

PRE-SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) help people of all ages with communication and swallowing problems. Problems with communication and swallowing can have a significant impact on people's quality of life.

SLPs work to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat a range of problems. These include problems with:

- **Speech sounds**, or how we say sounds and put sounds together into words. Other words for these problems are *articulation or phonological disorders, apraxia of speech, or dysarthria*.
- **Language** is how well we understand what we hear or read and how we use words to tell others what we are thinking. In adults, this problem may be called *aphasia*.
- **Literacy** is how well we read and write. People with speech and language disorders may also have trouble reading, spelling, and writing.
- **Social communication** refers to how well we follow rules, like taking turns, how to talk to different people, or how close to stand to someone when talking. This is also called *pragmatics*.
- **Voice**, or how our voices sound. We may sound hoarse, lose our voices easily, talk too loudly or through our noses, or be unable to make sound.
- **Fluency** is how well speech flows. Problems with fluency are known as *stuttering*. Someone who stutters may repeat sounds, like t-t-t-table, use "um" or "uh", or pause a lot when talking. Many young children will go through a time when they stutter, but most outgrow it.
- **Cognitive-communication** refers to how well our minds work. Problems in this area may involve memory, attention, problem-solving, organization, and other thinking skills.
- **Feeding and swallowing** or how well we chew and swallow food and liquid. A swallowing disorder may lead to poor nutrition, weight loss, and other health problems. This is also called *dysphagia*.

Speech-Language Pathologists can work in many settings including hospitals, schools, rehabilitation centers, and private practices.

A career in speech-language pathology requires a master's degree from a program accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (<https://www.asha.org/eweb/ashadynamicpage.aspx?site=ashacms&webcode=caalisting&caacat=all>).

Before applying to graduate school, most programs require students to have either a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders OR to complete pre-requisite coursework in Communication Sciences and Disorders before applying. See the requirements (p. 1) tab for details.

For additional information please contact:

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Requirements

Students interested in becoming speech-language pathologists may choose to complete a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences

and Disorders (<https://uwm.edu/rehabilitation-sciences-technology/academics/bs-communication-sciences-disorders/>).

Sometimes people don't decide to become a speech-language pathologist until they have already completed (or almost completed) a bachelor's degree in another area. If that is the case, it is suggested that you take the prerequisite courses listed below. It is important to check the requirements for any program before you apply to graduate school. For the requirements for applying to UWM's graduate program, check out the FAQs on our program website (<https://uwm.edu/rehabilitation-sciences-technology/academics/ms-communication-sciences-disorders/>).

- English Phonetics (COMSDIS 230)
- Anatomy & Physiology of the Speech and Hearing Mechanism (COMSDIS 220)
- Normal Language Development (COMSDIS 240)
- Speech Science (COMSDIS 480)
- Hearing Science (COMSDIS 380)
- Introduction to Audiology (COMSDIS 470)
- Aural Rehabilitation (COMSDIS 490)
- 25 guided hours of clinical observation (COMSDIS 350 & COMSDIS 351)
- Statistics (KIN 270)
- Physics or Chemistry
- Human or Animal Biology
- Psychology or Sociology

I'm a new student. How do I start?

You are assigned an academic advisor upon admission to UWM. New Student Orientation (NSO) (<https://uwm.edu/studentorientation/>) helps those who are new to campus learn and understand the enrollment process and enroll in classes for their first semester at UWM! You should ask to have the designation "Pre-Speech-Language Pathology" added to your academic record.

Who is my advisor?

Undergraduate students who have declared an intent to pursue Pre-Speech-Language Pathology are encouraged to contact the College of Health Professions & Sciences Office of Student Affairs at 414-229-5047 or via e-mail at uwmchps@uwm.edu.

When should I meet with my advisor?

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor at least once per semester to ensure timely progress to graduation.

- **Enrolling for spring semester?**
Schedule an appointment with your advisor in October or November.
- **Enrolling for fall semester?**
Schedule an appointment with your advisor in March or April.

Students are also welcome to schedule an appointment with their advisor at any time to discuss academic challenges, career opportunities, or any other questions.

How can my advisor help me?

CHS boasts professional academic advisors who understand the challenges of balancing academics, work, family, and the social aspects of college life. Advisors partner with you to:

- Explore your academic and career interests
- Plan the sequence of your courses
- Prepare for course enrollment
- Access tutoring and other academic support
- Identify opportunities for campus involvement
- Connect you to campus resources
- Plan for graduation