

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

COLLEGE of LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES
Communication Sciences & Disorders

Graduate Student Handbook

**Doctor of Philosophy in Speech-Language
Pathology**

Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology

2023-2024

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Melcher Life Sciences
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Introduction and Overview of the COMD Graduate Program

Letter from the Department Chair

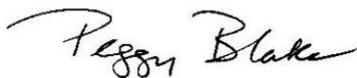
Welcome to the UH COMD Graduate Program! Each of you was admitted to this program not only for your academic preparation and strong potential to succeed, but also for what you will bring to the program. The collective diversity of your backgrounds, ideas, experiences, skills, and goals contributes to our academic and clinical missions.

Under normal circumstances, graduate school is not for the faint of heart. It takes a lot of time and energy; some weeks will be a breeze and others may feel like you've reached your breaking point. In the next years you will provide services to many clients, work with many different clinical educators, and learn from a variety of professors. Each experience will provide you with different knowledge or skills, all of which you will use at one point or another in your career as an SLP (even if it doesn't feel like it at the time). Some of the experiences will teach you how to work with people that don't think the way that you do, or whose personality clashes with yours. Finding ways to work with and learn from these individuals may be some of the most important lessons you learn in graduate school.

I encourage you to actively learn as much from your graduate program as you can. For many people, graduate school is the last good opportunity to soak in knowledge and to spend most of your day learning. On those days that are the most difficult, remember this!

UH COMD, along with the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences assert that racism, discrimination, classism, xenophobia, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and other weapons of divisive hate have no place on college campuses or in civil society, domestic or abroad. We are engaged in continuing conversations to identify, understand, and address these issues in COMD and in the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology. We provide opportunities for you to be part of this conversation so you can help us to mold COMD into a place that is not only diverse but also inclusive and inviting to students, staff, faculty, and clients from all different backgrounds and walks of life.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about the department and the requirements for your program. It includes essential information that you will need during your course of study, and it is important that you review these materials carefully. This handbook will be augmented by other information from the UH graduate catalog [<http://publications.uh.edu/>]. It is your responsibility to know the relevant department and university policies/procedures, and to ask for help and guidance as needed. We are looking forward to guiding you in your academic and professional development.



Margaret (Peggy) Blake, PhD CCC-SLP
Professor & Chair

Letter from the PhD Program Director

Dear UH COMD PhD student,

Welcome to this next, pivotal chapter in your life. You will find these next years to be some of the most challenging, yet most rewarding years of your academic career. The many opportunities and challenges that come up will highlight both your strengths and weaknesses, some of which you may learn about for the first time.

This handbook serves as a guide outlines current academic policies and procedures as well as the requirements of the program. The University of Houston and the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences have minimum requirements for all graduate students, but these requirements may be superseded by the more specific departmental requirements and/or program requirements. The program requirements are in line with institutional requirements except where more specific departmental rules apply that may supersede more general guidelines. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the requirements and follow the policies and procedures of the program. The Program Director, your mentor, and the Program Manager are available to provide assistance and guidance.

To be successful in the PhD program, you will need to shift your mindset from your earlier experience as a student in an undergraduate or master's program. A PhD is more than checking off a list of required courses and pre-requisites. This is your chance to learn in depth about your content area and set yourself up to be successful in your career. Be cognizant of the shifts in research and technology around you and use this time to learn new skills that will keep you on the forefront of research and give you an edge in the academic world. The PhD program is a research degree, and you need to develop a niche area of expertise for yourself by the end of this program.

Like everyone that goes through a PhD program, you will have moments of doubt over your abilities. In those moments, remember that those who are successful in any walk of life are not those that are the "smartest", but those who work hard and put in the time towards their trade consistently. It might take you some time to find a system that works for you, but build structure into your day/week, to get consistent time in for reading articles, scientific writing, learning new relevant skills etc. Also, build some habits to manage daily stresses and to maintain a work-life balance that works for you. There will be weeks of a lot of work but make sure to take some time to recover from those weeks.

Finally, the relationships you build in these years will last you a lifetime. Fostering the relationship with your mentor/s, lab mates and peers will enrich your experience now and in your academic career. These are the people you will come to rely on for personal and professional challenges for years to come. Do not always work in a silo, even if it has worked for you before. Also, do not compare your path to that of another PhD student. Each of you has different demands, obstacles to overcome and skills to learn. This is not a sprint, it is a marathon and you may have different finish times, but you are each running your own race.

Everyone at UH COMD is rooting for your success. Make the most of your time with us and access all the resources available to you. Please reach out to your mentor, to me or to Dr. Blake if you are struggling at any level and need support. You are not in this alone. We hope you have a great experience, and we look forward to including you as our colleague in academia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashwini Joshi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ashwini Joshi, PhD CCC-SLP
Associate Professor and PhD Program Director

Letter from the Master's Program Director

Dear UH COMD Master's Student,

Thank you for choosing us! It is with great honor and pride that I welcome you to the University of Houston's COMD Master's Program. I am pleased to be the director of your program and a part of your journey to become a speech-language pathologist.

I am a UH COMD alum and I confirm that as a graduate student, you are an important part of our department, the university, and the community. Our faculty, staff, and clinical educators are ready to support your academic success, professional development, and personal well-being. By fostering a spirit of collaboration, cooperation, and inclusion, we will strengthen your desire to learn new skills and contribute positively to the profession.

We will also face challenges together because of structural racism and a global pandemic. We will be required to be innovative leaders, creative thinkers, and work collaboratively. Your voice matters as we solve problems and make necessary improvements. I look forward to the transformations.

Your journey as a graduate student will be like none other. Because of your diverse background and interests, some parts of the program will be easy, and some parts will be hard. During the easier parts, please help others that may be struggling. Explain a concept in your own words, help them gather supplies for a session, or share a healthy meal. This program is not intended to be done without support. During the harder parts of the program, reach out for help and guidance from professors, clinical educators, advisors, graduate assistants, peers, and professional counselors. Again, this program is not intended to be done alone and we have a strong support system to assist you on the way.

I want to share some important points that are central to your graduate student experience:

1. We are here for you and eager to help! We value your participation in classes and clinics. You will have stimulating dialogues with your peers (i.e., your future professional community) and you will get to know the strengths and weaknesses of your instructors and educators. You will notice our inclusion of multiple viewpoints as we encourage you to express yourself and your ideas. You will also see our continuous improvements because of your feedback.
2. It will be imperative that you increase your level of personal responsibility even above that which allowed you to successfully achieve your bachelor's degree. Memorizing the content will not be enough. You will need to know the concepts to apply didactic information to clinical interactions. You will expand your critical thinking into clinical thinking. Your future clients will depend on your ability to do this to protect their welfare.
3. Our faculty are committed to intellectual excellence, and we are equipped to share valuable knowledge and skills. If you have a passion and want to learn more than the

introductory level for an area, we will support your desire with a thesis or a specialty concentration.

4. In addition to the exceptional academic resources, we will also encourage you to explore wellness resources where you'll find other students, faculty, and staff offering many kinds of support. We also encourage you to venture off-campus and enjoy Houston's wide-ranging activities and diversity.

I am confident that you will find this a truly exciting place to pursue your studies in communication sciences and disorders.



Laura Cizek, EdD, CCC-SLP

Clinical Associate Professor and Master's Program Director

Letter from Clinic Director

Dear Student,

Welcome to the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic (USLHC) at the University of Houston. The clinical educators and I are thrilled you chose the University of Houston to pursue your advanced degree in speech-language pathology, and we are dedicated to providing you with an outstanding clinical experience in a friendly and supportive environment.

During your first three semesters, you will likely be assigned a client/s at the USLHC or one of our community sites. These services may be provided in person or via telepractice depending on the client. We have a diverse client population, so you will have the opportunity to work with a wide variety of communication disorders in both adults and children which will prepare you well for your final two semesters at an externship.

The clinic handbook includes invaluable information regarding the clinic and the roles and responsibilities of graduate clinicians and clinical educators. Refer to this guide regularly for information regarding the profession, the clinic, the program, and the department.

We look forward to working with you and getting to know you.

Regards,
Jane Tragesser, M.A., CCC-SLP

COMD Mission Statement

The mission of the Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Houston is to advance the understanding of typical and disordered speech, language, and hearing through excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service to the community.

Program Goals:

Goal 1: Teaching

The educational focus of our mission includes pre-professional training in communication disorders for undergraduate and post baccalaureate students, research, and professional training in Speech - Language Pathology for graduate students, and continuing education opportunities for professionals.

Undergraduate level: Our goal is to recruit and retain highly capable, academically qualified, broadly educated individuals from a variety of backgrounds. They will be educated to be knowledgeable about culturally diverse groups of all ages, especially as they exist in an urban environment, 2) critical thinkers, and 3) well-prepared for graduate study in communication disorders.

Graduate level: Our goal is to provide the highest quality instruction, laboratory experiences and clinical practica to prepare students to function competently as speech-language pathologists in all professional settings. Graduates of the program will meet eligibility requirements for licensure by the state of Texas and certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Graduates of the program will be prepared to pursue a terminal degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders or a related field.

Goal 2: Scholarship

The scholarship component of our mission consists of fostering an environment that encourages and supports students and faculty to participate in scientific inquiry. The research activities will increase basic and applied knowledge in the areas of normal and disordered speech, language, and hearing sciences.

Goal 3: Service

The goal of the service component is to provide high quality speech, language, and hearing services to the community. Services will be provided on the University of Houston campus and at community outreach centers to individuals from all cultures, ages, and abilities.

The University of Houston is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and the UH graduate program in COMD is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The standards for accreditation can be found at: <https://caa.asha.org/siteassets/files/accreditation-standards-for-graduate-programs.pdf>.

COMD Faculty, Staff, and Clinical Educators

Please view the COMD webpage for information about the departmental faculty, emeritus faculty, departmental staff, and clinical educators.

<https://www.uh.edu/class/comd/people/faculty/index>

Prohibitions on Discrimination

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is committed to the promotion and affirmation of diversity and respects the dignity and worth of individuals regardless of their gender expression and identity, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. We follow the University of Houston's Anti-discrimination policy: <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/anti-discrimination/policies/>.

FERPA

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, commonly known as FERPA, is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Students have specific, protected rights regarding the release of such records, and FERPA requires that institutions adhere strictly to these guidelines. FERPA restricts faculty and staff from releasing student information to parents. This information often surprises parents since they frequently pay college tuition. Any student wishing to allow parents access to records should refer to the following link:

<http://www.uh.edu/legal-affairs/general-counsel/ferpa/index.php>.

Contact Information

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic are in the Melcher Life Sciences Building on the University of Houston Main Campus.

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Melcher Life Sciences
3871 Holman St., Room M242, Houston, TX 77204-6018
713-743-2897
Fax: 713.743.2926
E-mail: comd@central.uh.edu

University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic: A United Way agency
 Melcher Life Sciences
 3871 Holman St., Room M156, Houston, TX 77204-6018
 713-743-0915
 Fax: 713.743.2926
 E-mail: USLHC@uh.edu

Parking permits are required for parking in the lot directly in front of Melcher Life Sciences. Visitor parking is available in the Stadium Garage across the street. Emergency procedures for the department and clinic are described in [Appendix D](#).

Student Supports

Accessibility

Any student with a disability and who needs accommodations to perform successfully in the program, is required to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Ability Center, (713) 743-5400; 713-749-1527 (TDD); 713-743-5396 (Fax); or JDCenter@central.uh.edu (email). The center will evaluate each student and identify their needs. Appropriate documentation related to accommodations must be given to each instructor at the beginning of each term for which accommodations are requested. Accommodations are negotiated between the person making the request, the instructor, and the Dart Center. [Student Accessibility Center - University of Houston \(uh.edu\)](#). Accommodations will not be provided to students by instructors without documentation from the Dart Center.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional graduate program, or feeling sad and hopeless. Students can reach CAPS (<http://www.uh.edu/caps/>) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let's Talk” program, a drop-in, confidential consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus: <https://uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets-talk/>.

Library Printing Information

UH Main Campus students, faculty, and staff receive a printing credit on their Cougar Card FLEX account at the start of every term. Here is more information about library printing, including printing from your own device: [Print & Scan | University of Houston Libraries \(uh.edu\)](#).

Equal Opportunity Services

The University of Houston offers many campus resources for other individual needs and/or personal interests. Information on Equal Opportunity Services, including Title IX, can be found at <http://www.uh.edu/equal-opportunity/>.

Ombuds Services

The Ombudsperson provides a safe setting for graduate and professional students to confidentially raise and discuss their concerns about workplace and academic issues, interpersonal difficulties and to receive assistance in identifying options for resolving the conflicts and concerns. The Ombudsperson operates independently, listens without judgement, remains neutral, provides an impartial perspective, and holds all conversations and information confidential except when there is imminent risk of serious harm. The Ombudsperson serves as a thinking partner and a bridge between problems and options for the resolution of concerns and conflicts. The graduate/professional student is the ultimate decision-maker for the path of resolution. More details can be found on this webpage: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/ombuds-services/>.

Wellness

UH Wellness is here to support you in all your health and well-being needs. They promote and enrich the health and well-being of students to become successful scholars and engaged global citizens. More information can be found at <https://uh.edu/wellness/>.

Cougar Cupboard

The Cougar Cupboard is available for any student facing food insecurity. For more information follow this link: <https://uh.edu/dsaes/cougarcupboard/>.

Other Student Resources

Please visit: <https://uh.edu/dsaes/resources/students/index.php> for a detailed list of several other student resources.

Feminine products are available free to students in the Grad Student workroom.

Policies

English Proficiency Policy

It is the policy of UH COMD to follow the ASHA guidelines (see below) with respect to English proficiency for provision of clinical services.

According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, a high level of language proficiency is critical for clinical work as a certified speech-language pathologist. The primary language of instruction at UH and the primary language of ASHA, our certifying body, is English. Thus, students are expected to have a high level of English proficiency. Satisfactory performance on the TOEFL does not, in and of itself, imply that one can meet this minimum standard.

ASHA 2020 Standards and implementation procedures for the Certificate of Clinical Competence Standard V-A:

The applicant must have demonstrated skills in oral and written or other forms of communication sufficient for entry into professional practice.

Implementation: Applicants are eligible to apply for certification once they have completed all graduate-level academic coursework and clinical practicum and have been judged by the graduate program as having acquired all the knowledge and skills mandated by the current standards.

The applicant must have demonstrated communication skills sufficient to achieve effective clinical and professional interaction with persons receiving services and relevant others. For oral communication, the applicant must have demonstrated speech and language skills in English, which, at a minimum, are consistent with ASHA's current position statement on [students and professionals who speak English with accents and nonstandard dialects](#).

Applying for Graduation

Per University policy, all students must apply to graduate. Graduation applications should be filed early in the term in which the student plans to graduate. Applications are completed via myUH on <https://accessuh.uh.edu/login.php>. Deadlines for filing the application for graduation are listed in the academic calendar which can be accessed at <http://www.uh.edu/calendar/specialty-calendars/>. Any student who does not apply for graduation will not be allowed to graduate, even if all degree requirements have been met.

Candidates for graduation who have been previously applied, but not finished in the anticipated term, must reapply for graduation, and may be charged an additional fee.

Any student who expects to graduate in a given term must be enrolled for that term. This regulation applies to students who have not submitted a thesis or dissertation by the deadline of the previous term. Students will work with their advisors in these situations.

Certification for graduation is performed by the Dean's office in the college of the student's major. Diplomas usually are mailed about one month after graduation. However, students may indicate on the graduation application form that they will pick up their diplomas in the Office of Registration and Academic Records.

Social Media Policy

Social media is an umbrella term that encompasses the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. Social media includes technology (computers, phones, tablets) and is used in various forms (blogs, wikis, photo and video sharing, podcasts, social networking, mashups, virtual worlds, etc.). Means of accessing social media may include applications (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Skype, Snap Chat, YouTube, etc.). These devices and applications are subject to having content transmitted to others, with or without consent from the original author.

All students in COMD are expected to follow the University of Houston Social Media Policy, <https://uh.edu/marcom/guidelines-policies/social-media/>, especially sections 3 and 4 which were specifically designed for students. Additionally, per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) regulations <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/special-topics/de-identification/index.html>, no information, pictures, videos or descriptions of clients/families can be posted on social media sites. Please see the full COMD HIPAA policy in the Clinic Handbook. Violation of HIPAA regulations may result in disciplinary action being taken by the University against the student. The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders takes all violations of HIPAA regulations and the Social Media Policy seriously. Sanctions imposed on violators vary with the seriousness of the violation, ranging from a written reprimand to dismissal from the graduate program. As required by federal law, violations of HIPAA regulations will be documented permanently in the COMD HIPAA Violations Record Book.

UH is committed to fostering a learning environment that allows for freedoms of speech and expression in accordance with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (See MAPP 13.01.01 - Freedom of Expression at <http://www.uh.edu/mapp/13/130101.pdf>). Please be aware, however, that UH will not tolerate any activity or posting that loses First Amendment protection such as any unlawful, defamatory, or obscene activity or posting. UH reserves the right to remove any such posting without notice. Students should use caution and good judgment when posting information to electronic communications and social networking sites, both personal and those that are related to the University of Houston and/or the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Therefore, it is the policy that the use of social media, in any type or form as described above, by UH COMD students follow the criteria below:

No postings, photos, or recordings are allowed during class or clinical experiences except when approved by the faculty member or clinical educator responsible for the learning experience. Under no circumstances will a client be photographed without a signed photo release from that individual. Students and faculty should obtain verbal permission from friends or colleagues before posting on social media.

Using social media for sharing class material with anyone who is not enrolled in the course and sharing academic assessment material (e.g., tests, quizzes) without express permission from the instructor is explicitly prohibited. In addition to a violation of the Social Media Policy, this is also a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

<http://publications.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=9055>

Careful consideration should be given to any posting on social networks. Students create personal public images with these posts. However, they also represent the COMD department, the University of Houston, and the field of speech language pathology. Employers commonly review social media sites when considering new hires; thus, students should carefully consider what they contribute to their on-line profile, and that they may be held accountable for anything they post that reflects poorly on COMD or the University. The ASHA Code of Ethics Principle IV, Rule D states: Individuals shall not engage in any form of conduct that adversely reflects on the professions or on the individual's fitness to serve persons professionally.

<https://www.asha.org/code-of-ethics/>

Students should carefully consider the way they describe the program, academic/clinical assignments, and professional experiences. Future or current instructors, clinical educators, peers, and co-workers may be reading posts. Respectfulness and professionalism are expected. Use of social media that results or could result in individual or group harm, physical or emotional (e.g., damage to an individual's personal or public reputation or harassment resulting in personal or public humiliation of others), will not be tolerated.

Violations of these professional behavior standards will result in the following tiered consequences:

First occurrence: Student receives a verbal and written warning which is placed in the student's file. There is a required meeting with the graduate program director.

Second occurrence: Student is placed on a professional behavior probation. This includes formulating and implementing an improvement plan, which will be interactive, include documentation of progress, and placed in the student's permanent file.

Third occurrence: Student is dismissed from the COMD MA program.

Students should use social media responsibly, remembering there is no such thing as a “private” social media site. A good rule of thumb is to assume that anyone, anywhere, can get access to anything posted on the internet at any time, no matter what privacy settings are used; this includes fellow students, UH faculty and staff, externship supervisors, and prospective employers. A good practice is to make sure that the persona reflected in social media is the best possible representation for professionals and faculty to encounter online.

Complaint Policy

Complainants are expected to file complaints at the appropriate level so that all due process procedures may be followed. It is important to begin with the source of the complaint so that they can have the opportunity to rectify the situation or to provide an explanation or rationale.

Students should take issues regarding grades and class policies/procedures to the course instructor. For clinical placements the supervisor or Clinical Educator is considered the instructor. If the student is not satisfied after talking with the source, the student may schedule a meeting with the next higher level within the administrative structure as described here:

Graduate MA/PhD program: Instructor then Program Director, then Department Chair.

Students may use their advisor to help navigate the process.

On-campus Clinic: CE, then Clinic Director, then Department Chair

Externship: Supervisor, then Extern Coordinator, then Clinic Director, then Department Chair

Complaints or concerns about a program or curriculum should be directed to the Director of that program. If the student is not satisfied after talking to a Director, they should schedule a meeting with the Department Chair.

Concerns or complaints about a department employee or student should be directed to the Department Chair. Concerns or issues related to discrimination must be reported to the UH office of Equal Opportunity Services (see details below).

Complaints about the MA program related to the Standards of Accreditation should be made in writing to the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Such complaints must meet the following criteria:

- be against an accredited graduate education program or program in candidacy status in audiology and/or speech language pathology,
- relate to the Standards for Accreditation of Entry-Level Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology,
- clearly describe the specific nature of the conduct being complained about, which must have occurred at least in part within 5 years of the date the complaint is filed,

the relationship of the complaint to the accreditation standards, and provide supporting data for the charge.

Procedures for filing a complaint with the CAA can be found at:

<https://caa.asha.org/programs/complaints/>

Questions and/or requests for information about accreditation or the CAA can be directed to:

The Council on Academic Accreditation in
Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Boulevard, #310
Rockville, MD 20850
accreditation@asha.org
800-498-2071

The Office of Equal Opportunity Services is charged with the processing of all inquiries and complaints concerning discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, genetic information, and/or veteran status. Concerns or complaints involving any of these will be forwarded to EOS. Any ongoing department procedures will be put on hold until a report from EOS has been received.

A student, staff, or faculty may inquire with Equal Opportunity Services to ask for advice, seek counseling, and/or file a formal complaint.

No person inquiring/filing a complaint will be subject to retaliation.

A full description of the complaint procedure can be found at the EOS website:

<https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/about-eos/index.php>

If any issue continues to be unresolved after meeting with the appropriate levels, including the Department Chair, the student may file a formal grievance with the department.

COMD uses the CLASS definition for grievances: An academic grievance refers to an action taken against a student by a member of the faculty (including part-time instructors and teaching assistants), staff, or administration that either violates a university, college, or department academic policy or procedure or prejudicially treats the student based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, or any other nonacademic status. Because assigning a grade or evaluating a student's work performance involves the faculty's professional judgment and is an integral part of the faculty's teaching responsibilities, disagreement with an instructor concerning a grade or evaluation *per se* is not a justifiable grievance to be considered under this policy unless factors such as those mentioned in the previous paragraph can be shown to have affected that grade or evaluation.

The details of the formal grievance process for the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders are in [Appendix A](#) of this handbook.

A record of complaints will be maintained by the appropriate supervisor (i.e., the clinic director for issues involving clinic, the externship coordinator for issues with externship, and the department chair for all other issues).

Grievance Policy

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders uses the definition provided by the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) Grievance policy <http://www.uh.edu/class/students/graduate/academics-planning/policies-procedures/>: An academic grievance refers to an action taken against a student by a member of the faculty (including part-time instructors and teaching assistants), staff, or administration that either violates a university, college, or department academic policy or procedure or prejudicially treats the student on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, or any other nonacademic status. Cases involving prejudicial treatment of any of the categories listed above will be referred to the UH Office of Equal Opportunity Services [<https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/about-eos/index.php>]. The full COMD policy & procedures are in [Appendix A](#).

Petitioning for Reinstatement

If a student is dismissed from the graduate program, they have the right to petition the faculty to reverse the decision. A written petition must be submitted to the faculty within approximately three weeks of the initial notice. A specific deadline will be given in the dismissal letter, so that a decision may be made prior to the beginning of the subsequent term. Ideally, the petition should contain the following: the student's view of what led to their poor performance, a request to be re-admitted to the program, and what changes the student will make to improve performance.

The petition will be discussed and voted on by a group of at least 5 faculty actively involved in the relevant program. Each petition is considered individually. Conditions for reinstatement, if approved by the faculty, will also be determined on an individual basis. The student will be informed of the faculty's decision in a written letter.

Disagreement or dissatisfaction with the faculty's decision is not a justifiable grievance unless, as stated in the CLASS grievance policy, there was an action taken against a student by a member of the faculty (including part-time instructors and teaching assistants), staff, or administration that either violates a university, college, or department academic policy or procedure or prejudicially treats the student on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, or any other nonacademic status. Procedures for filing a formal grievance are in [Appendix A](#).

Attendance Policy

Timeliness in arrival to class and class attendance are expected to facilitate learning and a demonstration of professionalism. As such, faculty may take attendance and note late arrivals. Point deductions for unexcused absences and/or late arrivals may occur. Details are specified in the class syllabi.

Please see the [Graduate Excused Absence Policy](#) for information about excused absences.

Please see the Clinic Attendance Policy in the clinic section of this handbook regarding student and client absences.

Professional Organizations

COMD Alumni Association

The Communication Sciences and Disorders Alumni Association was created to fund scholarships; promote networking among alumni; provide continuing education opportunities; and to support the program, its faculty, and students. All graduates, former students, and friends of the COMD Program are eligible for membership. For more information, contact the Houston Alumni Organization at (713) 743-9550 or <https://houstonalumni.com/alumni-associates/interest-and-affinity/COMDaa/>. We encourage all our graduate students to join once they finish the program.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association is the professional organization for speech-language pathologists and audiologists. The American Academy of Audiology also serves audiologists. ASHA maintains high standards for the fields requiring both academic programs as well as members to reflect these on a daily basis. <http://www.asha.org/members/>

One function of ASHA is to offer an accreditation program for academic and clinical institutions. The academic accreditation agency is called the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). It examines academic programs and determines their eligibility for accreditation. The Communication Sciences and Disorders Program of the University of Houston is accredited by CAA. This means that the program must adhere to guidelines in administering the academic and clinical programs. The CAA can be contacted at: 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, MD 20850-3289, (800) 638-8255.

For members, there are certain academic and clinical requirements that are mandatory as part of ASHA certification. These have been enumerated throughout this handbook. ASHA also has a public Code of Ethics. It is the responsibility of every student and professional to follow this Code. It is available at <http://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/>. It will be discussed in several of the classes. Please read it.

Finally, ASHA offers members many perk-type benefits. These can be reviewed at: <http://www.asha.org/members/benefits/>.

National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA)

The National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association is affiliated with ASHA. There is a National NSSLHA chapter, as well as local, university-based chapters. At the University of Houston, there is a local chapter which is very active. It is an excellent way to learn about

professional issues and have fun. Students are encouraged to participate in this association. Activities that UH NSSLHA has sponsored include providing opportunities to visit professional work settings, presenting lectures from professionals in the community, and raising funds for tests for the clinic and scholarships for clients in the clinic and the students.

One advantage to membership in the national NSSLHA program is reduced ASHA certification fees for students who have been a national NSSLHA member for 2 consecutive years prior to applying for ASHA certification. Additionally, national NSSLHA members can access all member-only areas of the ASHA website, which includes on-line access to all ASHA journals. To get the most out of these benefits, students are strongly encouraged to join the national chapter early in their program, as there can be some delays in account activation. <https://www.nsslha.org>

Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (TSHA)

The Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association is the state professional organization. Students are encouraged to join at a reduced student rate. TSHA offers excellent educational and professional opportunities for students at its annual convention. Annual conventions are held in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin on a rotating basis. TSHA offers financial support to students for research and education. <http://www.txsha.org/>

Houston Association for Communication Disorders (HACD)

The Houston Association for Communication Disorders is the local professional organization. It is the largest regional organization in Texas, with several hundred members. The main mission is to provide continuing education for its members. HACD supports students through mentoring programs and scholarships for COMD students. HACD is a useful network for students, a way to meet and know local professionals. Reduced membership dues and workshop fees are available for students. <http://www.hacd.org/>

National Black Association for Speech, Language and Hearing (NBASLH)

The Houston Affiliate of the National Black Association for Speech, Language, and Hearing is a local organization closely associated with the National Association. The broad objectives of the affiliate and the Association are to 1. PROMOTE an increase in the number of certified black speech-language and hearing professionals, 2. PROMOTE improvement in the quality of speech, language, and hearing services to black individuals with communication disorders, 3. PROMOTE the research and development of a body of knowledge of the identification, diagnosis, and treatment of communication disorders in black individuals, 4. SOLICIT and provide financial support for the training of black students in the fields of speech-language and hearing, 5. ADVOCATE for black individuals with communication disorders at the local, state, and national levels, and 6. DISSEMINATE information among the professions and to the public on communication differences and disorders among black individuals. <http://www.nbaslh.org/>.

The following is a link to contact the president of the Houston Affiliate, Dr. Brittney Pettis:
<https://www.nbaslh.org/affiliates>.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY (PH.D.)

About the Program

The primary educational objective of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree program in COMD is to prepare students for academic careers in the field of speech-language pathology/communication disorders by providing the highest quality instruction and research experience. Graduates of this program will comprise the next generation of leading researchers and scholars in the field of communication sciences and disorders.

This program is mentor-based with the student and the mentor designing a program of study that meets the student's goals within the general guidelines of the program as outlined in this handbook (e.g., number of credits, first-year project).

Applicants must first identify an area of study and the potential professor(s) with whom they share common scientific interests, given the broad range of research areas by our faculty. A UH COMD faculty member must accept the responsibility of being the student's primary mentor before the applicant is considered for admission to the PhD program. Acceptance of a student into the COMD PhD program is determined on an individual basis by factors including but not limited to previous grade point average(s) (GPA), letters of recommendation, and identification of an area of study and an agreement by a COMD faculty member to provide mentoring. The PhD program in COMD constitutes a combination of formal coursework within UH COMD and in related departments, an independent initial research project, a qualifying research experience, and a final aggregation of scholarly work.

Admission to the PhD Program

Admittance of a student into the COMD PhD program is determined on an individual basis and based on several factors. Students must meet or exceed the minimum acceptance requirements of the University of Houston Graduate School. The documentation required to be considered for admission is detailed below. All application materials must be submitted by the application deadline, which is posted on the UH COMD website (<https://www.uh.edu/class/COMD/programs/phd/>). Please visit: <http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/admissions/how-to-apply/> for more information on how to apply. Students may be admitted into the PhD program with or without funding.

Requirements

To be given full consideration for admission to the COMD PhD Program, all application materials must be completed and received by the deadline posted on the Program website (<https://www.uh.edu/class/COMD/programs/phd/>). Prospective students must complete the application on CollegeNet, have an interview with the prospective mentor, and obtain a tentative agreement by a COMD faculty member to provide the applicant's initial mentoring before the application deadline. The following are required to apply:

- Applicant interview with prospective mentor and commitment from the mentor

- Documentation of previous education (transcripts)
- Three (3) letters of recommendation
- Curriculum vitae or resume
- Statement of interest
- Materials required of international applicants (if applicable)
- Application fees

Applicant Interview

As part of the application process, applicants must complete an interview with a potential mentor either in person or online before the application deadline. A tentative agreement by a COMD faculty member to provide the applicant's initial mentoring is required for acceptance into the program as part of the application process before the application deadline. This interview will be used to determine the candidate's readiness and preparation for doctoral studies, suitability of their academic and research goals for this program, as well as the likelihood that the applicant will be successful in achieving their academic, research, and career goals.

Documentation of Previous Education

Prospective students must submit official transcripts from each college or university previously attended, including the degree(s) earned and date(s) awarded. Students must meet or exceed the minimum acceptance requirements of the [University of Houston Graduate School](#). UH requires that doctoral applicants have earned at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States (US) or at an institution at which English is the medium of instruction in the following countries: Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the Bahamas, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Jamaica, Liberia, Trinidad and Tobago, the Virgin Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Grenada, Turks and Caicos, and English-speaking Canadian provinces. Please see the section on "[International Applicants](#)" to see the requirements for applicants with degrees from institutions in other regions of the world.

Curriculum Vitae or Resume

An academic curriculum vitae or a resume illustrating the applicant's relevant background and experience should be included with the application.

Statement of Interest

A personal statement of interest explaining why you are applying to our program must be included with the application. While there is not one specific way to compose such a statement, the typical document includes information about why the applicant is a good fit for our program, her/his research interests, career objectives and plans, and it typically identifies the

proposed mentor. The personal statement of interest should not exceed 2 pages (double-spaced).

International Applicants

Applicants with degrees from institutions in other regions of the world must present *one* of the following scores for the *Test of English as a Foreign Language* (TOEFL): (a) a score of 79 or higher on the Internet based version (iBT), with a minimum writing score of 20; (b) a minimum score of 20 in Reading, 20 in Listening, and 20 in Writing on the new revised paper-based exam. Alternatively, a student may present a score of 6.5 on the *International English Language Testing System* (IELTS), with a minimum writing score of 6.5. In addition to the above, international applicants must also submit each of the following: a Statement of Understanding, a letter of financial backing, a non-refundable application evaluation fee, and the language tests specified above. More information for international students can be found on this page of the Graduate School's web site: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/international-students/>.

Application Fees

A \$50.00 nonrefundable application fee is charged to domestic applicants. An \$80 nonrefundable application fee is charged to international applicants.

PhD Curriculum

Program Description

The curriculum of the doctoral program is designed to provide students with the necessary foundational courses and research experiences to support a productive academic career. Students will work with advisors to select members for two committees as they matriculate through the doctoral program: curriculum planning committee and dissertation committee. Members of these committees may remain the same throughout the program or may be adjusted as the student progresses. Changes to any of the student's committees must be approved by the Committee Chair, the Program Director, and the Department Chair. Every student will have a curriculum uniquely designed by members of the Curriculum Planning Committee. This individual program of study is intended to ensure academic rigor, quality instruction, and future marketability of program graduates. Students must complete all required course work, research experiences and additional program requirements. The Sample Curriculum presents an outline for the completion of all requirements in a 4-year period.

Full-Time versus Part-Time Enrollment

Students have the option of full-time or part-time enrollment in the UH COMD PhD program. Full-time enrollment comprises 9 credit hours per semester; part-time enrollment comprises up to 6 credit hours per semester. The curriculum plan for students choosing part-time enrollment must still be completed within the 10-year time frame as stipulated by the University of

Houston (see also Time Limits and 99-Hour Doctoral Cap below). Some types of funding may not be available to part-time students.

Curriculum Planning and Dissertation Committees

Curriculum Planning Committee

This committee is formed at the beginning of the student's program (no later than the beginning of registration for the following Spring semester; typically, mid-October) and is led by the student's primary mentor to guide the student at least through the Comprehensive Examination of their program. The committee must contain at least three members led by the primary mentor who will also serve as the committee chair and who must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in UH COMD. The second committee member must also be from UH COMD. The third committee member may be from UH COMD, another department at the University of Houston, or an outside expert with sufficient expertise and credentials to help guide the student through the program.

The student and Curriculum Planning Committee will meet before the beginning of the Spring semester of the student's first year in the program to discuss the student's progress towards the Initial Research Project, outline a plan for successful completion of the Initial Research Project, and discuss the student's program of study. Committee membership, including establishing a new committee and changes to an existing committee, must be approved as stipulated above under Program Description.

Dissertation Committee

The student's dissertation committee is formed after the successful passing of the Comprehensive Examination (both the written and oral portions) to help lead the student through candidacy, dissertation, and the successful completion of the program. The Dissertation Committee must be comprised of a minimum of four members, including three faculty members from UH COMD and one approved member external to the department, who is acceptable to the department and the college. After these minimum requirements for committee members are satisfied, additional committee members may be approved. Members of the Curriculum Planning Committee may also serve on the Dissertation Committee.

The State of Texas subsidizes a large portion of the costs of doctoral education at its public universities, and the State Legislature has decided to limit the length of time the state will continue this subsidy for individual students. All doctoral students who accumulate more than ninety-nine doctoral semester credit hours at any Texas public institution of higher education will be charged the non-resident tuition rates irrespective of student residency status or any appointment, fellowship, or other circumstance that would normally entitle them to resident tuition rates. Please see the graduate catalog entry on the [99-Hour Doctoral Cap](#) for full details.

Coursework and Credits

Coursework in the COMD PhD program requires a minimum of 54 credit hours of graduate coursework beyond a master's degree. These 54 credit hours will be obtained by completing coursework and credit in the following areas: Advanced Statistics (9 credit hours), COMD Advanced Research Methods (3 credit hours), Special Problems or Selected Topics in COMD (9 credit hours), Grant Writing (3 credit hours), Teaching Methods (3 credit hours), electives outside the major (6 credit hours), COMD Proseminar (3 credit hours), Research (6 credit hours), and Dissertation (12 credit hours), as outlined in Table 1. Potential elective courses are listed in Table 2. Elective courses must be approved by the student's Curriculum Planning Committee prior to enrolling in them.

For students applying to the PhD program with a bachelor's degree but without a master's degree, completion of an additional 30 credit hours at the graduate level in COMD and related fields will be expected as part of the PhD curriculum plan for a minimum of 84 total credit hours. Thirty hours of graduate courses may be elective courses listed in Table 2. As part of the program of study, students will be required to complete all the coursework listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Semester Credit Hour (SCH) Requirements by Category

Category	SCH Entering with a Bachelor's	SCH Entering with a Master's
Advanced Statistics	9	9
COMD Advanced Research Methods	3	3
Grant Writing	3	3
Teaching Methods	3	3
COMD Proseminar	3	3
Special Problems or Selected Topics in COMD	9	9
Electives Outside the Major	6	6
COMD Research	6	6
Dissertation	12	12
Graduate level credits	30	0
Other (e.g., internships, clinical work, residencies)	0	0
TOTAL	84	54

Table 2. List of Potential Electives* and Courses to Fulfill Program Requirements (SCH= Semester Credit Hours)

Prefix and Number	Elective Course* Title	SCH
CUIN 8377	Qualitative Inquiry in Educ I	3
ELET 6354	Biomedical Image Analysis	3

PEP 7397	Adv Selec Topic Human Performance	3
PEP 8306	Principles of Scientific Inquiry	3
PEP 8334	Applied Statistical Modeling in Health Research	3
PHCA 7308	Biostatistics and Experimental Design	3
PHLS 8302	Research Methods in Psy/Educ Research	3
PHLS 8319	Inferential Statistics in Psy/Educ Research	3
PHLS 8322	Intermediate Statistical Analysis in Psy/Educ Research	3
PHLS 8326	Nonparametric Stats in Ed Research	3
PHLS 8327	Longitudinal Data Analysis Psy/Educ Research	3
PHLS 8328	Hierarchical Linear Modeling in Psych/Educ Research	3
PSYC 6300	Stats for Psychology	3
PSYC 6302	Experimental Design	3
PSYC 6304	Social Development	3
PSYC 6344	Functional Neuroanatomy	3
PSYC 6391	Seminar in Teaching of Psychology	3
PSYC 6392	Selected Topics in Psychology	3
PSYC 7306	Advanced Statistics: Multilevel Modeling	3
PSYC 7333	Experimental Neuropsychology	3
PSYC 7334	Dementia	3
PSYC 8322	Psychometrics	3
PSYC 8330	Cognitive Neuroscience	3
SPAN 6390	Research Heritage Language Educ Seminar	3
SPAN 6394	Topics- Language and Linguistics	3

*Elective courses must be approved by the student's Curriculum Planning Committee and may need instructor approval. Not all courses are offered each semester or every year.

Transfer Credits

In accordance with UH policies, up to 9 credits of graduate coursework may be transferred from other accredited institutions and counted towards the minimum hours required to complete the program, subject to the approval of the student's primary mentor, PhD Program Director, Department Chair, Associate/Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, and the Vice Provost/Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate and Professional Student Petition is accessible via the Graduate School's website (<https://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/gpsp-updated-petition-102020.pdf>.)

Research Activity Requirements

Successful completion of the following research activities is required as part of the COMD PhD program:

- Initial Research Project
- Comprehensive Examination
- Doctoral Candidacy and Prospectus
- Doctoral Dissertation

Initial Research Project

Students will complete an Initial Research Project under the direction of their primary mentor. For this initial research project, students will pose a novel research question, analyze data, and interpret findings. This initial research project shall consist of a research project that is developed either from previously collected research data (i.e., no data collection required) or from pilot data collected by the student. Students will produce (1) a complete manuscript and (2) an oral presentation to be defended before their Curriculum Planning Committee. The Curriculum Planning Committee will assign one of the following: pass, pass with revision, or fail. Decisions of fail will result in the student's dismissal from the program.

The project, including the oral defense and the final draft with revisions, must be completed by the official close of the Fall semester of Year 2 of the program.

Comprehensive Examination

Nearing the completion of the coursework (typically after 4 full semesters or approximately 40 credit hours), students must pass a comprehensive examination. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to demonstrate proficiency in a body of knowledge base in the chosen area of study.

- The comprehensive examination will take the form of a grant proposal for an external funding opportunity (approved by the Curriculum Planning Committee) and will include (1) a written component and (2) an oral defense.
- Students will enroll in a doctoral level Grant Writing course in their final semester of coursework and begin working on their assigned grant. Students may continue working on their grant during the summer or winter break immediately after completion of the course.
- The student should develop the specific aims of their grant proposal independently and have them approved by the Committee prior to progressing on the grant. The committee may provide feedback as appropriate.
- The student must independently prepare the rest of the Specific Aims and Research Strategy pages of the grant.
- The deadline for submission of the written component will be decided by the Committee but must be within four months from the end of the Grant Writing course.
- Students will complete an oral defense three weeks after submission of the written component. The content of the oral defense will be determined by the Curriculum Planning Committee. This may include a defense of the submitted grant proposal alone or in addition to specific content-related questions outside of the grant.

- The Curriculum Planning Committee and/or mentor may provide feedback on the grant to the student before submission to the funding agency (e.g., NIH, ASHFoundation). Note that this feedback cannot be provided to the student until after their comprehensive exam has been successfully completed.
- The Curriculum Planning Committee will evaluate the comprehensive exam products (written and oral). The committee will assign one of the following after the completion of the oral defense: pass, pass with revision, or fail.
- A student passing with revision will receive one attempt to revise or redo (1) the written exam, (2) the oral exam, or (3) both components of the exam within 2 months of the first oral defense. The Committee will evaluate this attempt and assign either a pass or fail grade
- Decisions of fail for the initial attempt or after revision will result in dismissal from the program.
- All timelines must be met unless an extension has been approved by the Curriculum Planning Committee and the PhD Program committee for extenuating circumstances.

Doctoral Candidacy and Prospectus

Prior to being considered a doctoral candidate, students must: 1) have successfully completed the initial research project, 2) passed the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination, and 3) have completed or be nearing completion of their course work (approximately 40 credit hours beyond the master's degree or 70 hours beyond the bachelor's degree) and successfully complete and pass a prospectus of their dissertation. After a student has met these requirements, they will be considered a doctoral candidate and be permitted to begin their dissertation.

The purpose of the prospectus is to ensure that the student's dissertation project is both sound and feasible. The prospectus will include: 1. A written component comprised of a review of the literature, purpose, hypotheses/research questions, and method sections of the dissertation and 2. An oral presentation of the written document. Successful prospectuses will be approved by the dissertation committee.

Doctoral Dissertation

A student must complete and successfully defend a dissertation based on original research in order to complete the doctoral degree. Full-time students are expected to complete 3 dissertation hours per semester for 4 semesters. All students must enroll in a minimum of 1 hour of dissertation credit for consecutive semesters until the dissertation is completed or until the 10-year time frame for completion is met. If a student has not completed their program within the 10-year university time limit, they will be dismissed from the program. [Please visit the section on Time Limits for more information.](#)

Students should follow the current dissertation/thesis guidelines set forth by the UH Graduate School (<https://uh.edu/graduate-school/academics/thesis/>). Specific formatting may vary by

the student's specific area, but any variations must accommodate the general formatting guidelines. The most typical format of a dissertation in Communication Sciences and Disorders follows the structure of a long research report within one's own area of study.

Students can submit a dissertation in one of two formats, in alignment with guidelines from The Graduate School (<https://uh.edu/graduate-school/academics/thesis/uhgs-template-front-matter-082019.docx>):

With three major sections:

- Introductory chapters
- Middle chapters written in journal article format, with each reflecting material sufficient for a published paper/chapter
- Final chapters integrating the results of all the middle chapters.

In traditional format:

- Introductory chapters
- Methods chapter
- Results chapter
- Discussion chapter

Other Research and Professional Development Opportunities

Students are strongly encouraged to attend scientific lectures and working groups in preparation for academic careers in the field of speech-language pathology/communication disorders. The purpose of this activity is for students to develop practices that will aid in their thinking and writing scientifically. Such activities may include attending invited research talks, presenting at research proseminars, and participating in research reading groups of interest. In their yearly evaluation, the primary mentor may provide an assessment of these activities and offer recommendations for the student.

Additional Program Requirements

Teaching Experience

All PhD students must complete a teaching experience. The purpose of the teaching requirement is to prepare students for an academic career that includes classroom instruction. Teaching will give students practice in distilling complex information for a novice learner as opposed to disseminating information to expert learners. Depending on the teaching assignment, a student's teaching mentor may be their PhD mentor or another faculty member with expertise in the subject area or the art/science of teaching and learning. The experience must include being the primary instructor for a course (i.e., not just grading and providing guest lectures). As part of their funding package some students may be assigned as a Clinical Educator

(CE). A CE assignment will not be accepted as a substitute for the required classroom teaching experience. UH has a wealth of resources for teaching, including faculty mentorship and other sources listed in [Appendix B](#).

Progress Evaluations

A satisfactory rate of progress toward completion of degree requirements is expected throughout the student's enrollment, which includes meeting all departmental and institutional standards, satisfactory yearly evaluations and meeting other benchmarks (such as passing the Initial Research Project, Comprehensive Examination, etc.). At or near the end of each spring semester, no later than 5 business days after final grades are due, each student will meet with their primary mentor to discuss the student's yearly and overall progress towards the degree (including grades, status of on-going or completed projects, etc.) and to plan ahead. Within 7 business days after the meeting with the student, the primary mentor shall prepare a 1- to 2-page written report regarding the particular student's progress towards the degree including an evaluation of the student's progress supported by data (such as courses completed, GPA, status of projects, benchmarks met), an assessment of whether or not the progress has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory, and an assessment of whether or not the student's program is on track as planned.

The mentor's written evaluation will be submitted to the COMD PhD Committee for evaluation within 12 business days after the due date for grades for the regular Spring semester (the student-mentor meeting to occur within 5 business days after grades are due and the mentor's written report is due within 7 business days after the meeting). In addition to the submission of the letter to the COMD PhD Committee, a copy of the mentor's written evaluation will be provided to the student, a copy will be provided to the chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and a copy will be placed in the student's file.

The COMD PhD Committee will meet within 25 business days after the close of the regular Spring semester to discuss the progress of each doctoral student and recommend continuation of the program or dismissal based on the evidence provided by majority vote. Determination of continuation vs. dismissal will be based on whether or not a student meets the UH/Graduate School as well as the COMD PhD minimum criteria as detailed below. Within 5 business days after the COMD PhD Committee meeting, the Program Director will inform the interested parties (the student, the student's mentor, and the chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders) in writing of the recommendations of the COMD PhD Committee. In case of a recommendation of dismissal from the program, the student may petition for reinstatement (see [Petitioning for Reinstatement](#)).

Time Limits and 99-Hour Doctoral Cap

Students who enroll as doctoral candidates must complete their degree requirements within 10 years of the date of first enrollment with a doctoral degree objective. Failure to comply will result in the candidate being ineligible for that doctoral degree.

Doctoral students who fail to complete their dissertation within five years after completion of the comprehensive examination must retake the examination. For more information on the time limits, please consult the [current UH Graduate Catalog](#).

Dismissal from the Program

The following are conditions in which students may be dismissed from the COMD Ph.D. program:

- a. Failure to make the minimum academic requirements for doctoral students at the University of Houston, as described in the Graduate and Professional Studies Catalog (available online at <http://www.uh.edu/graduate-catalog>). Some examples of the University requirement are:
 - i. Students who fail to maintain a minimum graduate grade point average of 3.0 will be put on probation or be suspended from the University; and/or,
 - ii. According to University policy, students who receive 4 or more grades of “C” or lower in their programs of study will be terminated from the University. However, to help ensure the integrity and high standards of the COMD Ph.D. program, the program faculty has adopted a “Two C” rule. Thus, program students who obtain two grades of C will be dismissed from the Ph.D. program, although they may explore other options for continued graduate study within the university.
- b. Violation of the ethical principles of speech-language pathologists or researchers in their professional and academic work (e.g., coursework, research).
- c. Failure to meet one or more academic requirements (e.g., course work, initial research project, comprehensive exams, prospectus and dissertation). In these cases, remedial actions will be identified to help the student. If remedial actions fail to correct the deficiencies, the student may be terminated from the Program.
- d. Failure to make sufficient progress in one’s program of study. Students not making sufficient progress are asked to meet their advisors to identify remedial steps to assist them. Students who continue to lag after remediation may be terminated from the Program.

Policy Waivers

If a student, faculty advisor, or advisory committee member deems that any COMD policy stated in this handbook should be waived, a formal request, signed by both the student and faculty advisor, may be submitted for consideration to the Program Director. The request must fully justify the waiver. The waiver must be approved by the Department Chair.

A general petition may also need to be filed (for example, for degree requirement exception or approved course substitution, transfer credit, etc.) with the Graduate School using a Graduate and Professional Student Petition form (please click on the link here).

Financial Assistance for Doctoral Studies

Students may be accepted to the PhD program with or without funding. Funded students may receive a stipend (usually in the form of a Graduate Assistantship) and/or a Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF). The GTF covers tuition and course fees for 9 hours of credit per semester. A Graduate Assistant stipend may be provided by a mentor's research grant funds or by the department/college. A Graduate Assistantship requires students to work as a research assistant, teaching assistant, or clinical assistant. Assignments are made by the Department Chair. Please refer to your offer of admission letter for details regarding your specific funding package and do not hesitate to contact your mentor and/or the Program Director for information about your funding. You are also encouraged to complete a FAFSA application and seek out other sources of funding (such as external scholarships). Some funding is accessible only after completion of the FAFSA.

The Graduate School provides information regarding eligibility requirements and how to fund your education. Each student is responsible for being familiar with the eligibility criteria for their respective award(s). Please visit the graduate funding web page of the Graduate School for additional information (<https://uh.edu/graduate-school/graduate-funding/>).

Full-time students are expected to work no more than 20 hours per week (50% FTE) in order to reserve enough time to focus on their program of study. Students who receive stipends are expected not to take outside employment during the regular Fall and Spring semesters as the stipend already covers 20 hours of employment per week. Students considering pursuing outside employment should obtain prior approval from their primary mentor and the PhD Program Director.

Sample Curriculum in Communication Sciences and Disorders

YEAR	SEMESTER	Course	SCH
YEAR 1	FALL	COMD 8193 Proseminar	1
		COMD 8291 Research	2
		PHLS 8319 Infer Stats in Psych/Educ Res OR PSYC 6300 Statistics for Psychology	3
		Elective	3
	SPRING	COMD 8392 Advanced Research Methods	3
		COMD 8391 Research	3
PHLS 8322 Intermediate Statistics in Psy/Ed Research OR PSYC 6302 Experimental Design		3	
YEAR 2	FALL	COMD 8398 Special Problems	3
		Elective	3
		Advanced Statistics	3
	SPRING	COMD 8398 Special Problems	3
		PSYC 6337 Grant Writing	3
		Teaching Methods	3
YEAR 3	FALL	COMD 8193 Proseminar	1
		COMD 8291 Research	2
		COMD 8398 Special Problems	3
		Elective	3
	SPRING	COMD 8699 Dissertation	6
		Elective	3
OR ONLY COMD 8999 Dissertation		9	
YEAR 4 OR 5	FALL	COMD 8999 - Dissertation	9
	SPRING	COMD 8193 - Proseminar	1
		COMD 8699 - Dissertation	6

**The course sequence for the program of study and the electives must be carefully designed in consultation with the mentor and approved by the student's committee.*

FORM: PhD Curriculum Planning Committee Form

Student: _____

PSID: _____

Committee Chair/Mentor: _____

Committee Members

Name of Committee Member

Signature of Committee Member

Name of Committee Member

Signature of Committee Member

Department/Institution (if outside UH COMD)

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Committee Chair

Date

Signature of Program Director

Date

Dept. Chair Signature

Date

FORM: Curriculum Planning Committee Change Form

(Attach the previously completed form along with the change form when requesting signatures)

Student: _____

PSID: _____

It is requested that the following changes be made to the curriculum planning committee of the student named above:

Committee Member	Added	Removed

Signature of Committee Member

Date

Signature of Committee Member

Date

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Committee Chair

Date

Signature of Program Director

Date

Signature of Department Chair

Date

FORM: Initial Research Project Defense Form

Student: _____ **Date of Meeting:** _____
Year in Program: _____

Title of Initial Research Project _____

Evaluation (CIRCLE ONE): PASS PASS WITH REVISION FAIL

Comments:

SIGNED (CURRICULUM PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS)

Chair

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

Date

FORM: PhD Comprehensive Examination Plan

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to demonstrate mastery of a body of knowledge base in the chosen area of study. The comprehensive examination will include (1) a written component as determined by the student's curriculum planning committee and (2) an oral defense following the written portion. The written portion of the examination must be completed before the oral portion may be scheduled. Students must submit their written product four months after completion of their Grant Writing course and three weeks prior to the scheduled oral exam. The oral defense will be a maximum of one hour.

Student: _____

Mentor: _____

Committee Members:

Date proposed to begin written portion: _____

Date proposed to end written portion: _____

Tentative time of oral exam: (e.g. Fall 2022) _____

Signature below indicates that this plan has been submitted to, and approved by, the COMD PhD Program Director.

PhD Program Director Signature

Date

FORM: Comprehensive Examination Defense Form

Student _____ Year in Program: _____

Examination Dates (MM/DD/YYYY) **Revision: Y N**

Written Examination: _____ Oral Examination: _____

Evaluation:

Written Examination	PASS	PASS WITH REVISION	FAIL
Oral Examination	PASS	PASS WITH REVISION	FAIL

Comments (Include date for submission of revision if indicated):

SIGNED (CURRICULUM PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS)

Chair

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

Date

FORM: Dissertation Committee Appointment Form

Student: _____

PSID: _____

Committee Chair/Mentor: _____

Committee Members

Name of Committee Member

Signature of Committee Member

Name of Committee Member

Signature of Committee Member

Department/Institution (if outside UH COMD)

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Committee Chair

Date

Signature of Program Director

Date

Dept. Chair Signature

Date

FORM: Dissertation Prospectus Form

Student Name _____ Date of Meeting: _____

Year in Program: _____

Title of Prospectus _____

Evaluation (CIRCLE ONE): PASS PASS WITH REVISION FAIL

Comments:

SIGNED (DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS)

Chair

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

Date

MASTER OF ARTS IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
(M.A)

Program Requirements

Prerequisite Courses and Requirements for the Master's Program

Successful completion of the graduate program requires satisfactory acquisition of the knowledge and skills set forth by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) <https://www.asha.org/Certification/2020-SLP-Certification-Standards/>. To meet these standards necessitates the acquisition of knowledge in basic communication science and processes typically achieved in an undergraduate program in communication sciences and disorders. The following classes or their equivalent must be completed prior to the beginning of the graduate program:

COMD 2338 Phonetics
 COMD 2339 Language Development
 COMD 2376 Anatomy & Physiology for Communication
 COMD 3381 Fundamentals of Audiology
 COMD 3383 Language Disorders in Children -or- COMD 3371 Speech Dev. & Disorders
 COMD 4385 Speech Science
 COMD 4382 Aural Rehabilitation
 COMD 4489 Clinical Procedures

As part of the standards for certification, ASHA also requires coursework in statistics, biological science, physical science (chemistry or physics required), and behavioral science.

Prior to beginning clinical assignments, incoming graduate students must obtain 25 hours of guided observation under the direction of an ASHA certified speech-language pathologist. All guided observations after January 1, 2020, must be with a clinician who has completed the requisite training in supervision.

Incoming students must complete a self-screener to identify possible speech and hearing disorders, difficulties, or differences prior to the start of clinic.

Incoming students must also review the core functions form. To acquire the knowledge and skills requisite to the practice of speech-language pathology, to function in a broad variety of clinical situations, and to render a wide spectrum of patient care, individuals must have skills and attributes in these areas: communication, motor, sensory, intellectual-cognitive, interpersonal, and cultural responsiveness. Many of these skills can be learned and developed during the master's program through coursework and clinical experience; however, there are skills that are more inherent and should be present when a student begins the program. A copy of the core functions is in the Core Functions section of the handbook.

Petitioning for Graduate Credit

Six credits of graduate course work that has been taken at a post-baccalaureate or undergraduate level can be petitioned for graduate credit. Written approval must be obtained by the graduate program director and chair of the department. By the midterm of their first term a student may submit a written petition to have an extra three credits transferred. The faculty will consider and vote on such petitions and the decision made by the faculty is final. The petition can be obtained on the graduate school webpage <http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/>.

Any incoming student wishing to transfer graduate credit will follow the procedure outlined by the Graduate School in the [Transfer Credit policy](#).

Core Functions

A Guide for Future Practitioners in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology: Core Functions

This document is intended as a guide for educational programs in speech-language pathology or audiology and individuals seeking a career in these professions. It identifies the core functions that individuals of such programs typically are expected to employ in didactic and clinical experiences to acquire the knowledge and demonstrate the competencies that will lead to graduation and successful entry into professional practice. This document replaces the Essential Functions document created by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD) in 2008. The document was updated to differentiate core functions from individual program requirements and to be inclusive of differences in behavioral and learning preferences associated with race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, and sensory, physical, or neurological status.

Instructions for Appropriate Use of this Document

This document may be used when:

- informing individuals about the core functions associated with the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology
- initiating discussions between students and programs regarding student success
- empowering students to make informed choices regarding their pursuit of professions in audiology and speech-language pathology
- facilitating strategies to achieve student success

- assisting programs and students in identifying and advocating for appropriate resources and accommodations
- advancing the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology through the lens of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This document must not be used:

- to discriminate against individuals for any reason
- as a measure of acceptance or denial into an educational program
- as a tool to presumptively judge individuals' potential for success
- as a stand-alone student assessment or intervention plan
- to dismiss students from a program

Use of this document is not required by CAPCSD or any accrediting or credentialing body, including the Council on Academic Accreditation or the Council for Clinical Certification of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

For the sake of this document, the term “core functions” refers to behavioral or cognitive functions that an individual must be able to perform with or without accommodations necessary to ensure equitable access. The document intentionally does not address how stated core functions are demonstrated, recognizing that there are multiple ways an individual can successfully meet the demands of clinical education and practice. The determination of possible accommodations exemplified in this document varies from institution to institution based on numerous factors not covered in the scope of this document. The degree to which accommodations are determined is under the governance of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is the responsibility of the institution and the individual to work together to identify possible services and accommodations.

To ensure the integrity of the messaging in this document, a glossary of terms is included at the end of the document.

Communication

Statements in this section acknowledge that audiologists and speech-language pathologists must communicate in a way that is understood by their clients/patients and others. It is recognized that linguistic, paralinguistic, stylistic, and pragmatic variations are part of every culture, and accent, dialects, idiolects, and communication styles can differ from general American English expectations. Communication may occur in different modalities depending on the joint needs of involved parties and may be supported through various accommodations as deemed reasonable and appropriate to client/patient needs. Some examples of these accommodations include augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices, written displays, voice amplification, attendant-supported communication, oral translators, assistive listening devices, sign interpreters, and other non-verbal communication modes.

- Employ oral, written, auditory, and non-verbal communication at a level sufficient to meet academic and clinical competencies.
- Adapt communication style to effectively interact with colleagues, clients, patients, caregivers, and invested parties of diverse backgrounds in various modes such as in person, over the phone, and in electronic format.

Motor

Statements in this section acknowledge that clinical practice by audiologists and speech-language pathologists involves a variety of tasks that require manipulation of items and environments. It is recognized that this may be accomplished through a variety of means, including, but not limited to, independent motor movement, assistive technology, attendant support, or other accommodations/modifications as deemed reasonable to offer and appropriate to client/patient needs.

- Engage in physical activities at a level required to accurately implement classroom and clinical responsibilities (e.g., manipulating testing and therapeutic equipment and technology, client/patient equipment, and practice management technology) while retaining the integrity of the process.
- Respond in a manner that ensures the safety of clients and others.

Sensory

Statements in this section acknowledge that audiologists and speech-language pathologists use auditory, visual, tactile, and olfactory information to guide clinical practice. It is recognized that such information may be accessed through a variety of means, including direct sensory perception and /or adaptive strategies. Some examples of these strategies include visual translation displays, text readers, assistive listening devices, and perceptual descriptions by clinical assistants.

- Access sensory information to differentiate functional and disordered auditory, oral, written, and visual communication.
- Access sensory information to correctly differentiate anatomical structures and diagnostic imaging findings.
- Access sensory information to correctly differentiate and discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.

Intellectual/Cognitive

Statements in this section acknowledge that audiologists and speech-language pathologists must engage in critical thinking, reasoning, and comprehension and retention of information required in clinical practice. It is recognized that such skills may be fostered through a variety of

means, including assistive technology and /or accommodations/modifications as deemed reasonable and appropriate to client/patient needs.

- Retain, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and apply auditory, written, and oral information at a level sufficient to meet curricular and clinical competencies.
- Employ informed critical thinking and ethical reasoning to formulate a differential diagnosis and create, implement, and adjust evaluation and treatment plans as appropriate for the client/patient's needs.
- Engage in ongoing self-reflection and evaluation of one's existing knowledge and skills.
- Critically examine and apply evidence-based judgment in keeping with best practices for client/patient care.

Interpersonal

Statements in this section acknowledge that audiologists and speech-language pathologists must interact with a diverse community of individuals in a manner that is safe, ethical, and supportive. It is recognized that personal interaction styles may vary by individuals and cultures and that good clinical practice honors such diversity while meeting this obligation.

- Display compassion, respect, and concern for others during all academic and clinical interactions.
- Adhere to all aspects of relevant professional codes of ethics, privacy, and information management policies.
- Take personal responsibility for maintaining physical and mental health at a level that ensures safe, respectful, and successful participation in didactic and clinical activities.

Cultural Responsiveness

Statements in this section acknowledge that audiologists and speech-language pathologists have an obligation to practice in a manner responsive to individuals from different cultures, linguistic communities, social identities, beliefs, values, and worldviews. This includes people representing a variety of abilities, ages, cultures, dialects, disabilities, ethnicities, genders, gender identities or expressions, languages, national/regional origins, races, religions, sexes, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and lived experiences.

- Engage in ongoing learning about cultures and belief systems different from one's own and the impacts of these on healthcare and educational disparities to foster effective provision of services.
- Demonstrate the application of culturally responsive evidence-based decisions to guide clinical practice.

This document should be considered a living document and therefore reviewed by CAPCSD at regular intervals to ensure that current terminology, practice, and ideas are reflected.

Glossary

Cultural responsiveness involves “understanding and respecting the unique cultural and linguistic differences that clients bring to the clinical interaction” (ASHA, 2017) and includes “incorporating knowledge of and sensitivity to cultural and linguistic differences into clinical and educational practices”.

Evidence-based practice involves “integrating the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics, culture, and preferences” (Evidence- Based Practice in Psychology, n.d.).

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). Cultural responsiveness [Practice Portal <https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Cultural-Responsiveness/>]

Evidence-Based Practice in Psychology. (n.d.). <https://www.apa.org>. Retrieved March 3, 2023, from <https://www.apa.org/practice/resources/evidence>

This Document should be cited as: Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (2023). A guide for future practitioners in audiology and speech-language pathology: Core functions. <https://www.capcsd.org/academic-and-clinical-resources/>

Approved by the CAPCSD Board of Directors

April 3, 2023

Reference update April 25, 2023

FORM: Core Functions Acknowledgement

The following will be reviewed during orientation, signed, and retained for the duration of the program.

Acknowledgement of Core Functions

I, _____ (name printed), acknowledge that I have been informed of the core functions associated with the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology.

I understand that I may discuss student success with faculty of the Master's Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Houston.

Furthermore, I understand that I may request accessibility or disability related accommodations that may be necessary for success in the COMD Master's Program by contacting the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center.

Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center
4369 Cougar Village Dr., Room 100
Houston, TX 77204-3022
Phone: (713) 743-5400
TDD: (713) 749-1527
Fax: (713) 743-5396
JDcenter@central.uh.edu

Signature

Date

Academic Advising

All graduate students will participate in ongoing group and individual academic and clinic advising throughout the program. Students will be assigned to an advisor prior to orientation.

Prior to their first term graduate students are required to attend a small group advising meeting with their advisor to obtain initial information regarding the COMD program. This usually occurs during orientation. Going forward, at least once each term there will be mandatory individual and group advising meetings. It is the obligation of every graduate student to attend advising meetings. Advising not only assists students in keeping on track and having a contact person for questions and issues but is required of accredited programs by the CAA.

In addition to required meetings, graduate students can, and should, make appointments to meet with advisors if they have questions or concerns which impact their performance in the program.

Documentation of advising meetings is required. Individual advising records will be housed in the students' permanent file. Students may request to see their advising record at any time.

In addition to advising, to facilitate awareness and monitor accuracy of documented progress through the graduate program, graduate students are expected to monitor their individual profiles via the Clinical Assessment of Learning, Inventory of Performance and Streamlined Office- Operations (CALIPSO), a web-based on-line tracking program designed for this purpose.

Degree Requirements

The UH COMD program provides students with all the requirements of a program accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). This is done by offering rigorous coursework, various practicum experiences, and other pre-professional activities. This program can be achieved in full-time or part-time status, both of which are described below.

Full-time students take 12 required content courses (total of 31 credits), one elective content course (total three credits) and a minimum of five practicum courses (15 credits) for a total of 49 credits of graduate study.

Part-time students take 12 required content courses (total of 31 credits) and one elective content course (total three credits). Clinic loads for part-time students do not increase as rapidly as for full-time students. Because of the smaller clinic loads, part-time students complete 7 practicum courses (21 credits). Part-time students will graduate with 55 credit hours.

All students complete a clinic assignment in each term they are enrolled in the graduate program except for part-time students, who may have one open summer term.

COMD offers departmental electives during the summer term. These may also support learning with the specialty concentrations. See below for more information about concentrations and electives.

In addition to their coursework graduate students must: (a) complete a minimum of 25 guided observation hours and 375 clinical practicum hours supervised by an ASHA certified speech-language pathologist; (b) pass the formative assessment; and (c) pass a comprehensive exam or successfully complete a master's thesis.

Full-time Master's Curriculum

FIRST YEAR

Fall 1

COMD 6261 Research and Critical Thinking
COMD 6372 Remediation of Childhood
Language Disorders
COMD 6334 Aphasia & Related Com
Disorders
COMD 7322 Speech Sound Disorders
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (1)

Spring 1

COMD 6340 Augmentative and Alternative
Communication
COMD 6326 Motor Speech Disorders
COMD 6321 Swallowing Disorders
COMD 6230 Autism Spectrum Disorders
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (2)

Summer 1

COMD 7381/7382/7383 Elective*
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (3)

SECOND YEAR

Fall 2

COMD 6328 Acquired Cognitive Disorders
COMD 6387 Voice Disorders
COMD 7392 Adv Pract Sp & Lang Dis
(Externship 1)

Spring 2

COMD 7170 Graduate Seminar in Speech-
Language Pathology
COMD 7221 Fluency Disorders
COMD 7392 Adv Pract Sp & Lang Dis
(Externship 2)
Comprehensive Exam (if applicable)

Summer 2

(As needed to complete clinical
experiences, thesis, electives, outstanding
interventions)

*Students must take 3 elective credits. COMD electives are offered in the summer terms.

COMD 7381 Seminar in Medical Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 7382 Cultural & Linguistic Diversity Issues in Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 7383 Seminar in Pediatric Speech-Language Pathology

Part-time Master's Program Details

The part-time program has several aspects which differ from the full-time program. These are listed here:

1. Students in the part-time program, just as in the full-time program, need to make graduate school their priority. Although the course & clinic loads are reduced, students need to be flexible in the times they can spend at UH, particularly for the clinic schedule. The more restrictive a student's schedule, the fewer clients they can be assigned, and the less variety they are likely to get in the program. Given current client scheduling procedures, it is very difficult to place students who are not available multiple full days.
2. Once a student has declared part-time status, that status cannot be changed back to full time at any point for the remainder of the program. Students may opt for part-time any time before externships begin. Once a student has been assigned to an externship site, part-time status will be considered only in extenuating circumstances. All students, whether full-time or part-time, will participate approximately 35 hours/week at their externship site(s).
3. Students who begin part-time cannot graduate earlier than the spring term of their third year. Selecting the part-time program entails enrolling in and completing more clinic experiences (7 terms) than the full-time program (5-6 terms).
4. Part-time students typically do not register for clinic or classes during their first summer term.
5. The clinic workload in the part-time program will increase in the first to second years, and second to third years. While students will take no more than 2 academic courses in any term, the number of client contact hours increases each year (from clinic I to II to III, to externship).
6. The final 2 terms will require full-time externship placements or equivalent (i.e., 30-40 hour/week workload).
7. In some terms, part-time students will register for fewer than 9 credit hours. Nine credits is the University definition of "full-time" for graduate work, a definition that is also used to determine financial aid. If a part-time student needs to be considered full-time for insurance and/or financial aid reasons, then they can register for a 1 credit "special topics" course that will require additional work outside the course requirements.
8. Due to the extended nature of the part-time program, many students will earn the required 375 client contact hours and all required competencies before finishing the final term in the program, or before they have enrolled in, or finished their final externship placement. Despite this, students are not allowed to graduate earlier than the spring term of their 3rd year and are not allowed to have a shortened spring externship.

Changes to the typical plan of study (FT or PT) must be made via coordination with the student's advisor as well as with the approval of the graduate program director and the externship coordinator.

Part-time Master's Curriculum

FIRST YEAR

Fall 1

COMD 7322 Speech Sound Disorders
COMD 6372 Remediation of Childhood
Language Disorders
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (1)

Spring 1

COMD 6340 Augmentative and Alternative
Communication
COMD 6230 Autism Spectrum Disorders
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (1a)

Summer 1

Off

SECOND YEAR

Fall 2

COMD 6334 Aphasia & Related Com
Disorders
COMD 6261 Research and Critical Thinking
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (2)

Spring 2

COMD 6321 Swallowing Disorders
COMD 6326 Motor Speech Disorders
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (2a)

Summer 2

COMD 7381/7382/7383 Elective*
COMD 7391 Clinic in Speech-Language
Disorders (3)

THIRD YEAR

Fall 3

COMD 6387 Voice Disorders
COMD 6328 Cognitive Disorders
COMD 7392 Adv Pract Sp & Lang Dis
(Externship 1)

Spring 3

COMD 7221 Fluency Disorders
COMD 7170 Graduate Seminar in Speech-
Language Pathology
COMD 7392 Adv Pract Sp & Lang Dis
(Externship 2)
Comprehensive Exam (if applicable)

*Students must take 3 elective credits. COMD electives are offered in the summer terms.
COMD 7381 Seminar in Medical Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 7382 Cultural & Linguistic Diversity Issues in Speech-Language Pathology
COMD 7383 Seminar in Pediatric Speech-Language Pathology

In addition to the courses above, students may take COMD 6397 Selected Topics in COMD, or COMD 6398 Special Problems in COMD to pursue individual interests. These must be discussed with specific instructors and approved by the Program Director and/or Department Chair.

Formative Assessment

All master's program students complete a reflection report on formative assessment that is submitted near the end of their second fall semester for full-time students or in their third fall semester for part-time students. The reflection report uses Gibb's Reflective Cycle to provide structure to the learning experience. Students use six stages to explore the formative assessment experience: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. Instructions for how to complete the reflection report and the grading rubric used for the written paper are distributed in mandatory group advising meetings. Progress through the formative assessment process is documented on the "Formative Assessment Activities" form which is also provided in the group advising meetings. Passing the formative assessment requirements is determined by the student's advisor, who will review and grade the reflection report as well as check the student's completion of the case-based activities from academic courses. Failure to successfully complete the formative assessment activities in classes or to pass the reflection report, will constitute lack of sufficient academic progress and may result in removal from the program.

Comprehensive Examinations

The master's comprehensive examination (comps) is one of the requirements of graduate education. Full-time graduate students must take the comprehensive exam during their 5th term while part-time students take the test during their final term. The exam consists of complex clinical scenarios with related multiple-choice questions. The goal is to assess how students integrate material across content areas rather than simply reciting facts. Integrating the major aspects of the field across disorder categories that are within the scope of practice of the profession encourages the student to think like a clinician. Comps questions probe etiology, assessment, and treatment of a variety of communication disorders, as well as research, professional, interprofessional, and ethical issues which present throughout the entirety of the field.

Students who have done well in their courses and clinical practica should not have difficulty with this format. The information is not new; it comes from program content. The exam is designed not only to assess summative knowledge but also to help students achieve more

confidence in their knowledge as they prepare for clinical fellowship. The ability to integrate information will lead to a successful career in speech-language pathology, regardless of the employment setting. Further information concerning preparing for comps will be discussed at a mandatory group advising meeting during the last term. Information regarding comps intervention is in the [Formative Assessment of Knowledge and Skills](#) section.

Professional Engagement

Prior to program completion each student will participate in at least one professional engagement activity. This activity will be documented as part of CAA Standard IV, Contemporary Professional Issues. Specifics on the professional engagement activity are found in [Appendix F](#).

Academic Progress

The UH Graduate Catalog (<http://publications.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=40&navoid=13997>) states: A satisfactory rate of progress toward the degree is required throughout a student's enrollment. A department may terminate enrollment at any time if the rate of progress is not satisfactory. A student whose enrollment is terminated will be notified, with an explanation, in writing by the chair of the department of the major. Copies of this notice and explanation will be sent to the dean of the student's college.

Furthermore, Graduate students cannot graduate with a less than 3.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA) calculated as described above. Students whose cumulative GPA is below 3.00 will be classified as on GPA Warning. Students on GPA Warning are not eligible for graduation. When a GPA Warning student raises their cumulative GPA to 3.00 or above, they will return to Good Academic Standing. Failure to maintain a 3.00 GPA may also result in academic probation, suspension, loss of financial support, or dismissal according to college/departmental policy. The student should review and be familiar with the degree requirements and academic policies of their academic unit.

http://publications.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=40&navoid=14006#cumulative_gpa

In the UH COMD program, satisfactory performance occurs when a student demonstrates knowledge and skills in the key attributes of professional practice which have been defined by the department and ASHA's Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and speech-Language Pathology (CFCC). Satisfactory progress toward the degree is defined as (a) grades of B- or higher and (b) demonstration of the specific learning objectives for academic courses established by CFCC. Progress in clinic includes (a) grades of B or higher for clinic assignments and (b) demonstration of clinical competencies in clinical skill areas established by CFCC. Lastly, students must successfully complete application activities (i.e., formative, and summative assessments, see below). Students who do not initially demonstrate acquisition of knowledge or skills in academic or clinical components of the program will need to complete an

intervention plan to demonstrate acquisition of the specified learning expectation (see Intervention Plans below). Any COMD academic course for which a grade of D or lower is earned must be repeated. Any COMD clinic course for which a grade of B- or lower is earned must be repeated.

Progress in the Master’s Program			
Academic Classes in COMD	Meets specific learning objectives in each course	Earns grades of B- or higher	Passes all components of the Formative Assessment
Clinic Assignments (COMD 7391 or 7392)	Meets clinical competencies in each of the nine areas	Earns grades of B or higher	
Passes Summative Assessment (i.e., comprehensive exam)			

A letter from the master’s program director will be sent to students who earn unsatisfactory grades or objectives (academic or clinic). This letter will serve as a warning or dismissal and include steps that must be taken by the student. Master’s students who earn 2 or more unsatisfactory grades will be dismissed from the program. This can be any combination of academic and/or clinic courses either in 2 different terms or in the same academic term (e.g., two final grades of C in academic courses, one D and one C in academic courses, two grades of B- in clinic courses, or one C in an academic course and one B- in a clinic course). Graduate students who were admitted on a conditional/provisional basis who earn 1 or more unsatisfactory grade(s) during their first term (full-time) or first two terms (part-time) will be dismissed from the program.

Students are provided with academic advisors and access to CALIPSO to help track academic and clinical progress.

For cases in which external factors (medical, family, financial, etc.) may be preventing satisfactory progress, students may consider a leave of absence. After discussing options with an advisor, requests for leaves of absence must be formally filed with the master’s program director and are considered on a case-by-case basis. While leaves may result in the extension of the program by one or more terms, often they provide the needed time for a student to address external factors so they can succeed once they return.

Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

The UH COMD master’s program provides academic preparation for application for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology. The complete list of standards for this certification established by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology may be found at: <https://www.asha.org/Certification/2020-SLP-Certification-Standards/>.

The achievement of these standards may be summarized as follows:

- Knowledge of the field is not assumed based on acquiring a specified number of courses or credits in specific areas. Rather, students need to obtain knowledge that has been reflected in specific learning markers (student learning outcomes) for each of the standards.
- Every required course will specify the standards and learning markers that will be addressed. Students will be assessed by their ability to meet these goals through a variety of assessment tools (e.g., exams, quizzes, papers, presentations).
- Students who do not demonstrate knowledge of a learning marker will have an intervention plan developed to allow an opportunity to successfully demonstrate acquisition of that learning marker following additional support. Each intervention plan is developed on an individual basis. Please see the Intervention Plan section (below) for a more complete discussion of this procedure.

UH COMD uses the Clinical Assessment of Learning, Inventory of Performance and Streamlined Office-Operations (CALIPSO) software program to track students' progress in terms of acquisition of knowledge and skills as well as clinical hours. Students are required to monitor progress and keep contact information updated in CALIPSO. An electronic record of the learning marker form will be kept in the department for the duration of each student's master's program and for ten years following graduation.

The CALIPSO web address is: www.calipsoclient.com

Formative Assessment

There are many ways to assess knowledge and skills in the master's program. There are multiple classes or experiences used for students to achieve full knowledge of a given learning marker, so that indicator cannot be met until all those classes or experiences are successfully completed. These items will be marked as "in progress" until all related courses or experiences are successfully completed.

Most courses in the master's program have case-based activities that link didactic learning to clinical decisions. Each semester students are charged with applying course content to cases representing related information with the goal of linking academic knowledge to clinical knowledge and skills. As students progress through the master's program curriculum, they are regularly assigned case-based activities. Therefore, formative assessment is achieved with repetition and building upon prior knowledge and skills using activities where students apply course content to clinical cases.

As described in the previous section on Program Requirements, near the end of the students second fall semester (or third fall semester for part-time students) a reflection report on formative assessment is completed and submitted to their advisor. The goal of this reflection is to review and assess the impact of case-based activities on clinical thinking. After reviewing the reflection report as well as checking the completion of the other classes or experiences, the advisor will indicate that the formative assessment has been passed.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment taps the comprehensive knowledge students have obtained throughout their graduate education. Students will sit for and pass an internal comprehensive examination or complete a thesis as an assessment of summative learning. More information regarding the [comprehensive examination](#) and [thesis options](#) is available in subsequent sections of this handbook. Students will also receive detailed information about both throughout their programs.

Clinical Skills Assessment

The Performance Evaluation Form, listing the knowledge and skills necessary for completion of the master's program, is used for clinical and externship practicum experiences. This is found on CALIPSO. Specific details relating to expectations and documentation of experiences and acquisition of skills can be found in the Clinic Handbook.

An electronic record of clinical skill acquisition is maintained to chart progress throughout the master's program using CALIPSO. It is the student's responsibility to monitor skill acquisition and clinic hour accrual in CALIPSO and to work with the clinic director to obtain the necessary experiences for certification.

The department will retain documentation of all intervention plans, work, and subsequent outcomes in the student's file.

Verification by Program Director Form for Speech-Language Pathology:

Students who are applying for certification in speech-language pathology must exhibit knowledge and skills determined by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology as described above. This will be documented on the Certification Application 2020 form and elaborated on the Knowledge and Skill Acquisition- KASA- form found on CALIPSO. At the conclusion of the program, the advisors assure that the student completed all requirements, which generates a completed Verification by Program Director page of the ASHA application for certification. When the applicant submits certification paperwork, an email will be sent to the Department Chair for an electronic signature verifying completion of all academic requirements.

Students will be able to print a copy of their completed education and clinical records via CALIPSO and should KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE. However, the entire record does not have to be submitted to ASHA when applying for certification.

Intervention Plans

Students who do not initially demonstrate acquisition of knowledge or skills in academic or clinical components of the program will need to complete an intervention plan to demonstrate acquisition of the specified learning expectation. These are elaborated in the following sections.

Academic Coursework

Students who do not demonstrate adequate knowledge of predetermined specific learning markers on coursework (including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, presentations, written work) will be assigned an intervention plan. The plan, constructed by the instructor, may include an oral and/or written component. Completion of the intervention to the satisfaction of the instructor is necessary for learning markers to be met and documented on CALIPSO.

Individual instructors will establish the timeframe for completion of the intervention, which may extend beyond the actual term and must be successfully completed before the second week of the following semester (unless otherwise specified by the instructor). Completion of intervention plans will not change a student's grade. Additionally, students may or may not be assigned to clients until learning markers for the coursework related to relevant disorder(s) are met to the instructor's satisfaction. For example, if a student has an outstanding intervention for the aphasia course, the program director will inform the clinic director about the student's intervention, and the student may or may not be assigned a client with aphasia until the intervention is successfully completed. Clinical assignments are made by the clinic director.

Failure to successfully complete the intervention to the satisfaction of the instructor within the specified timeframe may result in removal due to lack of academic progress.

Clinical Practicum

In clinic (COMD 7391), intervention plans are required for any student who earned a grade below a B. An intervention plan will be developed with support from the clinic director and the clinical educator(s) who supervised the student during the clinical placement in which the student earned a grade below a B. Specific behavioral objectives reflecting skills that need to be developed will be outlined with recommended intervention strategies.

At the beginning of the subsequent term, the student's clinical educator(s) will be provided with the intervention documentation and an intervention plan tracking sheet to be reviewed weekly with the student. The student will receive written feedback on their progress on the

intervention plan at the midterm and end-of-term conferences. All objectives of the intervention plan must be met before the end of the term to successfully fulfill the intervention plan. Completion of intervention plans will not change a student's grade.

In externship (COMD 7392/7692/7992), intervention plans are required for any student who does not satisfactorily complete a clinical experience and/or fails to meet the competencies associated with the clinical placement. Specific goals for intervention in the areas of weakness will be developed with the student, site CE, and externship director. The goals must be met before moving forward in the clinical sequence and before graduation. The student will receive written feedback on their progress on the intervention plan at mutually agreed upon times (e.g., weekly, monthly). All objectives of the intervention plan must be met before the end of the term to successfully fulfill the intervention plan. Completion of intervention plans will not change a student's grade.

Any one student can have no more than three clinical interventions during their program. Interventions may not be repeated in the same area (e.g., language) or clinical skill area (e.g., displays effective written communication for all professional correspondence). After one intervention in that clinical skill area or disorder, a student should perform without the additional support in subsequent semesters and with subsequent clients. Failure to meet these criteria will result in dismissal from the program due to lack of sufficient progress.

Formative Assessment Reflection Report

An intervention plan for failed portions of the reflection report will be constructed individually by the student's advisor depending on the area(s) failed by the student (e.g., incomplete course project or incomplete reflection of evaluation, analysis, etc.). The intervention must be successfully completed and passed before graduation exit procedures begin.

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination (comps) is a critical step in exhibiting summative learning. Therefore, interventions will be required for any student who fails one or more content area(s) of comps (i.e., less than 6/10 in a section). Interventions will focus on the failed area(s) and will be constructed by the relevant instructor. Interventions may involve an oral and/or written component and must be completed prior to graduate exit interviews. A student who fails 3 or more content areas or receives a score below 70 will be required to re-take the comprehensive exam.

A re-take of the comprehensive exam will be set by the department and will be a minimum of 4 weeks after grades are posted. A re-take exam may involve the student staying for an additional term of graduate school. To comply with university requirements for graduation, the student is required to enroll in at least 1 credit during the term in which they re-take the comprehensive examination. Any student who fails the comprehensive examination twice will

be dismissed from the program due to lack of academic progress. Students may petition to be reinstated (see information above regarding petitions for reinstatement).

Clinical Programs

The Clinic Handbook outlines policies and procedures for the clinic. All students admitted to the graduate program are required to be familiar with the information provided in the Clinic Handbook.

Students must submit the required 25 clinical observation hours, with appropriate signatures and ASHA certification numbers and confirmation of supervision training for hours accrued after January 1, 2020, prior to beginning graduate practica. Documents that do not include the required signatures or ASHA certification numbers will not be accepted. Students who have clinical hours from other universities are responsible for submitting a record of those hours to the Clinic Director prior to their first graduate practicum experience. Students may submit up to 50 hours of clinical practicum obtained at another accredited institution. The clock hours record must be signed by the supervisor with CCC-SLP or CCC-A and ASHA certification number.

Any student who drops clinic after their practicum has been assigned will not be assigned clients during the next twelve-month period unless prior approval was granted by the Clinic Director.

On-Campus Clinic

The University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic: A United Way agency (USLHC) is the training facility housed within the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Houston. Graduate students enrolled in COMD are required to enroll in a minimum of 3 terms of on-campus clinic, consisting of treatment, diagnostic, and screening experiences.

Participation in the on-campus clinic is contingent upon completing the speech and hearing self-screening. Students must complete a Practicum Enrollment Form and attend graduate orientation prior to the first clinical practicum experience.

The USLHC follows policies and procedures in the clinic handbook. Policies and procedures for off-campus externships are also included in the clinic handbook.

ASHA sets forth specific guidelines regarding practica that address ethical behavior (see the ASHA Code of Ethics; <https://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/>), supervision requirements during practica, the number and types of clock hours students must earn as part of the pre-certification process, and the clinical competencies that must be demonstrated in nine areas of clinical practice. Students who successfully complete clinics and externships during their matriculation through the UH COMD master's program should accrue a sufficient number of

hours and demonstrate all clinical competencies required to begin their Clinical Fellowship after graduation. However, students are responsible for ensuring they obtain the types of clinical experiences they need and that they demonstrate entry-level clinical competence across the age span and in all disorder areas.

Community Screenings

Students are required to complete speech, language, and/or hearing screening experiences at off-site locations (e.g., pre-schools, schools, health fairs). A minimum of ten hours of hearing screening experience are required to earn hearing evaluation competencies. Hearing screenings, while listed as hearing evaluation in CALIPSO, are in the SLP scope of practice.

Off-Campus Externships

Externships are available for students to do practica off campus. Second year graduate students typically complete two terms of practica off site in one adult and one pediatric placement. Students should be prepared to work 30-40 hours/week at their externship site (or combination of sites). Most externship sites require students to attend five days a week. Students are expected to complete the entire term at their assigned sites. Therefore, students who earn 375 contact hours and/or all competencies prior to the end of the second extern rotation are not allowed to have a shortened externship.

If less than 20 hours per week is spent at an externship site (or combination of externship sites), and/or a minimum of 50 client contact hours is not achieved, the student will earn a grade of incomplete. The master's program is designed to minimize the number of academic courses taken concurrently with externships. Only in rare instances will a student be allowed to take more than 2 academic courses in the same semester as an externship placement.

Prior to enrollment in an externship experience, students need to have successfully completed clinic I-III, including treatment of both adult and pediatric clients and a diagnostic assignment, with a grade of B or better.

Specific regulations for the externship experience will be presented at an externship application meeting and can be found in the clinic handbook.

Should a summer externship placement apply, the rotation will generally follow the Summer Session 1 schedule (See UH Academic Calendar for details).

Dropping Courses

The UH COMD master's program is designed for academic preparation for clinical experiences. Therefore, if a course is dropped, it is not only difficult to insert it within the structure of the program, but there may also be clinical implications as well. Withdrawal from a course may

result in extension of the graduate program. The University policies concerning dropped courses are as available at: <http://publications.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=37&navoid=13814>

Withdrawal from Program

Upon beginning the program, continuous enrollment is expected for the fall, spring and summer terms until the degree is completed. Although the program is intended to be completed in 5 (full-time) or 7/8 (part-time) semesters, students have five years to complete all the requirements for the master's degree. Leaves from the program for medical or other exceptional reasons are allowed and may be recommended. Leave request must be submitted in writing on the graduate petition form (<http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/>) to the master's program director and approved by the faculty and the college. Requests are considered on an individual basis. Graduate and professional students who receive medical withdrawals must provide medical documentation indicating they are able to return and obtain permission from their college Dean to enroll again at the University of Houston.

Praxis Examination in Speech-Language Pathology

The Praxis Examination in Speech-Language Pathology (code 5331) is the national exam for speech-language pathology (SLP). It is required for ASHA certification and for Texas SLP licensure. It is not required for graduation from UH COMD.

The Praxis is a 2.5-hour timed test consisting of 132 questions. A passing score is determined by ASHA's Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Students must indicate that they are from the University of Houston, Main Campus (or University Park), code 0300, and request that their score be sent to the UH COMD department (code 0300) so that we can keep records for our files and accreditation reporting. Further information concerning preparing for the Praxis will be discussed at a mandatory group advising meeting during the final term and is available on the ASHA website.

<http://www.asha.org/Certification/praxis/About-the-Speech-Language-Pathology-Praxis-Exam/>

Students are encouraged to take the Praxis exam around the time of their comprehensive examination. Registration and further information are available from ETS.

<https://www.ets.org/praxis/register/> Students who receive accommodations from UH in the MA program may request accommodations from ETS (<https://www.ets.org/praxis/register/disabilities/>)

Graduation Exit Procedures

To be eligible for exit checkout students must have completed (a) all coursework including receiving a grade and completing all interventions; (b) all clinic assignments including receiving a Supervisor's Report from the externship supervisor; and (c) the preliminary GA clinic

checkout. For specifics on checkout procedures from the clinic please refer to the Clinic Handbook.

Students must then schedule final exit appointments in the following order:

1. Clinic director check out - clinic hours and skills verification (CALIPSO review)
 - a. Students can and are expected to have a final copy (download or print) of their clinic hours on CALIPSO. The clinic director will ensure that all the clinical competencies have been met.
2. Advisor academic checkout - knowledge verification (CALIPSO review).
 - a. Students will review a copy of the completed ASHA Standards and Implementation Record from CALIPSO at the exit appointment.
 - b. Advisor will confirm program completion and complete an exit interview (or verify that it was completed).

As part of the program check out, students will receive a letter to present to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation verifying final grades and total clinic experience hours and certify that all graduate degree requirements have been fulfilled. This allows the student to apply for Texas licensure prior to receiving their official diploma. The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Coursework and Clinical Experience confirmation form, SPA016, found at:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/sipa/forms/SPA016%20Intern%20in%20SLPA%20course%20work%20and%20clinical%20experience.pdf>, will be completed and signed by the department chair.

In addition to the forms required by the State, the Verification by Program Director page of the ASHA Application for Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology will be prepared for students via CALIPSO. For the certification electronic application, the form will be generated and sent to the Department Chair for verification when the student begins the CCC application process.

The full CCC application process can be found at <https://www.asha.org/certification/SLPCertification/>.

Texas Licensure

A master's degree is required for certification by ASHA and by the State of Texas for professional licensure. The master's degree and ASHA certification are the minimal credentials in speech-language pathology. The Texas Department for Licensing and Regulation licenses certified speech-language pathologists and audiologists as well as interns (persons completing their clinical fellowship under the supervision of a licensed, certified SLP) and speech-language pathology assistants. A Speech-Language Pathology license is granted to applicants who have completed their master's degree at an accredited school, have completed their intern requirements working under the supervision of a licensed SLP and who have passed the [Praxis examination](#), (the national examination in speech-language pathology) and a jurisprudence

examination described below. An individual must hold one of the licensure credentials to practice speech- language pathology in the State of Texas. Speech-language pathology assistants work under the direct supervision of a licensed SLP and are required to have a completed the undergraduate major coursework in communication sciences and disorders and have obtained 25 hours of observation and 25 hours of supervised clinical experience.

The link for online license applications is: <https://vo.licensing.tdlr.texas.gov/datamart/login.do> . Follow the directions for license applications. The details for this process change frequently, so it is best to check the website before beginning.

Professionals licensed within the State of Texas must adhere to the Rules/Regulations set by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. These can be found at: <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/slpa/slparules.htm>.

All individuals applying for or renewing SLP licensure in the State of Texas must take a Jurisprudence Examination. This on-line examination can be taken at the time of application. Details are available at: <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/slpa/slpaexams.htm>.

Thesis & Specialty Concentrations

Master's Thesis

Graduate students have the option of completing a Master's Thesis under the direction of one of the COMD faculty members. A Master's thesis is an original research project that may involve collecting and analyzing new data or analyzing existing data. The project completed as a Master's thesis should be publishable in a peer-reviewed venue. Students who are considering a Master's Thesis must obtain consent from a COMD faculty member who is willing to act as the thesis committee chair. Students who opt to complete a thesis must register for six thesis credits. The first 3 hours typically are taken in the summer term and replace the program elective. Students must be registered for thesis credits in the term their thesis is completed and defended; therefore, the other 3 hours tend to be completed in the last spring term. Thesis students are exempt from taking the comprehensive examination.

Thesis Guideline and Steps for Completion

Please note that the following should be used as a guideline only. Each thesis committee is different, and the thesis committee may deem it necessary to make changes in particular procedures or timelines. At each stage of the process the student should confirm the procedures and timeline with their committee.

The guidelines presented here are based on a 5-term program. Students in a part-time program will adjust accordingly and with their advisors' support and approval.

Students who are interested in pursuing the academic challenge of a master's research thesis are encouraged to do so. This process takes approximately a year and a half to complete (Spring 1, Summer, Fall and Spring 2), so appropriate planning is necessary to meet the requirements. Students will complete a total of 6 thesis credit hours. This guide can help students plan, but all final timelines and decisions are made by the thesis chair with input from the thesis committee as needed.

Spring 1

Students should secure thesis committee members no later than the first spring semester, including: a thesis committee chair (person in the department of COMD who has expertise in the project subject area; this is the person with whom the student has the most contact during the thesis process), a second committee member from the COMD department, and at least one faculty committee member from outside the department (within or outside of the university). The committee chair can help select appropriate committee members. See below for links to the CLASS Committee Appointment Record.

Students should conduct a bibliographical search with the guidance of the committee chair to write the first two chapters of the thesis: Literature Review and Methods. This may be an expansion of a project in another class. Research questions and hypothesis should be clearly presented. These two chapters are the basis for the prospectus and prospectus meeting. Students are encouraged to use library resources <https://guides.lib.uh.edu/commdisorders/main> and may request assistance with the search from the COMD liaison at the MD Anderson Library.

Students should read the [UHCOMD Master's Thesis Contract](#), and discuss it with the thesis committee chair. After discussion, the student should sign two copies of the form. One copy of the signed form is to be submitted to the COMD program coordinator to be filed in the student's permanent record and the second copy is retained by the student. The thesis committee chair will update the Thesis Tracking system in the COMD Share Point with the name of the student and the general topic of the research.

The prospectus meeting should occur by the end of the Spring semester. In some instances, the prospectus meeting could take place in the summer or early in the Fall semester, but this is only advisable if there is no data collection involved in the research project (e.g., secondary data analyses). The student should contact the committee members to find a time when all can attend the prospectus meeting. With the committee chair's approval, the student submits the first two chapters to the committee members, allowing approximately two weeks for them to review the chapters prior to the prospectus meeting. At the prospectus meeting, the student will present a brief outline of the proposed project to include a review of the literature, purpose, and rationale of the study as well as proposed methodology (15-20 minutes). Committee members will discuss the proposed project during this meeting and may offer suggestions, raise concerns, and/or present questions. Committee members may provide

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written feedback on the document (e.g., revisions, questions, comments). The student should bring two (2) copies of the [Thesis Committee Prospectus Approval Record](#). Committee members should sign this form at the prospectus meeting. One copy of the signed form is to be submitted to the COMD program coordinator to be filed in the student's permanent record and the second copy is retained by the student.

Students are not permitted to begin data collection (in cases where initial/new data collection is planned to occur) or analyses prior to completing the prospectus meeting.

Summer:

Register for Thesis COMD 6399 (3 credit hours) in the summer (in lieu of the summer elective). An incomplete (I) grade will be assigned for COMD 6399 at the end of the semester. When the thesis is completed, the student will receive the same letter grade for both the first and second sections of thesis (This will replace the incomplete grade in COMD 6399).

If the research project involves human subjects, prepare the application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB only convenes once per month, so it is imperative to be aware of and meet all deadlines for submission. Student projects are submitted to Committee 3: <http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/irb/irb-cmte-3/>. Follow guidelines for online submission via ICON on the UH Division of Research website ([ICON IRB Help – University of Houston \(uh.edu\)](#)). Online & in-person training and review of submissions are available through the IRB. Students should be ready to submit IRB application as soon as the prospectus meeting is complete, and revisions have been made. It is important to note that IRB approval may take 1-2 months; data collection and/or analyses cannot begin until formal IRB approval has been received.

While awaiting IRB approval, students will revise the first two chapters as suggested by the committee members.

Summer and Fall:

After receiving formal IRB approval, the student will proceed with the remainder of the research project as agreed upon by their thesis committee. The workload differs based on the project, but students should be prepared to devote at least one complete semester to the labor-intensive process of data collection and data analyses.

Spring 2:

Register for Thesis COMD 7399 (3 credit hours).

Begin writing and complete the Results and Discussion chapters with a plan to complete both by the end of March. The thesis must adhere to all guidelines established by the UH College of

Liberal Arts and Social Sciences: <http://www.uh.edu/class/students/graduate/thesis-dissertation-info/>.

Consult with thesis committee members to finalize a date, time, and location for the thesis defense. This defense date should be provided to the COMD program coordinator and director to publicize the date, time, and location as per UH procedures. Defenses are open to the public and may be attended by members of the academic, local, or larger community.

At least two weeks prior to the defense, obtain approval of the final draft of the thesis from the thesis committee chair.

Submit all chapters of the thesis draft to thesis committee members (at least two weeks before the defense) to review. Anticipate that some thesis committee members will provide feedback prior to the defense. Make revisions as needed with consultation from the thesis committee chair.

Prepare a 15–20-minute presentation of the thesis project with particular focus on the results and discussion sections. Prepare three signature pages on 100% cotton paper for the committee members to possibly sign at the defense and if not as soon as revisions are complete (see below).

During the thesis defense, the student will give their presentation first. Then, the committee chair will open discussion with questions coming first from the thesis committee followed by questions from other attendees. After the conclusion of this discussion the thesis committee members will discuss privately and conclude whether or not the student passed and successfully completed the thesis project. If the committee agrees that the student passes, they will proceed to sign the signature pages. The student must ensure that they have the most current thesis/dissertation forms to obtain final approval and signatures from the thesis committee. The student will submit this form to the UH CLASS thesis/dissertation coordinator along with the completed final thesis document.

The committee may request minor or major changes before signatures are provided (please see the next section for details on revisions).

After the defense, when any requested revisions are completed, the complete thesis document should be prepared for submission to the CLASS Dean's office and submitted as instructed, including all formatting requirements. <http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/academics/thesis/>. Submissions must meet the UH CLASS deadlines.

To submit the final completed thesis, the student will need to convert the word document to a PDF. The PDF must then be uploaded to the Vireo system: <https://uh-etd.tdl.org/> The student will receive confirmation from the faculty chair and college coordinator when the document has been accepted.

It is critical that all students who are working on a thesis project maintain good academic standing. Therefore, a student will be asked to drop the thesis project if they have a grade of C or below in any of their graduate academic or clinic classes. In rare occurrences, students might obtain permission from their mentor to submit a written petition to the COMD Department Chair to continue working on the thesis project. The decision to approve this petition is with the Department Chair who may seek additional input from the faculty.

In rare occasions, students need to drop the thesis project due to various circumstances (e.g., grades in the graduate classes, lack of progress in the project, medical leave). It is important that students understand that dropping the thesis project might result in the addition of a second summer semester to their academic program to be able to graduate. If students drop the project during the second fall semester, they will get a grade for the quality of the work completed in the previous summer semester and they must complete all academic activities that are expected in the graduate program (Comprehensive exam) in Spring 2. If the student drops the thesis project during Spring 2, they might be required to complete an extra summer semester to complete their Comprehensive exam.

CLASS Thesis Committee Appointment Record and Information Links:

[class-thesis-committee-appointment-form-4 2021 fillable.pdf \(uh.edu\)](#)

[Thesis and Dissertation – University of Houston \(uh.edu\)](#)

FORM: Thesis Committee Prospectus Approval Record

(Chair to provide the actual form revised 5/2021)

Student Name

Research Topic

Committee Members:

Committee Chair printed name

Department

Committee Member printed name

Department

Committee Member printed name

Department

Approval of prospectus (approve continuation of the project) (Circle one):

Approve with no/minor changes

Approve with major changes discussed

Do not approve*

Committee Chair (signature) / Date

Committee Member (signature) / Date

Committee Member (signature) / Date

Comments:

*Requires student to submit additional written revisions and/or new prospectus meeting

UHCOMD Master's Thesis Contract

(Chair to provide the actual form revised 1/2020)

Taking on a thesis requires time and work above and beyond the requirements of the Master's program. Thesis projects generally span 12-14 months and require an additional 3 credits. In addition to the time/effort from the student, faculty thesis advisors and committee members that take on thesis projects commit their time and effort to guide the student and the project, above and beyond their teaching and research commitments. While the role of the thesis advisor is to provide assistance and mentoring, there is an expectation that the student will complete much of the project independently.

I (print name) _____ in taking on a Master's thesis with (print name) _____ as my thesis advisor, agree to the following:

- I will put in the required time and effort to complete the thesis project.
- I will meet the deadlines agreed to in my discussion with my thesis advisor.
- If I feel I am unable to complete the project within the timeline and with an appropriate amount of independence, I will discuss with my thesis advisor before the end of the first semester of thesis credits.
- I agree to assist with preparing the project/manuscript for presentation or publication. If I fail to assist within months, I agree that my thesis advisor can present or publish the project. If I do not assist on the presentation or publication, authorship on it is not guaranteed.
- I acknowledge that I may have to register for an additional semester of thesis credits if I do not complete all requirements by the university deadline.
- I acknowledge that I may have to drop the thesis option if I do not meet the deadlines set by my thesis advisor.
- I acknowledge that I may have to drop the thesis option if I do not maintain an adequate level of academic or clinical performance.
- I acknowledge that dropping the thesis will require completing EBPR 2 and comprehensive exams.

Student signature

Date

Faculty Advisor signature

Date

Specialty Concentrations

The UH COMD master's program, like all accredited programs, must provide a range of courses and clinical experiences so that students obtain knowledge and skills that span the "Big 9" disorders identified by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). We understand that some students wish to specialize and obtain more in-depth, focused learning with a particular population or disorder area.

To provide a way to obtain some specialized learning, we offer Specialty Concentrations. A Specialty Concentration is an optional, mentored experience designed individually for each student. The Specialty Concentrations require work above and beyond that expected of the UH COMD master's program. Interested students will meet with a faculty mentor and develop a specialty concentration contract that includes all required elements and deadlines.

Ideally the product generated will benefit more than just the student; it is not just writing a paper or creating a project just to show student learning. Some examples of Specialty Concentration activities include assisting with writing a chapter; assisting with one or more components of a research project; experiences in assessment or treatment beyond clinic assignments; creating materials to enhance communication or knowledge of communication disorders in the community or in practice.

Students who choose to do a master's Thesis will not be eligible for a Specialty Concentration, because they will develop a specialty area through the structured process of completing the thesis.

Requirements:

1. Students and mentors must include an educational component in their plan. Students, in consultations with their mentors, can take an elective course related to their topic either through the COMD department or another department or by completing 3 credits worth of COMD Special Problems credits. The content of the Special Problems 'course' is at the discretion of the faculty mentor, and can include online workshops and trainings, assigned readings and discussion. These credits will fulfill the 3 credits of electives required in the UH COMD master's program. Selected Topics or Special Problems credits can be taken in 1-3 credit increments. If the credits are taken in 1- or 2- credit increments, once students begin taking Special Problems credits, they must also complete all the prescribed requirements for the Specialty Concentration, otherwise they may not fulfill the 3 credits of electives required for the MA program, which could result in a delay of graduation.
2. Students will be required to maintain the minimum grade for the clinic (B) and classes (B-) to begin and continue a specialty concentration. If students are below the minimum requirement at mid-term, the specialty concentration will be put on hold until the end of the semester. If the final grade meets the requirement, the specialty concentration may be resumed. If it does not meet the final grade requirement, the specialty concentration is discontinued.

The activities, projects, and expectations of the Specialty Concentrations are individualized and agreed upon by the student and their faculty mentor.

Timeline and Deadlines

Students who choose to complete a Specialty Concentration must meet with a mentor and sign a Specialty Concentration contract by the end of January of their first year in the program (or second year for part-time students). Students must commit to completing the Specialty Concentration at the time that they begin taking 3 credits that are Concentration specific if that is specified in the plan. Failure to complete the requirements after this point may delay graduation, as the Special Problems credits meet the required 3 credits of electives.

All aspects of the program must be completed 1 month prior to graduation for the student to earn a Specialty Concentration Certificate.

Departmental Scholarships and Traineeships

There are several scholarships and traineeships available in COMD. Most are awarded at admission; however, several opportunities open at other times during the program. [Please refer to the website for current information:](#)
<https://www.uh.edu/class/comd/programs/graduate/financial-assistance/>.

Additional Graduate Student Financial Aid

University Funds. The University offers a variety of financial assistance packages to undergraduates and graduates. For further information, contact the Student Financial Services Office at (713) 743-9090. We highly recommend that students investigate the Graduate School Fund, which is described on the funding webpage. <http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/graduate-funding/>. Remember to complete your FAFSA form as early as possible. The FAFSA opens in October each year.

There are many sources of academic funding that are outside of the University and COMD. The following list has some of these opportunities.

- Fastweb (free scholarship searches): www.demo.studentservices.com/fastweb/
 - A searchable database of more than 180,000 private sector scholarships and grants.
- The Financial Aid Information Page: www.finaid.org/
 - Comprehensive information about sources of student financial aid.
- Student Guide: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml>
 - The Department of Education's guide to all major federal aid programs.

For information on Texas and federal assistance, consult the following guides and databases:

- The Scholarship Database: <https://www.aie.org/resources/>
 - The Web's most comprehensive, up to date, no fee, searchable database of student financial aid.
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Website: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/>
 - Information regarding state loan, work, and grant programs for Texas residents.

More than a dozen federal agencies fund fellowship and traineeship programs. The amounts and types of assistance vary considerably.

One of many federal initiatives is the Jacob Javits Fellowship Program, which provides grants to students in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Application requests should be addressed to the Director, Jacob Javits Fellowship Program, U.S. Department of Education, Mail Stop 3327, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, ROB-3, Washington, DC 20202, (202) 732-4415.

The G.I. Bill of the past has been replaced by a series of programs. Veterans may use their educational benefits for training at the graduate level and should contact their regional Veterans Administration Office.

UH's Office of Grants and Contracts provides information about federal direct subsidized and unsubsidized loans and federal work-study programs.

Funding for Minority Students

The foundations listed below are only a few examples of the types of funding sources available to minority students.

Bureau of Indian Affairs offers aid to students who demonstrate financial need, who are at least one-fourth American Indian or Alaskan native, and who are from a federally recognized tribe. To obtain more information, contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs, PO Box 8327, Albuquerque, NM 87198. The BIA Higher Education Program has need-based scholarships and loans. Contact the Indian Resource Center, PO Box 1788, Albuquerque, NM 87103.

National Hispanic Scholarship Fund provides scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students of Hispanic background. The application period is June 5 to October 5 each year. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Selection Committee, National Hispanic Scholarship Fund, PO Box 738, San Francisco, CA 94101.

Additional Useful Internet Resources

- Academe This Week, A service of the Chronicle of Higher Education:
<http://chronicle.com/section/Home/5>

- Academic Advising Resources on the Internet: <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources.aspx>
- Grants Search through Carnegie Mellon University: www.cs.cmu.edu

Academic Job Announcements:

- H Net: <https://networks.h-net.org/>
- Chronicle of Higher Education: <http://chronicle.com/section/Jobs/61/>
- MLA: <http://www.mla.org/jil>

Assistantships

Students who are accepted into the graduate program will receive an application for assistantships as a part of their departmental information packet. These applications are to be returned to the department. Interviews may be required for some assistantship positions. Unless otherwise specified, positions are for 1 term. A second round of applications will happen in November for spring assistantships.

Academic Teaching Assistants

Generally, about 5-8 teaching assistants are needed each term to conduct labs and tutoring sessions for undergraduate courses. Students are selected by individual faculty. The stipend is \$10/hour. Time commitment varies with a maximum of 10 hours per week.

Graduate Assistants

At least three second year (FT) or third year (PT) graduate students are selected to serve as assistants in the clinic. Students are selected based on their clinical performance. Graduate assistants provide support to their cohort and the incoming cohort in addition to providing departmental and clinical support. The stipend is \$10/hour. Time commitment varies, with a maximum of 10 hours per week.

Research Assistants

The number of research assistants needed to work on specific research projects conducted by faculty varies depending on the need of the faculty each term. Students are selected by individual faculty. Stipends and time commitments also vary, with a maximum of 10 hours per week.

Professional Engagement Initiative

GOAL: To help graduates of the UH COMD program realize their place in the wider community as professional resources, models, and advocates.

CHARGE: CAA standards and the ASHA Code of Ethics both recognize the importance of graduate students and certified clinicians being part of the professional community (see below). UH COMD supports this mission with a requirement for each graduate student to complete at least one engagement activity during the program.

PLAN: During their time enrolled in the UH COMD Graduate Program, students will participate in at least one professional engagement activity. This activity will involve active interaction with the community outside of the department and outside of regular school requirements and/or assignments. Each activity should be a minimum of 1 hour; students must accrue at least 3 hours across 1-3 activities. Preparation for the activities is an inherent expectation. Unless the activity is led by the student, the preparation time is not included. For student-led activities, 1 hour of preparation time (i.e., content creation) may count toward the 3+ hour requirement.

DOCUMENTATION: Students must submit two forms of documentation for each activity: (1) confirmation of participation and (2) reflection paper.

Students should acquire confirmation of participation from someone responsible for organizing or supervising volunteers at the events. This will be submitted to the advisors. Confirmation can be as simple as a signed note or business card.

Following each activity, students will independently write a one-page reflection which includes a brief description of the event/activity, their role(s), examples of their engagement with the public, comments on the impact of the event, specific mention of the relation of their activities to the CAA Standard and/or ASHA Code of Ethics and plans for future professional involvement. The reflection paper should include the date and hours that the student participated. This will be submitted to the academic advisors, who will record the activity completion in CALIPSO.

ACTIVITIES: The professional activities may be related to any aspect of the profession. This may include working at the booth of a walk (e.g., Autism Speaks), completing extra hearing screenings at a community event - after required hours have been achieved, volunteering at a special population event (e.g., Stomp Out Stroke, Mayor's Back to School Fest), and so forth. The department will provide a list of some potential activities. Any activity that a student does outside of these should get prior approval from the academic advisor. If this prior approval does not happen, the event may still count, but it is at the discretion of the advisor.

DEADLINE: Students are expected to complete this one activity within the 5 (FT)-7 (PT) terms of the graduate program. This activity will need to be documented to complete the CFCC requirements for graduation.

Relevant Citations:

Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology standards relating to professional practice activities.

3.1.3B Identification and Prevention of Speech, Language, and Swallowing Disorders and Differences

The program must include content and opportunities to learn so that each student can demonstrate knowledge of

- principles and methods of identification of communication and swallowing disorders and differences,
- principles and methods of prevention of communication and swallowing disorders.

3.1.6B General Knowledge and Skills Applicable to Professional Practice

The program must include content and opportunities to learn so that each student acquires knowledge and skills in working with individuals with the aforementioned communication and swallowing disorders across the lifespan and by demonstration of

- ethical conduct;
- integration and application of knowledge of the interdependence of speech, language, and hearing;
- engagement in contemporary professional issues and advocacy;
- processes of clinical education and supervision;
- professionalism and professional behavior in keeping with the expectations for a speech-language pathologist;
- interaction skills and personal qualities, including counseling and collaboration;
- self-evaluation of effectiveness of practice.

Citation: Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. (2020). Standards for accreditation of graduate education programs in audiology and speech-language pathology (2017). Retrieved [date] from <http://caa.asha.org/wpcontent/uploads/Accreditation-Standards-for-Graduate-Programs.pdf>

ASHA Principle of Ethics III

- Individuals shall honor their responsibility to the public when advocating for the unmet communication and swallowing needs of the public and shall provide accurate information involving any aspect of the professions.

Citation: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2016). Code of ethics [Ethics]. Available from www.asha.org/policy/.

CLINIC: UNIVERSITY SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING CLINIC (USLHC)

USLHC Mission Statement

The mission of the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic is to:

1. Furnish opportunities for demonstration, observation, and supervised clinical experience in the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with communication disorders,
2. Teach the student to function independently in a professional setting through the development of problem-solving skills,
3. Provide diagnostic and treatment services for children and adults with speech, language, and hearing disorders
4. To conduct research in speech-language pathology

USLHC Parking

STUDENT PARKING: Students who have purchased the appropriate student parking permit from the University Transportation and Parking Office may park in Lot 15C located in front of the clinic or park in the Stadium Garage across the street. If a student parks in a metered space, they must pay the visitor rate, even if they have a valid parking permit. Students will be ticketed if they park in the un-gated lot in front of the building or the lots marked reserved. Students cannot park in the restricted areas such as fire and loading zones, disabled or reserved spaces which are enforced 24 hours a day and seven days a week. For additional information, visit Parking & Transportation site: <https://www.uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/parking-on-campus/>

CLIENT PARKING: Client and visitor parking is available in the stadium parking garage across the street, as well as metered parking along Holman Street. Clients are not permitted to park in Lot 15C and will be ticketed.

USLHC Rooms

MAIN CLINIC OFFICE: The main clinic office is located in Room M156. Active client permanent folders, clinic forms, and inactive client files are stored in the file room (Room M191). Clinician and clinical educator mailboxes are in the Clinician Workroom (M163C) and faculty and staff mailboxes are in the copy room (M244B) in the faculty suite upstairs. The clinic is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the summer semester.

CLIENT WAITING ROOM: The waiting room is located just inside the main entrance of the clinic. Clinicians should arrange to meet clients in the waiting room prior to sessions unless special arrangements are made in advance and approved by the clinical educator. Discussions with

clients or parents should take place in the treatment room, the conference room, or the clinical educator's office. DO NOT have conversations about the client's performance in the waiting room. This violates the client's confidentiality and constitutes a HIPAA violation.

TREATMENT ROOMS: There are pediatric treatment rooms, adult treatment rooms, and group treatment rooms. Please refer to the Therapy Room Scheduler on SharePoint to schedule the appropriate room for your client.

CLINICIAN WORKROOM: A workroom, Room M163C, serves as a treatment preparation area for graduate clinicians. It is provided as a place to plan, construct materials, write reports, and write daily logs or SOAP notes. Clinical Educators and clinicians have mailboxes in the clinician workroom.

GRADUATE CLINICIAN STORAGE LOCKERS: Lockers are available to graduate students on a first come, first served basis, in the Clinician Workroom (Room M163C). Clinicians must supply their own locks. Do not bring purses into the treatment sessions. Cell phones should be left in lockers unless being used in a treatment activity. Do not leave purses, phone, keys, or other valuables unattended.

CLINIC GRADUATE ASSISTANTS' OFFICE: Clinic Graduate Assistants share an office in Room M164F.

GRADUATE STUDENT COMPUTER LAB: Computers in the Clinician Workroom (Room M162H) are for graduate clinicians only. A printer is available in M162H for clinic use only.

STUDENT LOUNGE: A student lounge (M218) is located on the second floor of Melcher Life Sciences. All students have access to the lounge with their Cougar Card.

ALL GENDER RESTROOMS: There are two all gender restrooms located in the USLHC. One is in the clinic lobby, and one is located in the CE suite.

Clinical Program Overview

Clinical Skills Assessment

The Performance Evaluation Form, listing the knowledge and skills necessary for completion of the master's program, is used for clinical and externship practicum experiences. This is found on CALIPSO. Specific details relating to expectations and documentation of experiences and acquisition of skills can be found in the Clinic Handbook.

An electronic record of clinical skill acquisition is maintained to chart progress throughout the master's program using CALIPSO. It is the student's responsibility to monitor skill acquisition

and clinic hour accrual in CALIPSO and to work with the clinic director to obtain the necessary experiences for certification. The department will retain documentation of all intervention plans, work, and subsequent outcomes in the student's file.

Verification by Program Director Form for Speech-Language Pathology: Students who are applying for certification in speech-language pathology must exhibit knowledge and skills determined by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology as described above. This will be documented on the Certification Application 2020 form and elaborated on the Knowledge and Skill Acquisition- KASA- form found on CALIPSO. At the conclusion of the program, the advisors assure that the student completed all requirements, which generates a completed Verification by Program Director page of the ASHA application for certification. When the applicant submits certification paperwork, an email will be sent to the Department Chair for an electronic signature verifying completion of all academic requirements.

Students will be able to print a copy of their completed education and clinical records via CALIPSO and should KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE. However, the entire record does not have to be submitted to ASHA when applying for certification.

The University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic: A United Way agency (USLHC) is the training clinic housed within the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Houston. Graduate students enrolled in COMD are required to enroll in at least three semesters of clinic prior to receiving an extern placement. The clinical experiences may consist of treatment, diagnostic and screenings. Placements in community outreach settings with UH Clinical Educators may also be arranged during the clinical education program. These placements often extend beyond the on-campus clinic calendar to conform to the site's calendar. The clinical educator in these settings will determine the final date of the clinical experience. The Clinic Handbook outlines policies and procedures for the clinic. All students admitted to the graduate program are required to be familiar with the information provided in the Clinic Handbook.

Participation in the on-campus clinic is contingent upon passing speech/language and hearing proficiency examinations. In addition to passing these examinations, students must complete a Practicum Enrollment Form and attend graduate orientation prior to the first graduate practicum experience.

ASHA sets forth specific guidelines regarding practica that address ethical behavior (ASHA Code of Ethics), supervision requirements, the number and types of clock hours students must earn as part of the pre-certification process, and the clinical competencies that must be demonstrated in nine areas of clinical practice.

Students who successfully complete clinics and externships during their matriculation through the UH COMD graduate program will accrue a sufficient number of hours and demonstrate all

clinical competencies required to begin their Clinical Fellowship after graduating from the master's program.

Clinical Education Policies and Procedures

Health Requirements and Immunizations

Proof of immunizations is not required when providing services at the USLHC. However, collaborative clinic sites and externship sites have specific health and immunization requirements. In preparation for externship rotations, documentation of the following list of vaccinations will be required in the spring semester before fall externships begin. Please keep in mind that requirements standards can change. Some externship sites require American Heart Association CPR training only. This information is reflective of what is currently required.

- MMR
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Hep B
- TB Test
- Flu Shot
- COVID vaccines
- Tetanus

Clinic Orientation

All first semester graduate clinicians must attend, and successfully complete clinic orientation held the week prior to the beginning of classes in the fall semester. The clinic orientation meetings are scheduled by the Clinic Director in consultation with the Department Chair and Graduate Program Director. Incoming graduate students receive notification of the orientation dates in the packet of materials/ instructions sent from the Department prior to the fall semester. Orientation attendance is mandatory for all first semester graduate students.

HIPAA Training

All clinicians will complete HIPAA training and pass the final quiz prior to providing any clinical services or accessing any client information. Documentation indicating completion of training and passage of the quiz will be kept in the student clinician's academic file. This is also required of all clinic personnel annually through the mandatory online human resources training modules.

It is imperative that clinicians exercise caution when accessing a client's protected health information (PHI) on SharePoint. Be aware of your surroundings when accessing the information and do not leave your computer or device unattended when working in the

SharePoint site. Only relevant client folders should be accessed by the clinician and HIPAA guidelines should be followed at all times. Refer to the HIPAA training handout provided by the Office of the General Counsel, University of Houston System at clinic orientation.

CPR/AED Training

All clinicians are required to hold current CPR/AED certification throughout the graduate program. Each student clinician must provide proof of current CPR/AED certification in the form of the certification card issued at the time of their successful completion of the CPR/AED training. A copy of the certification card will be retained in the student's academic file. Only courses that include hands-on skill performance with mannequins and a final quiz are acceptable sources of CPR/AED certification.

Liability Insurance

The COMD Department carries professional liability insurance on all graduate clinicians.

Observation Hours

Students who have clinical hours from other universities are responsible for submitting a record of those hours to the Clinic Director prior to their first graduate practicum experience. The Clock Hours record must be signed by the clinical educator with CCC-SLP or CCC-AUD and ASHA certification number specified. In addition, the supervisor must have completed nine months of practice experience post-certification before serving as a supervisor and two hours of professional development in the area of supervision post-certification before serving as a clinical supervisor or CF mentor.

Observation hours, with appropriate signatures and ASHA certification numbers, must also be filed prior to beginning graduate practica. Documents that do not include the required signatures or ASHA CCC numbers will not be accepted. The 25 observation hours must be in the scope of practice for speech-language pathology and be completed with an ASHA-Certified SLP who has nine months of practice experience post-certification before serving as a supervisor and two hours of professional development in the area of supervision post-certification before serving as a clinical supervisor or CF mentor.

CALIPSO

Graduate students will track their clock hours using the CALIPSO online system, both during on-campus clinical experiences and when placed in off-campus settings. All students are required to obtain a CALIPSO account. Students must keep (1) ongoing track of the clinical contact hours earned, and (2) the client diversity record. The student reports the accrued hours in CALIPSO and submits them for approval by the CE. It is every graduate student's responsibility to check

the accuracy of the CALIPSO entries and notify the clinic director immediately if any entries appear inaccurate.

Graduate Assistants

Clinic Graduate Assistants (GAs) share an office in Room M164F. Clinic Graduate Assistants are responsible for assisting the Clinic Director and clinical educators in their duties. They check out diagnostic tests and AAC equipment to clinicians and will acquaint clinicians with the established procedures. The GAs, under the direction of the Clinical Educators, are available for consultation with student clinicians in providing an efficient therapy program. They may also provide supplementary feedback and therapy demonstrations. Graduate Assistants also assist with the end-of-semester clinic checkout process.

Clinic Graduate assistants are responsible for checking out assessments and audiometers for clinicians. Tests are requested via SharePoint. To check out a diagnostic test, test protocols, or audiometer, complete the request in the assessment request spreadsheet located in the Clinician Library at least 3 days before you need the test. A Clinic Graduate Assistant will pull tests and protocols and place them on the Check Out bookshelf in room M162H (graduate computer room).

FOLLOW THE LIBRARY CARD PROCEDURES WHEN RETRIEVING AND RETURNING YOUR TEST. Please be considerate. You may check out tests overnight but be aware that others may need the test. **DO NOT** keep diagnostic tests for more than one week. If you have special circumstances that require you to have a test out longer, email the GAs for permission to keep the test longer with details of the circumstance.

Materials Room

The Treatment Materials room is located in M163B. The COMD Department and the University Speech- Language-Hearing Clinic provide a wide variety of materials for use in the Clinic. These include stimulus materials, toys, manipulatives, articulation and language treatment programs, and various pieces of equipment. Access to these materials is not a right but rather a privilege extended to the students. The purpose is to present students with a variety of materials to support and enhance their learning process during clinical practicum. All materials must be checked-out before being removed from the materials room. Clinicians should sign out the item(s) they wish to use in the materials binder located next to the door. Items **MUST BE** returned to their original place in the Materials Room.

Assessments Room

Assessment instruments are kept in the Assessment Materials room (M163A). They may be checked out via the Clinician Library in SharePoint and must be requested at least three

business days prior to the evaluation. No items will be released without a documented request. A clinic G.A. will pull the test, a protocol, and place them on the shelf labeled Test Pick-Up in the graduate computer room (M162H) for your retrieval. All items must be collected within 48 hours of the GA completing the test request. Fill-in the check-out (library) card and place it in the box before taking the assessment instrument. Tests must be returned within eight days from the date and time the GA signed the test request form acknowledging the request had been completed. Please be considerate, as other clinicians may need the same test or instrument. If you have special circumstances that require you to keep the test longer than eight calendar days, email the GAs for permission to keep the test longer.

- Failure to return items on time will result in a reprimand for first time offenders.
- Should a student clinician fail to adhere to policy the second time, she/he will not be permitted to check out tests.
- If a student clinician does not return a test after repeated requests, this will result in a reduction in the letter grade in clinic.
- Clinicians who lose a diagnostic test while they are in their possession are held responsible for replacing the test at their own expense.

Materials and toys used for evaluations must be cleaned and disinfected using EPA approved disinfectant prior to returning. If wipes are not available a solution of 1/3 cup bleach to 1 gallon water will be used to clean materials.

Professional Behavior

Professional behavior is an essential component to success in a clinical training program and to a career as a speech-language pathologist. All students are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner both in clinic and in academic classes. The required professional behaviors are described on the CALIPSO Performance Evaluation under the heading 'Professional Practice, Personal, and Interaction Qualities' found on the CALIPSO Evaluation. Students who demonstrate poor performance in these areas may be placed on a remediation plan or be removed from the clinic program.

Clinician-Client Relationship: Being a professional means building a relationship that is supportive and nurturing without promoting dependency. It is challenging to achieve this balance. You want to communicate in your behavior that you are committed to serving and supporting the communication needs identified by individuals and their families. It is important to your effectiveness that you recognize the boundaries of your relationship with a client/family. Personal friendships or inappropriate personal involvement with a client or family compromises your effectiveness as a clinician. If you encounter a circumstance where a client is promoting a personal association, please discuss the situation with your clinical educator who will advise you in tactful management. This includes "friending" on social media.

Attendance & Promptness: Being a professional also means being reliable. Your reliability shows through when you are on time for your appointments and prepared. Student clinicians are required to meet clients at the scheduled time. A student clinician who is tardy to a client's appointment will be counseled and clinical hours may not be awarded for the session in question; a student who is tardy two (2) times may be counseled by the Clinic Director to drop clinical practicum.

Professional Email Communication:

With the accessibility of technology, students and faculty have numerous opportunities for quick and efficient communication. It is important to remember, however, that e-mail should follow a protocol that is respectful in tone and presentation, and sensitive to faculty time and availability.

- Use appropriate salutations (e.g., Dear or Good Morning; versus Hey)
- Indicate the purpose of your e-mail in the subject line (e.g., question about upcoming session; would like to schedule a meeting)
- E-mails should be short, and their purpose should be clear
- Be careful of spelling and grammar errors
- Use respectful language and avoid slang

Clinical educators also want to respond to your e-mail in a timely fashion. Reasonable expectations for responding, however, must be considered. It is important to remember that clinical educators are not always at their desk as they are teaching, engaged in clinical service/supervision and research activities. They will respond as soon as they are able. Several clinical educators are employed part-time and are not paid to be available other than the days they are scheduled to be on campus. Discuss your clinical educator's on-campus schedule and plan your conference time and communications via email accordingly.

Clinical Educators are not expected to respond to e-mail in the evening or on weekends, although some may choose to do so. A good guideline for you is that clinical educators typically will not be responding to e-mail after 5:00 pm during the week, and from 5:00 pm Friday until 8:00 am Monday morning, unless you have made special arrangements with the clinical educator in advance.

When you are asking clinical educators to review a document and/or give you feedback on a document, it is important to allow 48 hours for their response. For example, sending a treatment log, lesson plan, report etc. for feedback one day before (much less the day of) a supervisory meeting is not a reasonable expectation or sufficient time for the clinical educator to provide the needed support.

Professional Dress Guidelines

The purpose of a dress code is to present a positive, professional image and provide an environment conducive to learning. All students are expected to maintain good grooming habits and appropriate dress to provide the best possible impression to the clients and community we serve. It is important to remember that services are provided to individuals of all generations and cultural backgrounds and what is appropriate for one person may be too casual and not professional to another. Students need to maintain a professional appearance anytime client contact is expected or when conducting clinic business. Consider your physical appearance anytime you are in the building near where clients might see you, since clients and client families are in the building throughout the day.

Professional dress guidelines in externship placements should be discussed with your off-site clinical educator as they may be more stringent or more relaxed, depending on the type of site. The following guidelines apply to all students participating in clinical work and students doing observations, as well as students who will be in the main office working.

- Clothes should not be revealing or suggestive. Clothing should be appropriate for the professional setting.
- Distracting tattoos and body piercings should be concealed by clothing.
- Clinicians are expected to consider their appearance from all angles (i.e., sitting, bending over, playing on the floor), from the perspective of the family members who are observing. Clothing must be clean and neat.
- Attention to personal hygiene should ensure that one is clean and without offensive body odor.
- Clinic ID badges must be worn. Observers, assistant clinicians, and clinicians (both student & certified) must wear identification when acting in a professional capacity within the clinic.
- Do not bring purses and/or bags into the therapy session. Lockers are provided for storage of personal belongings. Cell phones being used during a therapy activity are allowed with permission from your clinical educator.
- When observing, interviewing at off-site placements, or conducting hearing screenings, students should follow the dress code of that facility. When unsure of the dress code policy at another site, contact the clinical educator.

The following are NOT considered appropriate when acting in a professional capacity:

- Jeans (unless otherwise indicated & discussed with clinical educator) and sweatpants.
- Flip-flops. (This does not include sandals).
- Shorts or very short skirts.

- Excessive jewelry, perfumes, & make-up should also be avoided. All jewelry should be discreet & professional. Jewelry worn in body piercings should be conservative and professional looking.

Client Confidentiality

The information included in clinical files and/or provided to you during client contact is of a confidential nature and is protected by law. We are obligated NOT to discuss clients or their problems/accomplishments with persons outside the clinic without prior written consent from the client/parent. This is most important. No information regarding any client will be released without the client's written consent. In keeping with Principle of Ethics 1, Rule 1, and HIPAA, if there is any doubt about our having written consent, do not give out information. Violation of a client's right to privacy could lead to dismissal from the graduate program, a lawsuit, loss of clinical accreditation, and damage to the clinician's and the program's reputation in the community. Discussion of clients with other clinicians can be a meaningful learning experience and is highly encouraged. However, be careful to respect and preserve the dignity of the client as you speak.

Client Files Policy/Procedures

All graduate students are required to complete a brief front office orientation and read/sign a Confidentiality and Security Agreement before handling client files. This signed agreement is placed in the student's academic file.

Security Policy Regarding Handling Client Files: Every client has the legal right to expect all information contained in his/her file to be safeguarded from unauthorized and unnecessary access. Only persons who have a legitimate reason to access such information should be able to do so and the information they are able to access should be only what they require. The following security policy is intended to ensure the legal rights of our clients as described above.

In order to comply with the Federal Law pertaining to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), faculty/staff are asked to remove from public view any client files that may be on the surface of their desks or any other visible location and place them in drawers or file cabinets when not in use. Privacy screens are required on screens of computers that are in public areas. This prevents any outside visitor in the office from having access to private and confidential information.

When away from your office, all client files must be stored in a locked filing cabinet. Faculty and students are expected to shred all hard copy drafts of reports. Any copy of a report being preserved, as a model/example must have all identifying information deleted or blackened to render the report anonymous and protect the privacy of the client and his/her identity.

Clinic Attendance Policy

Attendance is maintained for each client on the clinic EMR, Practice Perfect and on a spreadsheet in the client's file on SharePoint. During Clinic Check Out at the end of the semester, the Attendance Record is filed and cross-checked with the MCCF entries for the client to verify accuracy.

Client Absences: The paragraph below is the printed attendance policy given to the parents/clients at the beginning of the semester. Familiarize yourself with this policy and advise your client to notify the clinic in advance if an absence must occur.

It is extremely important that all scheduled appointments be kept during the semester. Having a good attendance record and being punctual for your appointments is necessary for treatment to be most effective. In addition, the supervised students providing the treatment must accumulate specified numbers of clinical hours during the semester. Therefore, the Clinic policy is that a client's therapy will be terminated if there are two (2) unexcused absences during the semester. An absence may be excused if notification is received prior to the scheduled appointment. If more than two absences are anticipated because of illness or other unavoidable reason, please feel free to discuss the situation with the Clinical Educator.

Clinician Absences: Clinicians must not be absent from clinic sessions except in cases of verified illness. If you must be absent, you are responsible for notifying your clients and your clinical educator. Make-up sessions are generally scheduled on Fridays before 4:00 p.m. but may be scheduled on other days when a treatment room is available. Before scheduling a make-up session, verify that there is a treatment room available at the specified day/time. As soon as you schedule a make-up session notify your C.E. and ensure a room is available.

Inclement Weather Procedures

The University has the responsibility for determining if school will remain open or closed. There are people in central administration at the University with access to resources and make the best decision they can. The COMD Department (faculty, staff, and students) will follow that decision. If the University is open, the clinic is open.

If an individual decides it is not safe to commute to campus, that is his/her decision and (s)he should act accordingly. Students should communicate their decision to their instructors and are responsible for material covered in class, getting copies of notes, assignments, etc. If an instructor decides to cancel class because (s)he cannot make it in safely or is concerned his/her students are at risk, that is his/her prerogative and his/her responsibility to communicate the cancellation of class to the Department Chair (Dr. Blake) and to each of the members of his/her class.

The Clinic Director, in consultation with the Department Chair, has the responsibility of deciding if the clinic should close. If the clinic is to be closed, each student clinician is responsible for contacting his/her clients to inform them that the clinic will be closed. Staff members who are not able to come to work should inform the Department Business Administrator.

Emergency Status changes from the university will be sent by e-mail, text, and can be accessed via the UH Web site and by calling 713-743-1000. In an emergency, visit the Emergency Alert Web site at www.uhemergency.info for updates.

Universal Precautions

All clinicians must follow universal precautions while engaged in clinic practicum. The clinician conducting the session is responsible for restoring the table surface, chairs, etc. to their clean condition before leaving the room. Disinfectant spray, sanitized wipes, hand sanitizer, and paper towels are stored in the cabinet of each treatment room.

Following are sanitization procedures:

- Clinic materials, including materials and toys used for evaluations and treatment, will be cleaned, and disinfected using EPA approved disinfectant wipes after each session. If wipes are not available a solution of 1/3 cup bleach to 1 gallon water will be used to clean materials.
- Surfaces used during evaluations or therapy including tables and chairs will be cleaned and disinfected after each session using EPA approved disinfectant wipes. If wipes are not available a solution of 1/3 cup bleach to 1 gallon water will be used.
- Doorknobs will be disinfected in between each session.
- Cleaning guidelines with a checklist will be posted in every therapy room, and clinicians will be required to document cleaning and sanitization of the room following each session by initialing the checklist including the date and time the room was cleaned
- For information regarding appropriate cleaning and disinfection, see CDC's Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities (2008) at: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/index>

Items such as gloves, diapers and partially eaten food that are not visibly contaminated with potentially infectious substances are considered low risk items and can be disposed of as general waste. Clear bags are available in the File Room. Request them from the Clinic Receptionist.

Items such as gloves and diapers that are visibly contaminated with potentially infectious substances should be placed in clear plastic garbage bags and sealed for disposal.

With regard to spills on porous surfaces (i.e., carpet) of potentially infectious waste (e.g., mucous, body fluids containing blood), the janitorial staff should be contacted to carry out disinfection of such surfaces. Notify the Clinic Receptionist of this need.

Procedures to be followed during Oral-Peripheral Exams/Hearing Screenings & Hearing Evaluations

1. Gloves should be worn routinely while performing an oral-peripheral exam. If there is indication of bleeding in the ear, gloves are to be worn for ear canal examination and probe placement for impedance testing.
2. Protective eye wear, if desired, must be supplied by the individual clinician.
3. Earphone cushions and headbands, audio microphones and microphones should be wiped with alcohol swabs before and after each use.
4. Probe tips used for the tympanometer and delayed auditory feedback units should be placed in the designated receptacles containing co-enzyme solution.
5. Items such as gloves, diapers and partially eaten food that are not visibly contaminated with
6. potentially infectious substances are considered low risk items and can be disposed of as general waste.
7. Items such as gloves and diapers that are visibly contaminated with potentially infectious substances should be placed in clear plastic garbage bags and sealed for disposal. Ask the Clinic Receptionist for clear plastic bags.

Guidelines for the proper use of gloves:

1. Select latex (or vinyl if the patient or clinician shows a sensitivity to latex) examination gloves that fit properly. Properly fitted gloves will fit tightly, like a second skin. This is important because loose fitting gloves cause frustration due to a lack of dexterity. This frustration is the main reason people stop wearing gloves.
2. Always change gloves between patients. If a glove becomes torn or perforated in any way, replace it. Never reuse disposable gloves.
3. If questioned about the use of gloves, explain that gloves are worn to protect patients and to provide the best in modern care. Most people expect gloves to be worn. Audiologists and speech-language pathologists, as well as other healthcare professionals, wear gloves as a precautionary measure.
4. Place bandages on open sores or cuts prior to putting on gloves.
5. Use the following procedure to safely remove gloves, making sure that hands do not make contact with potentially infectious material on the surface of the glove. First, peel off one glove from wrist to fingertip, and then grasp it in the gloved hand. Next, using the bared hand peel off the second glove from the inside, tucking the first glove inside the second glove as it is removed. Wash hands thoroughly when completed.

Clinical Observation

The required 25 clock hours of guided observation must be accumulated prior to beginning graduate clinical practicum. All 25 may be earned at the undergraduate level prior to entering the graduate program.

The purpose of the above requirement is to ensure that the graduate clinician has a basic understanding of communication disorders, some exposure to clinical interaction, and an introduction to procedures followed in clinical practice prior to being given responsibility for clinical interventions. While additional observation may be required during clinical practicum or externships, no more than a total of 25 hours of observation can be counted toward ASHA requirements.

The observation room is M162E. Space is limited and needs to be used following specific guidelines. Clinicians and/or parents who are observing will log into the VALT system on an iPad or laptop to observe the sessions. Headphones should be owned. Undergraduate student observers should contact the assigned graduate clinicians prior to the observation and receive approval of the CE before initiating any observation. CEs will facilitate and approve any parent/caregiver observations. Client observations are not permitted during Cougar Communication Groups.

Please abide by the following rules when observing:

- Graduate clinician should check to be sure a release for observation has been signed.
- Students observing telepractice sessions must be on campus to observe
- Please maintain quiet
- No food or drink in the observation area.
- Return any moved furniture to its previous space

Clinic Practicum Intervention Plans

See Program Requirements section.

Clinical Practicum Requirements and Implementation

Overview

The COMD graduate program requirements periodically exceed the ASHA minimum clock hour requirements. Graduate students are required to meet the COMD program clinical requirements to successfully complete the graduate program. The expectation is that the graduate student will complete his/her clinical assignment through the end of each semester,

regardless of the number of practicum hours accrued. This policy applies to both in-house clinic and extern placements. A request for early release from practicum obligations based on having met ASHA's minimum requirements represents unprofessional and unethical behavior. Clinicians have an obligation to provide the assigned clinical services to their clients throughout the duration of each semester.

Clinic Class

All 1st year graduate clinicians enrolled in COMD 7391 are required to attend the weekly clinic class. Topics relevant to professional practice and clinic procedures will be addressed in the class. Clinic class will also include opportunities for students to earn skill competencies through clinical simulation. A subscription to Simucase is required for clinic class.

Sequence of Clinical Practica

All students will complete at least three semesters of on-campus clinic practicum and at least two semesters of externship placement. On-campus practicum is generally completed in the first, second, and third semesters of the full-time graduate program. Externships are generally completed in the fourth and fifth semesters of the full-time graduate program. Students in the part-time graduate program should consult the graduate handbook regarding the expected sequence of clinical practica.

Clinical Skill Competencies

The acquisition of clinical skill competencies is an essential part of the graduate program in speech-language pathology. All graduate clinicians will have the opportunity to meet the clinical skill competencies that are required by ASHA through the clinical education program. These clinical skills competencies may be met through a variety of clinical activities including screenings, prevention, evaluation, treatment, clinical labs, and clinical simulation. The [ASHA 2020 Standards](#) which include the clinical skills competencies (Standard V) are listed below.

Standard V-A

The applicant must have demonstrated skills in oral and written or other forms of communication sufficient for entry into professional practice.

Standard V-B

The applicant must have completed a program of study that included experiences sufficient in breadth and depth to achieve the following skills outcomes:

1. Evaluation
 - a. Conduct screening and prevention procedures, including prevention activities.

- b. Collect case history information and integrate information from clients/patients, family, caregivers, teachers, and relevant others, including other professionals.
- c. Select and administer appropriate evaluation procedures, such as behavioral observations, nonstandardized and standardized tests, and instrumental procedures.
- d. Adapt evaluation procedures to meet the needs of individuals receiving services.
- e. Interpret, integrate, and synthesize all information to develop diagnoses and make appropriate recommendations for intervention.
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support evaluation.
- g. Refer clients/patients for appropriate services.

2. Intervention

- a. Develop setting-appropriate intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals that meet clients'/patients' needs. Collaborate with clients/patients and relevant others in the planning process.
- b. Implement intervention plans that involve clients/patients and relevant others in the intervention process.
- c. Select or develop and use appropriate materials and instrumentation for prevention and intervention.
- d. Measure and evaluate clients'/patients' performance and progress.
- e. Modify intervention plans, strategies, materials, or instrumentation as appropriate to meet the needs of clients/patients.
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support intervention.
- g. Identify and refer clients/patients for services, as appropriate.

3. Interaction and Personal Qualities

- a. Communicate effectively, recognizing the needs, values, preferred mode of communication, and cultural/linguistic background of the individual(s) receiving services, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- b. Manage the care of individuals receiving services to ensure an interprofessional, team-based collaborative practice.
- c. Provide counseling regarding communication and swallowing disorders to clients/patients, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- d. Adhere to the ASHA Code of Ethics and behave professionally.

Supervised clinical experiences should include interprofessional education and interprofessional collaborative practice and should include experiences with related professionals that enhance the student's knowledge and skills in an interdisciplinary, team-based, comprehensive service delivery model.

Standard V-C

The applicant must complete a minimum of 400 clock hours of supervised clinical experience in the practice of speech-language pathology. Twenty-five hours must be spent in guided clinical observation, and 375 hours must be spent in direct client/patient contact.

Standard V-D

At least 325 of the 400 clock hours of supervised clinical experience must be completed while the applicant is enrolled in graduate study in a program accredited in speech-language pathology by the CAA.

Standard V-E

Supervision of students must be provided by a clinical educator who holds ASHA certification in the appropriate profession and who, after earning the CCC-A or CCC-SLP, has completed (1) a minimum of 9 months of full-time clinical experience (or its part-time equivalent), and (2) a minimum of 2 hours of professional development in clinical instruction/supervision.

The amount of direct supervision must be commensurate with the student's knowledge, skills, and experience; must not be less than 25% of the student's total contact with each client/patient; and must take place periodically throughout the practicum. Supervision must be sufficient to ensure the welfare of the individual receiving services.

Standard V-F

Supervised practicum must include experience with individuals across the life span and from culturally/linguistically diverse backgrounds. Practicum must include experience with individuals with various types and severities of communication and/or related disorders, differences, and disabilities.

Clinical Assignments

Clinical assignments are generally distributed during or before the first week of classes each semester. Assignments are determined by the Clinic Director. Client contact information is available in the electronic medical records or can be obtained from your CE.

In order to ensure clinical competency upon completion of the master's program, care is taken to provide each clinician with exposure to as wide a variety of communication disorders as possible while advancing the clinician's completion of ASHA requirements and meeting the needs of the clients/families. The needs of the client and how they can best be met are primary considerations in determining a clinician-client assignment, while we continue to monitor the clinician's progress toward ASHA requirements. Schedules of clients, clinicians, and clinical

educators, plus the clinical expertise of the C.E., are all variables that affect the assignments that are made.

Prior to treating clients at the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, students must complete fall orientation. Students are generally assigned clients within disorder categories for which they have completed courses or are taking concurrently. Students will be provided with at least 25% direct observation for each client seen. However, amount of observation may be higher depending on complexity of client, student's readiness for independence, and clinical educator judgment of overall needs of student/client.

All students must be enrolled in a practicum course (COMD 7391 or 7392, 7662, 7992) each semester in which they accrue clock hours.

Clinic Collaborative Sites

The USLHC collaborates with several community sites to provide speech-language services. Students may be assigned to one of these sites during enrollment in clinical practicum (COMD 7391 or COMD 7392, 7662, 7992). The services and schedules of each community site vary. The Clinical Educator assigned to the site will inform students of the expected schedule and provide any orientations specific to the site. Clinicians should be aware that the schedule requirements of the collaborative sites may differ from the on-campus clinic. Clinicians are expected to follow the community site requirements calendar as indicated by their CE. The collaborative sites provide excellent opportunities for students to acquire skills with a variety of ages and populations in a community-based setting.

Diagnostic and Treatment Services

The University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic: A United Way agency (USLHC) provides services to infants, children, and adults with speech, language, and/or hearing impairments. The agency is partially funded by the United Way of Greater Houston and staffed by professionals certified in audiology and speech-language pathology. Communication services, including testing and treatment, are provided by graduate clinicians under the supervision of certified and licensed speech-language pathologists. These services are offered in-person at the clinic or via telepractice, whereby therapy is delivered online in the client's home, school, or any setting where high-speed Internet is available. Hearing services are provided in-person by a certified and licensed audiologist.

Equitable Treatment Services at the USLHC are available to all people, regardless of race, creed, gender, or national origin. All clinic staff, faculty, and graduate clinicians are committed to promoting and affirming diversity and respecting individuals' dignity and worth regardless of their gender expression and identity, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status.

Diagnostic and treatment services are available through the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic for children, adolescents and adults with communications difficulties including:

- Cognitive aspects of communication
- Articulation and phonology
- Augmentative/alternative communication
- Aphasia
- Receptive and expressive language disorders
- Stuttering
- Social/pragmatic communication disorders
- Voice disorders and gender affirming voice
- Communication problems associated with hearing loss
- Accent modification

Community Screenings

When enrolled in clinic practicum students will complete speech, language, and hearing screenings. These may be completed at community sites or in the USLHC. Students are required to complete 10 hours of hearing screenings. Hearing screening hours will be earned by demonstrating required competencies when participating in USLHC hearing screenings.

Scheduling, Cancellations, and Make-up Sessions

Scheduling for diagnostics and treatment is coordinated by the Clinic Director in coordination with the supervising clinical educator and clinic office secretary. No practicum credit will be given for unauthorized diagnostics or treatment done through private arrangements made by students with clinical educators or vice-versa. All inquiries for a speech/language diagnostic should be referred to the front office at 713-743-0915. Scheduling, cancellations, and make-up sessions are specific to your CE. Clinicians should work closely with their clinical educator whenever there is a scheduling change.

New practicum assignments may occur at any time during a student's academic program. Some assignments may extend into scheduled university vacations either before classes have started or after classes have ended. Please consult with your clinical educator(s) before making vacation/travel plans, especially airline reservations.

All diagnostics and treatment appointments must be kept as scheduled. No changes can be made without the advanced knowledge and consent of the Clinical Director and the Clinical Educator. All changes must be communicated to Clinic Office Secretary in writing in advance of the re-arranged appointment date.

Appointment cancellations initiated by a student clinician disrupt continuity of treatment, are looked upon with disfavor, and may be made only with the expressed consent of your clinical educator and/or Clinic Director.

Serious documented illness, injury or death in the immediate family constitute legitimate grounds for cancellation and must be discussed with your clinical educator in advance of the cancellation. Every effort must be made to arrange a make-up session within the same week if a cancellation occurs.

Emergency Cancellation Procedure: Clinicians must not be absent from clinic sessions except in cases of verified illness. If you must be absent, you are responsible for notifying your clients and your Clinical Educator. You should keep a list of your clients', your clinical educator/s and fellow student clinicians' telephone numbers with you. Make-up sessions are generally scheduled and coordinated with your clinical educator.

VALT Video Recording System

The USLHC uses the Intelligent Video Solutions (VALT) Recording system to record sessions held in the USLHC. Clinicians are required to record all diagnostic and treatment sessions. Instructions for scheduling your session on VALT are posted in the Graduate Clinician Computer lab (M162H).

Clock Hours

The 25 guided observation hours must be in the scope of practice for speech-language pathology and be completed with an ASHA-Certified SLP who has nine months of practice experience post-certification before serving as a supervisor and two hours of professional development in the area of supervision post-certification before serving as a clinical supervisor or CF mentor.

Students who have clinical hours from other universities are responsible for submitting a record of those hours to the Clinic Director prior to their first graduate practicum experience. The Clock Hours record must be signed by the clinical educator with CCC-SLP, or CCC-AUD and ASHA certification number specified. In addition, the supervisor must have completed nine months of practice experience post-certification before serving as a supervisor and two hours of professional development in the area of supervision post-certification before serving as a clinical supervisor or CF mentor. Observation hours, with appropriate signatures and ASHA certification numbers, must also be filed prior to beginning graduate practica. Documents that do not include the required signatures or ASHA CCC numbers will not be accepted.

A total of 400 contact hours, supervised by an ASHA-certified SLP, are required to graduate and start the Clinical Fellowship (CF): 25 observation hours and a minimum of 375 direct clinical contact hours.

If a graduate student has undergraduate direct contact clock hours, earned through an ASHA-accredited training program, up to 50 of those may be counted toward the required 375 clock hours. Only direct clinical contact may be counted toward the required minimum of 375 clock hours of supervised clinical experience. Alternative clinical experiences may include the use of standardized patients and clinical simulation (CS) technologies, up to 20% (i.e., 75 hours). Only time spent in active engagement with the CS may be counted. Debriefing activities may not be included as clock hours. Hours of work as an SLP-Assistant completed prior to admission to the graduate program cannot be counted toward the 375 required clock hours.

It is the shared responsibility of the student and the COMD Department to ensure that each student gains the clinical experiences and knowledge and skills competencies to meet all ASHA certification requirements. The student is required to demonstrate knowledge and skills in both evaluation and intervention in the following nine areas with a representation of diversity, severity, and age ranges.

- Speech sound production
- Fluency
- Voice
- Language
- Hearing
- Swallowing
- Cognition
- Social aspects of Communication
- Communication Modalities

Clock hours in Audiology screening and management of speech/language problems associated with hearing impairment. Students are required to complete hearing screening and aural rehabilitation/ management clinical experiences. Audiology screenings are conducted by the USLHC at off-site locations (e.g., schools, preschools, community centers). Hearing screening hours will be earned by demonstrating required competencies when participating in USLHC hearing screenings.

Hearing screening experience are expected of graduate clinicians during their first three semesters. Audiology/hearing management may include auditory/verbal check of amplification systems, teaching wear and care of hearing aids, listening training, and aural rehabilitation/habilitation therapy. All audiology hours must be in the SLP scope of practice.

When students advance to extern placements in their final year of the graduate program, they are encouraged to actively seek clinical experiences in their extern placements to address unmet competencies.

What Counts as Clock Hours?

- Direct contact with a client and/or family during assessment or intervention
- Alternative clinical simulation (CS) experiences, up to 20% (i.e., 75 hours). Only time spent in active engagement with the CS may be counted. Debriefing activities cannot be included. (March 1, 2016, CCC Standards revision).
- If a client presents communication disorders in two or more disorder categories, accumulated clock hours should be distributed among these categories according to the amount of treatment time spent on each.
- IEP/ARD meetings with the client and/or family present may count only when you are actively contributing.
- Counseling, prevention activities, and client education conducted with the client and/or family may be counted
- Periodic assessments during treatment are considered treatment hours, not diagnostic hours.

What Does not Count Toward Clock Hours?

- Time spent writing lesson plans, logs of sessions, S.O.A.P. Notes, progress reports, case summaries, diagnostic reports, or other written documentation of client contact
- Time spent preparing for diagnostic or treatment sessions
- Time spent in scoring tests or transcribing language samples
- Time spent in clinical educator conferences or clinic classes
- Time spent in travel when providing off-site services
- Participation in staffings when the client is not attending the staffing

Documenting ASHA Clock Hours

Graduate students will track their clock hours using the CALIPSO online system, both during on-campus clinical experiences and when placed in off-campus settings. Students must keep (1) ongoing track of the clinical contact hours earned, and (2) the client diversity record. The student reports the accrued hours on CALIPSO and submits them for approval by the CE/Supervisor.

It is every graduate student's responsibility to check the accuracy of the CALIPSO entries and notify the clinic director immediately if any entries appear inaccurate.

Clinical Simulation

Per ASHA, clinical simulation (CS) is the use of alternative methods of clinical practicum and is part of Standard V-B and V-C. Clinical simulation may be used in the COMD graduate program.

Students completing simulation must attend a pre-brief and debrief and meet any other indicated requirement in order to count the simulation hours.

Telepractice

Telepractice is another service delivery platform offered by the USLHC. While enrolled in clinical practicum (COMD 7391, 7392, 7662, 7992) clinicians may have opportunities to provide evaluation or treatment via telepractice.

Clinicians: When you receive your client assignments, contact your CE to discuss the following information:

- **Contact Information:** Check with your CE to see how they would like you to communicate with them. This will vary depending on the CE.
- **Amount of supervision:** CEs will be observing 100% of teletherapy sessions as required by ASHA (American Speech Language Hearing Association).
- **Session Recording:** Please let your CE know as soon as possible if the client has agreed to recording so they can record your sessions. Your CE will provide a link to the folder where you can access these.
- **Lesson plan format**

Once you receive your client assignments, confirm with your time with your CE. Your CE will inform you of their preference for scheduling procedures. A Zoom link will be generated either by the GA or your CE and sent to you. Clinicians are responsible for ensuring their clients receive the Zoom link.

- **Documentation Required for teletherapy**
 - **Intake Documentation:** refer to the Clinic Handbook to review all required documentation. In addition to documentation noted for in-person therapy, you will also need the following:
 - Notice of Privacy Practice (NOPP) receipt
 - Consent for Telepractice
 - Authorization for Release of Protected Health Information (PHI) (Release of Information)
 - Consent for Audio-Video recording
 - Observation Release
 - Contract for Payment/Service
 - **Documentation for Treatment:** Refer to the Clinic Handbook to review all required documentation. Follow deadlines as noted in the Clinic Calendar as set by your CE.

- **Billing:** Update the Client Charge sheet after each session. This spreadsheet can be found in your client's folder in the Clinician Library. Charges should also be entered into Practice Perfect.
- **Communication with caregivers:** Set aside time to debrief caregivers at the end of each session. If the client's parents do not live together, send an update to both parents weekly
- **Telepractice sessions** should be done in a quiet room to ensure patient privacy and no distractions
 - Telepractice sessions should never be conducted in a public area
- **Emergency Procedures:** If your client has a medical emergency during a teletherapy session, refer to the procedures in the Clinic Handbook.

Clinicians

- **Training:** Complete all synchronous and asynchronous training for telepractice
- **Telepractice etiquette**
 - Please remember that the client can hear you even when their video is off or if they have walked away from their computer. Hold ALL conversations until the client has logged out of the session.
 - Turn all notifications off during sessions. This ensures HIPAA protection for clients as well as FERPA protection for you.
 - Students must be dressed professionally for teletherapy just as expected for in person sessions.
 - When your co-clinician is doing an activity and you are taking data, maintain eye contact and maintain an attentive listening posture.
 - **ASHA Code of Ethics:** Please refer to the ASHA Code of Ethics for further information.
 - **Observers:** Please introduce any undergraduate observers you have in your sessions during the first session they attend. You will be responsible for sharing the Zoom link and any schedule changes with observers. Observers have the option to stay on the link for the debrief after sessions.

Technical Requirements for Sessions:

- **Internet Connection:** Check your speed at <http://www.speedtest.net> and click Begin Tests.
- **Computer:** Make sure you do not have automatic updates scheduled during your sessions.
- **Zoom:** Ensure you have the latest version of Zoom downloaded and maintain updates.
- **Audio:** Use an external microphone to minimize background noise. The microphone on the headphones that come with your phone is sufficient.

- Video: Set your camera at eye level and stay in the center of the video frame
- Room arrangement: Try to minimize distractions in your background. Virtual backgrounds are fine if they have minimal distractions.
- Lighting: Lighting in front, above or to the side of you will provide the best picture. Lighting behind you will put your face in shade and make it difficult for the client to see you.

Supervision Requirements

Speech-language pathologists who hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) from ASHA, and a State of Texas license in speech-language pathology, will supervise students. Clinical educators will have at least nine months of practice experience post-certification and two hours of professional development in supervision, before serving as a clinical educator, as required by ASHA CFCC standards.

Clinicians will meet with their clinical educator/s on a regular basis either individually or in their clinic team meeting to discuss to review progress, planning, and performance. The clinical educator will provide written and/or feedback on a regular basis to facilitate clinical growth and skill development.

All clinicians will receive direct supervision at least 25% of the time for each client receiving services. The amount of supervision will be adjusted based on experience and ability of the student. CEs will be observing 100% of teletherapy sessions as required by ASHA.

Clinical Educators

The clinical educators function as the student clinician's clinical instructors. The clinical educators provide assistance, guidance, and feedback/evaluation. Clinical educators are individuals and, therefore, do not function alike. Student clinicians benefit from exposure to our diversified and accomplished clinical educators, all of whom have recognized clinical expertise. Each clinical educator holds the ASHA Certification of Clinical Competence and offers extensive experience with varied clinical populations. Clinical educators are not responsible for planning the client's treatment or the implementation of their suggestions.

Clinicians participate in teams during the first year of the program. During a clinician's first semester each clinical educator may schedule a weekly CE conference with the student or address general tasks in the weekly team meetings. Student clinicians will meet with their clinical educators to review plans, client progress, and determine appropriate goals for the clinician's professional growth. These meetings may be used to evaluate past treatment sessions for areas of strengths and weakness, to discuss proposed plans, communicate upcoming responsibilities or to jointly work on personal goals established by the clinician. Student clinicians are expected to plan to use this conference time effectively; it is dedicated

time when the clinician has access to the clinical educator as a resource. Anticipate upcoming matters in order to use this time constructively.

The clinician is responsible for exercising his/her initiative and developing problem-solving skills as questions arise between scheduled meetings. Ongoing clinical and professional growth are represented by the level of initiative demonstrated. Clinicians who have reached an advanced stage of performance/ independence may require shorter conferences or a bi-weekly schedule of conferencing. The conference arrangements will change as the independence of the individual clinician increases. This is left to the discretion of the clinical educator.

Clinic Team Model

First year graduate clinicians are assigned to one of three clinic teams, Adult, Pediatric, or Diagnostic Team. Teams meet throughout the semester. The clinical educators serve as the team leader in the coordination of scheduling the meeting day, time, and location. The team leader sends an email notification to clinicians regarding the team meeting schedule. The team meetings allow for additional education and mentoring to support students who are treating clients with disorders concurrently with being enrolled in the class. This provides additional support and also helps to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and clinic implementation.

Another benefit to participating clinicians is that of exposure to the clinical management of other clients. Clinicians are expected to attend their assigned team's regular meetings, and they may choose to attend other team's meetings that represent the disorders of the clients they are treating.

Clinical Grading

Midterm and Final Clinical Evaluations

Student clinicians are formally evaluated on their clinical performance at mid-term and at the end of each Fall and Spring semester. During the shorter summer semester, the formal Clinician Evaluation will be conducted only at the end of the semester. Exceptions to this are at the discretion of the Clinical Educator and required when a student is on clinic probation. A conference between the clinical educator and student clinician is held to discuss the clinical performance evaluation. The student is expected to complete a self-evaluation at mid-term and at the end of the semester for discussion during the conference.

Clinic grades are computed by averaging all clinical educators' evaluations for a given student at the end of the semester. Clinic grades will be determined on the basis of performance during the semester and completing all aspects of the practicum responsibilities, including submitting final copies of progress reports or other required paperwork. Your ability to meet required timelines for clinical reports and other paperwork will influence the evaluation of your clinical

performance at the mid-term and end-of-term. The mid-term & end-of-semester evaluation forms are located in CALIPSO. Student clinicians evaluate clinical educators at the end of each semester using the Clinical Teaching Evaluation form. This is provided by the Clinic Director after clinic practicum grades have been submitted.

UH COMD Clinical Practicum Grading Scale

Student clinicians are formally evaluated on their clinical performance at mid-term and at the end of each Fall and Spring semester. During the shorter summer semester, the formal Clinician Evaluation will be conducted only at the end of the semester. Exceptions to this are at the discretion of the Clinical Educator and required when a student is on clinic probation. A conference between the clinical educator and student clinician is held to discuss the clinical performance evaluation. The student is expected to complete a self-evaluation at mid-term and at the end of the semester for discussion during the conference.

Clinic grades are computed by averaging all clinical educators' evaluations for a given student at the end of the semester. Clinic grades will be determined on the basis of performance during the semester and completing all aspects of the practicum responsibilities, including attending and participating in clinic class, and submitting final copies of progress reports or other required paperwork. Your ability to meet required timelines for clinical reports and other paperwork will influence the evaluation of your clinical performance at the mid-term and end-of-term. The mid-term & end-of-semester evaluation forms are available in CALIPSO.

Clinician's Evaluation of Clinical Educator: Student clinicians evaluate clinical educators at the end of each semester using the Clinical Teaching Evaluation form (available on CALIPSO).
Clinical Practicum Grading Scale: The student's practicum grade is derived by averaging the final performance ratings assigned by each clinical educator who has supervised the student. The ratings are weighted based on the number of clock hours completed under each CE's supervision. The rating scale is as follows:

Performance Rating Scale

1 = Performs Unsatisfactorily. The clinical skill/behavior is beginning to emerge. Efforts to modify may result in varying degrees of success.

2 = Needs Improvement in Performance. Inconsistently demonstrates clinical behavior/skill. Exhibits awareness of the need to monitor and adjust and make changes. Modifications are generally effective.

3 = Meets Performance Expectations. Displays minor technical problems which do not hinder the therapeutic process and requires occasional support at a graduate clinician level. 3.5 = Consistent satisfactory performance for a graduate clinician.

4 = Exceeds Performance Expectations. Effectively implements the clinical skill/behavior, demonstrating independence and creative problem-solving.

Grade	Rating score range
A	4.0-3.75
A-	3.74-3.50
B+	3.49-3.25
B	3.24-3.00
B-	2.99-2.75
C+	2.74-2.50
C	2.49-2.25
C-	2.24-2.00
D+	1.99-1.75
D	1.74-1.50
D-	1.49-1.25
F	1.24 and lower

To earn a B or better, the student clinician must earn an average rating of at least a 3.00, defined as “meeting performance expectations.”

Clinic Check-Out Meetings

At the end of each semester, you are required to go through the check-out process before you can complete the semester. This process is set up to ensure that the Department has everything it needs from you each semester, and to assist you in completing all program and ASHA requirements by the time you graduate.

This check-out procedure applies to all clinicians enrolled in COMD 7391 and COMD 7392, 7692, 7992. Clinicians in the USLHC, collaborative sites, and externships are all required to participate in the end of semester check-out process. If any aspect of a student’s check-out is incomplete, the practicum grade will be reduced or designated “Incomplete,” and enrollment in a subsequent practicum course will be prohibited until all check-out requirements are met.

The Graduate Assistants will send all clinicians a check-out form prior to the end of the semester. This form may be found in the Clinician Library on SharePoint. The form details items required for the clinic check-out meeting. The form may be found here. [Checkout Template \(DOWNLOAD THEN EDIT\).xlsx](#)

Clinicians in externships (COMD 7392, 7692, 7992) must complete an externship check-out meeting with the Externship GA or the Externship Director following the final date of their extern placement. The Externship Director will provide the details regarding required items for externship check-out.

Clinical Documentation Procedures

Required Clinical Documentation

Required clinical documentation is listed below and may be found in SharePoint under Clinician Library. All General Client Paperwork is offered in both English and Spanish. It is imperative that the required clinic documentation be completed. All clinic documentation may be found at this link [Clinic Documentation & Forms](#)

General Intake Paperwork

1. Notice of Privacy Practice (NOPP)
2. Release of Protected Health Information (PHI)
3. Consent for Teletherapy (teletherapy only)
4. Observation Release
5. Consent for Audio- Video Recording
6. Authorization for Use of Image, Voice, Performance, Artwork or Likeness
7. Consent to Receive Protected Health Information (PHI) by email
8. Payment Policy
9. Contract for Service
10. Informed consent (in-person only)
11. COVID-19 screener (in-person only)
12. PHI Review (to be for returning clients after all the above have been completed)

General Client Paperwork

- Scheduling Card
- SOAP Notes
- Treatment Rationale
- Treatment Plan and Progress Report
- Home Program
- CE Written Documentation for Missing Paperwork

Evaluation Paperwork

- Diagnostic Evaluation Report
- Case History Form

Additional Clinician Paperwork

- Lesson Plan
- Attendance Record

- Clinic Letterhead

Other Paperwork

- Emergency Information Form
- Request for Information from Another Facility
- Field Trip Release
- Permission to Transport
- Shot Records
- Statement from Physician
- Final Conference Planning Guidelines

Practice Perfect

The USLHC utilizes Practice Perfect, an electronic medical records system that is used to house clinic documentation and charges. Clinicians will be instructed in how to use Practice Perfect during Clinic Class. Please refer to the instructions below regarding the use of the Practice Perfect system.

Practice Perfect Instructions:

1. Sign in to Practice Perfect with your username and password.
2. After signing in to Practice Perfect, the master list of all clients will appear. To access an individual client's file, search or scroll to the client's name. (If you do not see your client's name, notify the Dept. Business Administrator.)
3. By double clicking on the name of the client you are trying to access, their contact information page will appear. There are two options to access their documents. 1) Click the symbol of a blue filing box on the task bar located on the page, and 2) click the symbol of two blank white pages on the task bar located on the page.

With both of these options, a list of documents will appear. With the blue filing box symbol, SOAPs created using the Practice Perfect template will appear. With the two white pages symbol, documents that have been uploaded (e.g. rationale, treatment plan, progress report, final conference report, and home program) will appear.

Creating SOAP Notes in Practice Perfect:

To create a SOAP note in Practice Perfect, click on the blue filing box symbol. Click the green plus sign on the left side of the task bar to create a new note. Always enter the appropriate date, time in, time out, and treatment duration, and select the CE as the Co-Provider. After filling out the SOAP note, change the status to "Complete Unsigned". Then, click the blue save icon from the task bar.

Uploading Documents to Practice Perfect:

To upload a document to Practice Perfect, click on the two white pages symbol. Click the “New Document” dropdown tab from the task bar and select “Import Document”.

Select the appropriate “Document Type” and “Provider”. Write the document title in the “Description”. Then, click the yellow file folder to choose the document you want to upload. Once this is finished, click “OK” and your document will appear in Practice Perfect.

Editing an Uploaded Document:

To edit a document previously uploaded to Practice Perfect, go to the two white pages document page and double click the document you want to edit.

Click on “View/Edit Document”. The document will open in Microsoft Word where edits can be made. Be sure to Save the document before closing out of Word. The above box should still be open in Practice Perfect after you close the Word document. The “Re-Import” button will now be available and must be selected for the edited version to be saved on Practice Perfect.

How to create a reminder - To notify CE that a SOAP note has been entered.

1. Reminders are in the Operations list on screen left
2. Click green +
3. Enter date and time when you’d like the reminder to appear
4. Type what you want to be reminded of
5. Chose the person the reminder is to go to.

SharePoint

The USLHC utilizes SharePoint as a secure, collaborative work environment. Client electronic files are also securely stored on SharePoint. Clinicians will receive access to the Clinician Library and the Clinic Resources Library subsites. Other subsites, such as team (i.e. Pediatric Team) or collaborative sites (i.e. Magnolia Multi-Service Center) will be granted as needed.

Clinical Educator Resources

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Compliance

All clinical educators, student clinicians, and all office staff are required to successfully complete HIPAA training, as measured by a Post-Test, to demonstrate their understanding and readiness to comply with the University Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic’s (USLHC) HIPAA requirements. Clinical Educators, faculty and staff complete mandatory online training every fall, or at the time of hire. This training must be completed during the first week of employment for COMD personnel, and during fall orientation for graduate clinicians.

Requests for Information

Protocol regarding requests for information about clients/services to be provided to attorneys and local state and federal government officials

On occasion an attorney representing a parent, caregiver, or client contacts the clinic requesting information, clinical records, or testimony regarding services provided to a USLHC client. Such contacts are received via phone, email, fax, or US Mail/Certified or registered mail, or other delivery service. CEs, office staff, and students are NOT authorized to provide any information without FIRST notifying the Clinic Director, who will consult with the UH General Counsel Attorney. No one at the USLHC may comply with a Subpoena or supply an Affidavit without FIRST obtaining the direct guidance and input from the UH General Counsel. All faculty, clinical educators, staff, and clinicians MUST comply with this requirement of the UH General Counsel Office.

Clinical Educator Observation Log

An Observation Log must be completed by each Clinical Educator to reflect the amount of observation performed for each student during the semester. At the end of each semester, the Clinical Educator Observation Log must be submitted to the Clinic Director or loaded in the Observations folder in the CE Library in SharePoint. This record of observation is kept on file until the next ASHA re-accreditation site visit has occurred (every 8 years). An electronic version of the Observation Log is available in the CE Library on SharePoint in the folder labeled Observations. You will need to adapt dates, clinician names, and client initials each semester.

Clinical Educator Semester Duties

Beginning of the Semester

- The week before clinic sessions begin, students receive their client assignments, call clients to confirm scheduled appt. times, and schedule a meeting with the assigned CE to discuss their initial session plan. CEs may post a sign-up sheet of meeting times on SharePoint or use Sign-Up Genius app. for electronic scheduling of the initial CE conference.
- CEs may wish to give each clinician an agreement of expectations, so they know when SOAPS are due, preferences for lesson planning, etc. (See examples in Section VI Clinical Documentation).
- Guide students in determining and wording goals/objectives. First semester clinicians need CE guidance in writing goals/objectives in measurable terms. Clinicians are taught to use a goal writing flowchart in Clinic Class. Please encourage students to review ALL goals/objectives using the goal writing flowchart provided to them in class.

- Students place phone calls to “confirm” therapy times with parents- it can occasionally result in a changed therapy time that was not anticipated. The student/Clinical Educator should then work out the time together and alert the Clinic Director if there is an obstacle in scheduling that cannot be overcome. Update the zoom master schedule located in the CE Library in SharePoint or report final confirmed days/times to the Clinic Director for updating in master schedule.
- Make sure students choose and understand therapy models for whatever goals are appropriate (for example: if phonology- minimal pair therapy, cycles approach, etc.)
- All due dates are listed on the clinic timeline. Part-time Clinical Educators may arrange alternative due dates that fit their on-campus work schedule.
- Set up your Clinical Educator Observation log.

Ongoing through the Semester:

- Observation of Sessions: Observe at least 25% of treatment sessions (100% of services via telepractice).
- Provide written feedback regularly and retain a copy
- Clinical Educators vary in how much they go into the session to support the clinician based on the clinician’s needs
- Track how much time you observe all students weekly (templates available in the CE Library on SharePoint)
- Make sure you note make ups/absences on the observation tracking form
- Complete a feedback form regularly and give it to the clinician
- Instruct the clinician to sign and return the feedback form to you, or respond in some way
- Examples of feedback forms are available in the Clinician Library on SharePoint
- Check with your clinicians to ensure each one completes the online MCCFs [Monthly Client Contact Form] at the end of each month.

End of Semester:

- Review/Edit progress reports, letter, and homework
- CALIPSO- All Clinical Educators must review accuracy of clock hours submitted by supervisees and approve the hours that are pending the CE’s approval.
- CALIPSO - All CEs must complete a Performance Evaluation at mid-term and end-of-semester on each supervisee. The evaluation is converted to a grade and the areas of performance are ‘mapped over’ to the KASA form on CALIPSO.
- Observation Logs- finalize and turn in- calculate percentage of how much observation you did.
- Turn in to Clinic Director or load to Observations folder in the CE Library in SharePoint.

- Attend Parent/Client conferences. Schedule during therapy session time usually; student conducts treatment but preserves 20 minutes to conduct a final conference at the beginning or end of the session. Clinical Educators set the conference time and student confirms with parents
- If services are being provided onsite, clinicians should arrange with a fellow clinician to stay with/engage the young client while the conference is conducted with the parent. Older children may participate with the parent in the conference.
- Students may prepare a homework assignment/home program, attach it to the final progress report, and discuss the homework assignment instructions during the final conference.
- If providing services onsite, students should bring 2 copies of the Treatment Plan & Progress Report document to the final conference (one for parents/one for client's permanent file), scheduling card, and client feedback form. The client/parent is asked to complete the feedback form and submit it to the front desk prior to leaving the final conference.
- If providing services via telepractice, the client follows the procedure to request an emailed copy of the document and the student completes the PHI email request in the Client Paperwork folder in the Clinician Library on SharePoint.
- Students lead the conference- you support. Students DO NOT conduct final conferences without the Clinical Educator in attendance.

Documentation:

- Clinicians will document their sessions on SOAP notes. Lesson plan formats and requirements may vary depending on the CE and clinic assignment.
- Clinicians providing services in the USLHC must document their services in the relevant folders in the Clinician Library on SharePoint. CEs of clinicians at the USLHC review and approve documentation on SharePoint.
- Clinicians assigned to outreach settings may post treatment plans/logs, etc. on SharePoint for CE review/feedback/approval.
- If a clinician fails to conform to this requirement, a HIPAA violation report must be filed with the HIPAA Privacy Officer (Clinic Director) and a sanction imposed. Consult with the Clinic Director.
- Make sure the short-term goals build on and represent a hierarchy advancing to the accomplishment of the semester goals and long-term goals.
- The Assessment section SOAP note is challenging for new clinicians. It is critical that CEs provide assistance in writing an interpretation of the goals, add information to their objective section, and guide the clinician in avoiding subjective statements.
- It can prove challenging to keep up with revisions. Add something at the end of the file name to show whether they need to edit/send back (1,2) or just edit/print (-done). Or

you can use a grid or something to remind yourself which ones you have edited and emailed to them and when they are complete.

- Have clinicians complete and submit revisions quickly otherwise, it becomes challenging to keep up with them. Turn-around time of 24 hours is recommended, so you can provide feedback before the next session.
- Provide your clinicians with your full name, credentials, TX license number, and ASHA number before they begin submitting SOAPS so they represent this information accurately on the documents.
- Advise clinicians to include charting/data forms with the SOAPS or Daily Logs. The charting needs to be reviewed in order to verify that the documentation in the Daily Log/SOAP is represented appropriately and accurately. This applies to scoring of diagnostic tests also.
- Treatment Plans: A template is located in the Clinician Library on SharePoint in the folder labeled Templates & Clinic Paperwork.) Provide guidance on goal writing and wording
- Treatment Rationale: A template is located in the Clinician Library on SharePoint in the folder labeled Templates & Clinic Paperwork. Graduate clinicians are required to submit a Treatment Rationale document, separate from the Treatment Plan. The clinician documents the evidence-based research that supports the decisions made about the treatment approach/techniques included in their Treatment Plan.
- Progress Report: A template is located in the Clinician Library on SharePoint in the folder labeled Templates & Clinic Paperwork. A client's progress report includes information about goals/performance accuracy, assessment completed if indicated, methods/procedures, prognosis, and recommendations for the next semester. CEs need to make sure they include section on assessment/interpretation of the semester (separate from the accuracy reporting). Check content for misused jargon! Progress reports can require 1-3 revisions. Clinic calendar includes due dates for these - remind students!! A copy of the clinic calendar is pinned to the top of the CE Library, Clinic Resources Library, and Clinician Library in SharePoint.

Supervisory Conferences

Clinicians participate in teams during the first year of the program. During a clinician's first semester each clinical educator may schedule a weekly CE conference with the student or address general tasks in the weekly team meetings. Student clinicians will meet with their clinical educators to review plans, client progress, and determine appropriate goals for the clinician's professional growth.

These meetings may be used to evaluate past treatment sessions for areas of strengths and weakness, to discuss proposed plans, communicate upcoming responsibilities or to jointly work on personal goals established by the clinician. Student clinicians are expected to plan to use this

conference time effectively; it dedicated time when the clinician has access to the clinical educator as a resource. Anticipate upcoming matters in order to use this time constructively.

The clinician is responsible for exercising his/her initiative and developing problem-solving skills as questions arise between scheduled meetings. Ongoing clinical and professional growth are represented by the level of initiative demonstrated. Clinicians who have reached an advanced stage of performance/ independence may require shorter conferences or a bi-weekly schedule of conferencing. The conference arrangements will change as the independence of the individual clinician increases. This is left to the discretion of the clinical educator.

Final Grading Conference

The clinical educator may post a schedule for final grading conferences. If so, the supervisees should sign up for a conference time. In the absence of a posted sign-up sheet, students should contact their clinical educator to schedule a final grading conference. When possible, joint C.E. conferences (teams) will be held with the student clinician at the end of the semester. In the final grading conference, the clinician shares their self-evaluation, and the CE reviews the final evaluation and approves clock hours.

Clinical Educator/Supervisor Resources

Resources for clinical educators and clinical education may be found at this link [CE Resources](#).

Clinical Externship

Overview of Externship Program

The University of Houston Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders (COMD) offers a comprehensive externship program that meets the standards set by ASHA (specifically the Council for Clinical Certification in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology) and the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). UH COMD has affiliations with a variety of medical facilities, public and private schools, early childhood programs, home health providers, outpatient clinics and private practices. Our program offers students a variety of over eighty different sites throughout the Houston metro area.

At least two externship placements 7392/7692/7992 Advanced Practicum (Externship) courses are required as part of program completion. Students should be prepared, and expect, to work approximately 35 hours/week at their externship site (or combination of sites). At a site, or combination of externship sites, if less than 20 hours per week is spent on the site(s), and/or 50 client contact hours are not accrued, the student will earn a grade of incomplete for the term. Most externship sites require students to attend five days a week.

The minimum requirements, described above, are utilized in only very rare occasions, and require approval from the Externship Director, Graduate Director, student's Advisor and Department Chair. Students are expected to complete the entire term at their assigned sites. If a student earns 375 contact hours and/or all competencies prior to the end of any extern rotation, students must complete the semester in order to earn a grade for the 7392/7692/7992 Advanced Practicum (Externship) course.

Prior to enrollment in an externship experience, students need to have successfully completed clinics I-III, including treatment of adult and pediatric clients and a diagnostic assignment with a grade of B or better. Externship placements will not be finalized until all Clinic I-III requirements have been completed, per verification by the Clinic Director. Additionally, all interventions must be passed (per email verification from the faculty member) before the finalization of an externship placement. Should a summer externship placement apply (6th semester), the rotation will follow the Summer Session I schedule (See UH Academic Calendar for details).

All placements are final unless the site specifically requires a change due to unforeseen circumstances. Should a student choose to leave or drop an externship assignment, at any point, once it is assigned the student will receive an incomplete (I) and any competencies and hours earned at that site will be forfeited. The student will not be eligible to be assigned to another externship until the following semester (but may be up to 12 months), pending site availability and approval by the externship director, graduate director, and student's advisor. Students need to be aware that this will delay program completion by approximately one year. The student will need to register for, and participate in, another full semester externship course, including all costs associated (academic, clinical, and personal). Medical withdrawal from the university does not apply to this policy.

A student's place of employment may not be utilized as externship sites, whether past or current. Students cannot work with clients with whom they currently or may potentially have other relationships with. Disclosure is required if you are placed in an externship site that is at a place of employment or a site in which any conflict of interest may occur.

Externship Health and Immunization Requirements

Proof of immunizations is not required when providing services at the USLHC. However, collaborative clinic sites and externship sites have specific health and immunization requirements. In preparation for externship rotations, documentation of the following list of vaccinations will be required in the spring semester before fall externships begin. Please keep in mind that requirements standards can change. Some externship sites require American Heart Association CPR training only. This information is reflective of what is currently required.

- MMR
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Hep B

- TB Test
- Flu Shot
- COVID vaccines
- Tetanus

Students should be aware that some externship sites have additional requirements for participation. These requirements may be but are not limited to, drug screening, fingerprinting, interviewing, physical exam, or additional training. Information regarding the health and immunization requirements for any site will be communicated to the student by the externship coordinator.

Externship Meeting Requirements

There will be mandatory meetings to communicate information and prepare students for externship placements. Important information regarding expectations, scheduling, and requirements will be provided at each meeting.

First fall semester: Immunizations & Preparation meeting - Students should expect to attend a mandatory immunizations/preparation meeting. Information regarding health and required immunizations will be covered.

First summer semester: Externship Training meeting – Information regarding competencies, expectations, and scheduling will be covered in this meeting.

Externship Placement Meeting: Information regarding initial contact with externship site, how to look up and document externship clinical educator certification and license.

Second fall Semester: Externship Orientation Meetings – These two important meetings will be held just prior to the beginning of the second fall semester. Topics such as such as documentation and required externship paperwork will be covered. Professional behavior expectations will also be covered in these meetings.

Schedule and Attendance

Schedule:

- Clinical educators determine the days and hours that students are at the site, not the extern student. However, we ask that the weekly commitment on site not exceed 35 hours/week; this does not include commuting time.
- Students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for the daily schedule. At least 30 minutes prior to the start of the first client contact/meeting is expected by UH COMD.

- Students will not be granted extra time off to study before their midterms, finals, comprehensive examinations, the Praxis Exam, or other program requirements.
- Student externships run Monday-Friday, unless otherwise preferred by the clinical educator or specified at the time in which the placement was arranged the externship director. If a weekend experience is desired, approval from the externship director should be gained first.
- Students should expect assignments at the USLCHC, or affiliated site, if their externship placement is not full-time.
- Students should not expect to take spring break, or any other university holidays, without prior written notification on the Externship Confirmation Form with approval from the externship director and the on-site CE.

Attendance:

- Regular attendance, participation, and engagement in the externship experience are important contributors to student success. Students with absences (due to any circumstance: illness, conferences, religious holidays, etc.) will be required to make-up days missed before course grades can be submitted. Aligned with the graduate excused absence policy, documentation of the absence may be required by UH COMD or the site CE. If a student has extenuating circumstances that prevent participation in externship, the externship program director and student's advisor should be contacted for an alternative plan which may result in semester or program extension and associated costs at student's expense. When excessive absences occur, regardless of reason, passing the course is not guaranteed. Please read the excused absence policy in UH Graduate Catalog regarding extended absences, should you need to consider this option.
 - Standards applicable to providing services in a professional environment include, but are not limited to:
 - Demonstrates knowledge of contemporary professional issues that affect Speech-Language Pathology (CFCC IV-G; CAA 3.1.1B)
 - Demonstrates professionalism (CAA 3.1.1B - Professional Duty, 3.1.6B)
 - Demonstrates an understanding of the effects of own actions and makes appropriate changes as needed (CAA 3.1.1B - Accountability)
 - Explains healthcare landscape and how to facilitate access to services in the healthcare sector (CAA 3.1.1B - Accountability).
 - Explains educational landscape and how to facilitate access to services in the educational sector (CAA 3.1.1B - Accountability)
 - Engages in self-assessment to improve effectiveness in the delivery of clinical services (CAA 3.1.6B)
- Student absences (excused or unexcused) require notifications prior to the start of the business day to the
 - On-site clinical educator
 - Externship director

- At least 13 weeks of externship rotation must be completed.
- If inclement weather conditions arise, the student and CE should make a collaborative decision based on the safety of student travel (regardless of official university closure) and notify the externship director. If the city of Houston is closed, the conditions are not safe for travel.

Dismissal from Externship Site

Dismissal from a site may be initiated by a site CE, other externship site personnel, or UH Program Director for Externships. Clinical supervisors have the right to dismiss students from the clinical setting if there is behavior that indicates that the student is unprofessional (see professionalism section), unprepared clinically, and/or not capable of providing safe care in their practice setting. The Externship Program Director should be notified by phone/email as early as possible by the site clinical educator when dismissal of a student is being considered. Dismissal of a student from an externship site indicates that the student has not demonstrated appropriate clinical or professional competencies. The dismissal process includes a meeting with the student, advisor, master's program director, and externship director to discuss circumstances regarding the dismissal. Immediate dismissal from the externship site, and possibly the master's program, may occur under dangerous, unethical, slanderous, or other serious circumstances.

Clinical Hours Acquisition

Students cannot accrue hours if a CCC-SLP is not on site. Another designated on-site CCC-SLP may "substitute" if he/she agrees to be responsible for the student and clients during the main/primary Clinical Educator's absence.

Early in an externship you will provide more supervision until you feel your student is capable of and comfortable with more independence, or have the student observe for the first week or two.

- Clinical Hours are tracked on CALIPSO via hours submitted by student (CEs will receive email).
- Supervisor should determine if he/she prefers accrued hours to be submitted by the student daily, weekly, monthly, or only per the UH required schedule (fall term= quarter term, midterm, final; spring term=midterm, final) .
- Students are expected to keep logs to back up/justify accrued hours submitted into CALIPSO. These logs may be requested by the site CE or Externship Program Director at any time.
- All official student documentation must be co-signed by the supervising speech-language pathologist.

ASHA-CFCC Standard V-C: "Only direct contact (e.g., an individual receiving services must be present) with the individual or the individual's family in assessment, intervention, and/or

counseling can be counted toward practicum. When counting clinical practicum hours for purposes of ASHA certification, only the actual time spent in sessions can be counted, and the time spent cannot be rounded up to the nearest 15- minute interval." Billable hours should not be used as a geode as they do not always meet ASHA standards for direct contact time.

The following activities may be included as part of the direct clinical practicum hours:

- Administration of Screenings (formal or informal)
- Administration of Evaluations:
 - informal
 - formal
 - parent/caregiver history/interviews
 - explaining evaluation results to parents/caregivers/clients/patients
- Treatment
 - must be synchronous
 - individual or group
 - Counseling with caregivers and family
 - wrap-up sessions"
 - advising, training, and providing education
 - demonstrating skills to caregivers
 - demonstrating to families how to program AAC devices

Time spent in meetings with the patient/family present can be counted (where the student is reporting evaluation results, treatment plans, progress, etc.) since that is considered advising, educating, and training caregivers and family. The rest of the ARD/IEP/Care Plan meeting may not be counted. Also, activities like planning, paperwork, and asynchronous therapy cannot be counted.

Clinical Supervision

ASHA Requirements for Clinical Educators/Supervisors of Graduate Student Clinicians:

Originally required by 1-1-20, The ASHA- CFCC delayed enforcement until January 1, 2020, of the supervisory requirements for clinical educators as outlined in (a) Standard III of the 2020 Audiology Certification Standards and (b) Standard V-E of the 2020 SLP Certification Standards. For a licensed and certified speech-language pathologist to supervise graduate clinicians:

1. Current CCC-SLP
2. A minimum of 9 months of full-time clinical experience with clients/patients is required, after being awarded the CCC.
3. After being awarded CCC-SLP and prior to the supervision of a student, a minimum of 2 hours of ASHA approved professional development in the area of

supervision/clinical instruction is required & documented on the professional certification verification screen at ASHA.org.

Externship CEs are expected to provide direct supervision of the student clinician's diagnostic and treatment sessions conforming to UH & ASHA guidelines:

- 50% of each diagnostic session (UH standard) (AHSA-CFCC standard = 25%)
- ASHA-CFCC Standard V-E : (25% of total treatment sessions per client) "The amount of direct supervision must be commensurate with the student's knowledge, skills, and experience; must not be less than 25% of the student's total contact with each client/patient; and must take place periodically throughout the practicum. Supervision must be sufficient to ensure the welfare of the individual receiving services."

The amount of direct supervision must be commensurate with the student's knowledge, skills, and experience; must not be less than 25% of the student's total contact with each client/patient; and must take place periodically throughout the practicum. Supervision must be sufficient to ensure the welfare of the individual receiving services.

Educational Considerations when Working with Graduate Students:

- Set up regular times for conferences.
- Encourage the graduate student to be an active participant in establishing mutually agreed upon educational goals for the placement, which take into consideration the student's level of experience and the nature of the clinical opportunities available at the site.
- Clearly state your expectations for the graduate student over the course of the practicum- (re: hours, responsibilities clients, assigned projects or readings), and facility policies – as well as how the student will be evaluated.
- Be cognizant of the graduate student's learning style and how they respond to feedback.
- Avoid attempting to expose the graduate student to every type of patient and disorder. Periodically revisit the goals for placement and student learning objectives.
- Maintain communication with the university regarding the student's progress.

Check-ins between CE and Student Throughout Semester:

It is important for the CE and student to regularly check in with one another throughout the semester to determine if any changes need to be made. As the semester progresses the level or form of support begins to change. This progression and development of supervision is encouraged to be discussed explicitly in order to foster greater independence for the student.

- As a student, if you need more support in one area or less support in another, talk to your CE to see what adjustments can be made. And, as a graduate student, if you would like to try a skill independently or try a new new/different for the first time, ask the CE about doing so. Include the EBP information to support the “why” you would like to try something. Also, be open with your CE about the kind of support you would like to continue receiving or what support you would be comfortable with the CE fading.
- As a CE, evaluate what is going well, and check in with the student to ask for ways you can adapt your support based on his/her current level of skill development.

Direct feedback often facilitates learning only at a surface level as the CE provides the information to the student to teach concepts and skills. On the other hand, indirect feedback, such as open-ended questions, involves more of an active role on the part of the student. Asking the student open-ended questions, helps them develop their own response to the question whereby the CE can facilitate problem-solving skills leading toward deeper learning. As the student clinician gains clinical experience, they “require/benefit” most from a less direct style of supervision (Anderson, 1988). Regardless of the type of feedback provided, it continues to be a crucial element throughout the clinical education/teaching experience. Feedback is what guides the student to move beyond surface level and technical skills toward the problem-solving/critical thinking skills required to effectively assess and treat patients.

Student Evaluation of Externship Clinical Educators:

At the conclusion of the semester, students will confidentially rate the CE in the following areas:

- Orientation to site.
- Quality of feedback for – diagnostics, interviewing, conferences, behavior management, therapeutic skills, materials selection for treatment and diagnostics, clinical skill development.
- Verbal and/or written recommendations provided for improvements.
- Evidence Based Practices utilized by CE.
- Encouragement of student independence and creativity.
- Positive reinforcement provided to the student when appropriate.
- Enthusiasm for the profession & providing services.
- Receptive to student questions.
- Effective interpersonal communication with student.
- Realistic demands.
- CE availability.
- Resources provided– materials, articles, etc.
- Organizational & management skills.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Students will earn ratings based on his/her skill level demonstrated during the externship rotation. Determination of these rating requires thoughtfulness and attention to evidence the student has provided during the rotation. These ratings render a grade for midterm and final evaluations.

Please refer to the UH COMD Clinical Practicum Grading Scale to assist in determining the most appropriate rating that student has earned based on performance the student has demonstrated.

- A midterm and final evaluation form is to be completed in CALIPSO as well as a meeting to discuss the outcomes
- Students are expected to complete the self-evaluation to discuss at midterm and final performance conferences.
- Students are expected to provide a hard copy/paper copy or electronic copy to the CE at least 1 week before the performance conferences.
- Skill/competency level should change throughout the semester. See Benchmarks of Supervision section regarding the evolution of progress throughout the semester.
- Grade inflation, whether clinical or academic, hurts our profession and reduces the value of any grading system. Overall ratings below 3.0 indicate that additional training/practice is needed in order for the student to meet performance expectations for his/her current graduate clinician level. An additional rotation may be needed in order to provide this opportunity.
- Ratings of 4.0 should be reserved for exceptional skill level that has been demonstrated (above and beyond expected skill level). Evidence of skill refinement level should be described in detail in the comments section.
- A student who has demonstrated substandard abilities should be reflected in ratings of 1-2.75 with examples documented in midterm and/or final evaluations.
- The UH Externship Program Director may change a rating according to the amount of support and guidance the student required in order to be successful clinically or professionally.
- Students are not professionals and are not supposed to be totally independent. They require your assistance but should be able to perform competently with the support of your suggested guidelines.
- There are basic professional competencies that are required and have been stressed from the student's initial practicum experiences at UH and externship orientation meetings. They include, but are not limited to: preparedness, responsibility, dependability, excellent attendance, meeting paperwork timelines, maintenance of confidentiality, respect for clients and supervisors, etc.

Performance Rating Scale Explanation:

All evaluations should be based on the current graduate clinician level (rather than compared to a CF or CCC- SLP)...will the student be ready work as a CF within the within their program completion timeline? As a summative assessment consider that an extern rotation 1 is the student's 4th semester and rotation 2 is the student's 5th, and last, semester of the graduate program.

Click on the [?] for more information about the skill (when logged into the CALIPSO program)

Note: Ratings may be documented in .25 intervals (ex: 3.0; 3.25; 3.5; 3.75)

Areas not addressed should be left unrated.

Please refer to the UH COMD Clinical Practicum Grading Scale for a full description.

University Visits with Externship Sites

A site visit by the Externship Director may be scheduled with the CE during the semester to discuss the student's experience. Visits may occur via phone, Zoom or in person. The student does not participate in the visit unless deemed necessary. If you would like to request a site visit at any time, please contact Janet Eckert.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: COMD Grievance Policy

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders Grievance Policy

UH COMD uses the definition provided in the CLASS Grievance policy

[<http://www.uh.edu/class/students/graduate/academics-planning/policies-procedures/>]:

An academic grievance refers to an action taken against a student by a member of the faculty (including part-time instructors and teaching assistants), staff, or administration that either violates a university, college, or department academic policy or procedure or prejudicially treats the student on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, or any other nonacademic status. Cases involving prejudicial treatment of any of the categories listed above will be referred to the UH Office of Equal Opportunity Services [<https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/about-eos/index.php>]. Department procedures will be put on hold until a report from EOS has been received. The time elapsed for the EOS investigation will not be counted toward any departmental deadlines described below.

All issues must first be addressed through the COMD complaint policy or petition procedure. If the issue is not resolved and it fits the above definition of an academic grievance, the aggrieved student may submit a formal grievance to the Chair of the department involved (or the college officer designated by the Dean if the Department Chair is the focus of the grievance) within 10 working days of the conclusion of the complaint or petition procedures.

Definitions:

Grievant: the student making the grievance

Respondent: the person about whom the grievance was made

Panel Chair: the faculty member appointed to lead the grievance hearing

Working days: Monday through Friday, excluding university holidays such as spring break or breaks in between fall-spring, spring-summer, or summer-fall terms

NOTE: Timelines may be altered during the summer term as described below in Special Consideration During Summer Months

The following procedures will be used concerning a grievance:

- All communication will occur via uh.edu email addresses per the University policies.
- The Department Chair will be responsible for receiving and reviewing the formal grievance, selecting members of the panel, and appointing a Panel Chair. If the Department Chair is named in the grievance, the Vice Chair will take over these responsibilities. If both the Department Chair and the Vice Chair are named in the grievance, a full-time associate or full professor who is not named in the grievance will

be appointed by the Department Chair to serve as the Panel Chair and to initiate the proceedings.

- For grievances against a departmental decision in which a specific person is not named, the Department Chair and appropriate Program Director will serve as respondents.
- The Grievance panel will include:
 - 3 full-time COMD faculty members (one of whom will serve as Panel Chair)
 - 1 UH faculty member from outside COMD
 - 1 UH student from outside the department at the same level as the grievant (e.g., undergraduate, graduate)
- In filing the formal grievance, the grievant must state 1) the specific issue being grieved 2) when they discovered the issue being grieved, 3) a summary of the complaint or petition process the student completed, and 4) what the desired resolution would be.
- The formal grievance must also contain evidence to support the grievance.
- The Panel Chair will review the formal grievance. If any of the above is not present in the formal grievance, the Panel Chair will inform the grievant of the missing information and allow 2 working days for the grievant to provide the missing information or the grievance will be dismissed.
- After filing the formal grievance, additional evidence may be submitted ONLY if it meets ALL 3 of the following criteria:
 - the new information was discovered after the submission of the formal grievance
 - it provides novel information that is qualitatively different from what had already been submitted in the formal grievance, AND
 - it has potentially significant implications for the proceedings.
- Such evidence must be submitted to the Panel Chair no later than 2 working days prior to the hearing, in the form of a 300-word (maximum) addendum.
- Upon receipt of the formal grievance, the Panel Chair will
 - inform the respondent(s) and provide them with a confidential copy of the formal grievance.
 - select the Grievance Panel
- The respondent(s) will have 10 working days to produce a written response to the grievance and submit it to the Panel Chair. Deaf faculty named in the grievance have the option to provide a video response in ASL with simultaneous interpreting into spoken English (voice over) as there is no written form of ASL.

- The grievant will receive a copy of the response composed by the respondent(s) within 5 working days after the Panel Chair's receipt of said response.
- A hearing will be scheduled within a maximum of six weeks of receipt of the response to the formal grievance. The Panel Chair will work with the Panel to arrange a date, time and place for the hearing and will inform all parties at least 5 working days prior to the date of the hearing.
- The Panel Chair will:
 - provide the formal grievance (including all submitted evidence) and the written response to all members of the grievance panel a minimum of 5 working days prior to the hearing.
 - provide the rules for the hearing (e.g., how much time each party will have to speak) and the names of the members of the grievance hearing panel to all participants (grievant, respondent, and panel) a minimum of 5 working days prior to the hearing.
- The grievant may invite an advocate to accompany them. If the grievant chooses to invite legal counsel as the advocate, the grievant must inform the Panel Chair within 10 working days after receipt of the written response. The hearing may be postponed up to 10 working days to allow the respondent time to obtain University legal counsel.
- The following hearing guidelines will be in effect:
 - The grievant, an advocate (if desired), the respondent, and the full panel will be present at the hearing.
 - The grievant, the advocate, and the respondent may speak at the hearing. These parties will present their cases directly to the panel. Discussion between the grievant/advocate, and the respondent is prohibited.
 - Only the panel members will be allowed to ask questions of the grievant and the respondent.
 - The hearing will be based on the original formal grievance, the response provided by the respondent, and any new evidence introduced prior to the meeting if admitted per the rules described above.
 - Recording of the hearings is allowed only by the Panel Chair to be used by the panel in their deliberation and writing their report. The Panel Chair will determine if the hearing will be recorded and will announce it to all parties at the beginning of the hearing. The recording will be destroyed upon submission of the written report.
 - After both sides have presented their cases and all questions from the panel have been answered to the satisfaction of the panel members, the grievant, advocate, and respondent(s) will be excused, and the panel will discuss the findings. The panel's discussion will not be recorded unless agreed upon by the panel. Recording will be solely for the use of the panel in their deliberations and report writing and will be destroyed upon submission of the written report.

- The outcome of the grievance process will be a written report from the panel which articulates, at a minimum, a brief summary of the allegations made and the respondent’s rebuttal, the findings of the panel (i.e., the panel’s judgment of the facts), and the recommendations of the panel. The recommendations must address the specific issues and resolutions provided by the grievant. The report will be completed within 7 working days after the hearing has been conducted. The decision will be sent to the grievant, the respondent, and the Department Chair.
- The grievant has the right to appeal the decision of the departmental grievance panel. This must be done in accordance with college procedures available at: <http://www.uh.edu/class/students/graduate/academics-planning/policies-procedures/>

TIMELINE

ACTION	TIMELINE
Complaint procedures fail to resolve issue	Grievant=10 working days to submit formal grievance
Panel Chair receives formal grievance	Panel Chair: 2 working days to review for completeness & either return or send to respondent <i>If incomplete, return to Grievant;</i> <i>Grievant: 2 days to revise & resubmit</i>
Respondent receives formal grievance	Respondent:10 working days to submit response to Panel Chair
Panel Chair receives response	Panel Chair: 5 working days to send response to Grievant Panel Chair: 6 weeks to schedule hearing
Panel Chair scheduling hearing	Grievant: announce legal advocate within 10 working days Panel Chair: send date/time to all parties 5 days prior to hearing
Hearing held	Panel Chair: 7 working days to submit written report to all parties

Special Consideration During Summer Months

Most COMD faculty work 9-month contracts (Mid-August through mid-May), and many students are not engaged in on-campus University work over the summer. Therefore, in order to offer the grievant a fair hearing with a full committee, the departmental timelines established in the policy may not be met during summer months. A student may file a grievance during the summer, defined as May 1st through August 31st, with the understanding and acknowledgement that the time lines could be altered based on availability of a full committee. It should be understood, however, that every effort will be made by the department to continue the process in a timely fashion.

To be completed and submitted with any grievance filed between May 1st and August 31st.

I, _____ (print name), acknowledge that I have been informed of and agree to waiving of specific timeframes for this grievance submitted during the University summer months of May through August. I have received assurance from the Communication Sciences and Disorders department that even with this waiver in effect, every effort will be made to conduct the process in a timely fashion.

Signature

Date

Appendix B: Links to Graduate School Forms and Procedures

NOTE: Please note that the web page links may change. This collection of links is provided for your convenience, but it is the student's responsibility to obtain and verify that the most current form is used. This is not a comprehensive list of all forms and procedures.

- Graduate School Forms and Procedures: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/>
- General Petition Form: <https://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/gpsp-updated-petition-102020.pdf>
- General Petition Form Instructions: https://uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/gpsp_instructions.pdf
- Student-Initiated Drop: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/student-initiated-drop-form1.pdf>
- Student-Initiated Term Withdrawal: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/uh-official-term-withdrawal-form.pdf>
- Medical/Administrative Term Withdrawal Request: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/gradprof-med-adm-withdrawal-request1.pdf>
- Inter-Institutional Course Registration Forms: <https://www.uh.edu/academics/forms/#IICR>
- Written Dissertation Approval Form: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/academics/thesis/written-thesis-dissertation-approval-form-082019.pdf>
- Thesis/Dissertation Template (Front Matter): <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/academics/thesis/uhgs-template-front-matter-082019.docx>
- Resources for teaching and learning:
 - Faculty Engagement and Development: <https://www.uh.edu/provost/faculty/current/fed/services/index.php>
 - Graduate Professional and Personal Development: <https://uh.edu/graduate-school/graduate-professional-and-personal-development/>

Appendix C: Emergency Procedures

Department Emergency Procedures

Emergency Procedures for the COMD department. Please see the Emergency Procedures for the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic (USLHC) in the Clinic Handbook.

All Department members and students are responsible and being familiar with the exits for every area of the department. The department is equipped with smoke detection systems and fire alarms throughout the building. The alarms emit sound and a flashing red light. All exits are clearly marked with red EXIT signs.

Students are notified of an emergency either through the alarm system or verbally. Everyone should move to the nearest exit to the outside of the building until notified by a UH official that it is safe to return. Do not re-enter the building until the 'all clear' signal has been given by the University of Houston police.

Fire Drill Exit Procedures

- Evacuate in a calm, orderly manner.
- Begin evacuating immediately upon hearing the alarm.
- Move away from the building once outside.
- Do not interfere with Fire Dept. personnel or equipment.
- Do not return to the building until notified by University Police that it is safe to do so.

In the event of an external emergency, the University of Houston PIER notification system will be used in concert with the siren system to disseminate further information to the UH community. Only those persons that have current contact information in PeopleSoft will be able to receive these emergency messages. Students can find instructions for updating mobile phone numbers, email addresses, and other contact information at www.uh.edu/emergency. All students are encouraged to regularly update their emergency contact information in the PeopleSoft system so they may be notified during severe weather conditions or other emergency situations.

Information concerning school closing will be posted on the UH website, and will be broadcast on major TV networks and radio stations.

Faculty and staff need to be aware of medical emergency conditions requiring immediate attention. These would include, but are not limited to:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Symptoms of stroke

- Altered mental status
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures
- Overdose-accidental or intentional
- Major trauma-including head trauma with loss of consciousness or altered mental status, and injuries involving more than one body part
- Severe allergic reactions with facial swelling and difficulty breathing
- Severe pain

In each of the above medical emergency conditions, immediately notify University Police at 713- 743-3333 or dial 9-1-1 from a campus phone and report the nature and severity of the medical problem and the location of the individual needing emergency medical care. University Police will meet emergency care providers and direct them to the individual needing medical assistance. If possible, someone should stay with the individual until the University Police officer or EMT arrives.

Do not move the individual unless there is an immediate threat to life (i.e., fire, dangerous fumes).

Notifying the University Health Center or transporting the individual experiencing the medical emergency conditions to the Health Center instead of immediately notifying University Police is not an appropriate, life-saving response. The Health Center is neither staffed for, nor supplied with, medications or devices to administer Advanced Life Support.

In case of an ocular (eye) emergency, please notify the University Eye Institute Ocular Diagnostic and Medical Eye Service at 713-743-2010 immediately. Symptoms that require prompt attention include sudden loss of vision, seeing flashes of light, unusual light sensitivity, extreme pain, and/or redness of the eye(s). Licensed practitioners are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Refer to the University of Houston General Emergency Evacuation Procedures for more information: <https://www.uh.edu/emergency-management/planning-and-response/emergency-management-plan/>

Clinic Emergency Procedures

Evacuation Circumstances and Procedures:

All Department members and students are responsible for reviewing the evacuation map and being familiar with the exits for every area of the building. The building is equipped with a sprinkler system and fire alarms. The alarms emit sound and a flashing red light. All exits are clearly marked with red EXIT signs. Please see the UH COMD Master's handbook for more information regarding emergency procedure for the department.

If you are notified of an emergency situation while engaged in clinical services, either through the alarm system or verbally, you are responsible for leading your client to the nearest exit. Do not leave a client in a treatment room, lab, audiology test booth, or restroom while you investigate the problem. Move with your client to the nearest exit to the outside of the building until you are notified by a UH official that it is safe to return to the building. Employees with disabilities shall notify University Police immediately of their work location(s), medical condition and any special requirements. [UH Police: 713-743-3333]

Areas of the building should be checked for occupants as follows:

Front office staff escort all work-study students and waiting room clients out of the building as they evacuate. Check the waiting room restroom as you go. Instruct anyone you see to leave the building immediately. Await further instructions from a UH official outside the building. Audiology staff are to escort any audiology clients out of the test booths and audiology clinic rooms to the nearest exit. Await further instructions from a UH official outside the building.

Clinicians/students evacuate the clinician computer room (M162H), clinical workroom (M163C), and clinic materials rooms immediately by going to the nearest exit. Do not delay by continuing to work on a computer document. Await further instructions from a UH official outside the building.

Clinicians in the clinic rooms escort their clients and families out of the building taking the nearest exit. Await further instructions from a UH official outside the building.

Clinical faculty will sweep the conference room, labs rooms, all restrooms, computer lab, student workroom, and clinic materials room as they leave the building, seeing that anyone they find comes with them. Await further instructions from a UH official outside the building. Persons in wheelchairs must exit via the main entrance.

All faculty & staff are responsible for evacuating all occupants from their assigned areas and reporting any problems (people who will not leave, etc.) to the University Police. Do not re-enter the building until all clear signal has been given by the University of Houston police.

Appendix D: Acknowledgement of Graduate Program Handbook Review

The following will be signed during orientation and retained for the duration of the program.

Acknowledgement of Graduate Program Handbook Review

I, _____ (name printed), acknowledge that I have been introduced to the COMD Graduate Program Handbook and orientated to its contents.

Furthermore, I am responsible for abiding by the contents therein.

I understand that I can locate the current handbook at any time on the UH COMD website; however, I should download the 2023-2024 Graduate Program Handbook for my reference throughout the program.

Finally, I understand that I must also follow the expectations from the UH Graduate Catalog and I can locate the current UH Graduate Catalog on the UH website (<http://publications.uh.edu/index.php>).

Signature

Date