

SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY (MS)

The Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology (MS-SLP) at DePaul University is a comprehensive program that offers a balanced, three-part curriculum to prepare future Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) to work with both children and adults across the full range of communication disorders. Course elements are designed to imbue students with the knowledge base pertinent to the field, while simultaneously fostering the critical thinking, problem solving, and self-confidence that contributes to effective independent clinical practice. Further, students will develop empathy and compassion, the hallmark traits of a master clinician. The curriculum includes both didactic and clinical requirements for graduation. A total of 102 quarter hours is required for the MS-SLP degree (or 112 for the BESSC-SLP Certificate). The three curricular parts are described below:

Academic Curriculum: The academic curriculum includes basic science and research coursework, in addition to courses that focus on specific communication disorders. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has established a minimum of knowledge and skills required for the Certificate of Clinical Competence (ASHA Certification Standards, 2020). Specific academic coursework is required that addresses the following:

- the discipline of communication sciences and disorders;
- basic human communication and swallowing processes, including the appropriate biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural bases;
- the ability to integrate information pertaining to normal and abnormal human development across the life span;
- etiology and characteristics of various communication and swallowing disorders, identification procedures, and treatment approaches;
- knowledge of the nature of speech, language, hearing, and communication disorders and differences, and swallowing disorders, including the etiologies, characteristics, anatomical/physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates.

Students must demonstrate specific knowledge in the following areas: speech sound production; fluency; voice, resonance, and motor speech; receptive and expressive language; social aspects of communication, including pragmatics; communication impairments related to cognition; augmentative and alternative communication; hearing and aural rehabilitation; swallowing and feeding.

Research Curriculum: Students learn about basic research methods within the discipline, explore the evidence base of speech-language pathology and related professions, and apply knowledge gained to clinical practices by completing a comprehensive literature review.

Clinical Curriculum: According to the ASHA certification standards (2020), students must complete at least 400 hours of supervised clinical experience with individuals who present a variety of communication disorders across the age range and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Students begin building their foundational clinical skills through screenings and simulations. The screenings take place in our community partner preschools in Chicago. Next, students engage in 4 quarters of clinical practica at the DePaul University Clinic. The

clinic accepts clients from the community ranging in age from young children through adults and with a variety of communication and swallowing disorders to provide our SLP students with a breath of clinical experiences. In addition, each student completes two advanced practica of at least 10 weeks duration. These involve externship experiences in school, clinic, or hospital placements.

Program Requirements	Quarter Hours
Degree Requirements	102
Total hours required	102

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Design appropriate evaluations for a variety of speech and language clients and disorders.
- Create intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals to meet speech and language clients' needs.
- Use evidence-based treatment strategies to support clinical decision making.
- Evaluate speech and language clients' progress to determine treatment outcomes.

Degree Requirements

Core Courses

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
SLP 400	INTERPROFESIONAL EDUCATION	2
SLP 401	NEUROGENIC BASIS OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS	4
SLP 402	CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND DISORDERS	4
SLP 403	PROFESSIONAL ISSUES AND ETHICS IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY	2

Research Courses

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
SLP 410	RESEARCH METHODS	3
SLP 411	TOPICS IN RESEARCH FOR SLPs: EBP	2

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
Child/Adolescent Courses		
SLP 420	SPEECH SOUND DISORDERS	4
SLP 421	LANGUAGE DISORDERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD	4
SLP 422	LANGUAGE DISORDERS IN SCHOOL-AGE POPULATIONS	4
SLP 423	AUTISM & OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS	3
SLP 424	LANGUAGE, LITERACY & LEARNING	4
Adult Courses		
SLP 430	APHASIA	4

SLP 431	DYSPHAGIA	4
SLP 432	ACQUIRED NEUROLINGUISTIC AND NEUROCOGNITIVE DISORDERS	4
SLP 433	MOTOR SPEECH DISORDER	4
Other Disorders		
SLP 440	VOICE AND RESONANCE DISORDERS	4
SLP 441	FLUENCY DISORDERS	3
SLP 442	AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE LIFESPAN	3
SLP 450	SPECIAL TOPICS	3

Clinical Education

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
SLP 480	CLINICAL METHODS IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY	4
SLP 481	CLINICAL PRACTICUM I	4
SLP 482	CLINICAL PRACTICUM II	4
SLP 483	CLINICAL PRACTICUM III	4
SLP 484	CLINICAL PRACTICUM IV	4
SLP 485	EXTERNSHIP SCHOOL PRACTICUM	8
SLP 486	EXTERNSHIP MEDICAL PRACTICUM	8
SLP 487	FOUNDATIONS IN CLINICAL PRACTICE LAB	1

Admissions Procedures and Requirements

Professionals in speech-language pathology begin the licensing and certification process by obtaining a Master's degree in the discipline. DePaul University offers this degree as a Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology (M.S. SLP). Prospective graduate program applicants are required to hold a bachelor's degree in speech language pathology or the equivalent. Students with backgrounds including communication sciences and disorders, education, health-related professions, biomedical sciences, and psychology are encouraged to apply. The following are graduate admission requirements for DePaul University Speech Language Pathology (SLP) Program:

- Completion of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited institution in either
 - Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD), including the courses listed below; or
 - An area other than CSD, with completion of the prerequisite coursework listed below (*see below*). A minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in the undergraduate major is required.
- Three (3) letters of recommendation who can comment on the academic, clinical, and professional experiences of the applicant.
- A completed *Communication Science and Disorders Centralized Application Service* (CSDCAS) application, including academic history, personal essays, and extracurricular/volunteer experience. Once a student's file is complete and reviewed by CSDCAS, the SLP program Admissions Committee will review it to ensure that all prerequisite courses have been completed.
- Official transcripts from every college or university attended (mailed to CSDCAS). If currently attending college, most recently completed quarter grades must be included.
- An interview with faculty (*by invitation only*).

- Commitment to abide by the DePaul University Drug-Free Workplace and Substance Abuse Policy.
- Passage of the DePaul University criminal background check.
- Proof of CPR certification through completion of a healthcare provider course certified by the American Heart Association.

Prerequisites for Admission:

Students will be required to complete the following prerequisites (*see below*) to be considered into the Speech-Language Pathology program.

Speech Language Pathology Courses: The following undergraduate or leveling courses must be completed prior to starting the graduate program.

- Anatomy and Physiology of the Speech & Hearing Mechanism
- Introduction to Audiology
- Introduction to Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Normal Child Language Development
- Phonetics
- Speech Science
- Speech Sound Disorders (Articulation and Phonology)

Observation Hours: Each student must have 25 clock hours of authorized observation signed by a licensed speech-language pathologist who holds the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The following form may be used to document observation hours: [DePaul_SLP_Observation_Hours_Form_F21_.pdf](https://catalog.depaul.edu/programs/speech-language-pathology-ms/DePaul_SLP_Observation_Hours_Form_F21_.pdf) (https://catalog.depaul.edu/programs/speech-language-pathology-ms/DePaul_SLP_Observation_Hours_Form_F21_.pdf)

Additional Course Requirements: (per the [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Standard IV-A](#))

- One course in the biological sciences (human or animal biology, such as biology, human anatomy and physiology, neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, human genetics, or veterinary science)
- One course in the physical sciences (physics or chemistry)
- One course in social/behavioral sciences (psychology, sociology, anthropology, or public health)
- A statistics course (a stand-alone course)

Strongly Recommended Courses:

- Aural Rehabilitation (*required for ASHA certification*)
- Methods of Teaching Learners with Exceptionalities (*required for an Illinois Professional Educator's License*)

Please note that simply meeting these criteria is not a guarantee of admission. As is the case with most graduate programs in speech-language pathology, admission is highly competitive.

Transfer Credit

No graduate courses may be transferred from another institution for this degree.

Conditional Admissions

Students whose undergraduate degrees were in majors other than Communication Science Disorders, Speech Language Pathology or related fields may be conditionally admitted provided they complete all the required prerequisites prior to the start of the academic quarter.

Readmission

The same readmission standards outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook and approval of the program director are observed for students in these programs.

Undergraduate Courses

No undergraduate courses shall count toward the graduate degree.

Standards

The M.S. SLP prepares students for entry into the profession of speech-language pathology. This assertion is based on the program's adherence to Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) standards which outline a comprehensive list of knowledge and skills for successful clinical practice. The Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) is the Program's roadmap with respect to development of experiences for each individual student. The Department standards for graduate student performance are in keeping with College standards for graduate education.

CAA Standards (2020): <https://www.asha.org/Certification/2020-SLP-Certification-Standards/>

ASHA Certification Handbook (2018): <https://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/SLP-Certification-Handbook.pdf>

Clinical Education / Practicum: Detail regarding policies governing the process of clinical education may be found in the *DePaul University SLP Program Clinic Handbook*. Students will complete at least 400 hours of supervised clinical experiences. Students will engage in four quarters of clinical practicum at the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic on the Lincoln Park Campus and two quarters of externship placements. The speech-language pathology students gain an in-depth and broad scope of clinical experiences working with clients from the community ranging in age from toddlers through adults with a variety of communication and swallowing disorders. In the first year, students must have successfully completed 25 documented clinical observation hours before being placed in a clinical practicum (SLP 481) at the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic. In the second year, students must have successfully completed a minimum of 150 hours of supervised clinical practice in the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic to qualify for a school (SLP 485) or medical site (SLP 486) practicum experience.

Student Assessment of Knowledge and Skills: Each course offering in the curriculum has been designed to provide students with knowledge and skills requisite for functioning as a speech-language pathologist. The knowledge and skills are aligned with learning outcome statements. These statements are found in each course syllabus, including those for clinical practicum. Outcomes are consistent with and follow the numbering of the ASHA 2020 Standards for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology.

The ASHA Standards Assessment Form is completed for each student in each class or clinical experience every quarter by rating performance as either "Not Evident," "Emerging," "Present," "Adequate," or "Consistent."

1. **Not evident:** Skills are not evident most of the time. The student requires direct instruction to modify behavior and is unaware of the need to change. The clinical educator must model behavior and implement the skill required for the client to receive optimal care. Clinical educator provides numerous instructions and frequent modeling. (Skill is present <25% of the time).

2. **Emerging:** Skill is emerging but is inconsistent or inadequate. The student shows awareness of the need to change behavior

with clinical educator input. Clinical educator frequently provides instructions and support for all aspects of case management and services. (Skill is present 26-50% of the time).

3. **Present:** Skill is present and needs further development, refinement, or consistency. The student is aware of the need to modify behavior but does not do this independently. Clinical educator provides ongoing monitoring and feedback; focuses on increasing student's critical thinking on how/when to improve skill. (Skill is present 51-75% of the time).

4. **Adequate:** Skill is developed/implemented most of the time and needs continued refinement or consistency. The student is aware and can modify behavior in-session and can self-evaluate. Problem-solving is independent. Clinical educator acts as a collaborator to plan and suggest possible alternatives (skill is present 76-90% of the time).

5. **Consistent:** Skill is consistent and well developed. The student can modify their own behavior as needed and is an independent problem-solver. Students can maintain skills with other clients and in other settings when appropriate. Clinical educator serves as a consultant in areas where the student has less experience; Provides guidance on ideas initiated by the student (skill is present >90% of the time).

At the discretion of the clinical educator, an intervention plan to address specific skill deficiencies may be implemented even if the overall grade falls outside the range indicated below. Student concerns and desired learning outcomes at the clinical levels will be addressed through the intervention plan.

The Director of Clinical Education will review all graduate student final competencies at the end of each quarter. Additional opportunities for grand rounds or oral presentations of case studies, for example, may be part of the summative assessment.

Clinical Grades and Assessment:

a. Clinical practicum is a progressive activity. It is expected that a clinician will continue to develop new insights and skills. Therefore, the repetition of the same quality work in subsequent semesters will not ensure the same grade. In accordance with ASHA standards, growth is essential. The CALIPSO evaluation standards are structured to reflect this progress, and grades will be graduated across the quarters to reflect this growth in clinical skills.

b. Final grades submitted for the quarter are at the discretion of the Director of Clinical Education and will be determined during a final grading meeting with all clinical educators at the end of each quarter. General grading scales aligned with the Clinical Performance Evaluation Score are listed below:

SLP 481 Practicum I

A 3.66-5.00
A- 3.35-3.65
B+ 3.04-3.34
B 2.73-3.03
B- 2.50-2.72
C+ 1.00-2.49

SLP 482 Practicum II

A 4.00-5.00
 A- 3.66-3.99
 B+ 3.35-3.65
 B 3.04-3.34
 B- 2.73-3.03
 C+ 1.00-2.72

SLP 483 Practicum III

A 4.00-5.00
 A- 3.66-3.99
 B+ 3.35-3.65
 B 3.04-3.34
 B- 2.73-3.03
 C+ 1.00-2.72

SLP 484 Practicum IV

A 4.27-5.00
 A- 3.96-4.26
 B+ 3.65- 3.95
 B 3.34-3.64
 B- 3.03-3.33
 C+ 1.00-3.02

SLP 485 Practicum V Externship

A 4.27-5.00
 A- 3.96-4.26
 B+ 3.65- 3.95
 B 3.34-3.64
 B- 3.03-3.33
 C+ 1.00-3.02

SLP 486 Practicum VI Externship

A 4.27-5.00
 A- 3.96-4.26
 B+ 3.65- 3.95
 B 3.34-3.64
 B- 3.03-3.33
 C+ 1.00-3.02

CALIPSO Tracking System: The Department of Speech Language Pathology at DePaul University utilizes a secure, on-line program to track clinical experiences: *Clinical Assessment of Learning, Inventory of Performance, and Streamlined Office Operations* (CALIPSO). This system also enables students to maintain an electronic portfolio and manage a variety of external documents. It allows the Director of Clinical Education to maintain a comprehensive database of clinical sites and instructors. Students will have access to this system throughout their course of graduate studies and then continuing for three years after graduation to allow and ensure access to their clinical hours. Students will be trained prior to accessing the CALIPSO system.

Academic Performance

Academic performance is defined by course grades, which also includes grades in all clinical practicum courses. The Speech Language Pathology Program defines minimum academic performance as

- A cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of no less than 3.0 (B) across all graduate-level courses; and
- No course grade less than B- in any graduate-level course.

Intervention Plans

Intervention plans are designed to improve a student's knowledge and skills in a specific area judged to fall below an acceptable level of

minimum competence. Three scenarios can result in the implementation of an intervention plan. An intervention plan will be automatically implemented whenever a student receives an overall score of "emerging" from any instructor or supervisor. An intervention plan may be instituted if a student receives either multiple scores of "emerging" within an individual experience, or multiple scores of "emerging" on the same ASHA standard. The decision to implement a remediation plan under these circumstances will be made jointly by the instructor(s) who gave the "emerging" scores and the Program Director.

A student may request that an intervention plan be developed for scores of "emerging" that did not already result in a plan. The decision to implement an intervention plan under this circumstance must also be approved by the instructor(s) and the Program Director. This is to be based on the impact that receiving "emerging" will have on the student's successful completion of the program in a timely manner. For example, an intervention plan may be implemented if few or no future opportunities are available for that standard to be addressed. A remediation plan may not be approved if there are many future prospects for completion of the standard.

If an intervention plan is necessary, the following steps will take place:

- The Program Director will meet with the instructor(s) involved including academic and clinical instructors. Students will be involved in these discussions to facilitate successful intervention.
- The plan will outline the activities and/or experiences the student must complete to demonstrate adequate improvement in the area of concern. This plan must include measurable goals that can be completed within one quarter, specification of persons who will be responsible for monitoring and implementing plans to achieve each goal, and specific consequences due to the student's failure to meet the plan. The development of the plan is a shared responsibility between students and faculty.
- The student, Program Director, and Director of Clinical Education (if applicable) will each sign and receive a copy of the plan. If other faculty or clinical instructors are responsible for any portion of the plan, they will also receive a copy.

In the case of academic needs, the faculty instructor(s) involved in identifying areas of need typically will serve as mentor(s) towards the completion of the plan, unless stated otherwise by the Program Director.

Academic Probation

A graduate student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater to remain in good standing. A student failing to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. If the cumulative GPA is raised to at least 3.00 at the end of the next academic quarter, the student is no longer on probation. If the cumulative GPA has not risen to 3.00 at the end of the next academic quarter, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Withdrawing from a CORE Course

A student who withdraws from a core speech language pathology course while in good standing cannot progress in the sequenced curriculum until that course has been successfully completed. In courses that contain both a clinical practicum and a lecture component, both course segments must be completed simultaneously. Exceptions may be identified and defined by the Admissions, Progressions and Retention Committee (APR) in consultation with the Program Director, the Director of Clinical Education and the course faculty. A student who withdraws from a core speech language pathology course who is 'not in good

standing' (with a grade of C+ or lower or on probation) at the time of withdrawal, will be referred to the Admissions, Progressions, and Retention Committee (APR). The APR will meet to review the student's past and current performance and to elicit recommendations from the course faculty. A representative of the APR committee may then meet with the course faculty, Program Director, Director of Clinical Education and the student to counsel the student and to establish a contract for academic improvement. Such students may not progress in the sequenced curriculum until the course has been retaken and successfully completed. In courses that contain both a clinical practicum and a didactic theory portion, both course segments must be completed simultaneously. A student may withdraw from a core speech language pathology course 'not in good standing' (with a grade of C+ or lower) only once during their program of study. A second such withdrawal will result in dismissal from the program. A student who has a grade of C+ or lower at mid-quarter may be placed on contract for an intervention plan by the instructor. The student must satisfactorily fulfill all course and contract requirements by the end of the quarter of contract initiation in order to progress in the program. A student currently enrolled in a degree program in which revisions are approved while their studies are in progress may elect to formally adopt the revised requirements.

Leave of Absence

Requesting a Leave of Absence: Students who need to interrupt their studies for personal, health or other reasons may request a leave of absence for up to one full year. The request should be made to the Program Director, Director of Clinical Education and the Admission, Progression and Retention Committee should be notified. Depending on circumstances and estimated length of absence, the Program Director or student's academic advisor may recommend additional action to complete the request process.

Returning from a Leave of Absence: Students who wish to return to the program following a leave of absence will need to submit a written request for resuming coursework to the Admissions, Progression, and Retention Committee. It is the student's responsibility to send a copy of such request to the Program Director, the student's faculty advisor, and the Director of Clinical Education. This written request should demonstrate the resolution of the extenuating circumstances contributing to the original need to leave the Speech Language Pathology Program. This request for reinstatement must be made no less than 6 weeks prior to resuming the speech language pathology course sequence. Students will be notified in writing regarding the decision concerning their reentry to the program. e. Individual assessment of current knowledge and clinical skills will be made prior to placement of the student in the appropriate level within the speech language pathology program. Students who become "out of sequence students" due to withdrawal, or military/medical/family leave of absence will be placed into a clinical rotation upon re-entry based upon space available and cannot be guaranteed placement in the next available clinical course needed. "Out of sequence students" cannot displace in-sequence students from a clinical spot.

Time Limit for Leave of Absence: Students who have taken a leave of absence from the program for greater than 12 calendar months must re-apply to the university. Their application will then be considered with all other qualified applicants applying for admission to the speech language pathology program.

Time Limitation

The MS degree in Speech Language Pathology is designed to be completed in seven quarters. The maximum time to complete this degree,

including up to a 12-month approved leave of absence, is three years from first quarter of enrollment.

Graduation Requirements

A well-balanced, unified, and complete program of study is required, including evidence of successful achievement of both academic and clinical skill development. The program utilizes a cohort model, suggesting that all students move through the curriculum at a similar rate. The M.S. SLP degree in speech-language pathology requires successful completion of a minimum of 102 graduate credits (106 with a masters thesis). Speech-language pathology students are also required to complete a written comprehensive examination. Failure to complete the program requirements will result in forfeiture of degree eligibility unless the program recommends that the student complete a retake. If a retake or an extension is granted, the student must complete it by the end of the following quarter.

Students must earn at least a 3.00 cumulative GPA in SLP graduate coursework as a requirement to be eligible to graduate.

PRAXIS Examination: Speech-language pathology students are required to successfully submit the PRAXIS exam results using the DePaul SLP Program code.

Comprehensive Examinations: Comprehensive exams are a degree requirement for the M.S. SLP and must be completed in the spring quarter prior to graduation. Students will have a maximum of 4 hours to complete the exam. The purpose of this examination is to evaluate the student's knowledge of concepts, content, procedures and terminology from their graduate studies as well as their ability to apply this knowledge. This examination is designed to be summative in nature and to address the nine knowledge/ skill areas identified by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. This written examination consists of 100 multiple-choice questions that will include items from the nine major ASHA knowledge areas. Preparation for the multiple-choice section should include student review of the Praxis study guide.

Graduation with Distinction

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.75 in SLP graduate coursework and successful completion of the comprehensive examination is required for graduation with distinction.

Other Program Policies

Religious Observation

A student who is absent from class because of a religious holy day will be provided with the opportunity to make up the work of that class within a reasonable amount of time after the absence. The student will not be penalized for the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to inform their faculty prior to the religious holy day to be observed of their intention to be absent

DePaul Speech Language Pathology Program Student Code of Ethics

Students must adhere to the ASHA Code of Ethics. Violation of the ASHA Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action as determined by the DePaul University Speech Language Pathology Program. Students must adhere to the DePaul University Speech Language Pathology Program Professional Behavior Code of Conduct defined as unprofessional behavior towards clients, faculty, staff, peers and public are significant issues in the evaluation and promotion of Speech Language Pathology

students. Inappropriate behavior may be grounds for failure to promote, dismissal and/or denial of degree. Separate and apart from a violation of the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action (see the *DePaul Speech Language Pathology Graduate Handbook* for details).

The following are professional behavior guidelines and responsibilities that the DePaul University Speech Language Pathology expects of its students:

- Interpersonal Relationships
- Honesty, Integrity and Confidentiality
- Professional Appearance
- Professional Responsibility and Judgment