful course. This option is available at the instructor's discretion, and students are responsible for fees associated with re-registering for the course.

## Academic Standing

To maintain good academic standing, every graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) for all courses taken at the University, including both academic coursework and clinical practica. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation by the Graduate School and has 12 credits/two semesters to achieve a GPA of 3.0 or above. In addition, HESP has department-specific requirements, above and beyond graduate-school requirements:

1. A minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) is required for all academic courses taken after matriculation as a graduate student. In other words, A-level work in clinical practica cannot make up for poor academic performance.
2. All clinical practicum students receiving a grade lower than a B- are reviewed by the faculty to

determine eligibility for future practicum placement. Thus, A-level academic coursework work cannot compensate for poor clinical performance.

3. A minimum grade of B- or better is required for all academic courses taken for credit toward the degree requirements. For courses in which the minimum grade requirement is unmet, students are required to retake the course in a subsequent semester. The course is not considered "completed" until a grade of B- or better is achieved.
4. A student on academic probation at the end of the semester is not eligible for Outside Placement the following semester (they must register for in-house practicum). Students with an incomplete grade in a required course at the end of the semester must petition the faculty before registering for outside placement.
5. A student who earns a failing grade (C+ or lower) in two required courses is subject to removal from the MA program.

It is the student's responsibility to calculate their GPA and to ensure continued non-probationary status. Instructions on calculating GPA can be found at this link: http://registrar.umd.edu/current/Policies/acadregs.html. If a student's grades fall below minimum levels, he/she is responsible for setting up an immediate meeting with the academic advisor to discuss the situation, prior to receiving any notification from the graduate school or department.

## Support

Students who lose their good academic standing or fail to meet program-specific criteria for satisfactory progress are expected to seek guidance from their academic advisor and develop a suitable plan. The campus has numerous support services: https://gradschool.umd.edu/students#student-support-services.

## Accommodations in HESP Courses and Clinical Training

Students who need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to work with the UMD Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) to ensure timely support across their coursework and clinical training.

In addition to the university-wide policies and procedures managed by ADS, the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences recognizes that certain aspects of the HESP program (such as clinical practica, disorder courses, and hands-on training requirements) may raise unique considerations.

A departmental committee is currently developing program-specific guidance for students and faculty regarding the implementation of accommodations in HESP courses and clinical settings. This guidance will be added to the handbook once finalized, and is likely to take effect starting in the 2025-2026 academic year.

In the meantime, students are encouraged to:

- Register with ADS to ensure official accommodations are documented.
- Communicate early with faculty, clinical educators, and advisors regarding any anticipated needs.
- Reach out to the HESP advising office with questions about how accommodations may intersect with specific program requirements.

The department is committed to ensuring that all students have equitable access to learning and clinical experiences.

### Impact on Graduate Assistantships

As per UMD's policies for graduate assistantships, a Graduate Assistant (GA) must be in good standing and making satisfactory progress toward their graduate degree. Those who do not make satisfactory progress risk losing their Graduate Assistantship.

Some forms of student funding require full-time academic status for disbursement. Therefore, withdrawal from courses can result in the loss of a GA position, including the requirement to pay back tuition remission for that semester.

### Curriculum requirements

All students seeking the MASLP degree must accumulate a minimum of 35 credit hours of graduate-level academic coursework. In addition, students pursuing the MASLP degree fulfill a clinical practicum that is designed to provide clinical training and meet ASHA clinical certification requirements. The following sections describe the curriculum for students pursuing the MASLP degree. **The following sections describe academic requirements (coursework and capstone paper [thesis or candidacy paper]) and clinical requirements separately.** This curriculum does not reflect additional pre-requisite or ASHA-specified coursework, which may be necessary to meet ASHA certification requirements for students coming to the graduate program from non-HESP backgrounds or other undergraduate Hearing and Speech Programs.

## ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

The academic curriculum includes required courses, elective courses, and a final scholarly paper. The academic courses and their credits are given in the next Table. The course listings can be found in the course catalog (www.testudo.umd.edu ).

## Distribution of academic courses and credits

| Course # | Title | Credits | Semester/Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Disorders Courses** | | | |
| HESP616 | Language Disorders in Preschool Age | 2 | [1]Fall/1 |
| HESP702 | Diagnostic Procedures | 2 | |
| HESP610 | Language Disorders In Adults | 2 | |
| HESP613 | Autism | 2 | |
| HESP620 | Speech Production Across the Lifespan | 3 | Spring/1 |
| HESP612 | Fluency Disorders | 2 | [1]Spring/1 |
| HESP611 | Cognitive Disorders In Adults | 2 | |
| HESP625 | Dysphagia | 3 | Summer I/ 1 |
| HESP627 | Alternative & Augmentative Communication | 2 | Summer II/1 |
| HESP626 | Language Disorders in School Age | 2 | Spring/2 |
| | | | |
| HESP624 | Voice Disorders | 2 | Fall/2 |
| **Basic Science Courses** | | | |
| HESP601 | [2]Foundations of Scientific Enquiry | 1 | Summer I/1 |
| HESP602 | Neuro Bases Communication | 2 | Spring/1 |
| **Elective courses**[3] | | | |
| HESP639 | [4]Special Topics: Advances in SLP<br>HESP639P: Interprofessional Practice (Spring)<br>HESP639B: Traumatic Brain Injury (Winter)<br>HESP639D: Advanced Dysphagia (Fall) | 2 | Variable |
| HESP603 | [2]Seminar- CLD-Emphasis Prog. | 1 | Fall/1 to Spring/2 |
| HESP605 | [5]Bilingual Assessment & Intervention | 3 | Summer |
| HESP615 | Counseling | 3 | Winter/1 or 2 |
| HESP617 | Cultural & Linguistic Diversity | 2 | Winter/1 or 2 |
| HESP708 | Independent study- Research | 1 | Any |
| HESP724 | [6]Research Methods | 3 | Spring/1 or 2 |
| [7]Other related courses outside the department | | | |
| **Capstone** | | | |
| HESP638 | [8]Candidacy Paper | 2 | Winter or Spring/2 |
| HESP799 | Thesis | 6 | Variable/2 |
| **Total Credits** | | **35-36** | |

**Footnotes to the table:**

[1]These courses will be offered as a paired sequence in a semester. Each 2-credit course will run for 7 weeks (final exam in the 8th week), followed by the next 2-credit course.

[2] This is a four-semester course sequence with meetings beginning in the first semester of the program and continuing thereon; currently it is offered Summer I/year 1. If needed, additional sections are offered Fall/Y2 and Winter/Y2. Most students will register for Summer I/Y1.

[3] Electives need to be related to SLP, but need not be disorders courses or courses offered by the

department. Students doing a Candidacy Paper require 6 credits of electives, and students doing a Thesis require 2 credits. Depending on which elective courses you take, you might take 7 or 3 credits, respectively (most courses are worth 2 credits, but some are 3 credits). **Students are strongly advised to plan early to fulfill their elective requirements promptly**, especially given that some electives are only offered in the winter term.

[4] Rotating topics. Examples of such courses are Seminar in Interprofessional Collaboration, Medical Speech-Language Pathology, Pediatric Swallowing, Educational Audiology, Traumatic Brain Injury, Instrumentation for SLP, Motor Speech Disorders in Adults, etc.

[5] This is an elective option for students not pursuing the Bilingual Certificate in Speech-Language Pathology. **Students pursuing the Bilingual Certificate need to have courses over and above their MA Coursework, and HESP605 is the signature course for the certificate and does not count as an elective.**

[6] HESP724*:* Research Methods. This is optional for students planning on doing a thesis. Students may take this course during the Spring semester of their first year instead of any one of the other courses typically taken during Spring 1 (they will take this course in Spring 2, e.g., Cognitive Disorders in Adults).

[7]Courses may be taken outside the department, either on the UMD campus (e.g., EDCI 631: Student Assessment in the Second Language Classroom) or at other Universities in the Washington Area Consortium (e.g., Galludet, GWU, Howard University). Students will require permission from their academic advisor, and in some cases, a petition must be made to the faculty. The student may need to provide a reason why they are unable to enroll in the electives offered by HESP and provide evidence that the proposed non-UMD course fulfills one of the core competencies of ASHA's knowledge and skill outcomes: https://www.asha.org/Certification/2014-Speech-Language-Pathology-Certification-Standards/

[8] Students who choose the candidacy paper option will also take the comprehensive examination in the Spring of their 2nd year (typically the first week of April)

## Typical sequence of classes by semester

Courses are typically offered once yearly, occasionally once every other year, in the indicated semester. For students pursuing the Thesis option, at least 2-elective credits are required. For students pursuing the Candidacy Paper option, at least 6 elective credits are required. While most elective classes are for 2 credits, there are a few 3-credit options, so you may enroll for 3 or 7 credits of electives instead of the minimum credits (we do not typically offer 1-credit electives, except for HESP 603, which is part of the CLD-EP program).

Please note: Students participate in HESP648A the first three semesters during the in-house clinic. However, students will not register for the course until summer I, year 1.

**YEAR 1 – FALL**
HESP616 Language Disorders in Preschool Age (2 credits)
HESP702 Diagnostic Procedures (2 credits)
HESP610 Language Disorders in Adults (2 credits)
HESP613 Autism (2 credits)
HESP648A Clinical Practice in Speech: Diagnostic Procedures (1 credit)

HESP648B Clinical Practice in Speech: Therapeutic Procedures (2 credits)

**YEAR 1 – WINTER**

Elective (e.g., Counseling; Special Topics in SLP; Cultural & Linguistic Diversity) (2-3 credits)
NOTE: **We strongly recommend that students take classes during the 3-week winter term**. Some electives are offered only at this time, so it is *highly recommended* to enroll for winter term classes. This enables students to complete their elective requirements in a timely manner (especially those who plan on doing a candidacy paper and hence need 7-8 elective credits). The Head and Neck Cancer elective is recommended for students interested in medical SLP settings as their first outside placement.

**YEAR 1 - SPRING**

HESP602 Neurological Bases of Communication (2 credits)
HESP612 Fluency Disorders (2 credits)
HESP611 Cognitive Disorders in Adults (2 credits)
HESP620 Speech Production Across the Lifespan (3 credits)
HESP648A Clinical Practice in Speech: Diagnostic Procedures (continued from Fall Year 1)
HESP648B Clinical Practice in Speech: Therapeutic Procedures (2 credits)

**SUMMER SESSION**

HESP625 Dysphagia (3 credits), typically offered in the 1st summer session
HESP627 Alternative & Augmentative Communication (2 credits), typically offered in a blended format (in-class + online) in the 2nd summer session
HESP648A Clinical Practice in Speech: Diagnostic Procedures (continued from Fall Year 1)
HESP648B Clinical Practice in Speech (2 credits)
Elective (e.g., Bilingual Assessment and Intervention is offered during alternate years in the 2nd summer session)

**YEAR 2 - FALL**

HESP624 Voice Disorders (2 credits)
HESP626 Language Disorders in School Age (2 credits)
HESP728 (Outplacement) Advanced Clinical Practice in Speech: Advanced Graduate Laboratory Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology (3 credits)
HESP601 Foundations of Scientific Enquiry (1 credit) (you can register in the Fall or Spring)
Thesis option: HESP799 Master's Thesis Research; (1-3 credits; 6 are needed and may be split across semesters)
Possible elective (2-3 credits)

**YEAR 2 – WINTER**

Thesis option: HESP799 Master's Thesis Research; (1-3 credits; 6 are needed and may be split across semesters)
Possible elective (2-3 credits)

**YEAR 2 – SPRING**

HESP601 Foundations of Scientific Enquiry (1 credit), if you have not already registered for this
HESP728 (Outplacement) Advanced Clinical Practice in Speech: Advanced Graduate Laboratory Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology (3 credits)
Thesis Option: HESP799 (3 credits, 6 total required)
or Non-thesis candidacy research: HESP638 Candidacy Paper (2 credits)

Possible elective (2-3 credits),
HESP603 (for the CLD Program)

## Capstone paper: Thesis and Non-thesis options

According to the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, College Park, an independent scholarly paper is required for all Masters' degree programs at the university. Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills in their scholarly paper:

- **Scholarly knowledge** (knowledge of relevant information and facts; comprehensiveness of knowledge base)
- **Conceptual rigor** (understanding of important theories and concepts; ability to apply concepts appropriately; developing theoretical and scientific background)
- **Synthesis and analysis skills** (ability to synthesize across different research papers and make connections; ability to analyze and critique existing literature base; critical thinking and logical reasoning)
- **Understanding of research design** (ability to design a research study; understanding of potential confounds; ability to recognize flaws in research studies)
- **Appropriate writing skills** (clarity of argument; conciseness; correct spelling & punctuation; appropriate organizational structure; complete sentences and good transitions; appropriate documentation/citations)

The MASLP program has two options for the scholarly paper: thesis and non-thesis. The thesis and non-thesis options differ in what constitutes the scholarly activity and the number of elective course credits and requirement for comprehensive examinations (for non-thesis option only). Typically students choose one of the two options by the end of their first year in the program. Students are encouraged to consult with their academic advisors before making their decision.

The Department has produced a writing guide to assist in the preparation of candidacy papers, theses, and term papers. Students are strongly encouraged to consult it on the HESP website.

### Quick comparison

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Credits | 6, HESP799<br>All credits with thesis mentor | 2, HESP638<br>1 credit each with 1st and 2nd readers |
| Faculty | Three committee members | Two readers, topic approval |
| Benchmarks | Proposal meeting, Written thesis, Oral Defense | Initial Proposal (written), Candidacy Paper (written) |
| IRB Approval | Yes, for human subjects research | No |
| Paper Format | Recommended format: journal article<br>See also Graduate School Style Guide www.gradschool.umd.edu | See the description of the format in a later section |
| Other | - | Comprehensive Examination |

## Grades

Both HESP799 and HESP638 are graded as Incomplete (Grade of I) each semester until the

student completes the project. The Incomplete grade will be changed to Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) when the project is completed.

## Thesis option

Graduate school link on thesis requirements

A thesis is excellent preparation for anyone who believes that they would like to pursue a doctoral degree or would like to gain hands-on experience with conducting research. Students who elect the thesis option must register for six semester hours of HESP 799, M.A. Thesis Research. The student is not required to take comprehensive examinations but is required to defend their thesis in an oral examination.

The MA thesis should demonstrate the student's ability to pose a scientific question, plan and execute scientific inquiry, and scholarly writing. The Dean of Graduate Studies defines scholarly writing as "the ability to present in a clearly organized paper, with proper scholarly documentation, evaluation." The critical ingredient is that the student must show evidence of original thought, completion of a research project, literature synthesis, and critical analysis.

### *Timeline & Approval Process*

The department does not impose deadlines for each of these stages because there is considerable individual variation depending on factors such as a student's prior familiarity with a topic, identifying a research question, IRB approval, and data-collection procedures. It is strongly recommended that the student work with their research advisor to develop a feasible timeline. However, there are deadlines by the Graduate school that need to be completed during the semester of graduation. (see also https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/masters-degrees-policies/ ).

These are the typical stages of pursuing a thesis and due dates/timeline for timely graduation.

| Stage | Timeline & Due Dates (Y1= year one; Y2= year two) |
|---|---|
| | |
| Identify a research question | Begin: February Y1<br>Due: June 15th Y1 |
| Write a proposal | Begin: June Y1<br>Due: Sep.11th Y2 |
| Nominate the examining committee | Due: Oct. 2nd Y2 |
| Hold a Proposal meeting | Due: Oct. 27th Y2 |
| Obtain IRB approval | Due: Nov. 24th Y2 |
| Conduct the research project | Begin: Oct./Nov. Y2<br>Due: Feb. 12th Y2 |
| Write the thesis | Begin: Jan. Y2<br>Due: Mar. 11th Y2 |
| Hold the oral defense | Due: Apr. 19th Y2 |
| Revise the thesis (if needed) | Until May 3rd Y2 |
| Submit the thesis | Due: May 3rd Y2 |

1. **Identify a research question.** After formulating a tentative question and perhaps a research design, the student seeks out a member of the graduate faculty who agrees to serve as the primary advisor or chairperson of the thesis committee.

    - *Note: Students are not required to formulate their research question/design independently; in many cases, it is common for a student to approach a potential mentor first and for them to jointly develop a study in line with the student's interests. However, this works best if the student has some general ideas of the topics they are interested in so they can approach an appropriate faculty member.*

2. **Write a Proposal.** The student prepares a formal written proposal providing relevant background, the rationale for the research project, and the procedures to be followed in collecting and analyzing the data. The student revises the proposal based on feedback from the primary advisor. Although there are individual variations, there may be at least 3 drafts of the proposal before it is finalized for distribution to the thesis examining committee. Your advisor may take a minimum of 2 weeks to give you feedback on your proposal drafts, so please plan accordingly.

3. **Nominate the examining committee.** The primary advisor and the student choose at least two other members of the graduate faculty to serve on the thesis committee. Please refer to a later section on ***Thesis Committee members*** for eligibility of faculty to serve on committees.

    A committee is not official until it has been nominated and approved by the Graduate School. To do this, you must submit the committee nomination form. The form is found at https://gradschool.umd.edu/forms. here is a deadline each **semester for its submission**: Please check with the graduate school's deadlines, posted at https://gradschool.umd.edu/calendar/deadlines/academic-deadlines.

4. **Hold at least one proposal meeting.** This ensures that the student and committee members agree on the appropriate grounding of the thesis question and the specific methodology that will be employed. It is thus useful to hold this meeting before obtaining IRB approval, which is required for all projects in this department, even those using archived data. Before this first meeting and any subsequent to it, the student should distribute a well-articulated background review, hypotheses, and methods to the committee members at least ten workdays beforehand (approximately two calendar weeks) so that members can read and annotate the proposal and come prepared to discuss issues with the student. *Under no circumstances should a meeting be held if the members have not had sufficient opportunity to read the preliminary proposal.* Members may inform the advisor if they do not believe that the preliminary proposal is sufficiently well-articulated to yet merit a committee meeting. The student meets with the Thesis committee to propose the study. The committee members may provide constructive feedback during this proposal meeting. Many committee members are also willing to serve as a resource during the execution of the research project. If the committee determines that the proposal defense is not well-articulated, a subsequent meeting may be held to give the student an opportunity to formulate the project. In all cases, committee members must serve on the oral examination committee, which is officially appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

5. **Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval**. If the research involves human subjects, including de-identified archival data, the University Committee for Research on Human Subjects must approve the project (http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/RCO/New/index.html). Students may

not begin a project until it has received IRB approval. The graduate school will demand assurance that the project has received such approval before accepting the thesis or dissertation.

In addition, students may need to complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training for social and behavioral research (https://www.citiprogram.org/ ).

6. **Conduct the research project.** Following the approval of the thesis topic, the student is then permitted to pursue their research and write the thesis.

7. **Hold an interim meeting** of the committee if any unforeseen changes in the direction of the thesis/dissertation are expected. We recognize that some alterations (all of which must be approved by the IRB) may be necessary during the execution of a thesis/dissertation project. Such changes should be approved by the committee before implementation to avoid unwelcome surprises at the end of the project.

8. **Write the thesis**. After completing the research project, the student initially submits the thesis to the primary advisor, who may provide constructive feedback. The thesis is typically written in a *peer-reviewed empirical journal paper format*. After the student and primary advisor have finalized the thesis, the student distributes the thesis to the committee. The student also schedules a date for an oral examination, which is at least seven work days after the thesis is made available to committee members. The student should not change the document at the last minute and bring revised copies to the oral defense. The committee members may inform the student if the thesis/dissertation is not ready for defense. In this case, the defense must be rescheduled and the same time frames listed above apply to revised submissions.

9. **Hold the oral defense.** As per the graduate school policy, a final oral examination of the thesis is required after the student has completed the thesis to the satisfaction of the student's advisor, all other requirements for the degree have been completed, and a 3.0 grade point average has been earned. M.A. thesis defenses at HESP are not open to the public.

   Prior to the defense, the advisor meets with the student to describe what happens in a defense and the order of events. At the beginning of the defense, the advisor asks the candidate to leave the room. The committee then reaches a consensus that the defense can (or cannot) proceed and determines the order of questioning (e.g., chapter by chapter, person by person, etc.). The candidate returns and gives a BRIEF (10-15 minute) thesis summary, including background, hypotheses, method, findings, and implications. Committee questioning ensues and is moderated by the advisor. Following the questioning period, the candidate is asked to leave the room, and the committee renders a decision and specifies

   - Whether the oral examination is passable
   - The exact nature of revisions (if any),
   - Which revisions are required and which are optional;
   - Who will supervise and sign off on the revisions and the timeline;
   - When the committee members sign the thesis approval form.

10. **Make recommended revisions** (if any).

11. **Submit the final thesis** to the committee members and the graduate school. Please also refer to the graduate school's style guide for electronic thesis and dissertations: http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/current_students/etd_style_guide.html. There are graduate

school deadlines each semester for thesis submission if the student wishes to graduate during that semester. Theses submitted to the University through the ETD process will also be deposited in the UM Library's online electronic archive, DRUM (Digital Repository at the University of Maryland). This is a free public archive of academic work by University faculty and graduate students. Submitting the thesis to the University in fulfillment of degree requirements grants the University the one-time, non-exclusive right to publish the document on DRUM.

12. **Understand Policies on the University of Maryland's Thesis**

- **The University's Rights.** The University of Maryland retains non-exclusive distribution, reproduction, and archival rights to doctoral dissertations submitted to the Graduate Faculty to fulfill the requirements for a graduate degree. Such rights entitle the University of Maryland to reproduce, archive, and distribute dissertations, in whole or in part, in and from an electronic format as it sees fit. Distribution is subject to a release date stipulated by the student and approved by the University.
- **The Student's Rights and Responsibilities.** The University of Maryland's publication rights regarding dissertations are non-exclusive - they offer no explicit restrictions on the distribution of dissertation material by the author. University of Maryland doctoral students retain full ownership rights to and copyright of their dissertations. Students also retain full rights to use all or part of their dissertation in future works, such as books or articles. Students are responsible for ensuring that their thesis or dissertation complies with copyright law. Copyright law gives the owner of a work exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, display, or perform the work publicly and to modify or adapt the work and the exclusive right to grant others permission to exercise any of those rights in the work, subject to certain exceptions. Students are responsible for determining if their use of another's work requires his or her permission or falls within one of the exceptions. Permission is not required to use a work when:
    - The work never qualified for copyright because, for example, it lacked originality or was created by Federal employees in the scope of employment.
    - Copyright in the work has expired.
    - The use qualifies as fair use.

Please see the Graduate School policies for more extensive guidance on copyright issues.

***Note on timely graduation:*** Students sometimes fear that the thesis option may delay graduation. In fact, some students who undertake theses do not finish them within the two-year span of the typical MA program and may complete the thesis in the summer (rather than the Spring semester of 2nd year). ASHA does not require the MA degree to be awarded in order to start a Clinical Fellowship (CF), only completion of ASHA course work and clock hour requirements. However, various jurisdictions, including DC, Maryland, and Virginia, DO require CF candidates to present evidence of an awarded degree before authorizing a temporary license. If graduates will work in other states, they should check local requirements. However, students should be aware that eligibility to begin a CF does NOT require the MA degree. For students who are planning to work in the schools, the summer graduation still permits you to start a CF on time with typical August public school start dates. If you are able to meet local licensure requirements for CF placements while completing thesis research/writing. At the end of three years of starting their MA program, both thesis and candidacy paper students are at the same point regarding earning potential and ASHA certification eligibility.

## *Thesis Committee members*

The Committee must consist of a minimum of *three members*, at least two of whom must be Regular

Members of the UMCP Graduate Faculty, who are on tenured or tenure-track appointments. The Chair of the Committee is the student's advisor, who must be a Regular or Adjunct Member of the Graduate Faculty, or, by special permission, has been appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Each member of the Committee must be a member of the Graduate Faculty of UMCP. Upon nomination by the Director of the Graduate Program and approval by the Dean of Graduate School, individuals who have been approved for Special membership in the Graduate Faculty may serve on Thesis Examining Committees. These individuals serve in addition to the two required Regular Members. To nominate a Special Member to serve, submit the nominee's curriculum vitae, a nomination form, and a letter of support from the Director of the Graduate Program. Graduate faculty who terminate employment at UMCP (and who do not have emeritus status) retain their status as members of the Graduate Faculty for twelve months, and during that time may serve as members and chairs of Thesis Examining Committees. If granted Special Member status, however, they may serve as co-chair. Professors Emeriti and Emeritae may serve on Thesis Examining Committees if they have retained their membership in the Graduate Faculty.

### *Registration & Forms*

The course number is HESP799: Master's thesis research. All six credits will be registered with the Chair of the thesis committee (that is, the primary thesis advisor). There is no restriction on the semester(s) during which the credits are registered for (as long as these are during the semesters during which the student works on any stage(s) of the thesis).
https://gradschool.umd.edu/sites/gradschool.umd.edu/files/uploads/nomination_of_thesis_or_dissertation_committee_form.pdf
https://gradschool.umd.edu/sites/gradschool.umd.edu/files/uploads/thesis_and_dissertation_electronic_publication_form.pdf

## Non-thesis option: Candidacy paper & Comprehensive Examination

Students who choose the non-thesis option must write a formal research paper on a topic of their choosing and must pass written comprehensive examinations in Speech-Language Pathology. The student must register for a total of two credit hours in HESP 638 (Research Practicum) across the semesters that the Candidacy Paper is written.

The Candidacy Paper is intended to be a demonstration of the student's scholarly writing ability and their competence in performing independent work. Scholarly writing ability is defined by the Dean of Graduate Studies as "the ability to present in a clearly organized paper, with proper scholarly documentation, evaluation". Thus, the Candidacy Paper may not simply review what is known about a given topic. The critical ingredient is that the student must show evidence of original thought and critical analysis. The Candidacy Paper may be an extension of work prepared for graduate-level courses. However, Graduate School policy is that the Paper must be written independently of and in excess of academic course requirements.

### *Timeline*

The student must begin working on the Candidacy Paper by the beginning of the semester PRIOR TO the semester of expected graduation. (That is, if a student is graduating in the spring semester, they must begin working on the Candidacy Paper by the start of the fall semester). However, we recommend that students begin thinking about their Candidacy Paper earlier than this, given the time and effort required to identify a topic and identify faculty readers.

1. **First month of the semester prior to graduation** (September for Spring graduation, February for Fall graduation): The student is expected to obtain approval for the paper topic from the first reader. In addition, the student needs to identify a second reader (with input from the first reader) and obtain consent from the second reader.
2. **Second month of the semester prior to graduation: A** paper proposal must be submitted to both readers for feedback and approval. Submission of a well-developed proposal is an essential part of the candidacy paper process- it provides an opportunity to receive constructive feedback from your faculty readers. This feedback is crucial for successfully completing your candidacy paper. Failure to submit a proposal by the deadline posted for the semester will result in an inability to register for classes for the subsequent semester. The inability to register for classes will not only delay your graduation but also jeopardize students' full-time status for the graduating semester, which is needed for graduate assistantships and other arrangements such as student loans or health insurance.
3. **First week of the semester of graduation**: The Candidacy Paper is due to both readers.
4. **Six weeks into the semester of graduation**: Revision or resubmission of the candidacy paper must be made by this time if the previous submission was not approved.

Students should allow a minimum two-week turnaround for reader comments at each stage of the Candidacy Paper process. A detailed schedule of deadlines for each academic year is posted on the departmental website. Students must abide by **all** posted deadlines and obtain final approval of the Candidacy Paper from both readers by the posted deadlines to be eligible to graduate during that semester.

### *Readers*

Two members of the HESP faculty must read and approve the Candidacy Paper. The first reader is the primary contact person for advisement on the paper. The student should present a proposal for the paper topic to a faculty member whom they would like to serve as the first reader. Ideally, this faculty member would have interests that are in line with the proposed topic, but most HESP faculty members are able to read papers outside of their own specific research areas. Once a faculty member has agreed to be the first reader, the student should then approach another faculty member to be the second reader.

*Eligibility for being a first reader:* Eligible first readers must hold a doctoral degree and hold a half-time or greater appointment within HESP.

*Eligibility for being a second reader:* Any member of the HESP faculty (including both part-time and clinical faculty) may serve as a second reader. Under normal circumstances, adjunct faculty do not serve as readers of candidacy papers, although this may be allowed in unusual circumstances, again with the approval of the student's advisor. This is generally only allowable for adjunct instructors who are doctoral-level faculty and have a continuing "presence" in the department; instructors who teach a single course are generally not asked to take on additional responsibilities of this nature.

Please note that time constraints may prevent faculty members from reading an unlimited of candidacy papers in any given semester, and it is incumbent upon the student to ask faculty members to serve as readers in a timely manner. Moreover, we generally encourage faculty to limit the number of candidacy papers they read so as to maintain equity in the department. (That is, we prefer that one faculty member not be on too large a proportion of that cohort's papers.)

## *Approval Process*

Following approval of the topic by the first reader, the student is expected to submit an "Initial Proposal" to both readers. The readers may provide constructive feedback on this initial proposal. The student may meet in-person with their readers to discuss the paper and topic. The student is expected to incorporate the feedback in preparation for the Candidacy Paper and submit the Candidacy Paper to both readers. Both readers read the paper and provide a joint decision about the paper. There are two possible outcomes: Satisfactory or Fail. Students who fail the paper are given a maximum of two opportunities to re-submit the paper. The student is expected to consult with the candidacy paper readers before re-submitting the paper. If the paper is re-submitted by the deadline posted for the semester and the student passes this attempt, they are eligible to graduate during that semester. If the student fails the re-submitted paper, then they have one last chance to submit a candidacy paper by the deadline posted in a subsequent semester. A failure of this 2nd attempt will result in termination from the program without earning a diploma. Note that many faculty do not work in the summer (because their contracts are for the academic year), and thus may not be available to review your candidacy paper during the summer months.

## *Format*

As mentioned earlier, the candidacy paper is a demonstration of a student's competence in performing independent work, scholarly writing ability, original thought, and critical analysis. The candidacy paper is expected to include a critical analysis of key literature followed by a research proposal.

### 1. Initial proposal

This submission should provide a well-thought out conceptual framework based on five primary references, followed by a statement of objectives for further study and describe succinctly every major aspect of the proposed project. It is expected that students would have already performed a thorough review of relevant literature before selecting the five key references that are thematic anchors for the paper. One of the factors that will be considered in assessing your initial proposal will be the degree to which these five references are: recent, high quality, empirical, and central to the proposal. Students may include a reasonable number of additional supporting references for background and research methods. This initial proposal is expected not to exceed one and a half pages (excluding the reference list; see instructions below on font and margin specifications). Students are encouraged to take advantage of the library's research resources https://www.lib.umd.edu/rc .

### 2. Candidacy Paper

The candidacy paper should include relevant background and a research proposal. The background section will introduce the topic, provide a critical analysis of key literature and the significance and rationale for the research question(s). The research proposal should include specific hypotheses and methods for study. It is expected that the overall length of the candidacy paper will be 7-10 pages, excluding references (Arial or Helvetica font style, 12-point size, with 1.5 line spacing and 1-inch margins). Recommended page limit guidelines for the sections of the candidacy paper as follows.

- Background, including literature and significance/rationale for study – 2 to 3 pages
- Innovation and Research Questions and Hypothesis – 1 to 2 pages
- Research Approach (experimental design, participants, stimuli, procedure, data analysis and statistics, interpretation) - 1.5 to 3 pages
- Conclusions/applications – 1 to 2 pages

The style of the Candidacy paper, including citations and references, should follow those described by

the latest edition of the style manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). Copies of the manual are available in McKeldin Library. Students may wish to refer to any ASHA publication for an example of APA style. Students are strongly encouraged to consult the writing resources compiled by the HESP department.

### *Registration*

The course number for the candidacy paper is HESP638: Research Practicum. Of the two candidacy paper credits, one credit each will be under the section number of the first and second readers. There is no restriction on the semester(s) during which the credits are registered for (as long as these are during the semesters that the candidacy paper is written).

## Comprehensive examination

The master's comprehensive examination is a crucial component of the graduate education in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Maryland for students who pursue the **Non-thesis option**. It provides the opportunity to integrate the major clinical, research, and professional issues that transcend the various disorders that are within the scope of practice of the profession.

- Students are strongly advised to read the more detailed MA (SPLA) Comprehensive Examination Guidelines (available in the Appendix).

### *Eligibility*

Typically students write the comprehensive examination during the Spring semester of their second year if they

- have completed all relevant course work with no Incomplete grades from prior semesters (exceptions may apply to HESP728 under special circumstances);
- are in good academic standing (that is, not on academic probation);
- have chosen the non-thesis option.

### *Format*

The comprehensive examination is administered in a single day and involves answering three two-hour questions. Students who have accommodations involving extended examination time will generally take the exam over the course of two days (please refer to the detailed guide in the Appendix). There will be a one-hour break between questions. For each two-hour question slot, you will be given two questions that combine content from the same two courses. The questions may integrate information from any two required courses, including the basic science courses. The questions may involve clinical case scenarios, clinical, professional, and research issues, and/or research design and interpretation. The exams are open book, so you can have access to your notes and articles during the exam. Importantly, there will be no discussion with people and no access to online resources. Details are provided in the Appendix and are also available on the departmental website (see MA Comprehensive Exam Guide).

### *Date and Location*

The date of the comprehensive exam and the retake date for failed questions are announced at the beginning of each academic year along with other graduate deadlines (see the HESP website). Comprehensive examinations are administered virtually on ELMS, and the specific start time will be announced a few weeks prior to the exam. Students are expected to type responses to comprehensive examination questions. Students will be invited to familiarize themselves with the ELMS website prior to

their comprehensive testing date.

### *Grading & Final Outcome*

Each comprehensive exam answer is read by two faculty members with expertise in the relevant question topic area(s). The readers are generally (but not always) the individuals who taught the relevant courses. Grading is anonymous. Each question will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Within the pass category, a distinction is made between *High pass, Pass, and Low pass*.

- Any student who fails one comprehensive examination question may take a make-up question in the same topic areas during the same semester on the scheduled re-take date. This re-take date is scheduled to be within the Spring semester graduation deadlines. Thus, a student who needs to re-take a single question may be able to graduate in the same semester if they pass a re-take of that question.
    - Students who do not pass the re-take question will be judged to have failed the comprehensive examination and will have to re-take the entire exam at a later date

- A student who fails two or more examination questions will be judged to have failed the entire comprehensive examination and will have to re-take the entire exam at a later date.

- For students who have failed the entire comprehensive examination (either by failing two or more questions or by failing a re-take of a single question), the Comprehensive examination may be offered during exam week in the Spring semester, at the earliest. This allows for the student to graduate during the summer semester.

- Any student may take the entire comprehensive examination only twice. Failure to pass any questions on the second full administration of the comprehensive examination will result in termination from the program without earning a diploma.

## CLINICAL PRACTICUM

To be recommended to the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association for Clinical Certification in Speech-Language Pathology a student must accumulate at least 25 hours of supervised clinical observation and a minimum of 375 clock hours of supervised clinical practice. At least 325 hours of graduate level practicum must be obtained under the direct supervision or monitoring of the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences. Practicum enrollment is concurrent with coursework registration, and carries additional registration charges.

### Clinical practicum enrollment

Students interested in obtaining certification/licensure shall participate in clinical practicum each semester of their graduate training until at least the minimum number of ASHA clinical clock hours required for the ASHA C.C.C. have been obtained. All students perform evaluation and treatment activities at the University of Maryland Speech and Hearing Clinics (including the LEAP program) for the first three semesters of clinical training.

- Registration in HESP 648B (Clinical Practice in Speech Pathology) is two credit hours per semester.
- Registration in HESP 648A (Clinical Practice in Speech: Diagnostic Procedures) is one credit hour. Students will participate in 648A during the first 3 semesters of clinical training but will register

for the course in the Spring semester, Year 2. The Speech Diagnostic Practicum (648A) may be completed concurrently with or following HESP 702. In no case will students be allowed to participate in 648A before they have taken HESP 702.

## Clinical practicum enrollment policies

Admission to the academic degree programs **does not** guarantee access to the clinical training component of the program. Clinical training is required for eventual ASHA Certification, but is not a requirement of any of the degree programs at the University of Maryland.

Departmental permission is required for registration in clinical practicum (both in-house clinic and outside placements) and is granted only to matriculated students. Thus, students may not complete clinical practicum after receiving their M.A. degree.

Clinical work often requires physical, mental, and social skills beyond what is required in a classroom setting. Students must meet the Professional and Technical Standards required by the clinical program to be accepted for and continue in clinical practicum. Further, as the client population served by this program is predominantly English-speaking, participants in any clinical practicum must be effective speakers of English. Students whose spoken and/or written English limits the provision of clinical services will be recommended for remediation.

All students enrolled in clinical practicum are expected to abide by the ASHA Code of Ethics, which is provided to each student upon admission to graduate study. Violations of the Code of Ethics may result in permanent dismissal from practicum and may additionally subject the student to dismissal from the academic degree program.

Clinical practicum students are expected to maintain professional dress and demeanor. Unprofessional conduct, or any conduct that compromises the quality of care to clinic patients, may result in dismissal from clinical practicum placements. HESP clinics abide by HIPAA regulations; any student violating HIPAA regulations may be dismissed from clinical opportunities.

## Clinic Dress Code

The Hearing and Speech (HESP) Clinic urges students to use common sense and sound judgment when it comes to determining how they present themselves in the clinic. When in doubt, err on the side of conservative business attire.

The HESP Clinic recognizes the diversity of its students and will take a sensitive approach when this affects its dress code. We will reasonably accommodate students with a disability or with cultural or religious beliefs that may make it difficult to comply fully with the dress code unless the accommodation creates undue hardship. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and infection control considerations, and professionalism.

Students are expected to dress professionally during clinic hours of operation when in the clinic for more than 10 minutes. This includes being in the clinic for labs, meetings, research, or clinic assistant duties. This dress code is a **minimum** requirement for off-campus placements; specific sites may have individual guidelines you will be expected to adhere to.

***Clothing***

Speech students are expected to wear business casual attire when in the clinic. Clothing should fit well and allow for comfortable movement throughout all required clinic activities without compromising safety or professional image. Excessively baggy or tight attire is not considered acceptable in appearance. Shirt length is required to ensure coverage of the torso. Necklines should adequately cover the chest area. This level of coverage must be maintained when moving about the therapy rooms (e.g., playing on the floor, gross motor activities, bending to pick up items).

Clothes should be neat, clean, wrinkle-free, and in good condition. Faded and/or frayed clothing or clothing with holes are not considered professional in appearance.

For safety reasons, students should wear closed-toe footwear. Clean athletic shoes of a neutral color are acceptable.

***Hair, beards, or mustaches*** should be clean and neat. Hair should be pulled back or restrained as appropriate for safety in the work area by anyone who provides direct patient care. Hair/facial hair should not interfere with the ability to interact with patients who have a communication disorder. No hats, bandanas, sweatbands, or headgear may be worn unless required for medical, safety, or religious reasons.

***Nails*** should be kept trimmed to not interfere with the effective use of clinical materials, equipment or devices.

***Jewelry and piercings*** must be appropriate and in keeping with a professional image. They may not interfere with clinic performance, patient care, personal or patient safety, or the ability to interact with patients who have a communication disorder.

***Fragrance***
Students should be sensitive to and respectful of the fact that some co-workers and patients may have fragrance-sensitive medical conditions. Therefore, students and faculty should minimize wearing the following: perfume, cologne, after-shave, scented lotions, scented hairspray, personal care scented fragrances, cigarette smoke odor, or controllable body odor.

***Tattoos or Other Body Art***
The Hearing and Speech Clinic permits students to display tattoos and other body art that does not pose a conflict with patient care or provider professionalism. Factors that will be considered when determining whether body art is unacceptable to display include offensiveness to patients or colleagues based on racial, sexual, religious, ethnic, or characteristics or attributes of a sensitive or legally protected nature.

The Clinic Director is responsible for enforcing this policy and ensuring all students and faculty meet the dress code standards. Anyone who has questions regarding these standards should consult with the Clinic Director. Students and faculty are expected to comply with the dress code policy. Noncompliance with this policy may result in being sent home to change; repeat offenses may result in removal from clinical practicum.

## Advanced Clinical Practicum Enrollment

Students may apply for outside placement (HESP 728) assignment after they (1) demonstrate adequate skills in the University of Maryland Speech and Hearing Clinic, (2) obtain a satisfactory number of hours of clinical experience in HESP 648, and (3) satisfactorily complete appropriate coursework, which should include HESP 625 (Dysphagia). These placements at school/clinic/hospital facilities in the Washington, D.C., or Baltimore metropolitan areas occur during the second year of graduate study and must be arranged by the HESP faculty. A listing of selected outside placement opportunities for HESP students is provided on the following pages. This sample is representative of opportunities available to HESP graduate students, but changes each semester based on a variety of factors. .

- Registration for HESP 728 (Advanced Clinical Practice in Speech) is for three credit hours for each semester.

*Selected Examples of Outside Placement Sites for HESP MA (SPLA) Students*

**Adult Placements**

Adventist Rehabilitation Hospital
Anne Arundel Medical Center
Charles Regional Medical Center
George Washington Voice Center
George Washington University Medical Center
Georgetown University Medical Center
Holy Cross Hospital
INOVA Fairfax Hospital
INOVA Loudoun Hospital Center
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Kaiser Permanente Outpatient Center
National Institutes of Health Clinical Center
National Rehabilitation Hospital
Suburban Hospital
University of Maryland Medical Center
VA Hospital Washington DC
Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
Washington Hospital Center
White Oak Adventist Hospital

**Child Placements**

A Sound Beginning
Coastal Early Intervention
District of Columbia Public Schools
Hospital for Sick Children
Howard county Public Schools
Ivymount School
Katherine Thomas School
Kendall Demonstration Elementary School
Kennedy Krieger Institute and School
Lab School of Washington
Montgomery County Public Schools
Mount Washington Pediatric Center
National Speech-Language Therapy Center
Prince George's County Public Schools
River School
The Summit School
Treatment and Learning Centers
Wheatley Early Childhood Center

## Advanced Clinical Practicum and Outside Placements Policies

A student may not go on outside placement if they are on academic probation (GPA below 3.0) or or clinical probation (see below). Students will receive clock hour credit for hours earned in clinic registrations that receive a grade of B- or better; no hours will be credited for clinic registrations that receive a grade of less than B-.

A student must complete a minimum of 15 hours of academic coursework prior to applying for outside placement. Students who receive a grade lower than B- for an outside placement, or whose outside placements are terminated, must re-register for placement in the University of Maryland Hearing and Speech Clinics (through HESP 648A or B) and earn a final grade of B- or better during the following semester, before being permitted to re-register for outside placement. A minimum of two outside placement assignments must be completed successfully.

Students are matched with outside placements by a placement coordinator. Students are not permitted to seek their own placements. Instead, students should request placements when they apply for practicum. Every effort is made to meet reasonable requests, however, specific placements or settings cannot be guaranteed. Students who are matched with a placement and then elect to decline the placement may be required to wait until the following semester to complete the practicum .

## Clinical Evaluation Process

Student clinical progress is reviewed at midterm during the Fall and Spring semesters and at the end of each semester by the clinical faculty. This Clinical Review is designed to evaluate how individual students are progressing through the clinical portion of the program and provide students summative feedback on their progress in the clinical portion of the program, set goals for continued progression, and provide early warning to students who are having difficulty. This review is meant to go beyond a discussion of grades, though grades will be determined during this time. The review is in no way meant to be punitive. It is intended to ensure that all students are progressing and identify students who may need additional teaching support to advance.

After each Clinical Review meeting, students will meet with a "primary" clinical faculty member who is one of their clinical educators for the semester and has firsthand knowledge of their clinical skills and progress. During this meeting, students will receive feedback about their clinical performance, establish goals for future clinical work, and be informed of the grade agreed upon by the clinical faculty.

Any student who is identified as having difficulties will receive one of the following courses of action:

**1. Early Warning**

A warning will be given to a student at any time who is not meeting the Professional and Technical Standards or who is passing practicum but whose performance is borderline adequate in one or more clinical skill areas (grade of at least B-). This warning is intended to bring concerns to the student's attention early so that they can be addressed. The warning will be provided in writing to the student and placed in their academic file. It is the student's responsibility to address the identified concern. Students are encouraged to initiate conversations and work with their clinical instructors to address identified concerns as soon as possible.

In some cases, the clinical faculty may recommend that the warning be accompanied by a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). PIPs will be developed and written by the student along with a designated clinical faculty representative. PIPs should include specific and measurable goals to remediate Professional and Technical Standards and/or areas of clinical competencies and a timeline for completion of each goal. [See Template] PIPs should be completed and filed in the academic file within two weeks of a midterm Clinical Review and prior to the start of clinic for a final Clinical Review.

**2. Clinical Probation**

A student may be placed on Clinical Probation in the following cases:

- The student's performance in Clinical Practicum (648A, 648B, or 728) is deemed to fall significantly below expectations and who receives a failing grade in any Clinical Review (less than B-)
- The student is not meeting multiple Professional and Technical Standards
- The student does not successfully complete a practicum for any reason documented leave of absence or medical concern.
- The student has previously received a warning but has not corrected areas of concern (though note that a previous warning recommendation is not necessary for probation)

Students are on probation until the next clinical review. Prior to the Clinical Review meeting, the student along with the clinical faculty designee will provide a written status update on each goal in the PIP. The clinical faculty

will review progress on these goals in conjunction with the usual clinical feedback from clinical faculty and recommend a course of action. The clinical faculty can recommend:

a. Return to good clinical standing if all goals from the remediation plan have been met.
b. Continuation of clinical probation if some but not all goals have been met, or significant progress has been made towards goals, though they are not yet met.
c. Dismissal from the clinical portion of the program if they have had 3 consecutive Clinical Reviews with probation recommendations.

Students must be in good standing to be considered for outside placement. A student who is on probation at the end of the summer semester will be required to meet the goals in their remediation plan in the HESP clinic during the following Fall semester.

A student who is placed on clinical probation during an outside placement will not be sent to another placement until remediation plan goals have been met. If they are not met by the completion of the placement, the student will need to return to the clinic to meet the goals. In select circumstances, clinical faculty may elect to make alternative arrangements for students to meet PIP goals prior to outside placement.

**3. Dismissal from the Clinical Program**

A student may be recommended for dismissal from the clinical portion of the degree program if they are recommended for probation after two consecutive probation recommendations. The student may complete the MA program and receive their degree without the clinical component but will not then be eligible for licensure or certification as an SLP. Should this occur, students are eligible for a non-clinical degree, Master of the Arts.

Students may appeal these recommendations in writing directly to the department Chair. Exceptions to this policy will be considered by the Department faculty only in the case of extenuating circumstances. Appeals beyond this point must follow the Academic Grievance Procedure.

The department retains the right to drop a student from clinical practicum without the above process in the event of illegal, unethical, unsafe, or otherwise seriously concerning conduct.

## Licensure and Certification Eligibility

The degree requirements for completion of both the academic and clinical portions of this program have been designed to align with the ASHA certification requirements for a Certificate of Clinical competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) and Maryland state licensure. Upon completion of the program graduates are eligible for a Clinical Fellowship and for limited licensure in the state of Maryland. Some states have additional licensure requirements. Students are encouraged to check the requirements of other states they plan to work in.

# STUDENT CONDUCT

**The graduate school's policies regarding academics and courses are outlined here:**
https://www.gradschool.umd.edu/sites/gradschool.umd.edu/files/uploads/docs/course_related_graduate_policies.pdf
https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/academic-record/

**Academic Integrity**
The University of Maryland is an academic community dedicated to teaching, learning and research. Like other communities, the University can function properly only if its members share an expectation of intellectual honesty. By enrolling at the University of Maryland, students acknowledge their obligation to adhere to the Code of Academic Integrity. As members of the University community, students are responsible for promoting academic integrity. This includes the responsibilities to report cases of academic dishonesty to the Student Honor Council and to cooperate with faculty and the Council in resolving such cases.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: cheating (including use of unauthorized materials or study aids in any academic exercise), fabrication, and plagiarism. The Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences considers charges of academic dishonesty very seriously. Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity may result in expulsion of the student from the graduate program.

**Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy for writing scholarly papers**

*This policy is specifically regarding research documents (e.g., capstones, theses, dissertations, journal articles), and NOT for papers submitted as part of academic coursework.*

The goal of scientific writing is to clearly convey your ideas and explain your experiments and results in print in a way that others can understand and replicate. Acceptable scientific documents (journal articles, theses, or dissertations) are a requirement for our programs. Many tools are used to facilitate scientific writing, including a word processor program with spelling and grammar checkers and citation managers. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT can be used to help write such documents. The policy in the HESP Department is that such computer programs can be used to draft scientific documents, but that the student must carefully edit and revise such documents to ensure their accuracy; in essence, these programs can be used as a starting tool, but not as a final draft. The ability to communicate clearly in writing and oral presentation is an important learning outcome of all of the academic programs. The use of ChatGPT will not replace the training needed to achieve this outcome.

The student must do the following to use such a tool:

1) The mentee is required to discuss with their research mentor and have mutually agreed upon a set of expectations as to how such a tool is used.
2) The student and mentor should have written documentation of that agreement, which will be signed by both mentee and mentor.
3) The student has the primary responsibility to ensure that any written text produced by generative AI is factually correct (e.g., methods reflect methods used in experiments, citations are appropriate for statements). The mentor has a secondary responsibility that the edited text is factually correct. Finally, any committee member who reads these written documents should be made aware that generative AI was used for drafting the document and should read the document in a manner that might also help correct any factually incorrect statements.

· In the case that documents are defended or published that have factually incorrect statements, such errors must be fixed. For example, for a journal article, an erratum/corrigendum should be written for the article.

· Furthermore, it is not an acceptable excuse to say that the mentee/mentor was unaware that factually incorrect statements were made by the generative AI.

4) Since generative AI is viewed as a tool (like a grammar checker), it should not be a co-author on a publication.
5) The suspected inappropriate use of generative AI will be treated similar to a case of plagiarism, and will follow the processes outlined in the University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity.

**Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Clinical Report Writing/Documentation**

*This policy is specifically regarding clinical reports, and NOT for papers submitted as part of academic coursework.*

The goal of clinical report writing is to accurately document details related to patient/client encounters. Accurate documentation is imperative for high-quality patient care, compliance with billing and coding regulations, and to reduce liability risks. Clinical documentation includes description of: patient/client concerns, diagnostic results and interpretation, clinical impressions, and recommendations for intervention/referrals/follow-up. The personal health information (PHI) included in such reports is protected under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and as such, may not be shared with any person or entity who is not directly involved in the patient/client's case. HIPAA protected data may only be shared with written approval from the patient/client. Due to the nature of AI platforms, such as ChatGPT, which require submission of information for learning and generation of content, creating clinical reports in this manner is a violation of HIPAA laws.

Secondly, the process of documenting clinical encounters is a significant component of graduate student learning. Development of clinical report writing skills is a necessary, transferrable skill to be used across all professional clinical settings. Many practicum sites do not allow for the use of technology during documentation - clinical notes may be hand written or are created in a secure, web-based platform which does not interface with AI software. Therefore, students must learn how to independently document clinical encounters in a manner that is in compliance with legal, ethical, and third-party payer standards.
As such, the policy in the HESP Department is that such computer programs cannot be used to develop clinical documents.

**Student Conduct**
Students are expected to abide by the University of Maryland's policies on student conduct, including sexual misconduct, responsible action, discrimination, lawful activities and ethical use of university property. These policies are outlined here: http://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/V-100B.pdf

Students are required to follow ASHA's Code of Ethics in their clinical practicum (more information on this can be found in the Clinical Practicum Handbook): http://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/

**HESP Department's policy regarding Manufacturer-sponsored workshops**
Attendance at manufacturer-sponsored or publisher-sponsored workshops and educational programs that are held off-site, for which the student receives either a financial or material incentive for attendance or receives travel support from the manufacturer or its representatives, is a violation of professional ethical conduct because it leads to real or perceived conflicts of interest on the part of the student. This issue frequently arises with regard to hearing aid manufacturers' training workshops, in which the company underwrites student travel expenses, attendance costs, food, etc. However, such conflicts also arise when accepting support from any company or organization to which the student may later make clinical referrals or from whom he/she may purchase products. Students are welcome to attend workshops and educational programs offered by manufacturers that take place during a local or national convention sponsored by a professional organization (i.e., at the ASHA Convention, AudiologyNow! Convention MSHA Convention, etc.), or to attend a presentation by a manufacturer's representative that is held locally, as long as there is no monetary compensation or other benefit (other than educational) associated with attendance. If a student wishes to petition for an exception to this policy to allow attendance at a particular manufacturer-hosted event or educational opportunity, that petition can be brought to the faculty at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting.

## QUESTIONS & GRIEVANCES

Students seeking exceptions to departmental policies and timelines may submit a written petition to the Chairperson and faculty. The petition form is at the end of this handbook. Students should consult their advisor, or involved faculty/instructors before submitting a petition. Written petitions should not be used as a grievance for course grades.

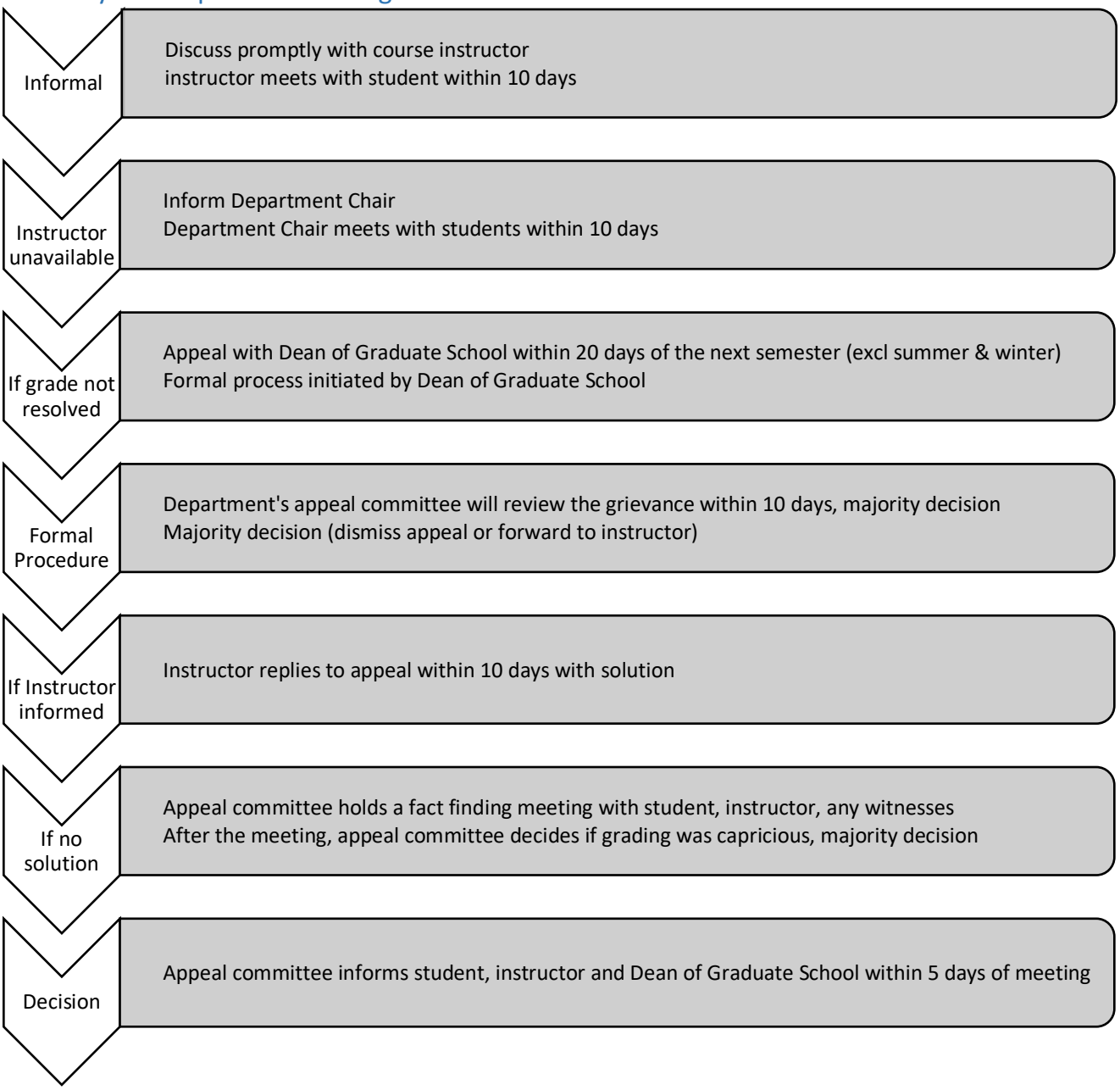
If a student has questions regarding departmental policies or experiences interpersonal challenges with a faculty member, the student is advised to **first communicate with the faculty member**. If the challenges are not resolved, the student may consult with the departmental chairperson. Students may appeal adverse departmental actions. Appeals should be addressed, in writing, to the Chair, with thorough justification of the grounds for the appeal. Appeals will be reviewed by the faculty, who may, in exceptional cases, waive normal departmental policy. Students should be aware that such waivers are rarely granted.

The student may also meet with the departmental graduate ombudsperson or the Graduate School ombudsperson, whose contact information can be found at http://www.umd.edu/ombuds/. The ombudsperson can be consulted for information regarding departmental/university policies and other problems that cannot be resolved through typical channels. An ombudsperson listens to complaints and offers to resolve them in an independent and impartial manner. Communication with the ombudsperson is confidential.

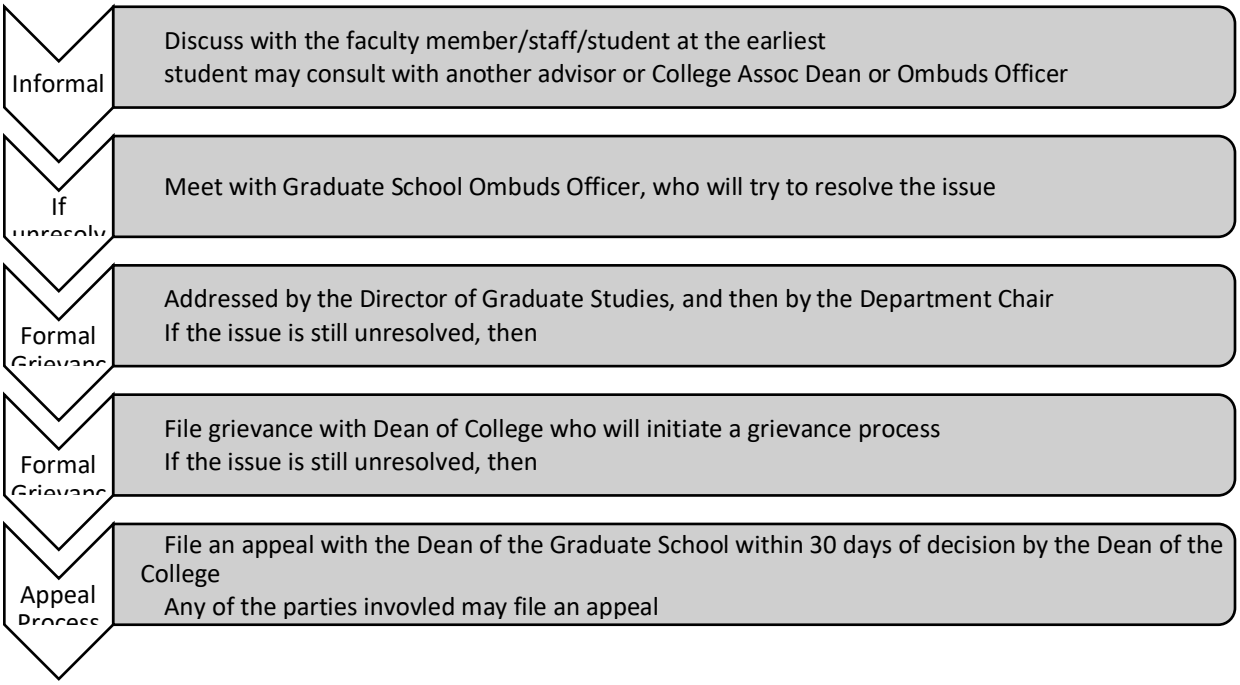
UMD has formal grievance procedures. Information can be found at
https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/school-policies/and
https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/policies-graduate-assistantships/#text

The following flowcharts provide an overview of UMD's grievance procedures for students:

## Arbitrary and Capricious Grading in courses



### Grievance for Graduate Assistants




If students have complaints regarding the department's compliance with standards of accreditation for audiology or speech language pathology, they may contact the Council on Academic Accreditation http://caa.asha.org/.

## FUNDING & GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP POLICIES

It is expected that students will only commit to *10-hour* (also called half-GA) graduate assistantships because a higher time commitment will leave you with insufficient time to devote to your academic and clinical training. The department has a limited number of graduate assistantships. In order to be considered for these assistantships (as positions open up), please fill out the departmental funding request form each year that you are in the program (deadline is typically in January for the upcoming academic year). In order to maintain an equitable distribution of departmental funding sources, students receiving Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) scholarships are precluded from accepting other graduate assistantships and hourly positions at HESP.

## UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL DEADLINES FOR GRADUATION

**Reminder**: Graduate school regulations require all students to carry *at least one credit of enrollment during the semester in which graduation is anticipated*, regardless of the number of credits already accumulated. Please plan accordingly. Failure to be enrolled for at least one credit during the semester of graduation may prevent timely receipt of your diploma. The University and Department both have strict deadlines which must be followed to ensure timely graduation. Failure to meet either University or Department deadlines will typically result in delay of graduation for one full semester. During that semester, the student will be required to enroll for a minimum of one credit of registration.

Students receiving Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) scholarships have signed a contract indicating that

they would begin working in August, and are generally required to submit proof of graduation in early summer. Thus a delay in graduation may not be possible for MCPS students without serious implications for their financial award, such as having to reimburse MCPS for the scholarship amount.

## University deadlines

| University deadlines are published each semester in the Schedule of Classes, and are also available at http://gradschool.umd.edu/calendar/deadlines | |
|---|---|
| Diploma Application | typically due during the second week of the semester during which graduation is expected |
| Approved Program Form | typically due six weeks after the beginning of the semester |
| Nomination of Thesis Committee Form (for theses) | typically due six weeks before the scheduled defense |
| Report of the Oral Examining Committee (for theses) | typically due three weeks after the beginning of the semester |
| Certificate of Completion of MA degree without thesis | typically due three weeks after the beginning of the semester |

## Departmental deadlines

| Departmental paperwork deadlines are published each semester for current and following semesters at http://hesp.umd.edu/landing/Graduate | |
|---|---|
| Approval of candidacy paper topic and selection of readers | typically due during the first month of the semester prior to graduation |
| Candidacy paper initial proposal | typically due during the second month of the semester prior to graduation |
| Candidacy paper | typically due during the first week of the semester of graduation |
| Final candidacy paper approval | typically eight weeks after the beginning of the semester |
| Comprehensive examinations | typically held eleven weeks after the beginning of the semester (usually first Friday in November/April for Fall/Spring graduation) |

# APPENDICES

# Cultural and linguistic diversity emphasis program

## What is the Cultural-Linguistic Diversity Emphasis Program?

The Cultural-Linguistic Diversity-Emphasis Program (CLD-EP) is a limited enrollment, pre-service diversity clinical training program. The American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) has outlined roles and responsibilities related to culturally responsive intervention for certified professionals in speech-language pathology, underscoring its importance (ASHA, 2017). The goal of the CLD-EP is to develop culturally responsive clinicians for the professional practice of speech-language pathology in order to reduce health disparities in BIPOC communities. The program seeks to broaden students' understanding of culture, language and society to recognize cultural influences on communication disorders and empower students to apply this knowledge to their clinical experiences. For the purposes of our program cultural and linguistic diversity is broadly defined to consider race, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation and religious preferences. Cultural learning is assessed through pre-selected learning outcomes.

## CLD-EP Overview

The CLD-EP is a four-semester seminar completed over the two-year MA program. This specialty track includes seminar-style learning sessions, clinical experiences with diverse populations, scholarly activities, and professional training opportunities for students. The CLD-EP is a limited capacity program to enable effective mentoring and programming for students. An application is required for acceptance into the program. An announcement for applications is offered to admitted students during the summer preceding their first Fall semester. Students will be notified of their admittance to the program around the second week in August. Admitted students will begin the program in the first semester of the MA program. Students will work with their faculty advisor to plan their activities (described below). Students will register for a one-credit course in the spring of year two of the MA program. This course, titled Seminar in Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Communication Disorders (HESP 603), will appear on the official transcript to demonstrate completion of the program. All CLD-EP coursework will apply towards the elective credit requirements of the MA program.

## CLD-EP Learning Activities

The program has four core areas of focus: Coursework, Clinical training, Scholarly research, and Professional participation. Pursuant to the goals of CLD-EP, students (i) are required to include experiences in multiculturalism and/or bilingualism, and (ii) may not limit their experiences to a single culture/language background. All activities should be completed while enrolled as an MA Student. Examples of activities that fall under each of these areas are listed below.

### I. Coursework

1. HESP 603: A 1-credit seminar on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity offered as a 4-semester sequence is required for all students in the program. Students meet weekly with CLD-EP faculty to discuss a wide range of topics related to culture, language, and society as it relates to our profession
2. Complete an elective course that focuses on some aspect of linguistic, cultural, or economic variation that is relevant to SLP or AUD. HESP offers two courses related to cultural and linguistic diversity. The majority of CLD-EP participants take both HESP courses. Students may take these or other courses offered across campus
    a. HESP 617: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Communication Disorders
    b. HESP 605: Assessment and Intervention in Bilingual Populations
    c. HESP 659: Global Perspectives in Communication Sciences & Disorders-Study Abroad Program
    d. Other graduate-level courses on gender diversity, economic diversity, and ethnicity

### II. Clinical Training

Students are required to engage in ***both*** diagnostic and treatment activities to apply course content to clinical

intervention. For clinical training experiences, clients will be assigned to students to broaden their exposure to diverse populations. Assignments may be impacted based on the current CLD caseload in the clinic. Students may also include their clinical outplacement experiences.

1. Conduct a diagnostic evaluation (as a primary clinician) with a diverse client, inclusive of their cultural, linguistic, and/or ethnic background. This may include:
    a. An ethnographic assessment, or
    b. A community-based diagnostic evaluation, or
    c. A bilingual assessment
2. Apply culturally responsive intervention practices to at least one diverse client, inclusive of their cultural, linguistic, and/or ethnic background.

## III. Scholarly Research

Students are required to submit their candidacy paper or thesis topics to the CLD-EP program director for approval.

1. Conduct original empirical research on a topic related to linguistic, cultural, or economic variation in the area of communication sciences and disorders. This may be an independent study, an MA Thesis, or a volunteer or paid research assistantship on approved projects.
2. Propose a novel empirical research project on a topic related to linguistic, cultural, or economic variation in the area of communication sciences and disorders. This is the MA candidacy paper option.

## IV. Professional Activities

Professional activities are designed by CLD-EP faculty to foster community building and cultural brokering. They may vary depending on campus and community events. Students are encouraged to engage in activities that meet their personal interests and to share those experiences with the cohort to build a community of practice. Activities may include:

1. Attend scientific presentations on language or cultural diversity at professional conferences
2. Attend cultural events to deepen individual understanding of culture and diversity
3. Present on a professional topic related to cultural or linguistic diversity to students, professionals, or a community group (e.g., departmental seminar, state convention).
4. Initiate, instruct, or participate in a vocational group in another language (e.g., ASL).
5. Complete ASHA continuing education activities related to issues in cultural or linguistic diversity (e.g., Perspectives publication of Special Interest Division 14 as well as some special issues of SIDs or journals).
6. Develop assessment or educational materials (e.g., brochures) or specific language or cultural groups.
7. Compile or develop clinical resources that may be used in the assessment, treatment, counseling, or referral of culturally or linguistically diverse clients and their families. Examples of such projects are
    a. compiling a list of local and national resources relevant to a CLD group (e.g., Spanish or Vietnamese speaker(s) and their families with a specific condition (e.g., hearing loss or head injury)
    b. create culturally and linguistically appropriate educational materials (audio tapes, videotapes, brochures) on communication disorders to address the needs of a CLD group
    c. develop a reading list of "cultural considerations" to be used in educating parents on language facilitation techniques for young children
    d. develop a portfolio that explores in depth the cultural and linguistic characteristics and heterogeneity of a particular cultural or linguistic group
8. Volunteer in service to a group of non-native speakers of English through a local community group or campus organization (e.g., working with adults learning to read, tutoring children, or working with a social group or athletic team)

# Bilingual Certificate in Speech-Language Pathology

## Curriculum

The Certificate in Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology is a specialty track within the MA SLP program. The core objective of this program is to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to become qualified bilingual speech-language pathologists, by meeting the criteria set forth by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. By fulfilling these requirements, students will acquire the skills needed to provide clinical services to linguistically diverse populations. Students will demonstrate knowledge of standards, protocols, diagnostic methods, treatment approaches, and current trends in the area of bilingual speech-language pathology. The Certificate Program in Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology is intended to provide a greater focus on linguistic diversity, more specifically, by training students to become bilingual service providers. Students in this program will fulfill all of the requirements of the master's program and will also participate in additional training specifically related to bilingual speech-language pathology.

Students enrolled in the Certificate in Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology are required to take specific coursework, in addition to all courses required in the master's program. Students who are pursuing their Bilingual Certificate may also participate in the CLD-EP, but are not required to do so. All academic coursework is to be delivered using traditional face-to-face instruction, not online. Enrolled students will be required to take a signature course on assessment and treatment in speech pathology (HESP 605). HESP 617 is a requirement of both the Certificate in Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology and the CLD-EP. Students who are enrolled in both the Bilingual Certificate and CLD programs are required to take HESP 603. Alternatively, those students not participating in the CLD program are required to take HESP 708 as a one-credit course. Students taking HESP 708 will participate in a service-learning experience, as outlined by the course instructor. Both HESP 648 and 728 are required by students in their master's program, but students enrolled in the Certificate in Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology will be required to participate in clinical activities that necessitate providing services in their target language. Students will be given the opportunity to provide services to bilingual clients during both their on-campus and off-campus clinical experiences.

| | |
|---|---|
| [1]**HESP 605** Assessment and Intervention in Bilingual Populations | 3 |
| [2]**HESP 603** Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Seminar or **HESP 708** Independent Study | 1 |
| [2]**HESP 617** Cultural & Linguistic Diversity | 2 |
| [3]**HESP 728** Advanced Clinical Practice in Speech: Advanced Graduate Laboratory Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology | 3 |
| [3]**HESP648A** Clinical Practice in Speech: Diagnostic Procedures | 1 |
| [3]**HESP648B** Clinical Practice in Speech: Therapeutic Procedures | 2 |
| **Total** | 12 |
| *[1]HESP605 cannot be counted as an elective for the MA program for students who are enrolled in the Bilingual Certificate*<br>*[2]Part of the CLD-EP, and can be used as electives for the MA program for students who are enrolled in the Bilingual Certificate*<br>*[3]Requirement of the MASLP program* | |

**Clinical Competency**

In order to ensure that graduate students sufficiently develop required bilingual clinical skills, enrolled students will be required to demonstrate acquisition of specific clinical competencies, based on expectations outlined by ASHA. Students will be evaluated in each competency area throughout their clinical practicum experiences, via a *Clinical Competency Skills Assessment*. In order to successfully complete the program, all clinical competencies

must be met by the last semester of graduate study. In order to develop competencies, students are expected to accrue 50 clock hours providing services to clients with communication/related disorders in their target language. These clock hours should consist of a combination of both treatment and diagnostic services and will be accrued during both the on-campus and off-campus clinical practicum courses, HESP 648A, 648B, and 728. The goal of both the on- and off-campus practicum courses is to develop the clinical skills needed to work with clients from linguistically diverse backgrounds. When possible, students may be provided with the opportunity to work with a client population in their target language. As part of their clinical training, students will be provided with access to supervision/mentorship from a licensed and certified speech-language pathologist with knowledge and skills related to working with linguistically diverse individuals. All efforts will be made to find students an appropriate off-campus placement site that provides a sufficient opportunity to work with their target population.

**Language Proficiency**

Per ASHA standards, all bilingual service providers are required to demonstrate native or near-native language proficiency across all domains of language (i.e. vocabulary, grammar, phonology, reading, and writing). In order to meet this standard, all students must take the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview assessment (computer version) (*https://www.actfl.org/professional-development/assessments-the-actfl-testing-office/oral-proficiency-assessments-including-opi-opic*).* This assessment takes roughly 40 minutes, and must be taken on campus and proctored by a staff or faculty member in Hearing and Speech Sciences. It is strongly recommended that the OPI be completed at the beginning of the fall semester of the first year of graduate study, but students have up until the end of the fall semester to complete this. Students who do not successfully complete this assessment will not be allowed to continue in the Bilingual Certificate Program. For languages in which the OPIc is not available, alternative forms of assessment may be used.

An important component of this program is the clinical aspect of working in a language other than English, which is achieved through the off-campus placement (HESP 728). Though the goal is to provide every student with an opportunity to participate in a practicum placement using his or her target language, it is possible that finding local supervision for a given language may prove to be extremely difficult. Other resources may be available to our department in some instances. For example, there are a number of modern language departments at the university, which potentially offer access to speakers of those languages. This provides access to resources for many, but not all, languages in which our student clinicians may wish to practice. For this reason, acceptance into the program would depend on the student and faculty jointly developing a solution, such as an off-campus placement in another region or country.

**Thesis/Candidacy Paper**

Students enrolled in the Certificate in Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology are expected to write their thesis or candidacy paper on a topic relevant to cultural and linguistic diversity. Specific topics should be discussed with the academic advisor. Students are expected to complete their thesis/candidacy paper in the spring semester of their second year of graduate study.

## Comprehensive Examination- Further Information

The master's comprehensive examination is a crucial component of the graduate education in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Maryland. The comprehensive examination is a UMD requirement for students pursuing the non-thesis option and is also required in many M.A. SLP programs nationwide. It provides the opportunity to integrate the major clinical, research, and professional issues that transcend the various disorders that are within the scope of practice of the profession. Preparing for the comprehensive examination presents a learning opportunity in itself because it requires the student to take a bird's eye view of information covered in various courses, while still keeping sight of the details.

In what follows, we have attempted to provide information that will orient you to the process and content of the exam and to help you to best prepare yourself for it.

***What is the format of the exam?***

The comprehensive examination is administered in a single day and involves answering three two-hour questions. There will be a half-hour break between questions. Each question will be an integrative question that will combine information from any two of your required courses (e.g., Language Disorders in Adults and Dysphagia). For each two-hour question slot, you will be given two question options (both from the same two-course combinations), from which you will choose one to answer.

The typical schedule is as follows:

8:15-8:30 – Instructions and set up
8:30-10:30 – Question 1
10:30-11:00 am – Break
11:00 am – 1:00 pm – Question 2
1:00-1:30 – Break
1:30-3:30 pm – Question 3

***What kinds of questions should I expect?***

The content for all questions comes from required courses (disorders and basic science courses) and practicum experiences. Questions tend to be of three general types (outlined below). Sample questions are provided in the Appendix.

a. Clinical case scenarios. You might be given a list of a client's symptoms, a list of a client's diagnoses or disorders, or a story about a client's recent history. You would be asked to provide the diagnoses if you were given the symptoms, or the symptoms, if you were given the diagnoses, or maybe both if you were given a story. You might be asked to create or describe appropriate assessment procedures, typical or expected assessment data or results, initial intervention plans, typical or expected treatment data or results, prognosis, discharge plans, etc. You will almost always be expected to provide your reasoning, not just your conclusion (i.e., don't write "he has Wernicke's aphasia"; tell us which of his symptoms are consistent and inconsistent with that diagnosis, what else it could have been and why you did not draw that conclusion instead, etc.). The clients/symptoms/disorders in such cases may be complex, usually with multiple disorders and often with conflicting or not easily explained symptoms (i.e., recent onset of headaches and tremors in an adult who stutters, or a child with a phonological disorder is in a car accident and gets a head injury).

b. Research design and interpretation. Here you would be asked to discuss recent research findings about the nature or treatment of a given disorder or combination of disorders and asked to describe what future research could reasonably add to our profession's knowledge. We might direct your attention to a specific theory, problem, or controversy; we might leave it more open. We might ask you to produce a fairly specific research proposal, using an organizing scheme like the subsections of a journal article's Method section (Participants, Materials, etc.), or we might ask for a more theoretical discussion. We might actually give you a research article, or part of a research article, and ask you to critique it, including describing how well it was done as a piece of research, how it fits with what else has happened in that area, what research should be conducted next, or how research about the basic nature of a disorder or disorders can be relevant to assessment or treatment. Although the focus is on research design and interpreting research, the content of these questions is germane to disorder courses and there is no necessary advantage to students who have taken the Research Design course. Exposure to research article readings in other courses and working on your candidacy paper will sufficiently prepare you for this type of question.

c. Clinical, professional, research issues and trends. This third type of question can cover just about anything, is difficult to predict, and is a test of your ability to use what you know to answer a question you'd never even thought of or to dig into something that is more complex the more you look at it. Content areas may include, but are not limited to, evidence based practice, ethics, multiculturalism, work setting-based issues, and current controversies.

***What is an acceptable answer? How specific/detailed do my answers need to be?***

Specific enough that somebody in your field with current and extensive knowledge in the areas that your answers address can tell that you are familiar with the relevant details. Specific enough that somebody in your field who is not an expert in that particular sub-area of the field could learn the relevant details from your answer. Specific enough to show your readers that you understand how the relevant details are relevant. And specific enough to answer the question that was asked; don't spend time reciting details that were not asked for.

***How broad/integrative do my answers need to be?***

Broad enough and integrative enough that somebody in your field with current and extensive knowledge in the areas that your answers address can tell that you are familiar with the relevant themes, ideas, or controversies. Broad enough and integrative enough that somebody in your field who is not an expert in that particular sub-area of the field could learn the relevant themes, ideas, or controversies from your answer. Broad enough and integrative enough to show your readers that you understand how the general themes of your discipline fit together. And broad enough and integrative enough to answer the question that was asked; don't spend time discussing general themes that were not asked for.

***Are my answers supposed to be specific/detailed, or are they supposed to be broad/integrative?***

Both – and most importantly, both in the context of the other. We want to see not just that you can recite details or give lists, but that you can combine and use details in support of larger themes; we want to see not just that you can discuss larger themes, but that you can use larger themes to illuminate the importance of details. And, again, let the question be your guide; read carefully for what the question is actually asking you to do.

***Dr. X is biased for/against a certain theory/treatment. Do I have to write what Dr. X believes to pass my comps? Or, a different version of essentially the same question: In clinic, we were taught ABC, but in Dr. X's course we were taught XYZ. Should I say ABC or XYZ in my comps? The course was taught by Dr. X, but Dr. Y is writing the question. How should I frame the answer?***

Remember that you are writing for teams of readers, not playing mind games with any one professor. In most years, the readers include primarily individuals that you think of as "academic" faculty, plus also at least one that you think of as "clinical" faculty. Also remember that your professors and your clinical supervisors are, even though students never believe this, friends and colleagues who actually tend to have a pretty good idea of what everyone teaches and believes and why. They actually tend to have great respect and admiration and understanding for each other and for the relevant complexities and circumstances of each other's work, even when there is a true difference of professional opinion. Remember that you are one of the relevant "professionals," and professionals are perfectly capable of understanding and respecting and explaining the support for the multiple views that other professionals hold about any given topic. That's what we're looking for in your comps, regardless of what Dr. X might have had the time to say or might have chosen to emphasize in one course: a professional-level discussion of the relevant issues and their support, leading to your interpretation and your support for your views.

***Some ideas have come up in more than one course, or in a specific course, and also in other places, like multicultural issues or collaboration or use of instrumentation. Could we have comps questions that include these concepts/areas?***

Yes. It is likely that you would be expected to incorporate such ideas into questions that focus on other disorders or issues.

***What are the most common mistakes on comps, and how can I avoid them?***

The most common mistake, by far, is failing to answer the question that was asked, either because the answer just doesn't get to everything, because the answer wanders off into its own territory, or because the answer spends too much time on simplistic things that are related to the disorder mentioned but only vaguely related to the more complex or more comprehensive question that was asked. In particular, it is very common

for students to spend way too much time "dumping" memorized lists of only vaguely relevant information (reciting six definitions of stuttering because there is a question about the clinical assessment of a child who stutters, or reciting Darley, Aronson, and Brown's types of dysarthria with their neurophysiological bases because the question mentions motor speech disorders).

All of these problems can be helped enormously by taking the time to create an outline or a set of subheadings for yourself before you start writing your answer; then write your answer by filling in each of the subheadings you've created. Make sure you fill in all of them, and make sure that all you do within each subheading is address the question that was asked. Unless the question specifically asks you to recite a list of memorized information, don't spend your time reciting a list of memorized information. (You can also help to prevent this by not spending your study time memorizing lists of information, as described below.)

Probably, the easiest way to explain how to answer the questions is to detail the problems that have gotten people "into trouble" in the past, and to try to offer ideas about how to avoid these pitfalls.

►*Frank errors* – This one is fairly obvious at one level but not at another. On the one hand, if you happen to incorrectly cite the year of a research article or misspell the name of an author, that's not really a problem. Rather, frank errors mean, as an example, that you indicate that you'd do or not do something clinically that would represent poor clinical practice, might cause harm to a client, is in violation of the Code of Ethics, or would reflect an erroneous knowledge base. Errors also include incomplete answers (not answering all parts of a question, or failing to answer the question that was asked) and assertions without explanations, rationales, and documentation.

►*Writing that prevents readers from understanding what you intended* – Knowing something in your head isn't helpful (now or professionally) if you can't get it down lucidly onto paper. Your own understanding must be made clear in your response. Preparing an outline prior to writing – even if it's only a bulleted list of points you plan to include in your answer – will help keep you organized and on track. Make notes to yourself. Be certain that you have used all words (professional terminology *and* other words) correctly. It is unnecessary to write "artistically," only clearly, even if that means a series of active declarative sentences. When clear "bullet points" are more efficient, it's OK to use those as long as they're clear, and you have not failed to elaborate, justify, or explain as requested in a question. Sometimes, information gets muddled when sentences get too long. You may want to use headings and subheadings to clearly indicate which parts of the question are being answered.

►*Errors of logic* – This problem involves drawing erroneous conclusions, proceeding from a faulty (or absent) rationale, and making assumptions that are illogical. It also includes failure to connect all parts of the question when doing so is needed (for example, failing to connect assessment procedures to what you know about the client/patient or not connecting treatment goals to intake and diagnostic information).

►*Disorganized presentation* – This problem can be related to fuzzy thinking, poor writing, or to poor organization. Several suggestions may help this problem.
**(1)** Be certain that you address all aspects of the question and be absolutely sure that you have alerted your readers to the fact that you are answering one or another facet of the question. One way to do this is to number (letter) sections of your answers so that they correspond to the letter or number of the question sections.
**(2)** In your paragraph topic sentences, use wording that indicates what you are now about to address.
**(3)** Liberal use of section/paragraph headings is also *strongly encouraged*.
**(4)** When you complete a response, you are well advised to re-read the question to make sure you have addressed all the important points and that what you've written makes sense.

Also, <u>be sure not to wander; make your presentation "tight."</u> Avoid just stringing together a series of assertions without indicating what relationship they bear to each other or to the questions. Make your assertion/statement, follow it with a reason/rationale for making the statement, including documenting from the literature, and then provide an example.

Organization also becomes a problem when you "free associate" from one point to another rather than making a point, expanding on it, giving examples and documentation, and then moving on to your next point. *You don't have to write everything you know in order to answer the question successfully*. Over-inclusive answers do not give you extra credit; they eat up precious time that is better spent writing a well-focused response to another question. Producing a good answer depends as much on knowing what to leave out as it does on what to include.

►*Insufficient documentation* – Everything we do clinically has some basis in our and others' professional/scientific literature. It is important to be able to support clinical decisions with documentation from relevant literature covered in those courses. Good documentation in an integrated answer involves making a point and then citing the literature containing information/data that backs up your point. By contrast, providing a series of paragraphs, each summarizing an article is not good documentation.

Clinical experiences are valuable practical sources of information that you should draw from to inform your thinking. Although these experiences provide excellent insights and sources of *examples* to use in your answers, these resources *should **not** be used to document* your responses in lieu of research literature.

►*Superficial coverage* – Sometimes students write too superficially or too little. This is often the result of not explaining, documenting, and giving examples as indicated above. This may be a particular problem for writers who rely heavily on a bulleted format. At other times, students use their time unwisely and go into too much detail on one part of a question, leaving insufficient time to cover the remaining portion(s) in sufficient depth.

►*Answer does not directly relate to the question asked* – This frequently happens when groups have tried to "pre-prepare" write-ups to cases that they THINK will be presented. But if those cases are NOT those that ARE asked, you will be trying to fit your "pre-prepared" answer to whatever case you *thought* would be asked rather than addressing the question that actually *was* asked. So your answer therefore makes little sense in relation to the question and basically *fails to answer the question.* It also doesn't let the reader know if each of you *independently* is able to address the issues presented. What's more, it doesn't matter how accurate the information you provide is, if it is irrelevant to what is asked. In other words, you won't get credit simply because what you've written is accurate if your answer is not relevant to the question.

***How should I prepare for the comprehensive examination?***

If you have retained class notes and read your texts, handouts, supplementary readings/articles, and readings/articles for papers, you should not need to collect any other material to study.

The best suggestion we can give is to metaphorically stand back from everything you've learned over the past few years and try to see the larger patterns in what it all means and how it all fits together. Comps is not about repeating the organizational structure and level of detail that were presented in your courses; it's about creating the next level of organizational structure, and about integrating themes and details to come up with a comprehensive (!) view of your world as a member of a science-based clinical service discipline. Studying can be helped by studying with partners or groups, if you like working with other people, as long as you talk about grand ideas and the occasional detail, not whether everybody remembers the list of 10 things from a lecture on October 3, 2008. We also strongly suggest that you make up questions along the lines of those listed at the beginning of this handout (e.g., what types of questions and answers can you create around the combination of severe phonological disorder, assessing infant prelinguistic communication, and validity issues) and then force yourself to spend 2-3 hours writing about each. Part of what can be hard about comps is the idea of spending several hours thinking about the multiple levels of a complex question, and the best way to study for that is to

practice doing it. If you can explain what those seemingly random sets of ideas are about, what they have in common, and why, you're well on your way to being able to demonstrate successfully your comprehensive (!), integrative, science-based, clinical knowledge.

Students frequently ask about how much time needs to be set aside for preparation. This depends on your own learning style, habits, preferences, and circumstances. Probably the most frequent answer that past students have given to this question is "two-three weeks of concentrated study." This meant that they were well organized and ready to go at the *beginning* of those two weeks and used that time for concentrated review and integration of the material.

***What is the procedure for comprehensive examinations?***
Upon meeting eligibility requirements (course work and satisfactory completion of candidacy paper by the deadlines posted for the semester), you are eligible for the examination.

***What is the format of the exam?***
You will answer three questions and will have two hours to answer each question. For each two-hour slot, you will choose from two possible questions and answer one. There will be a half-hour break between each two-hour slot.

***What is expected on the day of the exam?***
The exam is conducted in an OACS computer lab in the Lefrak building. The room location of the exam is published on the departmental website for each semester. Each student will be assigned a computer, and the same computer will be used by a particular student for the entire exam. Each student will also be assigned a confidential code to use for file names.

► *Things to bring with you* –You may keep a pen with you. All other materials, such as blank white paper to write notes and USB drives to save your answers, will be provided to you.

► *Things not to bring with you* – Don't bring food (not allowed in the computer lab), books, notebooks, articles, etc. You will be asked to leave your bags and belongings with the exam proctor while answering the questions.

► *When you arrive* – You should plan to arrive at the computer lab by 8:30 am and check in with the exam proctor by signing in. After a brief orientation of procedures, you will be provided a confidential code number for identifying your exam notes, and other materials that you will need.

► For each question, there are two options. You need to answer *only one* of the two options.

► Naming your file and ensuring anonymity. Please name your Word document with the following file name format:

Code-Question#-Option#
(example: S25-Question1-OptionA)

Please also insert your file name as a header in the Word document (for faculty who may print responses for grading).
Please also remove your name from the document's author properties by going to File>Save as> and deleting your name in the *Author* textbox.

► After you have answered each question, you will be asked to unplug the USB drive and hand it over to the exam proctor along with all papers (question, scrap, etc.). A blank USB drive will be handed out for the next question. You may leave the computer lab only during the half-hour breaks between questions.

► *Lunch* – You may "do lunch" in whatever way is best for you during the breaks between questions. You may not, though, eat in the computer lab. Just use the time in whatever way best suits you and your set of circumstances.

During your breaks, we ask you not to discuss your answers with others who are also taking breaks. There are

many good ways to answer questions and there are many legitimate options for including and excluding material. Because of this, discussing how one responded to a question tends inevitably to arouse anxiety in others who may not have approached a question the same way or included identical information in their answers but who both have equally acceptable answers.

***What is the best way to use my time efficiently?***

Most students feel that they couldn't possibly know enough to need two hours to write up an answer. Don't be fooled. You know a lot. In fact, some students have difficulty completing their write-ups within the allotted time. After you've addressed the case questions, if you still have time, you can go back and add to or polish the answers. Stay focused. Keep your eye on the clock and do not obsess over one aspect of the answer to the detriment of other aspects.

Another time management problem involves writing a too-involved outline. Some students prepare detailed outlines on scratch paper and then panic because they feel they don't have enough time to write an official "fleshed out" answer. Your outline might be better as a list with one or two word sub-points that serve as reminders and organizational schemes for yourself. You can then number the lists and points in the order that you will write about them and check off each as you cover it. This allows you to be as sure as possible that you've included everything that needs to be in the answer while maximizing the time you have to prepare a coherent answer.

***How is my comprehensive exam graded and by whom?***

Each comprehensive exam answer is read by two faculty members who specialize in the relevant disorder or topic area. The readers are generally (but not always) the individuals who taught the relevant courses.

***Will grading be anonymous?***

Yes, faculty members will not know your name or any other identifying information for grading purposes. This is why you will be assigned a unique code number on the day of the test. It is important for you to understand that the code number is used as the only form of identification on the papers. Therefore, DO NOT put your name on your document or notes. Should a re-test be necessary, then a new unique code number will be assigned to the student taking the test. The coordinator will let a faculty member know what grades they assigned to each student, but only after that faculty member has handed in their final grades.

Although we try our best to preserve anonymity, in some cases, the grading may not be entirely anonymous (for example, if you are the only student taking a re-take of a question or if you have extended time accommodations and your exam is spread over multiple days).

***What grading system will be used?***

Each question will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Within the pass category, a distinction is made among High pass, Pass, and Low pass. The following general criteria are used to assign grades:

High Pass: A comprehensive and a thorough response to all aspects of the question, all facts are completely accurate and highly detailed, and if needed, frequent citing of the appropriate literature*. Overall, this answer demonstrates in-depth synthesis and critical analysis of the topic areas.

**acceptable citations are original peer-reviewed, published journal articles only; references to textbooks, classroom instructors, presentations at meetings, and trade journals are not acceptable.*

Pass: A comprehensive response to the question, all facts are accurate, may be missing minor detail, and if needed, some citing of appropriate literature*. Overall, this answer demonstrates acceptable synthesis and critical analysis of the topic areas.

Low Pass: Not as strong of an answer as we expect from a graduate student, significant amount of content may be correct, but other minor portions are vague or incomplete. For questions that require citations, these are insufficent*. Some amount of synthesis and critical analysis, but not of the quality expected from a graduate

student.

Fail: Factual inaccuracies, an unsatisfactory answer which does not completely address the question (for a graduate level). For questions that require citations, no or inaccurate citations*. This answer may be a laundry list of points, showing little or no evidence of critical thinking to answer the question.

***Is it common to fail the comps? And, What happens if I fail?***

► Most students pass comps on their first attempt. Anywhere between 1 and 5 students may re-take a single question. It is extremely unusual for students to fail the entire comps; this probably happens once in five years.

►Any student who fails one comprehensive examination question may take a make-up question in the same areas during the same semester on the scheduled re-take date.

- Students who do not pass any re-administered questions will be required to re-take the entire comprehensive examination during a subsequent semester.
- Note that topic areas and their question combinations for re-takes in another semester will be different than what the student was originally examined on.

►A student who fails two or more examination questions will be judged to have failed the comprehensive examination and will have to re-take the entire exam during a subsequent semester.

►Any student may take the entire comprehensive examination only twice. Failure to pass any questions on the second full administration of the comprehensive examination will result in termination from the program without earning a diploma. (see MA Handbook).

***When and how will I find out if I've passed?***

Typically, the turn-around time for communicating the results permits at least a few days to prepare for a possible re-take. The amount of time it takes to report the results bears no relationship to how well the group or any individual has performed. Factors such as the number of students taking comps, faculty availability, and the time of year exert the greatest influence on turn-around time. Once all grades have been received by the exam coordinator, the grades are compiled and communicated to you, either via phone or email, whichever you prefer.

***What do I do if I have accommodations?***

If you have testing accommodations, please contact the Comprehensive Exam coordinator, currently Dr. Shah, at the earliest, preferably at the beginning of the semester when you plan on taking comps. The coordinator will review your accommodations and develop an administration plan. Please note that the examination may have to be spread over two days, depending on the time extension in your accommodations. To preserve the integrity of the comps, different questions may be used for students with extended time. Students must register with the Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS) Office to receive accommodations. It is the students responsibility to present documentation from ADS specifying the accommodations required. Information on evaluation and accommodations can be obtained from ADS, part of the Counseling Center (https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/).

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. **Neurological Bases of Communication and Child Language Disorders**

What is your understanding of the genetic and neural bases of child language disorders? How do these differences manifest themselves clinically?

Note: You can approach this question by either selecting specific language disorders, such as SLI and ASD or by addressing general findings.

Discuss how you would incorporate principles of neural plasticity (outlined by Kleim & Jones, 2008) into intervention planning for childhood language disorders. Provide specific examples to illustrate your point.

2. **Speech production disorders across the lifespan and Diagnostic Procedures**

As a speech-language pathologist working in a private practice, you receive a request for SLP evaluation from the parents of a 4 ½ year old child whose speech is "unintelligible". You have two 90-minute sessions on two consecutive days to e½-year-oldvaluate your client, followed by an additional hour to meet with the family and/or teacher.

Identify what model of assessment you would choose as your approach (i.e., medical, behavioral, social systems, etc). Start with your "clinical question(s)", identify principles/methods of information gathering, move through a **detailed description** of the cognitive-speech-linguistic domains or skill areas that you would prioritize in assessing this client, and finish with recommendations for all the specific tests or non-standardized measures you would implement. Please provide **clear rationales/explanations for all of your decisions** at each phase of the process.

Once the assessment data has been collected, how will you **differentially diagnose** this child's speech production skill profile? How will you evaluate the **possible concomitant** presence of communicative deficits other than speech sound production? What impact might this speech sound disorder have on the **child's future performance** in related areas? What key information would you provide to the child's **family and preschool teacher** upon completion of the assessment?

3. **Autism and Counseling**[1]

You are a consultant for a preschool program for children with special needs. A 3 ½-year-old boy, recently diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, has just started in the program. His cognitive skills are estimated to be in the low-average range. He demonstrates limited functions and means of communicating. Problem behaviors include screaming and biting (staff, students, and parents at home). Both his teachers and parents are at a loss and are seeking your input and guidance.

Your response should include both A and B below:

A. As you begin to work with the team, what are some of the underlying feelings experienced by the teachers, parents, and you (as the clinician)? Discuss your rationale for expecting these feelings.

B. Describe how your knowledge of the cognitive, social, and communicative learning style in autism will influence the content of what you teach the team, as well as the strategies you would use to counsel.

Your response might include, but is not limited to the following:

Steps you would take to establish the counseling relationship.
Specific counseling strategies would you consider, and why.
Important content of his treatment plan and why these goals are important.
Teaching strategies and environmental supports for both the home and classroom settings to help manage problem behaviors and teach needed skills to the client, parents, and staff.

# After Graduation: ASHA Certification and Related Information

## ASHA Certification

Specific requirements for certification in Speech-language Pathology may be found in the ASHA Certification handbook, which may be accessed at https://www.asha.org/Certification/2020-SLP-Certification-Standards/. **It is crucial that students meet with advisors to ensure that their curriculum plan will satisfy ASHA requirements**

[1] Counseling is not a required course, we are just giving you an example of the format.

**for certification.**

ASHA certification forms are signed by the program director, Eusebia Mont. The steps are as follows:

- Fill out your ASHA application (https://www.asha.org/certification/) and Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) form FULLY and check it for accuracy. The KASA form is in your student advising folder. We have a model KASA form that uses University of Maryland courses as examples to guide you in filling out your form. The ASHA application can be filled out online, the paper forms are being phased out.

- The Department keeps a permanent copy of the ASHA application in your files for your future employment inquiries. ASHA does NOT keep a copy of the application. Please fill it out completely and neatly. Dr. Yasmeen Faroqi-Shah will NOT sign off on incomplete applications, even though only the end pages must be submitted to ASHA. This means you must fill out all coursework and clock hour information. Forms will not be signed without this information.

- You must submit these forms TOGETHER WITH the other pages of the ASHA Certification application to Dr. Yasmeen Faroqi-Shah and the graduate program coordinator, Ms. Valerie Brownlee.

## Praxis exam

- The praxis exam can be taken any time before you apply for ASHA certification. Students typically take this during their final semester in the program. https://www.ets.org/praxis/asha/requirements
- Please list the University of Maryland as a recipient of your NTE ASHA exam scores. Please use the number R0131. There are additional codes for the University of Maryland, but your report will not come to the Department unless you use this code. If, by any chance, you miss entering UMD as your score recipient, please email DyQuan Washington with your score or a screenshot of your score so that we have documentation. The department needs this information to report aggregate pass rates to maintain its accreditation.

## Contact Information

- Please provide the department with your forwarding address if you will be moving after graduation, as well as your non-umd email address.

## Clinical Fellowship Information

- Please notify the department of your CFY site as soon as you know it.

## Other links

- SLP Certification Standards: http://www.asha.org/Certification/2014-Speech-Language-Pathology-Certification-Standards/
- How to Apply for Certification in SLP: http://www.asha.org/certification/SLPCertification.htm
  Application for Certificate of Competence (SLP): http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/2005-SLP-CCC-Application.pdf
- Knowledge and Skills Acquisition Form (KASA): http://hesp.umd.edu/content/knowledge-and-skills-acquisition-kasa-form-and-instructions
- Praxis Exam: http://www.asha.org/Certification/praxis/About-the-Speech-Language-Pathology-Praxis-Exam/
- ASHA Code of Ethics: https://www.asha.org/siteassets/publications/code-of-ethics-2023.pdf
- ASHA State-by-State Guidelines: http://www.asha.org/advocacy/state/
- Maryland Licensure Qualifications for SLP:
  http://www.mdboardaudhadslp.org/html/professionals/speechqual.htm

## Special circumstances: Leave of Absence

In circumstances such as childbirth, adoption, a serious health condition (mental and/or physical), or caring for incapacitated dependents (such as children, ill or injured partners, or aging parents), students may not have the time and energy to devote to their educational programs. The University allows students in such circumstances to apply for a leave of absence of up to two semesters. Policies regarding leave of absence are detailed in the Graduate School website. The application for leave of absence needs to be made prior to the semester in which the student wishes to be on leave. The procedures involve, filling out a request for leave of absence and a waiver of continuous registration. Typically, students in the first semester of the graduate program are not eligible to apply for a leave of absence.

## Special circumstances: Delay in Graduation

In unusual circumstances, students may not complete one or more requirements to graduate in the Spring semester and may have to move their graduation to Summer or the following Fall semester. Please note the following about delayed graduation:

**Registration requirement:** Students need to be registered for at least one credit during the semester of graduation even if they have met all their credit requirements, unless they complete all requirements before the first day of summer session 1. In order to have the credit registration requirement waived, students need to have completed all requirements for the degree, including submission of all grades and the approved program form, by the first day of Summer Session 1. For thesis students, all thesis edits need to be approved and the electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) submission needs to be completed by this date.

**Faculty availability:** Several faculty members have 9.5 appointments and thus may not be available to review student work beyond May 31. Students are responsible for consulting with faculty regarding their availability, and it is recommended that they do so early enough so that they can make alternate plans (e.g., change candidacy paper readers) if faculty are not available.

**Beginning your clinical fellowship:** ASHA does not require the MA degree to be awarded in order to start a Clinical Fellowship (CF), only completion of ASHA course work and clock hour requirements. However, various jurisdictions, including DC, Maryland, and Virginia DO require CF candidates to present evidence of an awarded degree before authorizing a temporary license. If graduates will work in other states, they should check local requirements. However, students should be aware that eligibility to begin a CF does NOT require the MA degree. At the end of three years, both thesis and candidacy paper students are at the same point in terms of earning potential and ASHA certification eligibility.

**Participating in the commencement ceremonies:** Students may participate in the Spring commencement ceremonies along with their cohort even if their actual graduation is delayed.

The deadlines below are advisory only. Please check with your academic advisor for specific dates that may apply to your case.

| | |
|---|---|
| May exam week | Re-exam of comprehensive exams for those who failed the entire exam |
| May 31 | All requirements (e.g., candidacy paper, thesis, incomplete grades, etc) need to be completed to avoid enrolling in 1 credit for summer graduation. Note that in order to complete your requirements by this date, you will need to submit your work at least two weeks prior (consult with the respective faculty). |
| July 2nd week | Last day to submit an Application for Graduation (University requirement). This must be done on the web via Testudo |

| | |
|---|---|
| July 2nd week | *Master's Thesis Students:*<br>Last day to submit<br>Master's Thesis Examining Committee Nomination Form |
| Aug 1st week | All requirements (e.g., candidacy paper, incomplete grades, etc.) need to be completed for summer graduation. |
| Aug 1st week | *Master's Thesis Students:*<br>Final date for Thesis advisors to submit Report of Examining Committee<br>Final date to electronically submit Thesis;<br>Final day to submit Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Publication Form to the Registrar |

## Special circumstances: Switching from Thesis to Candidacy Paper

In unusual circumstances, a student may partially complete work on a thesis and decide to switch to a candidacy paper after the typical timeline for such decisions (October 1 of Fall semester). This is an unusual process and is rarely pursued, particularly because it may delay the student's graduation. However, at times, reasons beyond the student's control, such as health issues, require this switch and this decision is made with consultation of the student's thesis committee. Given that a candidacy paper requires a student to generate an original research idea, whereas some thesis ideas are proposed by the faculty advisor (e.g., when the faculty advisor has an existing large-scale project or data), it is important to note that the student switching from thesis to candidacy paper may need to change the topic if their topic was not originally their own idea. Students are advised to be proactive about consulting with the faculty readers about timelines and availability, in case the work must be completed during the summer months. HESP799 registrations can be changed to HESP638 by working with the Coordinator of Graduate Studies, DyQuan Washington. Additionally, students will need to take the comprehensive examination. This exam is offered only at specific times during the year (Fall and Spring semesters), and this may affect your graduation timeline.

## Special circumstances: Non-Degree Options

For students who already have an undergraduate degree, the University of Maryland offers the option of taking graduate and undergraduate courses. These options are described here https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/non-degree-admissions. The non-degree options are suitable for individuals who do not have an immediate degree objective in mind, or who wish to take graduate courses for continuing education coursework (as space permits). Being enrolled as a non-degree student does not facilitate student entry into UMCP graduate programs. Enrollment in classes as a non-degree student requires that the student meet course prerequisites, obtain permission for permission-only registrations, and that space is available.

We strongly recommend that students who need to take undergraduate preparatory coursework consider the **Hearing and Speech Sciences in the Evening (HESPIE) program** offered through the Office of Extended Studies: http://oes.umd.edu/continuing-education/hespie.

## Combined M.A. and Ph.D. track

The combined MA/PhD program is for students who are committed to simultaneously pursuing both a PhD in Hearing and Speech Sciences with a focus on speech/language and clinical training. This option is intended for students who do not already have clinical certification but are interested in a career involving clinically-oriented research and thus wish to pursue clinical training along the way to their research degree. The combined MA/PhD program is intended for students with well-defined research interests and prior research experience. Application is through the PhD program, but students should indicate their intent to pursue both degrees in

their statement of interest.

## Sample 6-year plan for students who wish to combine the MA and PhD degree programs, with the option of an integrated CFY

**Overview:** This suggested course sequence guidance for combined MA/PhD is a department internal procedure designed to maximize program benefits and efficiency – the degree requirements are not changed for either the MA or the PhD Program, with the exception of the MA thesis, which can be overlapped with pre-candidacy research for the Ph.D. (This is allowable because the pre-candidacy research is a departmental expectation, not a university requirement.) No classes apply to both degrees in terms of credit accumulation. This is the fastest reasonable schedule (completion of both degrees in 5-6 years); students are not required to finish in this timeline, but completion in 6 years is the goal. Nor is it required that this timeline be followed in all particulars; rather, this is intended to serve as a starting point for discussion between a student and their Program Planning Committee for the purposes of individual advising. It is one possible plan but is not expected to be appropriate for all doctoral students.
Although ASHA guidelines specify that students may begin the CFY before receipt of the MA degree, if all required coursework and supervised clock hours have been completed successfully, students should be aware that many states now require that the MA degree be conferred before starting the CFY. Completing the work without the official degree (equivalency) does not suffice for many states, including Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Please note that any ASHA pre-requisite coursework must also be completed before a CFY's commencement.

The sequence below presumes the satisfaction of undergraduate pre-requisite classes. If those courses are not yet completed, doing so may add between 1-2 semesters to this plan, depending upon applicable prior coursework, and the potential for interleaving a small number of such courses into the plan below. Students can opt to do their CFY after completion of their doctoral work, or to integrate their CFY with their doctoral program on a part-time basis. Students should be aware that spending 50% of their time on a CFY during their doctoral program will likely slow their progress toward completing their dissertation.

The **first year** is typically focused more on PhD-related coursework, and on initiating research projects with the student's primary mentor. Thus, a typical schedule would be

Fall year 1: Typically, three PhD courses (9 credits) + lab hours + HESP601. Typical PhD courses might include statistics (note that seats are limited for first-semester students doing regular registrations, so this may not be available), a seminar course within the department, a course in NACS (Introduction to Neurosciences, or Cognitive Science), or a course in a related department such as Linguistics, Human Development, Second Language Acquisition, etc. Students will also register for lab hours (889), and should start taking HESP601, Foundations of Scientific Inquiry – this is a 1-credit course spread across multiple semesters; registration will likely occur in the subsequent year. (Note: alternatively, this can be taken starting in year 2.) Students may instead take two PhD courses, and take 2 clinical MA courses (2 credits each – Child Language Disorders, and either Autism or Language Disorders in Adults).

Winter year 1: Research credits. Students need to complete a total of 24 research credits across their time in the program (6 credits for the MA thesis, 6 credits for doctoral candidacy research, and 12 credits for dissertation research); when these credits are registered can vary across students depending on their research projects and funding sources.

Spring year 1: Typically, three PhD courses. One course should be Statistics; generally, a second course would be Research Design (HESP 724), or HESP 602 (Neurological bases of communication, 2 credits) possibly combined with NACS 600 (Ethics in Scientific Research, 2 credits). The third course is generally a seminar course either within the department or in a related department. Students will also register for lab hours (889) Summer year 1: Independent study/lab registration. Possible additional statistics course if available; HESP 417 (Clinical methods; second summer session) if an equivalent course was not taken as part of the undergraduate program.

The **second year** is typically focused more on MA-related coursework, and on starting in the clinic. Thus, a typical schedule would be:

Fall year 2: Four clinical MA courses (8 credits): HESP 616 Child Language Disorders (2 credits, half-semester long) HESP702 Diagnostics (2 cr., half-semester long) HESP610 Language Disorders in adults (2 cr., half-semester long) HESP613 Autism (2 cr., half-semester long) (If two of these clinical courses were taken in year 1, then a PhD course will be added here.) Clinic registrations (HESP648A, HESP648B, 3 credits)

Winter semester year 2: Possible MA elective course, possible MA thesis credits (HESP799)

Spring Year 2: HESP620 Speech Production across the lifespan (3 credits) HESP612 Fluency Disorders (2 credits, half-semester long) HESP611 Cognitive Disorders in adults (2 credits, half-semester long) Clinic registration (HESP 648 B, 2 credits) Pre-candidacy research proposal
Summer Year 2: HESP 625 (Dysphagia), pre-candidacy research, and possibly final semester of in-house clinic (third semester of in-house clinic can be either this summer, or subsequent fall; note that some clinical experience in year 3 is recommended immediately prior to starting outside placement in order to refresh clinical memory and/or not lose skills already gained; students may opt to pursue additional clinical experiences beyond those required by the program, either to maintain skills or gain additional breadth).
The third year is typically focused more on PhD-related coursework, and on completing candidacy research. Thus, a typical schedule would be

Fall year 3: Additional statistics course, PhD seminar, HESP626 (Language Disorders in School-Aged Children), and possibly the final semester of the in-house clinic.

Winter semester year 3: Possible MA elective course, possible MA thesis credits (HESP799)

Spring year 3: Generally, coursework will include either HESP724 (Research Design, 3 cr) or HESP 602 (Neurological bases of communication, 2 credits) combined with NACS 600 (Ethics in Scientific Research, 2 credits) – whichever was not taken in year 1. HESP624 (Voice) can be taken either here, or in year 4. Possibly begin HESP 728 (outside placement) here, rather than in the fall of year 4. Continue doctoral coursework and research. Summer year 3: HESP627 (Augmentative and Alternative Communication).

The **fourth year** returns to a more MA focus, with outside placements consuming a large amount of the student's time (typically, placements are 3-4 days per week). Thus, a typical schedule would be

Fall year 4: HESP 728, 3 credits (outside placement); additional doctoral coursework, and research credits. By the end of the fall, defend your MA thesis or precandidacy research project. Explanation: The MA thesis can also count towards the PhD pre-candidacy research. However the MA thesis is typically a larger project than is needed for a precandidacy research project, and students cannot take PhD comprehensive exams until a pre-candidacy research project has been completed. Thus, if a student has progressed far enough in their research to have completed a thesis, they can defend it, and move onwards to prepare for comprehensive exams in year 4. However, a student may opt to defend a smaller pre-candidacy project at this time, and defend an MA thesis later in their program. (For example, a student examining a clinical group might report on a control group's data for their precandidacy project, even if the full clinical population for the thesis was not yet recruited.)

Spring year 4: Outside placement if not already completed; HESP624 (Voice) if not already completed; Doctoral coursework; prepare for comps After year 4, the student should have completed all requirements for the MA degree, except possibly for an MA thesis. Thus, the focus shifts towards completing the requirements of the PhD program and possibly pursuing a part-time CFY.

Some students may be able to complete the program after **year 5**, but this is heavily dependent on the student's particular research area, and our recommendations below presume a 6-year program Thus, a typical schedule

would be:
Fall year 5: Comprehensive examination; write-up research to date; identify area for PhD dissertation
Spring year 5: Prepare and defend dissertation proposal Summer year 5 through Fall year 6: Dissertation research
Spring year 6: Defend dissertation

## Additional notes:

While MA coursework is likely to all be within the department, doctoral coursework is likely to include courses from related departments; decisions on appropriate courses should be made in consultation with the student's Program Planning Committee (PPC). If the student is pursuing a NACS certificate or an LSC Fellowship, additional time may be required. CFYs can be pursued on a variety of different schedules. It is possible to do a half-time CFY during the 5th and 6th years of the program or to wait and complete a full-time CFY subsequent to the program. A full-time CFY can be completed in 1 year (9 months) following completion of the doctoral program; this allows students to graduate with their Ph.D. in the shortest possible amount of time. If a student wishes to pursue a half-time CFY, the total duration required will depend on the number of hours per week. For example, a 20 hr/wk CFY requires 18 months of work; adjust schedules for other CFY plans accordingly. Please note that the responsibility to find a CFY position lies with the student, not the department.

# HESP STUDENT PETITION FORM

Updated 8/23/25