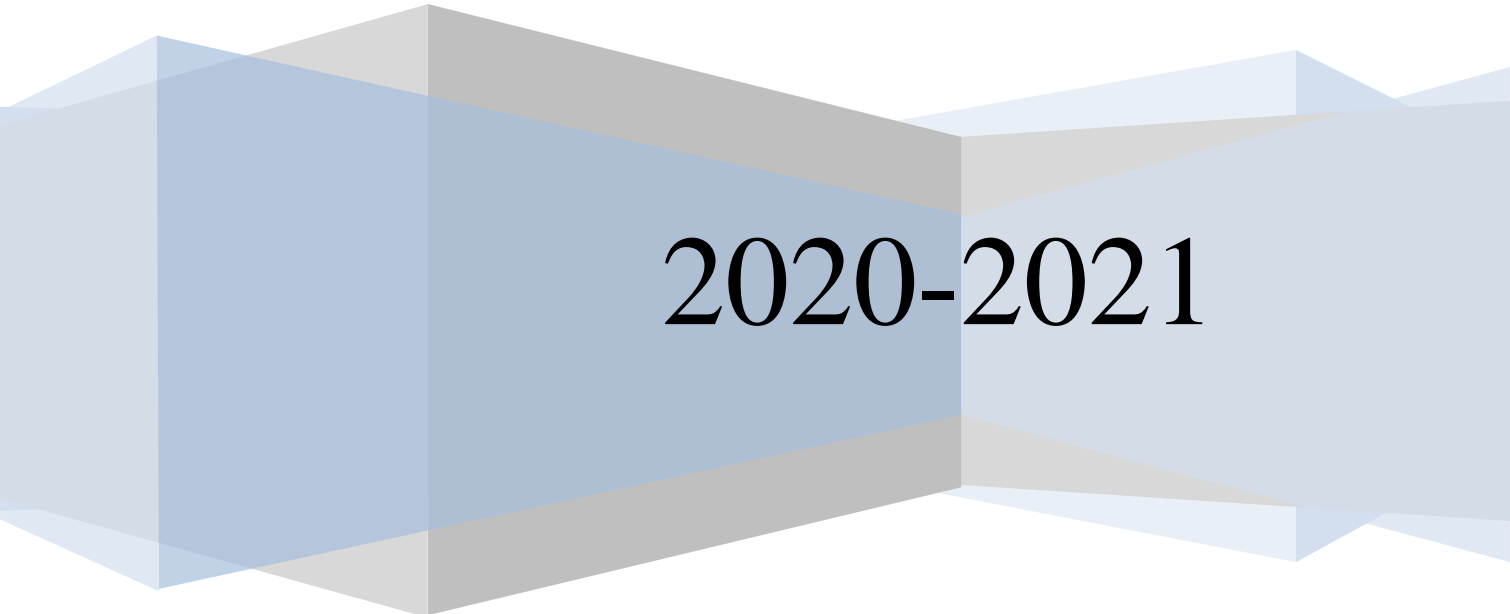


**The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**

**Graduate Student Handbook  
Speech-Language Pathology  
Academic Policies and Procedures**

**Revised 03/08/21**



**2020-2021**

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## I. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

In addition to proven academic ability and other relevant personal characteristics, the M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Program expects all students to possess and be able to demonstrate the skills, attributes, and qualities set forth below, without unreasonable dependence on technology or intermediaries. If you are uncertain about your abilities to meet these technical standards, please consult the Graduate Director of the SLP Program to discuss your individual situation.

**Physical health:** The student must possess the physical health and stamina needed to carry out the SLP Program. The student must be able to continuously sit/stand for several hours.

**Intellectual skills:** The student must have sufficient powers of intellect to acquire, assimilate, integrate, and apply information and must have the intellectual ability to solve problems.

**Motor skills:** The student must have sufficient use of motor skills to carry out all necessary clinical procedures, both those involved in learning the fundamental sciences and those required in the clinical environment. This includes the ability: (1) to participate in relevant educational exercises and to extract information from written sources; (2) use a computer keyboard to operate clinical and laboratory equipment; and (3) access transportation to all clinical and academic placements.

**Communication:** The SLP student must have sufficient use of the sense of speech, hearing and vision, and the English language to communicate effectively with patients, faculty, staff, peers, and other health care professionals in both oral and written form, e.g., telecommunication, therapy plans, progress notes, diagnostic reports.

**Sensory abilities:** The student must have sufficient use of the sense of vision, hearing, touch, and smell to observe effectively in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting. Students must possess the ability to observe both close at hand and at a distance.

**Behavior qualities:** The student must possess emotional health sufficient to carry out the tasks above, must have good judgment, and must behave in a professional, reliable, mature, and responsible manner. The student must effectively manage the use of time and be able to systematize actions in order to complete professional and technical tasks with realistic constraints. The student must be adaptable, possessing sufficient flexibility to function in new and stressful environments. He/she must be able to critically evaluate her/his own performance, be forthright about errors, accept constructive criticism, and look for ways to improve academic and clinical performance. The student must show respect for individuals of different age, ethnic background, religion, and/or sexual orientation. The student must exhibit professional behavior by conforming to appropriate

standards of dress, appearance, language and public behavior. The student must uphold the Code of Ethics of the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Code of Academic Conduct of the University of South Florida.

Each student must continue to meet all of the *Essential Functions* set forth above. A student may be denied permission to continue in the M.S. in SLP Program at the University of South Florida should the student fail at any time to demonstrate all the required *Essential Functions*.

## **II. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ACQUISITION (KASA)**

In 2005, ASHA moved to a competency-based system of assessment, known as the Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA). In this system, the student is evaluated on a series of described competencies that reflect a broad knowledge base in both the academic and clinical aspects of speech-language pathology. All departmental syllabi contain information on what KASA standards will be met with the completion of the course. In addition, instructors will specify minimum competency levels that are needed to meet course standards.

Since this is a competency-based system, it is possible to pass a course while still needing work on certain material or skills that were targeted in that course. It is the responsibility of the instructor to notify the student of any failed KASA competencies and the instructor will work with the student to devise an intervention plan. This plan should be written up and placed in the student's folder and should be signed by the instructor and student when competencies have been met. These competencies are noted in the CAA Accreditation Standards 4.3.

In situations where a student fails to meet KASA competencies, either in an academic or a clinical course, the Graduate Program Director is notified and in the latter situation, the Clinic Director is notified. Individualized plans are then developed, with consultation among appropriate faculty members, area and clinic directors, and the student. Intervention for the academic course competencies typically involves independent study and intervention for the clinical course competencies typically involves additional supervised clinical experiences.

## **III. SLP PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS STATEMENT**

In addition to Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) Standards required by ASHA for application for the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC), the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of South Florida requires graduate students in Speech-Language Pathology to adhere to the SLP Professional Standards Statement. KASA standards and USF-Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic (USF-SLHC) Professional Standards reflect competencies needed by entry-level professionals and, therefore, demonstration of compliance is necessary throughout the

program of study. In addition, compliance is necessary to achieve success in the workplace, to meet the expectations of employers, and to competently practice the profession. Accordingly, the standards require that students comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the University of South Florida graduate student catalog (<https://catalog.usf.edu/index.php?catoid=12>), and the CSD graduate student handbook.

#### IV. CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

Students who do not meet the admissions criteria can be admitted conditionally. To become fully admitted, the student must complete a full-time course load (usually 12 hours) with a minimum overall GPA of 3.0. When the student meets this criterion, then he or she will be considered fully admitted.

#### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

##### A. ACADEMIC COURSEWORK

The curriculum of the graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology involves core courses, specialty courses and clinical practica. The first year in the graduate program is comprised of core courses and clinical practica in the speech-language clinic; the second year Master's students are required to attend a few specific core courses, specialty courses, and external placements.

Specific course requirements for the graduate program in SLP are listed in the Graduate School Catalog in the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences section. The following table lists the department's academic requirements in SLP.

<u>CORE REQUIREMENTS</u> (29 hours required)		<u>CR</u>	<u>SEM</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
SPA 5204	Advanced Clinical Phonology	3	_____	_____
SPA 5403	Lang. Lrng in School-Age Years	3	_____	_____
SPA 5552	Diagnostic Principles and Practices	3	_____	_____
SPA 6211	Advanced Vocal Disorders	3	_____	_____
SPA 6222	Advanced Fluency Disorders	3	_____	_____
SPA 6410	Aphasia	3	_____	_____
SPA 6805	Research Procedures in CSD	3	_____	_____
SPA 6559	Augmentative & Alternative Comm	3	_____	_____
SPA 6565	Dysphagia	3	_____	_____
SPA 6571	Ethical Practice Issues in CSD	2	_____	_____

Blue font – core courses completed during the first year in the graduate program

Black font – core courses completed during the second year in the graduate program

In addition to core courses, students are enrolled in up to 9 credits of specialty courses, if they are not completing a thesis. These specialty courses are advanced in content and their availability in the curriculum is dependent upon faculty with the required expertise. See sample of specialty courses:

**SPECIALTY COURSES** (If non-thesis, min. 9 cr. required).

3 courses are selected based on availability from the list below.

		<u>CR</u>	<u>SEM</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
SPA 6232	Neuromotor Disorders of Speech	3	_____	_____
SPA 6324	Aural Rehabilitation: Children**	3	_____	_____
SPA 6401	Pediatric Language Disorders	3	_____	_____
SPA 6404	Language Learning Disabilities	3	_____	_____
SPA 6417	Communication & Cognition in TBI	3	_____	_____
SPA 6564	Seminar in Aging, Cognition, & Comm	3	_____	_____
SPA 6473	Bilingual Assessment & Intervention*	3	_____	_____
SPA 6461	Family-Centered Intervention (SLP)	3	_____	_____
SPA 6253	SLP Mgmt of Com Movmt Disorders	3	_____	_____

\*\*If not completed at UG level with B- or better, must be taken at the graduate level.

**All students must earn a "B-" or better in each graduate course. Failure to do so will require that the student repeat the course. Grade forgiveness may not be used at the graduate level. Any student who earns a "C+" or less in two courses will be dismissed from the program by the Department.**

## B. PLAN OF STUDY

The development of each student's **Plan of Study** involves two steps and is based on the student's academic background, initial clinical experiences, and interests. Plans of study are in the student's permanent file.

**Step 1** occurs upon entry into the program. Students are assigned to an **Initial Plan of Study (IPS)** which specifies the sequence for completing the first three semesters of required core academic coursework and clinical practica (Fall, Spring, Summer)

A sample IPS sequence is shown below:

<b>Sample IPS</b>								
Semester 1 Fall (12 credits)			Semester 2 Spring (12 credits)			Semester 3 Summer (8 credits)		
SPA 5204	Adv Clin Phon	3-cr	SPA 6211	Adv. Vocal Dis	3-cr	SPA 6805	Res Methods	3 cr
SPA 5403	Lang Lng	3-cr	SPA 6225	Adv. Fluency Dis	3-cr.	SPA 6565	Dysphagia	3-cr
SPA 5552	Dx Prin & Prac	3-cr.	SPA 6410	Aphasia	3-cr	SPA 6505	Clinic III	2-cr.
SPA 6505	Clinic I	3-cr	SPA 6505	Clinic II	3-cr.	VFN	Adult Practicum	
				Language Phonology Practicum				

**Step 2** occurs in the Spring semester of Year 1. An **Advanced Plan of Study (APS)**, specifying the sequence for completing *the remaining required core academic coursework and specialty courses* in Semesters 4-6 and the *clinical practica* for Year 2 (Advanced Practicum, Externship I and Externship II), is developed for each student.

Midway through the Spring semester of Year 1, the MS-SLP Graduate Program Director will request that the students rank their preferences for the *specialty course options* (see *Appendix A*). Students who have not completed an undergraduate course in Aural Rehabilitation will be required to complete this course as a specialty course during Semester 3 (summer). In addition to considering student specialty-course preferences, the completion of remaining *core academic requirements* and assignment of students to second year clinical practica are determinants of the APS. Additionally, students must be advised that offering of specialty courses is dependent on availability of faculty with the specialty areas listed. A sample APS and Tentative Schedule of Specialty Area Courses are listed below.

Sample APS (Year 2)					
Semester 4 Fall (11-cr)		Semester 5 Spring (12-cr)		Semester 6 Summer (9-cr)	
SPA xxxx Spec. Course 1	3-cr.	SPA 6559 AAC	3-cr.	SPA xxxx Spec. Course 3	3-cr.
SPA 6571 Ethic Prac	2-cr.	SPA xxxx Spec. Course 2	3-cr.	SPA 6505 Extern II	6-cr.
SPA 6505 Extern I	6-cr.	SPA 6505 ADV. Prac.	6-cr.		

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF SPECIALTY COURSES		
Semester 4 Fall	Semester 5 - Spring	Semester 6 - Summer
SPA 6564 Aging, Cog, Comm *Or approved SAS course SPA 7931 PhD Seminar SPA 6250 SLP Management of Complex Movement Disorders SPA 6401 Pediatric Language Disorders	SPA 6473 Bilingual Assessment and Intervention SPA 6232 Neuromotor SPA 6253 SLP Management of Complex Movement Disorders SPA 6461 Family-Centered Intervention for the SLP	SPA 6332 Neuromotor SPA 6403 Lang Learn Disabilities SPA 6324 Aural Rehab: Child

**Modifications to Plans of Study** (to either the **IPS** or **APS**) may delay graduation within the typical 6-semester program, when enrolled full-time. Whether the modification is initiated by the faculty or at the request of the student, **all changes must be approved by the MS-SLP Graduate Program Director. Any changes to the clinical practica sequence must be approved by the SLP Clinic Director prior to the final approval of the Plan of Study Modification by the Clinic Director.**

### C. CLINICAL COURSEWORK (24 credits)

Students must obtain a minimum of 400 clinical clock hours to complete the graduate program. These take place in-house as well as in community settings. Of these, a minimum of 375 clock hours must be in direct client/patient contact and 25 hours in clinical observation. Up to 50 clock hours at the undergraduate level **may be** applied

toward the minimum of 400 clock hours required. The number of hours accepted by the Department will be determined by the Clinic Director. For further information regarding clinical requirements and assignments, please refer to the Clinical Handbook.

## VI. OTHER ACADEMIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### A. THESIS OPTION

To complete the Master's degree, graduate students in Speech-Language Pathology may elect to write a thesis. A thesis requires the design of a research project with data collection/analysis or analysis of an existing dataset, an appropriate written document and an oral defense. The completion of a thesis develops research, writing, and knowledge within a specialized area of study. It is an outstanding addition to a professional resume. A student who elects to complete a thesis will work with their thesis advisor to develop a course of study and clinical work that will provide the student with time to complete the thesis and the necessary KASA standards. A thesis student will typically take a partial Advanced Practicum (i.e., 2 hours instead of 4 hours) and one specialty course in addition to their 9 research credits. This way the thesis student takes the same number of hours (i.e., 62 hours) as the non-thesis student to graduate.

THESIS (minimum 9 hours required – IN PLACE of the specialty courses)

	<u>CR</u>	<u>SEM</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
SPA 6910 Directed Research	1	_____	<u>S or U</u>
SPA 6971 Thesis	8 (min)	_____	<u>Z or S</u>

The thesis is a highly-individualized learning process that requires independent effort from the student, guided by the faculty members of the thesis committee. Students develop the ability to bring together numerous facets of the knowledge and skills gained in graduate study and direct them toward the solution of a specific problem. Students who elect to complete a thesis as a part of their graduate program must be in good academic standing and demonstrate adequate research and writing skills.

### Guidelines for the Thesis Process

- A. During **the first or second** semester in the program, student indicates an interest in doing a thesis to an Advisor, Program Director, or Faculty Mentor. If that Faculty Mentor is tenured or on a tenure-earning line, he or she may serve as Chair or Co-Chair of the thesis project.
- B. Directed Research Credit - Student should register for one credit of Directed Research (SPA 6910) with their thesis mentor (Major Professor) no later than



the following semester after indicating the desire to participate in a thesis process to develop the thesis idea.

This enables the student to work closely with the thesis advisor to plan and explore the thesis topic. Furthermore, it enables the faculty to evaluate and advise the student as to his/her potential for successful completion of the thesis. In the following semester, the student begins thesis work officially by enrolling in Thesis credits (SPA 6971). Students must complete at least 8 additional hours of thesis credit; however, enrollment may occur over several semesters. The Graduate School requires that a student must register for at least 2 credits for each semester the student is enrolled in thesis. Also, once registered for thesis, the written project must be completed and accepted by the Graduate School prior to graduation. Students may not withdraw from enrollment in thesis credits beyond the drop deadlines. Each student who is working on a thesis should consult the Graduate Studies website for deadlines, writing information (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>) and the required thesis defense form (ETD Certificate of Approval) (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.php>).

- C. Selection of Thesis Committee** - At the **end of the semester in which student enrolled in Directed Research**, the student with guidance from the Major Professor will select a thesis committee. See requirements below:
- i. The Thesis Committee must consist of three members
    1. The Chair (1 or 2 – could Co-Chair) as previously specified, should be a tenured or tenure-track Ph.D. or Ed.D. faculty member in CSD, or a Ph.D. or Ed.D. with Graduate Faculty status. (Note – in the case of new instructional faculty who have not yet been determined to have Faculty Affiliate status, please discuss with the Program Director or the Departmental Chair)
    2. The Chair and at least one Committee Member must be from the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.
    3. The other member/s can be other academic or clinical faculty within CSD with research experience, University faculty members from other departments, or outside personnel who have at least a Master's degree in an appropriate field and are eligible for Graduate Faculty status.
    4. The committee may be larger than three, and additional members may be added from outside or inside the Department. Individuals from outside of the department must submit a curriculum vitae to the Department Chair in order to be approved to serve as affiliate graduate faculty.
  - ii. The student must submit the necessary thesis committee form to the departmental Graduate Program Assistant prior to the initiation of their research project.  
<https://www.usf.edu/cbcs/documents/grad.thesiscommitteeappointment.form.doc.pdf>.

**D. Thesis Credits** –(minimum 9 credit hours – 1 credit of directed research = 8 credits)

Registration Requirements:

- a. The student must register for a **minimum of 2 credits with their major professor each semester** that they are working on their thesis for a minimum of 9 hours of thesis (and directed research) credit over the course of their Master's program.
- b. The student must be registered for a **minimum of 2 credits in the semester in which they intend to graduate** (i.e., submission of the final copy of their thesis)

**E. Project Development, Data Analysis, and Defense**

- a. Preparation of Study – Prospectus and IRB Phase
  - i. Each thesis student should prepare a prospectus prior to the initiation of data collection. The prospectus should consist of a Literature Review that provides the background for the project and a detailed Method section.
  - ii. The student should arrange a Prospectus meeting for all the Committee Members to discuss and approve the project prior to its initiation. The student will distribute the Prospectus document (Literature review and Method section) minimally one week prior to the meeting and will present a brief overview of the project to the Committee at the meeting. The Major Professor will insure that any changes suggested by the Committee be made prior to submission for IRB approval. A Thesis Prospectus Approval form will be signed by each Committee Member and filed in the student's academic record file.
  - iii. The student should also apply for IRB approval, if necessary.
- b. Methodological and Analytical Phase
  - i. The student works with their major professor and other pertinent faculty to complete data collection and analysis.
  - ii. The student prepares their thesis for presentation to the committee.
- c. Preparation for Defense
  - i. The final document comprising of the literature review, methods, results, and a discussion of the findings must be approved by the Major Professor
  - ii. Format check and preparation for final submission - Thesis students must attend an ETD workshop one semester prior to thesis submission (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>).
  - iii. A defense date is selected and a room is reserved with the Program Assistant

- iv. The defense date should be advertised so that interested parties may attend. An approved flyer must be utilized for this purpose. Please be sure to discuss with your Major Professor.
- v. The final document is sent to all members of the thesis committee **minimally 1 week prior to the defense date**. Please check the submission dates with the Graduate School, as these dates tend to be earlier than the end of semesters (this is particularly the fact with summer graduates!)
- vi. The thesis defense must be attended by 3 faculty members. If one committee member cannot attend, then a substitute committee member should be recruited.
- vii. The Defense **must be completed prior to submission of the final copy of the Thesis to ProQuest.**
- viii. Major Professors should allow sufficient time for the student to make any necessary corrections prior to final submission to the ProQuest.

**F. Submission** – Please check electronic submission deadlines:

[http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD\\_Deadlines.php](http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD_Deadlines.php)

- a. Certificate of completion of the thesis must be signed by the Thesis Committee and the Program Director prior to electronic submission.
- b. The thesis must be submitted electronically to ProQuest.

### Thesis Timeline

Semester	Step	What to register for
Fall, Spring, or Summer (at latest) *year 1*	1.Select topic for thesis 2.Select Committee and complete Committee form 3.Register for 1 directed research credit	Directed Research credit
Summer, Year 1 or Fall Year 2	1.Research – writing of literature review and methodology 2.Prospectus meeting 3.Application for	Thesis credits
Fall, Spring year 2	1.Collect data, analyze data 2.Write results/discussion	Thesis credits
Spring year 2/ or summer year 2	1.Prepare defense 2.Format check* (*adhere to dates to prevent delays on graduation) 3.Sign certificate of completion 4.Submit thesis electronically via ProQuest	Thesis credits

### B. NON-THESIS OPTION -

As previously mentioned, students not interested in pursuing a thesis project, must be enrolled in 9 credits of specialty courses. These were previously listed in the course requirements section.

## II. Academic

### A. TAMPA CAMPUS STUDENTS

To assist with the scheduling of the initial and advanced plans of study, core courses and 1<sup>st</sup> year Practicum assignments are scheduled before students begin their first semester in the graduate program. Core courses are scheduled in a particular student's schedule to insure proper conceptual preparation is completed prior to or at the same time as a related clinical experience. Necessary accommodations necessitate of specific documentation that must be provided by the student to the Program Director. Adjustments (e.g., reduction of course load) is only permitted when such documentation is compiled. If there is a need to make an adjustment to the scheduling of the Core or specialty courses, students must schedule a meeting with the Director of the Graduate Program in Speech-Language Pathology or the Clinical Director during the **first** week of classes. **Students CANNOT make adjustments to the scheduling of CORE courses without authorization from the Program Director.** All advising related to the clinical portion of the programs is completed by the Clinic Director. **Students CANNOT make adjustments to the scheduling of PRACTICUM courses without authorization from the Clinic Director.** The Graduate Program Assistant will automatically permit the student each semester. Individual advising meetings are NOT held every semester. Students are given permits to register for specific core courses a few weeks before the beginning of the semester in which they will be enrolled in these courses. Individual advising meetings are only held when there are specific questions or needs by a student. For that purpose, the student is to e-mail the Graduate Program Director and request a mutually agreeable date and time.

Specialty course preferences will be collected during the summer semester of the first year. The Graduate Program Director will provide a document in which students will rank their preferences for specialty courses. Students are reminded that these courses are taught depending on faculty availability.

To support any other queries or concerns related to the graduate school experience, students will be assigned advisors at the beginning of their first semester. These advisors are available to meet individually with a student as needed. These program advisors also will plan small group meetings, at least once a semester, to provide students with essential departmental information and to answer any questions they may have. All second-year students will have one advisor: The Program Director. The students are to schedule meetings with the Director, if there are specific concerns or

questions regarding their academic training and with the Clinical Director, if there are specific concerns about his or her clinical training.

## **B. SUNCOAST CONSORTIUM STUDENTS**

This program is specifically designed to assist professionals working in one of the school districts in the Suncoast Consortium to complete their Master's degree using a combination of distance and on-site teaching technologies. A limited number of students will be admitted every year and these students will progress through the program as a cohort. As a consequence, all course selections and practicum assignments will be made by the Director of this program.

Like the students on the Tampa campus, the academic program assistant will automatically permit students into the appropriate courses and practica each semester. If there is a need to make an adjustment to the scheduling of your courses, you must discuss it with the Program Director. Students **CANNOT** make adjustments to the scheduling of their courses or practica without authorization from the Program Director.

## **VIII. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Graduate assistantships (GAs) are competitively assigned during the admission process. However, applications are accepted and kept on file throughout the year. Periods of assignment are generally from early August to December, and early January to mid-May of each year, with summer assignments made separately. Graduate assistants are required to work 10 hours per week, primarily on campus, for a total of 390 hours from the beginning to end of the Fall semester and from the beginning to the end of the Spring semester.

Assistantships may carry over from semester to semester, and from the first year into the second year of study, provided that the graduate student receives a satisfactory rating on their performance evaluation conducted every semester. The faculty mentor assigned will review the results from such evaluation with the Graduate Assistant every semester. The assistant is to sign the evaluation to note agreement and to be considered for continued appointment.

**NOTE - No guarantee of summer assistantships will be made until late Spring of each year. GAs are generally NOT awarded** during their last summer semester before graduation. Second year students are required to apply and complete part-time (no more than 30 hours) externship placements, if they desire to maintain their assistantships. Any further questions regarding graduate assistantships must be directed to the Graduate Program Director.

## **IX. STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

Starting in August 2016, the Graduate Program in Speech-Language Pathology instituted the Student Ambassador Program. **The Student Ambassador Program** is comprised of a select group of 2<sup>nd</sup> year student volunteers dedicated to supporting, promoting, and representing the program's mission and serving as liaisons / mentors for first year students in the Master's Program in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of South Florida. See Appendix B for Application, which is sent by the Program Director every year, in the early summer months.

The Student Ambassador Program is comprised of 4 students who demonstrate excellence in leadership, academic, and service skills. All applicants must have attended the Master's Program for two semesters prior to applying to be considered, be a full-time student, and must have a minimum 3.8 cumulative GPA. All students serve for one year, their second year in the Graduate Program. The application/nomination process takes place during early in the summer semester of year 1, prior to the first year Moving Up and Beacon of Light ceremony. An e-mail will be sent by the Program Director regarding the application process. The Student Ambassadors will be introduced to the new class, every year, during the Orientation Program.

### **(a) Mission**

The mission of the Student Ambassador Program is to (a) bring together students with different levels of expertise and cultural backgrounds, and (b) enrich and enhance leadership and communication skills, personal growth, and professional development for its membership.

### **(b) Student Ambassadors Purpose**

1. Become knowledgeable about the SLP Program's history, personnel, programs, facilities, student organizations, events
2. Serve as 'representatives of the graduate experience' in such events as Open House, New Student Orientation, and First Year Moving Up and Awards Ceremony
3. Inform the Program Director of needs of /feedback from the first-year students via one monthly meeting
4. Provide ideas and support for fundraising events to benefit students, which are in line with the Program's mission

### **(c) Student Ambassador Benefits**

- Externally, professional networking opportunities can foster personal and professional relationships with external donors, school supporters, and business community members, which may open pathways for future career opportunities.
- Internally, the exposure that comes from interacting with students, staff, faculty alike can strengthen the members' professionalism and provide additional sources of reference when career searches begin.

- Personally – taking a leadership role in training others is an essential skill in service professions like Speech-Language Pathology and it may add a dimension of practical know-how to the theoretical material students learn in class and clinic. These insights can be of great value while ambassadors are in school and more so as they approach graduation and the working world.

## X. CODE OF ETHICS

All students must read and confirm that they have read the Code of Ethics of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (<http://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/>). The Code is available on the Communication Sciences and Disorders Canvas site in the Speech-Language Pathology section and on the ASHA website ([www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)). As part of the initial practicum, students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of the Code and agree to adhere to the Code.

## XI. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The USF policy on Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty will be followed in all courses within this Department. It can be found in the USF Graduate Catalog. **Any form of cheating on examinations, plagiarism on assigned papers, sharing of lecture notes or papers on websites without permission constitutes unacceptable deceit and dishonesty and will result in an automatic grade of “FF” for the course, as well as dismissal from the Program.** For more information on the USF Policy – 6.0021 Code of Student Conduct USF go to: <https://usf.app.box.com/v/usfregulation60021>.

## XII. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### A. NATIONAL STUDENT SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION NSSLHA USF Chapter

What is NSSLHA? NSSLHA is a student professional organization for undergraduate and graduate students interested in human communication sciences and disorders. NSSLHA is a national organization with local chapters at universities and colleges. NSSLHA is the student branch of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Why Join? There are many reasons to join NSSLHA both at the national and the local level.

As a member of NSSLHA, you will receive access to these fine ASHA publications:

*American Journal of Speech-Language: A Journal of Clinical Practice*  
*American Journal of Audiology: Clinical Practice*  
*Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*

*Language, Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools*  
*ASHA Leader*  
*Contemporary Issues in Communicative Science and Disorders* (the NSSLHA Journal)

As a NSSLHA member you will be eligible for reduced fees at ASHA conferences and conventions. NSSLHA members are also eligible for a discount on their first year ASHA dues. At the national level, NSSLHA dues are \$60.00 per year. Applications for NSSLHA are available through the USF Chapter on online at <http://www.asha.org/members/nsslha/>.

At the local level, the USF chapter offers students the chance to meet with each other and discuss the program, the courses and the opportunities available in the field of communication sciences and disorders. Undergraduates have an opportunity to meet with upper level and graduate students who have experience with the courses and the instructors. Bimonthly program meetings are planned to present topics of interest to students at all levels and are open to all students within the university. Suggestions for meeting topics come from NSSLHA members. Other activities include fund raising, public relations, and social functions. Become a part of a growing number of students who are finding that involvement in NSSLHA leads to a fuller appreciation of the profession and a greater awareness of the issues affecting the field. USF Chapter dues are set annually. Mailboxes and lockers are available in the Student Workroom (PCD 2031) to members at a nominal charge. For further information regarding the USF Chapter of NSSLHA and membership application, contact your NSSLHA officers or the NSSLHA sponsor.

## **B. BILINGUAL LANGUAGE AND LITERACY INVESTIGATIVE AND NETWORKING GROUP (BLLING)**

The Bilingual Language and Literacy Investigative and Networking Group, (BLLING), student organization in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD), was co-founded by Drs. Maria Brea and Kyna Betancourt. This organization has members who are undergraduate students, graduate students in Speech-Language Pathology, Ph.D. students, and faculty from CSD and Education. The group meets twice a month to discuss research, plan community outreach activities, and brainstorm possible venues for promoting education in issues related to bilingualism and biliteracy.

In terms of community service events, the following are a few of the events organized by BLLING: (a) an annual Bilingual Healthy Speech and Language Fair in Learn Tampa Bay, Plant City, FL in which the speech, language, and hearing screenings of Spanish-speaking, English language learning children ages 3-5 years are conducted. Lovin' Lit, a series of parent training or clinician implemented events centered around shared book-reading strategies generally implemented during the Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters by BLLING members in collaboration with the Speech and Language Clinic and the USF



Bolesta Center. Finally, BLLING student members often participate in book fairs, cultural studies, or literacy nights carried through in service-learning courses in the department.

### C. The Sertoma Collegiate Club

The Sertoma Collegiate Club at USF-Tampa is an international service club that stands for SERvice TO MANkind. The club is comprised of undergraduate and graduate students from both speech-language pathology and audiology programs. Their focus is on community service in the areas of hearing and speech disorders. It is one of only 14 collegiate clubs across the nation.

## XIII. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### A. EXAMINATION

All graduate students are required to pass the departmental comprehensive examination prior to graduation. This requirement will be waived if the student successfully passes the PRAXIS Examination in Speech-Language Pathology prior to their date of graduation. These examinations are offered several times each month (<http://www.ets.org/praxis>, for test dates). It is the student's responsibility to determine when sufficient coursework has been taken to attempt this examination; however, under no circumstances should the examination be taken during the first semester of graduate study. Furthermore, sufficient time must be allowed following the examination date for the Department to officially receive the student's test results. The student should anticipate that receipt of test results requires at least **4 weeks**. For this reason, many students elect to complete this examination during the semester prior to the term in which graduation is anticipated. At the time of the examination, students should request that a copy of their test results be sent directly to the Department. If such a request is not made, the Department cannot confirm that this graduation requirement has been met. If a student should not pass the PRAXIS, he/she must contact the Graduate Program Director to discuss their options to insure an on-time graduation.

Students must pass the departmental written comprehensive examination in lieu of the PRAXIS, when they have not successfully passed the PRAXIS exam in Speech-Language Pathology prior to the time of their graduation and when it will not be offered again with sufficient time to receive test results. This exam is objective in nature and basically is a review of all material covered during graduate study. A student should meet with the Graduate Program Director to receive instructions on how to prepare for this test and to set a date for the examination.

### B. GRADUATION APPLICATION

Graduation is not an automatic process that occurs as a result of completing your final course or practicum assignment. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process by completing the "Application for Graduation" form that is available online through OASIS. When you are ready to complete the form, login to OASIS using your Net ID and self-assigned password, then click on the Student menu and select **Apply for Graduation**. At this time, you will complete the "Application for Graduation" and the

graduation survey. This process must be the assigned date in the semester in which you plan to graduate (usually within the first 15 days of the semester). This date is set each semester by the Registrar's Office. The Graduate Program Assistant will send out an email reminding graduating students to apply for graduation, but the student is also responsible for checking the important dates on the Registrar's website. If the student does not complete the "Application for Graduation" within the prescribed time limit, he/she cannot graduate

At the beginning of the last semester, the student must also schedule an appointment with the Graduate Program Assistant within 4-5 weeks prior to graduation to assure that the Graduate Program contract and the Certification for Graduation form have been completed. Any course or practicum discrepancies must be resolved prior to certification for graduation. It is the **student's responsibility** to work with the Academic Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Program Director to solve any discrepancies. All of the preceding steps are essential and must be completed to be assured of graduating on the date anticipated. If any problems develop regarding eligibility for graduation, the student will receive a notice, by mail, of ineligibility to graduate. The student will retain that standing until after the beginning of the following term.

### C. CAREER RESOURCE CENTER

USF offers a service to students to assist in career placement and planning. The **Career Resource Center** (CRC) may assist undergraduates and graduates with such tasks as job search strategies, resume writing, and interview skills. Individual appointments are available and group presentations are also available by calling 974-2171 or by checking the web: <http://www.usf.edu/career-services/about-us/career-express-hours.aspx> .

The CRC is located in the Student Services Building, Room 2088 and the office hours are 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. An updated recruiting list is available 24 hours a day by calling 974-2200. In addition to coordinating placement activities, the CRC staff presents various job search mini-classes. The Center also holds various special events throughout the year such as a Graduate/Professional Day.

## XIV. CERTIFICATION

### A. NATIONAL CERTIFICATION

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association issues Certificates of Clinical Competence to individuals who present satisfactory evidence of their ability to provide independent clinical services to persons who have disorders of communication (speech, language, and/or hearing). An individual who meets these requirements may be awarded a Certificate of Clinical Competency (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology or in Audiology, depending upon the emphasis of preparation; a person who meets the requirements in both professional areas may be awarded dual Certification.

The M.S. degree in Speech-Language Pathology offered by the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is accredited by the Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and as such adheres to the standards set forth in the ASHA Code of Ethics. All of the programs of study within the Department are structured to prepare graduates to meet the Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) competencies established by ASHA in 2005. These competencies are prerequisites to in-field employment in most employment settings. Graduates with a Master's Degree from this program meet all current ASHA requirements for coursework and clinical experience; therefore, the process of applying for ASHA membership and certification are greatly simplified. Students should review their academic coursework the semester prior to graduation to be sure that all KASA competencies have been met.

The student is responsible for completing the ASHA Certification application and for obtaining the necessary information and signature from the Department Chairperson. The certification forms are found in the current *American Speech-Language-Hearing Membership and Certification Handbook* for Speech-Language Pathology.

The application, including a stamped, self-addressed envelope, should be given to the Academic Program Assistant. She will review the application and verify the completion of all clinical and academic requirements. Once the review has been completed, the Department Chair will then and only then, sign the application. **PLEASE NOTE:** The department chairperson does NOT sign for Clinical Fellowship Year papers. The verification of CFY requirements will be made by the CFY supervisor.

## **B. SUMMARY OF STANDARDS FOR NATIONAL CERTIFICATION**

**For a complete KASA description and list of requirements, please go to:**

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

### **STANDARD I - Degree**

Effective January 1, 2005, the applicant for certification must have a master's or doctoral or other recognized post-baccalaureate degree. A minimum of 75 semester credit hours must be completed in a course of study addressing the knowledge and skills pertinent to the field of speech-language pathology.

### **STANDARD II - Institution of Higher Education**

The graduate degree must be granted by a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

### **STANDARD III – Program of Study – Knowledge Outcomes**

The applicant for certification must complete a program of study (a minimum of 75 semester credit hours overall, including at least 36 at the graduate level) that includes academic coursework sufficient in depth and breadth to achieve the specified knowledge outcomes.

### **STANDARD IV - National Examinations in SLP and AUD**

All applicants must pass the National Examination in the area for which the Certificate is sought. The National Examinations in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology are designed to assess, in a comprehensive fashion, the applicant's mastery of knowledge of professional concepts and issues to which the applicant has been exposed throughout professional education and clinical practicum. The applicant must pass the examination in the area in which certification is sought. The examination must be passed within 2 years after the first exam administration following the approval of the applicant's coursework and clinical practicum by the Clinical Certification Board.

For further information, see: <http://www.ets.org/praxis/asha/requirements/>.

### **STANDARD V - The Clinical Fellowship for Speech-Language Pathology**

After completion of academic coursework and clinical practicum, the applicant must successfully complete a Clinical Fellowship. The Fellowship will consist of at least 36 weeks of full-time professional experience or its part-time equivalent. The Fellowship must be completed under the supervision of an individual who holds the Certificate of Clinical Competence in the area for which certification is sought. This professional experience shall involve primarily clinical activities. The Supervisor periodically shall conduct a formal evaluation of the applicant's progress in the development of professional skills.

The Clinical Fellowship Year must have begun after completion of the academic and clinical program experiences required for the Master's degree in one of the two areas of specialization. Departmental policy is that the Clinical Fellowship Year cannot be entered until a graduation date is officially confirmed.

### **X. Equal Opportunity**

The University of South Florida is a diverse community that values and expects respect and fair treatment of all people. USF strives to provide a work and study environment for faculty, staff and students that is free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, marital status, sex, religion, national origin, disability or age, as provided by law. USF protects its faculty, staff, and students from discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation, as well as gender identity and expression. USF is also committed to the employment and advancement of qualified veterans with disabilities and veterans protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act, as amended (VEVRAA). Please refer to the webpage maintained by the Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity Office for more information:

<https://www.usf.edu/diversity/>

Furthermore, the SLP program complies with all applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders prohibiting discrimination towards students, faculty, staff, and persons served in the program's clinics. This includes prohibitions on discrimination based on any category prohibited by applicable law but not limited to age, citizenship, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and veteran status.

## **XI. Student Complaint Process**

Students who have a complaint are encouraged to begin by speaking directly to the instructor in question or an academic advisor. If an issue arises that cannot be resolved through direct communication with an instructor or advisor, students should contact the Program Director or Clinic Director, as appropriate, to schedule a meeting to discuss the issue. If the Program Director or Clinic Director is not able to resolve the situation, the student will be referred to the Departmental Chair. For cases that are not resolved at this level, the student may file a grievance with the USF Office of Graduate Studies. For more information, please see the following:

- USF 10.002 Student Academic Grievance Procedure - <https://usf.app.box.com/v/usfpolicy10-002>
- USF 30-053 Student Grievance Processes and Non-Academic Grievance Policy - <https://usf.app.box.com/v/usfpolicy30-053>

For concerns that are clearly related to the Graduate SLP program's compliance with accreditation standards that cannot be resolved at USF, a complaint may be filed with the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) via the complaint process described here: <https://caa.asha.org/programs/complaints/>. Please note that the CAA cannot intervene in disputes between individuals and programs, and cannot affect outcomes such as grade changes, reinstatement to the graduate program, employment, etc., as part of this complaint process. Before filing a complaint with CAA, it is strongly recommended that you read Chapter XIII: Complaints in the Accreditation Handbook, located here: <https://caa.asha.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Handbook.pdf>.

**Appendix A**  
**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA**  
**Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders**  
**Speech-Language Pathology Application for Specialty Course Consideration**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Specialty Classes Usually Offered (please rank 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> choice for area):**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Language Learning Disabilities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Neuromotor Disorders of Speech
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pediatric Language Disorders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seminar in Aging, Cognition, & Comm.
- \_\_\_\_\_ SLP Management of Movement Disorders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family-Centered Intervention for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bilingual Assessment and Intervention
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pediatric Language Disorders

What other areas would you like covered?

If you are a thesis student, please circle 'YES' below.

YES

NO

Note: Requests for specific specialty classes may be made below. **Please note that permits for specialty classes will be made based upon student having successfully completed required pre-requisite core courses and clinical rotations and availability of Faculty to teach specialty courses**

## **Appendix B**

### **The Student Ambassador Program**

A select group of 2<sup>nd</sup> year student volunteers dedicated to supporting, promoting, and representing the program's mission and serving as liaisons / mentors for first year students in the Master's Program in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of South Florida.

The Student Ambassador Program is comprised of **4** students who demonstrate excellence in leadership, academic, and service skills. All applicants must have attended the Master's Program for two semesters prior to applying to be considered, be a full-time student, and must have a minimum 3.8 cumulative GPA. All students serve for one year, their second year in the Graduate Program.

#### **Mission**

The mission of the Student Ambassador Program is to (a) bring together students with different levels of expertise and cultural backgrounds, and (b) enrich and enhance leadership and communication skills, personal growth, and professional development for its membership

#### **Student Ambassadors Purpose**

1. Become knowledgeable about the SLP Program's history, personnel, programs, facilities, student organizations, events
2. Serve as 'representatives of the graduate experience' in such events as Open House, New Student Orientation, and First Year Moving Up and Awards Ceremony
3. Inform the Program Director of needs of /feedback from the first-year students via one monthly meeting
4. Provide ideas and support for fundraising events to benefit students, which are in line with the Program's mission

#### **Student Ambassador Benefits**

- Externally, professional networking opportunities can foster personal and professional relationships with external donors, school supporters, and business community members, which may open pathways for future career opportunities.
- Internally, the exposure that comes from interacting with students, staff, faculty alike can strengthen the members' professionalism and provide additional sources of reference when career searches begin.
- Personally – taking a leadership role in training others is an essential skill in service professions like Speech-Language Pathology and it may add a dimension of practical know-how to the theoretical material students learn in class and clinic.



These insights can be of great value while ambassadors are in school and more so as they approach graduation and the working world.

### **Process for Nomination**

**All applications must be endorsed by a faculty member.** The Program Director and Clinic Director review and make selections. These will be announced once a year, during a student ceremony every summer. The application will be completed online - a link to the application will be emailed to students.

### **Student Ambassador Application**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**What interests you about serving as a Student Ambassador?**

**List three personal qualities you possess that would enable you to be an effective Student Ambassador?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Please list any honors, scholarships or awards you have received:**

**Please list at least one reference we can contact if necessary.**

**Name: Phone: Email:**

**Department/Relation: Title:**

(Please read carefully before signing. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the following agreement,

By signing below I give permission for the Program Director to retrieve a copy of my academic record of USF course work for use in determining my eligibility for the Speech-Language Pathology Student Ambassador Program. I also certify that the above information is current and true as of the date indicated below.

---

(signature of applicant) Date

## Faculty Endorsement Application

Student Ambassador Program Nomination Form Name of Nominee:

\_\_\_\_\_

GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please explain in detail why you support this student's nomination to the Student Ambassador Program. (Please adhere to one page in your nomination).** Student Ambassadors must exemplify responsibility, dependability, enthusiasm, leadership, positivity, and be able to serve as a role model to represent other students in the Master's in SLP Program.

**Please list below 3-5 achievements and/or qualities that you believe will contribute to this student's success as a student ambassador.**

Instructor/Staff Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form by \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_