Communication Disorders, MS

You can make a difference in the lives of children and adults with autism, brain injuries or swallowing and communication difficulties. Speech-language pathologists are in high demand and can find employment in a wide range of settings including early intervention programs, schools, hospitals and clinics.

Program Description

Degree Awarded: MS Communication Disorders
The MS program in communication disorders prepares students to become certified speech language pathologists in a full-time residential program that can be completed in 20 months. The program trains students to evaluate and treat clients with speech, language, cognitive and swallowing disorders.

The first year develops knowledge and skills for the assessment and treatment of communication disorders in people of all ages. Students complete clinical practicum with clinical faculty educators. In the second year, students acquire additional clinical skills with two full semesters of external placements.

This program offers research and clinical opportunities in different settings, including inpatient and outpatient medical sites, public schools, early intervention programs and private practices. A part-time employment program is available for speech-language pathology assistants in public schools. Those seeking specialized training can pursue a multicultural and multilingual certificate.

The program is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

At a Glance

- College/School: College of Health Solutions
- Location: Tempe campus
Degree Requirements

52 credit hours and a written comprehensive exam, or
52 credit hours, a thesis and a written comprehensive exam

Required Core (34 credit hours)
SHS 538 Clinical Methods and Simulation in Speech-Language Pathology (4)
SHS 539 Professional Issues in Speech-Language Pathology (2)
SHS 567 Neural Bases of Communication Disorders (2)
SHS 570 Communication Disorders and Multicultural Populations (2) or SHS 597 Bilingual Speech-Language Pathology (2)
SHS 571 Augmentative Communication and Language Programming (2)
SHS 572 Language Assessment and Intervention in Infants and Toddlers (2)
SHS 573 Language Assessment and Intervention with School-Age Populations (2)
SHS 574 Management of Feeding and Swallowing Disorders (2)
SHS 575 Aphasia and Related Neurogenic Language Disorders (2)
SHS 577 Current Assessment, Intervention and Research in Autism (2)
SHS 579 Voice and Resonance Disorders (2)
SHS 578 Fluency Disorders (2)
SHS 581 Traumatic Brain Injury and Cognitive Linguistic Disorders (2)
SHS 582 Differential Diagnosis of Communication Disorders (2)
SHS 585 Articulation and Phonology: Assessment and Intervention (2)
SHS 587 Language Assessment and Intervention with Preschool Populations (2)

Electives (0 or 6 credit hours)

Other Requirements (20 credit hours)
SHS 500 Research Methods (1)
SHS 580 Clinical Practicum (9)
SHS 584 Clinical Internship (10)

Culminating Experience (0 or 6 credit hours)
written comprehensive exam (0) or
SHS 599 Thesis (6)

Additional Curricular Information
Core course SHS 538 is two credit hours taken twice times for a total of four credit hours.

Students in the nonthesis option take six credit hours of electives. Students should see the academic unit for an approved list of elective courses.

Both the thesis and nonthesis options require the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Praxis national exam in speech language pathology. This is the comprehensive exam for the thesis option. For the nonthesis option, a department-administered comprehensive examination in speech-language pathology is required along with the national exam to fulfill the requirements of the comprehensive exam.
Eligibility for graduation is based upon a passing score on the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Praxis national certification examination in speech-language pathology; successful completion of the thesis or nonthesis option, including the required culminating experience and academic credits; and successful completion of clinical experiences.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the College of Health Solutions.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's degree in speech and hearing science or a related field from a regionally accredited institution and completed prerequisite coursework in speech and hearing.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. personal statement not to exceed 300 words
4. GRE scores
5. email addresses of three recommenders
6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of current residency.

Students should see the program website for application deadlines and admission terms. Candidates who have undergraduate deficiencies may need to take required prerequisite courses.

Application Deadlines

Fall

Career Opportunities

Speech-language pathologists evaluate speech, cognitive, hearing and language test results, swallow results, or medical or background information to diagnose and plan treatment for speech, language, fluency, voice or swallowing disorders. These professionals work in a range of settings including schools,
private practice and medical centers. There are many opportunities to work with culturally and linguistically diverse populations. Speech-language pathologists collaborate with other professionals on a daily basis. People who value relationships, independence and helping others achieve optimal performance are a great fit for this career. Employment rates are extremely high, especially in school settings.

Career settings include:

- all levels of schools, including elementary, middle and high school
- early intervention settings, including home health
- inpatient and acute care hospitals
- neonatal intensive care units
- outpatient rehabilitation
- pediatric outpatient centers

Contact Information

College of Health Solutions | HLTHN 401AA  
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Admission Deadlines