

COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS, MS

The Communication Sciences and Disorders Program offers a Master's of Science which prepares students for careers as speech-language pathologists in public schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, private practice and university training programs. The program typically takes 2 calendar years to complete. Students usually prepare for service delivery in both school and healthcare clinical settings to maximize career flexibility. Occasionally, students may choose to focus career preparation on just one type of setting.

Laboratory and instructional facilities include a speech and language clinic, an instructional communication sciences laboratory, and faculty research laboratories. Research and instructional laboratories contain state-of-the-art technology, a variety of acoustic and physiological measurement systems including a swallow station, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. Students participate in three semesters of on-campus clinic. Students have the opportunity to participate in research through a thesis or research experience, working closely with a faculty mentor.

Following a minimum of two successful practicum experiences in the on-campus clinics, students are eligible for off-campus externships in medical, rehabilitation, school, and birth-to-three sites. A successful practicum experience is one in which a student earns a grade of S (satisfactory progress). Students placed in these facilities are required to pass a criminal background check prior to the externship placement, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapters 48 and 50.

The master's degree program in speech-language pathology (MS in Communication Sciences and Disorders) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (<https://caa.asha.org/>) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850-3289, 301-296-5700.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has also approved the undergraduate/graduate program in communication sciences and disorders. Students in the graduate program are advised individually to select academic coursework and clinical practica so that they may fulfill the standards of the credentials of their choice, including the state professional license issued by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), a state public schools license issued by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and the national professional Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC) issued by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

Admission

An applicant must meet Graduate School requirements (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/>) plus these departmental requirements to be considered for admission to the program.

- Submission of three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with applicant's academic qualifications and achievements.
- Students must apply to the program using the Communication Sciences and Disorders Centralized Application Service (CSDCAS) (<https://csdcas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>).

Consult the CSD FAQ Website (<https://uwm.edu/healthsciences/academics/ms-communication-sciences-disorders/faqs/>) for information about prerequisite coursework.

Applicants may be admitted with specific program-defined course deficiencies provided that the deficiencies amount to no more than two courses. The student is expected to satisfy deficiency requirements within three enrolled semesters. The deficiencies are monitored by the Graduate School and the individual graduate program unit. No course credits earned in making up deficiencies may be counted as program credits required for the degree.

Students preparing for professional certification in speech-language pathology must also have transcript credit (which could include coursework, advanced placement, CLEP, or examination of equivalency) for each of the following areas: human or animal biology, physics or chemistry, social/behavioral sciences, and statistics.

Credits and Courses

Minimum degree requirement is 48 credits, although total degree credits are typically around 52.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Curriculum		
32 credits including the following:		
COMSDIS 670	Advanced Procedures in Aural Rehabilitation for the SLP	3
COMSDIS 701	Research Design and Methods in Communication Sciences and Disorders	3
COMSDIS 702	Clinical Phonology and Articulation	2
COMSDIS 703	Voice Disorders	2
COMSDIS 704	Speech Fluency and Stuttering	3
COMSDIS 706	Language Assessment and Intervention	3
COMSDIS 709	Evaluation and Management of Swallowing Disorders	3
COMSDIS 710	Motor Speech Disorders	3
COMSDIS 712	Acquired Neurogenic Communication Disorders in Adults	3
COMSDIS 715	Assessment and Intervention in Augmentative and Alternative Communication	3
COMSDIS 725	Speech/Language Services in Educational and Medical Environments	2
COMSDIS 784	Professional Portfolio Development I	1
COMSDIS 785	Professional Portfolio Development II	1
Electives		

Select 2 credits of electives (see below)	2
Total Credits	34

The remaining credits will be taken in required clinical practica. The student, in consultation with the major advisor, plans the appropriate practicum courses for on-campus clinics and off-campus externships to meet ASHA certification, DPI and Wisconsin licensure requirements. Only clinical clock hours for practicum experiences in which the student has earned a grade of B or better will apply toward degree, certification, or licensure requirements.

Code	Title	Credits
Clinical Practica		
COMSDIS 720	Advanced Clinical Practice in Speech-Language Pathology:	1-3
COMSDIS 726	Speech-Language Pathology Externship in Medical Environments	6
COMSDIS 727	Speech-Language Pathology Externship in Educational Environments	6
COMSDIS 799	Independent Studies (clinical)	1-3

Electives

Code	Title	Credits
COMSDIS 579	Special Topics in Communication Sciences and Disorders:	1-3
COMSDIS 630	Communication Disorders in Multicultural Populations	2
COMSDIS 640	Clinical and Research Instrumentation in Communication Sciences & Disorders	2
COMSDIS 661	The Role of the Speech-language Pathologist in Literacy	2
COMSDIS 688	Evaluation and Diagnosis in Speech-Language Pathology	2
COMSDIS 713	Degenerative Cognitive Communication Disorders in Older Adults	2
COMSDIS 717	Special Populations in Communication Disorders	2
COMSDIS 790	Research and Thesis (credits beyond 1)	1-6
COMSDIS 791	Research Experience in Communication Sciences and Disorders	1-3
COMSDIS 799	Independent Studies (academic)	1-3

Students who have fulfilled the program's student learning outcomes in U/G courses (for example, COMSDIS 670) will be waived from taking these courses as part of their graduate program. However, students must still take a minimum of 36 graduate credits in academic coursework and must have a minimum of 48 total graduate credits to complete degree requirements.

Thesis

Optional. A student may earn up to 6 credits for a thesis (COMSDIS 790) if this option is selected. One of these credits will apply toward the core curriculum, two credits may apply toward the elective credit requirement, and the rest may apply toward the total of 48 credits required for the degree.

Capstone Project

Students who do not choose the thesis option must complete a capstone project. Capstone projects provide students the opportunity to showcase their growth during the graduate program and illustrate what they have to offer potential employers and the larger society. Students may choose to complete a research experience or an evidence-based case presentation.

Research Experience

The research experience is a one-credit course (COMSDIS 791) that may involve (but is not limited to) a small-scale original study, a project related to the ongoing research of a faculty member, or a literature review. Students may work individually or in groups. The final product can be either a research paper or a poster of the research findings, presented at a department symposium.

Evidence-based Case Presentation

The evidence-based case presentation is an opportunity for students to showcase their growth as a clinician. Students will summarize information from a case as part of the discussion section during each of their clinical externships (COMSDIS 726 and COMSDIS 727). Students opting to complete the evidence-based case presentation as their capstone project will present a summary of their clinical approach using one of these cases during a program symposium. Students are required to apply principles of evidence-based practice in their presentation.

Additional Requirements

Major Professor as Advisor

Entering students are assigned a major professor as an advisor to supervise the graduate studies as specified in Graduate School regulations.

Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) Assessment

All students will be responsible for completion of the Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) assessment, which assesses student attainment of learning outcomes in a variety of content areas. Students who are judged by program faculty and staff to be deficient in one or more content areas will be required to take additional coursework or clinical practica until their deficiencies have been satisfied.

Completion of the degree program affords the necessary opportunities to meet licensure and certification requirements. However, it is still the student's responsibility to ensure that their individual course and practicum choices are consistent with the credentials they seek to obtain, and that all competencies and standards have been met.

Time Limit

The student must complete all degree requirements within seven years of initial enrollment.