Communication Sciences And Disorders (PhD)

Degree Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders offers students specialization in speech and language pathology, communication science, or audiology. The doctoral program is designed to provide a formal course of training and advanced research in communication sciences and disorders that produces significant, original contributions to the professional discipline. Course work in experimental research design, statistics and various out-of-department opportunities maximize the student's ability to engage in original research and scholarship. A doctoral student is admitted to candidacy upon passing a written and oral comprehensive examination.

Applicants wishing to pursue the Ph.D. degree design a program suited to meet their future teaching and research goals in speech-language pathology, audiology, and/or applied speech/hearing sciences within the framework of the core requirements described below. For full-time students, it is anticipated that they can complete the Ph.D. in three years. Students must complete the Ph.D. in seven years from the start of the program. The student may apply for an extension if unable to complete the degree in seven years. All extensions must be approved by the student's committee and the department chair.

There are two tracks that students can choose in pursuit of the Ph.D. degree:

- **Track One** is for applicants who have completed both undergraduate and graduate level training in the profession or a related field. For these students, it is assumed that they have either already met course work requirements toward certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), or they are not pursuing certification.
- **Track Two** is designed for students who wish to obtain clinical certification in either discipline as part of their training. This track is available as a fast-track option to the Ph.D. program and is available to Au.D. and SLP Master's degree students after they have completed one half of their degree programs. That is, Au.D. students can apply to the Ph.D. program after the first two years of their Au.D. training. If accepted, they proceed to complete the requirements for the Au.D. and the Ph.D. programs simultaneously. They are awarded both degrees at the completion of all program requirements, and they are eligible for ASHA CCC-A. Students in the MSSLP program can convert to the Ph.D. program after one year of the master's degree and complete the Ph.D. in three years. They are awarded the Ph.D. only. They will have, however, demonstrated the core knowledge and skills necessary to be eligible for the ASHA CCC-SLP. They will still need to complete the Clinical Fellowship (CF).

Requirements For Admission

Minimum admission consideration requirements are as follows:

**Track One:**
1. Applicants who want to earn ASHA certification require a graduate degree in speech-language pathology or audiology. A degree from a related field of profession may be acceptable for those not seeking ASHA certification.
2. A preferred minimum overall graduate GPA of 3.5 (based on 4.0).
3. To be competitive a GRE score of 300 or higher is recommended. The writing portion of the GRE must be taken. Preferred minimum combined score of 290 on the Verbal and Quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
4. Preferred minimum GRE writing score of 3.5.
5. Three letters of reference from faculty at the undergraduate or graduate institution as appropriate, are required. At least two references must be provided by the Ph.D. faculty.
6. A Letter of Intent stating the applicant's reasons for pursuing the degree.

**Track Two:**
1. Current status within the Au.D. or M.S. Speech-Language Pathology program at USA with a minimum graduate GPA of 3.5 (based on 4.0).
2. Preferred minimum combined score of 290 on the Verbal and Quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
3. Preferred minimum GRE writing scores of 3.5.
4. Three letters of reference from current faculty, two of these references being provided by the Ph.D. faculty.
5. A Letter of Intent stating the applicant's reasons for pursuing the degree.
Application

Applications for Track One of the Ph.D. program are accepted at any time and enrollment can begin any semester. Applications for the Track Two program are accepted after November 1 during the student's first year of the MSSLP program or second year of the Au.D. program.

Graduate Assistantships/Tuition Fellowships

Graduate assistantships and tuition fellowships are available annually on a competitive basis.

Transfer Credit

Normally, students are not permitted to transfer doctoral level credits. Exceptions to this policy would require approval of the Admissions Committee, Director of Graduate Studies for the Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Comprehensive Examination

Ph.D. students must pass a comprehensive examination following successful completion of academic work. Subsequent to passing the comprehensive examination and successful presentation of an original research project the student is admitted to candidacy. The content of the student's comprehensive examination is determined by the student's comprehensive examination committee. The comprehensive examination consists of 18 hours of written examination followed by a 2 hour oral examination.

Candidacy

Admission to candidacy will be achieved upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination and professional presentation of a completed research project. The research project is undertaken with the guidance and approval of a pre-dissertation project committee. The doctoral candidate is, therefore, a student who has fulfilled all preliminary requirements for the Ph.D. and has only the dissertation research project as the remaining program requirement.

Dissertation/Dissertation Defense

While only 21 semester hours of dissertation research may count towards the degree, a student must continually enroll in CSD 799 (Dissertation Research) until the final dissertation document has been approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The final oral defense of the dissertation is scheduled after the dissertation study is completed and prepared in written form. Additional revisions of the dissertation may be required as a result of the defense or Graduate School evaluation.

Time Limit

After reaching candidacy, students have a maximum of two years to complete the dissertation.

Department Information

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<tr>
<th>Speech Pathology and Audiology Administrative Staff</th>
<th>(251) 445-9378</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Elizabeth M. Adams</td>
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<td>Dean Emeritus</td>
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<td>Associate Professor Emeritus</td>
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<td>Associate Professors</td>
<td>Adams, B. Beverly, Davis, Gordon-Hickey, Ramkissoon</td>
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The mission of the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology is to provide undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs that challenge the students to achieve the highest standards of academic learning, scientific inquiry and clinical excellence. The Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology seeks to deliver a comprehensive program of academic, research and clinical training in the areas of speech, language and hearing development and disorders. The Department offers the Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing Sciences, the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology, the Doctor of Audiology, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Sciences and Disorders, degree programs.

The undergraduate program readies the graduate to undertake professional study on the graduate level. Students in Speech-Language Pathology who complete the master's program will meet all the academic and practicum requirements to be eligible for the Clinical Fellowship (CF) that leads to national certification (C C C - S L P) by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and eligibility for the Alabama State License. Students in Audiology who complete the Doctor of Audiology program will meet all the academic and practicum requirements for national certification (C C C -A) and also be eligible for the Alabama State License.

The master’s program (Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology) education program in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of South Alabama is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, Maryland 20850, (800)-498-2071 or (301)-296-5700.

The doctoral program (Doctor of Audiology) education program in Audiology at the University of South Alabama is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, Maryland 20850, (800)-498-2071 or (301)-296-5700.