

SLP Graduate Student Manual

Fall 2023 - Spring 2025



Department of Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences

Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology

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Welcome!

Welcome to the Master of Arts (M.A.) graduate program in speech-language pathology (SLP) at Western Michigan University (WMU). You have joined one of the nation's first speech-language pathology programs, founded by Charles Van Riper and first accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology in 1966. We provide unique educational opportunities that incorporate interprofessional practice, person-centered care, applied research, and social justice.

This manual provides information about the degree program and related resources to support students and faculty advisors. It is intended to be consistent with and superseded by all WMU policies and procedures, including the [University Graduate Catalog](#). In addition, as a professionally accredited program, we draw heavily on program accreditation and clinical certification requirements provided by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

As a department, we value meaningful and productive relationships with our students and with one other. Consistent with our professional [code of ethics](#), we are committed to maintaining collaborative professional relationships that are foundational to providing quality services to clients and to cultivating a sense of belonging for all. Frustration and tensions are an inevitable part of working together and may offer an opportunity for both personal and community growth. While some of your classmates may become good friends, keep in mind that ALL of your classmates are emergent colleagues who you could have working relationships with for the remainder of your career. Invest in each other. Related support for managing interpersonal conflict are provided in the Student Resources section below.

The **Department Chair**, Dr. Laura DeThorne, oversees management and leadership of the department of Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences as a whole. The **Academic Program Coordinator**, Ms. Heidi Douglas-Vogley, oversees program advising, course registration, and annual student performance reviews specific to the speech-language pathology program. The Academic Program Coordinator also assigns each student a **faculty advisor** who serves as an additional student resource for professional advice and mentoring. Clinical education is overseen by the **Clinical Education Coordinator**, Ms. Kathy Rigley, who oversees all speech-language pathology services at the on-campus Charles Van Riper Language, Speech and Hearing Clinic and coordinates clinical externships for the second year.

Health, Safety, Wellness

Emergency Management

The University hosts an emergency management website and system. The WMU Hotline at 269-387-1011 and the [WMU homepage](#) are WMU's official sources for information on critical incidents, closures (including weather-related closures), and campus wide alerts. Students and faculty should register for campus wide alert delivery to their cell phones as soon as possible through [GoWMU Alerts](#). For general information regarding severe weather preparedness, we are referred to [ready.gov](#). For an active shooter threat, WMU recommends a '[Run. Hide. Fight.](#)' approach. For any immediate life safety issue or crimes in progress, please call 911. Other key phone numbers include Public Safety (269) 387-5555 and Police Non-Emergency (269) 488-8911.

COVID-19: Health, Safety & Wellbeing

As an allied health science, personal health and wellbeing, public safety, and evidence-based practices are fundamental to our professional discipline and mission. We refer students to [WMU's COVID-19 page](#) for the most current campus information. In addition, please note the specification for vaccination with our Minimal Work Requirements for clinical service provision within our Charles Van Riper Language, Speech & Hearing Clinic. In addition, our program partners with many facilities throughout Southwest Michigan and the United States to provide critical clinical externship opportunities. Many of these health and social service organizations mandate that their employees receive the COVID-19 vaccine, including students and faculty working at their sites. Some facilities may have an approved waiver or exemption process in place.

Program Overview

Our **mission** is to educate speech, language, and hearing professionals for a diverse and changing population, to advance knowledge through research, to deliver high quality clinical services, and to serve as an expert resource for the community and professions.

The professional journey to becoming a speech-language pathologist involves three distinct but inter-related sets of requirements: a) graduation, b) professional accreditation, and c) state licensure; each will be discussed in turn:

Graduation Requirements

Requirements for a Master of Arts degree in speech-language pathology from Western Michigan University are specified in the [Graduate Catalog](#). All courses are taught in English; consequently, the program adheres to [English language proficiency requirements](#) specified by the university for international students. That said, we recognize and value language variation and are committed to actively resisting linguistic discrimination. The program includes a minimum of 57 credit hours of required courses (or their equivalent) as specified by the department. Additional coursework may be required if foundational courses have not been completed prior to admission. The sequence of courses typically takes two academic years plus two summer sessions (six terms of enrollment). The program is designed to meet [ASHA certification requirements](#), which currently includes at least 375 hours of supervised clinical practicum (a minimum of 125 of which must be direct, onsite, in-person therapy), combined with 25 hours of observation, for a total of 400 hours. Students are also required to meet professional competencies related to clinical practice.

Upon admission to the program, the Academic Program Coordinator will oversee review of each student's undergraduate transcript for foundational coursework associated with the professional standards set by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. If additional undergraduate courses are considered necessary, students will be notified by the Academic Program Coordinator to develop an individualized program of study. For example, students who need to take an undergraduate course in Rehabilitative Audiology or Neuroscience for Communication Disorders will need to complete a [Permission to Elect Undergraduate Course form](#) and submit it to the Academic Program Coordinator who will gather the appropriate signatures and submit the form to the Registrar.

The coursework in the M.A. graduate program prepares a student to enter the field of speech-language pathology with a generalist background in the discipline. As such, all courses are required. The sequence of courses and the semester or session in which the courses are offered may vary from year to year; the anticipated course sequence is provided in Appendix A.

The program includes an optional master's thesis (a minimum of six credit hour enrollment) or one or more independent research registrations, which can be substituted *in place* of SLHS 6150 (Research Methods) if faculty mentorship is available. In general, students with an interest in research should meet with their academic advisors early in the graduate program to discuss their interests and identify a research mentor. A sample timeline for students who wish to pursue a master's thesis is provided in Appendix B.

A student who feels they have already completed an equivalent to one of our required courses at another institution can request a waiver of the graduate course requirement. Course equivalency is typically based on level of the course, specified course prerequisites, number of credits, specified ASHA standards, and at least 75% overlap in specified content based on a review of the syllabus and related materials. The decision regarding course equivalency will be made by the Academic Program Coordinator in consultation with the instructor of record, and the student's individual plan of study will be updated as needed. Any change to the [permanent program](#) of study must be approved by the Academic Program Coordinator before forwarding to the Office of the Registrar for audit prior to graduation.

The application for graduation deadline is set by the Registrar and typically occurs during the latter half of the semester or session prior to the anticipated last semester/session of study. Students should read the [academic calendar](#) to verify the deadline date and must submit the application for graduation on time.

ASHA Certification

As an accredited program, our curriculum is designed to prepare students for professional certification through the [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#) (ASHA), which will lead to the official "Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (the "CCC-SLP" designation often listed after a certified speech-language pathologist's name). Consistent with our accreditation status, syllabi for academic coursework should include specification of relevant [2020 ASHA Certification Standards](#), or the updated standards as of January 2023. Application for certification currently requires an official graduate transcript, completion of the *Clinical Fellowship Report and Rating Form*, which includes the *Clinical Fellowship Skills Inventory* (CFSI), and evidence of passing the Praxis examination.

The [Clinical Fellowship \(CF\) Experience](#) is a mentored professional experience that begins after the completion of the master's degree and typically includes professional compensation. Students are expected to find their own Clinical Fellowship positions that begin after graduation. The [Praxis Exam administered by ETS](#) is the summative examination utilized by ASHA for certification and is required for speech-language pathology licensure in some states. Our graduate program is designed by nature to provide students with the requisite knowledge and skills to pass the Praxis. For those who seek additional exam preparation, ASHA offers a [Praxis preparation resource](#). It is recommended that students take the Praxis examination and report their scores during the last semester of the M.A. program so that they will be ready to obtain state licensure in a timely manner.

State Licensure Requirements

Often, requirements for state licensure mirror those for ASHA certification. Transcripts are used to verify coursework completion and award of degree. It is recommended that students take the Praxis examination and report their scores during the last semester of the M.A. program so that they will be ready to obtain state licensure in a timely manner. In the State of Michigan, a new graduate cannot work as a speech-language pathologist without a state issued license. See the [State of Michigan, Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs website](#) for detailed instructions and application materials. Licensure requirements for all states within the U.S. can be accessed [here](#).

Clinical Practicum

As reflected in the program of study, students typically enroll in clinical practicum every semester/session of graduate study, either through clinical practicum that is directly supervised by a WMU faculty member (SLHS 6700) or through professional field externships (SLHS 7120) that are directly supervised by practicing speech-language pathologists outside of WMU and coordinated by the Externship coordinator. Students typically register for clinical practicum both semesters of their first year and in both sessions of the following summer.

Clinical Practicum – Year 1

Many first-year clinical practicum experiences occur within the [Charles Van Riper Language, Speech & Hearing Clinic](#) housed within [Unified Clinics](#) and are assigned by the Clinical Education Coordinator. Most first-year clinical practicum experiences will be scheduled on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, so students are asked to keep these days open in their schedules. However, some placements may take place on Monday and Wednesday. Therefore, students are asked to keep schedules as open and flexible as possible until the schedule is finalized. This usually happens by the second week of the semester. Weekly practicum meetings with clinical instructors are also required of each student; scheduling varies based on team availability and is determined after placements are made. Students submit an On-campus Clinical Practicum Application prior to each semester/session to indicate previous experiences and current needs. Clinical assignments are a complicated balance of many factors; areas in which the student needs to develop and address professional competencies are a necessary priority.

Clinical Documentation

In addition to direct client contact, practicum will require students to produce clinical documentation in a timely manner per clinical instructors' guidelines. This may include therapy session ("SOAP") notes, therapy plans, evaluation/treatment reports and/or reflections. Some of the clinical placements will require students to document their work in an electronic medical records (EMR) system. Training for the EMR system will be provided by the Clinic Coordinator in SLHS 5970 Advanced Clinical Methods course. It is important to note that all students are required to complete HIPAA training prior to being granted access to the EMR system.

Students enrolled in clinical practicum are required to purchase a subscription to CALIPSO Client (<https://www.calipsoclient.com/>). This secure web-based platform will house student earned clinical hours, required health records, and training certifications, as well as clinical competency performance evaluations. Performance evaluations are completed by clinical instructors and reviewed with students at mid-term and the end of the semester.

Clinical Externships – Year 2

The 2nd year Externship Coordinator uses the information stored in CALIPSO, along with details provided by students in the Application for Off-Campus Placement to make assignments for professional fieldwork externships. All clinical contact hours must be obtained in placements that were approved by the Externship Coordinator. Two off-campus externships are completed in the second year: a part-time placement (typically 2-3 days per week) in the fall semester and a full-time placement (typically 4-5 days per week) in the spring semester. One of these placements is typically in an educational setting and one in a non-educational setting (i.e.; private practice, skilled nursing, rehabilitation facility, etc.). Clinical placements can be competitive and may require interviews and/or purchase of an *ACEMAPP Education* account (an online clinical education placement management system). Information on ACEMAPP can be found at: <https://acemapp.org/content/acemapp-education>.

Clinical externships are an explicit part of the MA SLP curriculum. Students are placed at sites by the Externship Coordinator based on student's educational needs, site availability and through carefully cultivated partnerships within the community. The Externship Coordinator will use information available in Calipso, along with an SLHS 7120 Placement form, to assign students to their respective placements.

Professional Expectations for Collaboration, Cultural-linguistic Responsivity, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Our professional competencies include ethical conduct, collaboration, cultural-linguistic responsivity, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (CFCC Standard IV-G & CAA Standards 3.1.6 & 3.4). Prior to enrollment in clinical externships, we expect students to be able to, at a minimum:

- Recognize microaggressions (from oneself and others) and demonstrate an emerging ability to respond
- Show an awareness of one's own biases
- Refrain from negative talk about co-workers 'behind their backs'
- Recognize one's own positional power (e.g., race, gender, professional role, disability status, socioeconomic differences) and how that affects others
- Lean into curiosity and cultural humility about others' differences, rather than judgement.
- Seek knowledge/resources/consultation regarding less familiar cultures and identities

If faculty/staff observe any actions toward others (e.g., classmates, faculty/staff, or clients) that may be derogatory in nature, such as snickering, eyerolling, requests not to work together, exclusive and negative backchannel communications, or other behavior consistent with microaggressions, bullying, and exclusion, we will address the person(s) responsible as soon as possible. Potential repercussions include but are not limited to: a) submission of a referral to WMU Student Affairs (Student Conduct Concern), b) report to the Title IX office, c) requirement of an improvement plan that may delay externship and/or graduation, and/or d) filing of a concern with the ASHA Board of Ethics. Please see below section on Student Resources related to Interpersonal Tensions.

Minimum Work Requirements

Health and safety documentation requirements differ across clinical practicum sites. Failure to meet specified requirements may delay or prohibit graduation.

Charles Van Riper Language Speech & Hearing Clinic

The following summarizes minimum work requirements for face-to-face clinical service provision within our Charles Van Riper Language Speech & Hearing Clinic, which is housed within Unified Clinics on campus. Registration for clinical practicum, within the Charles Van Riper Language Speech & Hearing Clinic, is associated with SLHS 6700 and begins the first semester of enrollment in the program. The following minimum work requirements must be met prior to beginning any in-person clinical practicum work:

- State of Michigan /ICHAT background check
- TB testing (needs to be done annually)
- CPR certification (must be adult/child class)
- Vaccination records (e.g., Hepatitis, seasonal flu, COVID-19)
- Health insurance coverage
- Completed Unified Clinics training, including SANS (e.g., safety and security training)

Students will not be able to begin participating in services within our on-campus clinic until a) the above documentation has been uploaded into CALIPSO or b) their request for accommodations (i.e., disability or religious) has been approved. Please see Appendix C for information regarding the student process for seeking a minimal work requirement accommodation.

Clinical Externships

Note that clinical externship sites associated with enrollment in SLHS 7120 during the second year in the program may have additional minimal work requirements, including but not limited to possible drug screenings, various trainings, and national background checks. WMU students, including those in our program, must meet all work requirements and waiver processes established by those external placement sites. Failure to meet external placement site requirements may delay progress toward graduation and could deter successful graduation altogether. If a student has concerns related to meeting requirements for an external placement, please discuss these concerns as soon as possible with the Clinical Education Coordinator.

Evaluation of Clinical Competencies

Clinical educational programs in the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences address the knowledge and clinical skills specified in the ASHA 2020 Certification Standards. Clinical instructors formally assess each student's clinical competencies at midterm and at the end of the semester via CALIPSO (<https://www.calipsoclient.com/inventory-of-performance.html>). Students must demonstrate ongoing progress in knowledge and skill development relevant to their clinical work with a given client or client group. A student may demonstrate overall excellence in clinical skills without demonstrating full competence or independence in all areas assessed.

Students receive a completed Performance Evaluation in CALIPSO from each clinical instructor assigned to them during the semester. A final grade is computed by the clinic coordinator, who weighs each grade based on the number of clinical hours earned for each clinical assignment. One grade is then submitted to the Registrar. A grade of B or higher is automatically converted to “Credit” while any grade lower converts to “No Credit.” A grade lower than B for any clinical assignment is below expectations, and clinical hours will not be granted in association with that assignment. Failure to earn credit for a practicum registration is likely to delay or prohibit completion of the program.

Dress Code and Appearance Guidelines

Clinical guidelines for dress and physical appearance are provided in Appendix D.

Counting and Reporting Clinic Hours

Students are responsible for recording all direct client/family contact time for each session toward the clinical hours they earn. Time spent in each session should be counted from the time of initial contact to time of departure. This time may include contact that occurs outside of the therapy room, e.g., communication with the family/client on the way from or to the waiting room. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Council for Clinical Certification in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (CFCC) guidance on clinical practicum:

"Only direct client contact time may be counted as clinical practicum hours. Time spent in writing lesson plans, scoring tests, transcribing language samples, preparing activities, and writing reports may not be counted."

Continuation & Dismissal Policies

A student's academic and clinical status provides the basis for continuation in the graduate program. The categories of academic status as stipulated in the graduate catalog under [Academic Regulations](#) are: Good Standing, Warning, Probation, Extended Probation, Final Probation, Probation Removed, and Dismissal. Status in the program and progress toward degree completion is contingent on successful completion of academic coursework, credit hours within clinical practicums, achievement of knowledge and skills tied to [2020 ASHA certification standards](#), and the [WMU student code](#). Students will be notified of changes in program status in writing by either the Department Chair or the Department Education and Coordination Committee (DECC). A copy of the notification will also be placed in the student's departmental file. Students are referred to the Graduate College for specified grounds and processes for an appeal.

Academic Standards

Based on Academic Standards set by the Graduate Catalog, all graduate students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or better and a grade of "C" (2.0) or better in each individual course in order to continue their programs of study in good standing. If any grade below a C is submitted for the academic registration, the student will earn "no credit" for the academic course. The student must re-register for the course or experience. Receipt of a failing grade cannot be addressed through an academic improvement plan. In addition, departmental academic standards specify that a student may re-register for one – and only one – graduate level course and must achieve a grade of "C" or better in order to continue in the program. Note that withdrawal from a course is still considered registration, and a second withdrawal from that course will result in dismissal from the program. In an effort to ensure that a student's academic progress is meeting expectations, students on probation may not enroll in clinical practicum courses, unless given written permission from the department chair and the graduate advisor.

In addition to grades, each graduate course is tied to specific ASHA Competencies, which should be specified on the course syllabi. Failure to meet competency standards associated with each course will result in the need for an improvement plan developed by the course instructor at the close of the semester. Details on Improvement Plans are provided in Appendix E.

Clinical Practicum

Good departmental standing also requires assigned credit (tied to a grade of B or above) for each semester of clinical practicum tied to SLHS 6700 (Clinical Practicum) and SLHS 7120 (Professional Field Experience). A student may fail a clinical assignment or placement: (1) if he or she fails to demonstrate adequate clinical/professional progress as indicated by a clinical instructor's written evaluations of the student's clinical competencies, or (2) if a student's performance is unsatisfactory for any client match in a given semester. In either case, performance is below expectations for the graduate program. If either of the aforementioned situations occur, an improvement plan will be developed with the student and the instructor of record under the oversight/guidance of the Clinical Education Coordinator. Referral to the Department Education and Coordination Committee may be warranted.

If a serious concern is identified in any clinical assignment by the instructor of record, the clinic coordinator's responsibilities may include any of the following: contact the student's other clinical instructors to determine if concern is specific to one learning context or is a more general concern; schedule a meeting of all clinical instructors working with the student; meet with the concerned clinical instructor and student to review the improvement process and creation of an improvement plan if necessary; and inform DECC of the concern and the improvement plan.

If the student successfully completes (passes) the clinical experience but faculty concern remains, the clinic coordinator will consider the most appropriate action for the student given the individual circumstances.

Examples could include the following actions:

1. Schedule additional clinical practice experience to match student's need(s).
2. Create a new improvement plan to meet the student's current skills and needs. This action may include relating previous concern(s) to new clinical instructor(s) of the student.
3. Monitor student's progress in developing competencies and make a recommendation to the graduate coordinator regarding future improvement plans and clinical placements. Recommendations may include delaying off-campus placement to another semester or finding an alternative off-campus placement if the student has not demonstrated the competencies necessary for that placement.
4. If a serious concern is identified and a failing grade is submitted for the clinical registration:
 1. The student will earn No Credit and no practicum hours for that experience and the student must re-register for the experience.
 2. The clinical instructor and the clinic coordinator will recommend the most appropriate action for the student, including any of the following:
 - a. Develop a long-term improvement plan.
 - b. Meet with student and new clinical instructor to review the plan.
 - c. Monitor student's progress developing competencies and make recommendation(s) to the Department Education and Coordination Committee regarding future improvement plans and clinical placements, which may include an alternative for off-campus placement if the student has not demonstrated the competencies necessary for that placement.
 3. Following the development and implementation of an improvement plan, if a second failing grade occurs in a clinical registration, the student will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Certification Standards

In addition to course grades, a student may be placed on probation by the department in cases where repeated improvement is needed in relation to specified ASHA Certification standards tied to both academic courses and clinical practicum. The need for an academic or clinical improvement plan does not always lead to departmental probation. Departmental probation, however, may be given if an improvement plan is needed in multiple registrations in a given semester, if an improvement plan has not been completed within the specified timeframe, or if there is a pattern of repeated improvement plans needed across consecutive semesters.

Dismissal

Dismissal from the graduate program occurs when a student has failed to meet minimal academic, clinical/professional, and/or ethical standards. The failure to meet standards may be the result of a single incident (such as academic dishonesty or behavior which endangers or violates the rights of another professional and/or client), the result of being placed on probation and/or failing to complete an improvement plan, or if the repeated need for multiple improvement plans becomes untenable.

Recommendations for dismissal are typically reviewed by the Department Education and Coordination Committee. Documentation and the findings are provided to the department chair for approval and implementation. Based on the Graduate Catalog, once students are dismissed or voluntarily withdraw from the program, they must apply for readmission through the normal admission process.

Course Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals

Students are entitled to appeal course grades and program dismissal decision under certain circumstances specified in the Graduate Catalog under Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students are advised that such appeal processes are time sensitive, and the Office of the Ombuds may be available to assist.

Student Resources

Student Feedback & Concerns

- **Anthology Course Evaluations** is one of the fundamental forms for providing anonymous feedback to faculty about their courses. These course evaluations are automated for every course with an enrollment of at least 4 students and serve as the best mechanism for anonymous feedback regarding a specific nonclinical course or instructor. Student responses are anonymous unless the student chooses to share identifying comments within the open-ended responses. The results are not made available to the instructor until *after* course grades are formally submitted. While all numerical results from the Anthology evaluation will be available to the department chair, the open-ended comments are only seen by the primary instructor of record unless they choose to share them.
- **Qualtrics Course Evaluations** are utilized to mimic Anthology course evaluations for clinical education, specifically SLHS 6700, due to the unique registration properties of these courses. In such cases, students are advised to ignore any automated Anthology evaluations tied to SLHS 6700 and instead complete the Qualtrics links shared by either the Clinical Program Coordinator or the Department Chair. The evaluation results are not made available to the instructor until *after* course grades are formally submitted. Student responses are anonymous unless they are the only registrant, and/or the student chooses to share identifying comments within the open-ended responses.
- **Program Exit Surveys** are administered by the Academic Program Coordinator at the end of the M.A. course of study. Exit surveys are the best venue for feedback about the program as a whole (e.g., clinical education, course sequence, overall culture). Please make the time to complete these evaluations as they are one of the few ways we obtain comprehensive and systematic feedback from all students. Program-level concerns can also be directed to either the Clinical Education Coordinator, Academic Program Coordinator, or Department Chair for more immediate response/resolution.
- **Interpersonal Tensions** related to an individual faculty member, externship supervisor, classmate, or other professional relationship should first be raised through interpersonal interaction directly with the involved individual(s). We view self-advocacy and conflict resolution as valuable professional skills that are essential to the community we are working to create. We also recognize that power differentials can make these dynamics especially difficult, and we can all benefit from external support in these areas from professionals trained in creating safe spaces for all and in conflict resolution strategies in particular. Students and faculty are encouraged to seek advice and support through professional counseling services (see below resources), the University Ombuds (269) 387-0718, or Gryphon Place, a community-wide resource. The natural need to vent about others is best kept outside of your cohort/professional network.

Students are also encouraged to ask their faculty advisors, clinical education coordinator, academic program coordinator, or department chair for advice in how best to self-advocate and address tensions with fellow students, faculty/staff, or externship supervisors. Together we will walk through the walk you through the departmental Self-Advocacy Support Form. However, we ask that students refrain from talking negatively about fellow students or WMU faculty members with other students or faculty members outside of this structured self-advocacy support process, as this approach does not support the sense of belonging and community we aim to provide. If the issue cannot be resolved through direct discussion between the involved parties, students are encouraged to report their concerns directly to the Departmental Chair. If a student's concern involves the department chair directly, students are encouraged to seek counsel with the [University Ombuds](#) (269) 387-0718 or the [Associate Dean of Student Affairs in the College of Health and Human Services](#).

- **Issues regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** can be addressed through any of the aforementioned processes. In addition, any concerns involving potential discrimination or harassment which violate the law, or which constitute inappropriate or unprofessional limitation of employment opportunity, University facility access, or participation in University activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, protected veteran status, height, weight, or marital status should be directed to the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) (269) 387-6316. The College of Health & Human Services also offers a virtual [DEI Dropbox](#), which is sent directly to the CHHS Director of DEI Office. This form is anonymous and offers an opportunity for asking DEI-related questions, making DEI-related suggestions, and reporting DEI-related concerns that you have seen or experienced anywhere on campus. You do not have to leave your name or email unless you want someone to respond.

In any case, if a student believes their complaint(s) is not being handled satisfactorily through the specified processes above, their concern may be directed to the national accrediting body, the [Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology](#).

Academic & Professional Support

- [Disability Services for Students](#) (269-387-2116) aims to make education accessible and coordinates accommodation eligibility and supports for those who experience disability. Students who require accommodation are responsible for initiating the eligibility process directly with Disability Student Services. When contacting Disability Services for Students, please advise them that our program includes *both academic and clinical* components. To help guide relevant discussions about comprehensive support needs, the Council on Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders has provided an [Eligibility Requirements and Essential Functions](#) document. Although our department does not endorse all the specifications listed within this document, it provides a general reference to initiate meaningful discussions.
- [The Graduate College](#) offers a range of resources to support graduate students including but not limited to [funding opportunities](#), special circumstances such as [leave of absence](#), and details regarding [graduate assistantships](#).

- [CHHS Student Services & Success Center](#) is available to provide individualized support that includes academic advising, success coaching, & professional development.
- [The ASHA Career Portal](#) offers a fairly robust resource that covers everything from resume writing skills, to preparing for interviews, negotiating offers, etc. Resume examples representative of clinical professionals are available [here](#).
- [The Learning Resource Center](#) (LRC), located on the first floor of the College of Health and Human Services Building offers a quiet alternative for studying and assessment, student printing needs, and library resources.

Health, Wellness, & Equity

- [Sindecuse Health Center](#) offers a range of services including but not limited to clinic and nursing services, nutrition, COVID-19, gender affirming care, and a range of [counseling services](#) (269) 387-3287.
- Psychology Clinic at Unified Clinics provides counseling services (269) 387-8302.
- [FIRE Place Service & Resource Center](#) for resources and support related to sexual assault.
- The Graduate College offers a range of general [wellbeing resources](#) focused on mental health.

Appendix A

Sample MA-SLP Course Sequence

Fall 2023 - Total 11-14 credits

SLHS 4590 Neuro of CSD, 3 cr.*
SLHS 5530 Stuttering, 3 cr.
SLHS 5970 Advanced Clinical Methods, 3 cr.
SLHS 6480 Cult Responsive Practices, 2 cr.
SLHS 6700 Clinical Practicum, 3 cr.

Spring 2024 - Total 12-18 credits

SLHS 4560 Rehab Aud, 3 cr.*
SLHS 5010 Speech Science, 3 cr.*
SLHS 5370 Speech Sound Disorders, 3 cr.
SLHS 5380 Child Language Impairment, 3 cr.
SLHS 5970 Acquired Language Disorders, 3 cr.
SLHS 6700 Clinical Practicum, 3 cr.

Summer I 2024 - Total 8 credits

SLHS 6150 Research Methods, 3 cr.
SLHS 6560 Dysphagia, 3 cr.
SLHS 6700 Clinical Practicum, 2 cr.

Summer II 2024 - Total 7 credits

SLHS 5970 Autism, 3 cr.
SLHS 6690 Ethics, Counseling, & Prof, 2 cr.
SLHS 6700 Clinical Practicum, 2 cr.

Fall 2024 - Total 13 credits

SLHS 6400 Voice & Related Structural Disorders, 3 cr.
SLHS 6440 Motor Speech Disorders, 3 cr.
SLHS 6450 Augmentative & Alternative Communication, 3 cr.
SLHS 7120 Professional Field Experiences, 4 cr

Spring 2025 – Total 4 cr.

SLHS 7120 Professional Field Experiences, 4 cr.

*Courses that most students take as an undergraduate and do not need to repeat. However, students who have not taken these courses will need to enroll.

Appendix B

Sample Thesis Timeline

October (1st yr)

- Initiate discussions with one or more faculty members about potential topics
- Read sample thesis projects from MA students in Speech-Language Pathology from past 3 – 5 years
- Ask a faculty member to chair the committee
- Firm up topic (“Keep it simple” is a good rule to follow)
- Discuss research design with committee chair
- Invite at least 2 other faculty members to serve on thesis committee; submit form “Permission to Elect” to Graduate College;
- Review thesis guidelines:
https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u67/2015/permission.to_.elect_.pdf

by end of April (1st yr)

- Submit first draft of prospectus to committee chair
- Submit introductory statement and review of relevant literature
- Submit statement of specific statements or hypotheses and description of proposed methodology
- Initiate process to obtain Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) approval (obtain forms on the WMU website); must receive HSIRB approval before contacting participants

by end of August (2nd yr)

- Complete “Permission to Elect” form; register for some or all of the 6 hours of credit in SLHS 7000 (these hours will be spread out over several semesters until graduation)
- Distribute draft of prospectus to committee members (at least 2 weeks before the scheduled meeting)

by Sept – Oct (2nd yr)

- Hold prospectus meeting with committee to obtain approval and advice regarding your plan
- Prepare to submit application to the Graduate Student Research Fund by Nov. 15 deadline

by Nov – Dec.- Jan (2nd yr)

- Collect data (if applicable)
- Refine Ch. 1 (Intro), Ch. 2 (Review of Lit), Ch 3 (Methodology) from prospectus, using Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses, Projects, and Dissertations

by Jan.- Feb.-March (2nd yr) – Can extend into first summer session of second year

- Analyze data
- Write Ch. 4 (Results) and Ch. 5 (Discussion)
- Schedule committee meeting at least one week before thesis submission due date to Graduate College
- Deliver “final” draft of thesis to committee members at least two weeks prior to Meeting
- Hold meeting and obtain committee members’ signatures of approval
- Make changes in thesis requested by committee
- Submit thesis to Graduate College; receive approval notice from Graduate College

Appendix C

Student Process for Seeking Minimal Work Requirement Accommodation

Student accommodation requests for any minimal work requirement associated with providing face-to-face clinical service provision within the Charles Van Riper Language, Speech & Hearing Clinic(s) at Unified should be directed as follows:

- a. For a disability-related accommodation, a student should contact the Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) at 269-387-2116 or at wmich.edu/disabilityservices. If approved, the resulting accommodation letter will be shared with the clinical instructor per usual DSS procedure.
- b. For religious accommodation, a student should complete the **Request for Religious Accommodation Form** (see below) and submit it to the Clinical Coordinator as soon as possible. Supporting documentation can be uploaded into [CALIPSO](#), a secure web-based application, or through another mutually agreed upon means. Examples of supporting documentation include a letter from a relevant religious leader regarding the nature of the belief. In the case of requested vaccine accommodation, documentation from a medical provider may also be necessary to demonstrate that this belief has been consistently applied to other vaccines as relevant. The Clinical Coordinator and Department Chair will review the application in consultation as needed with other institutional offices. The Clinical Coordinator will inform the student of the resulting decision and ensure that the decision is documented on the Request for Religious Accommodation form. The criteria for an approved accommodation will be as follows:
 - i. the student's submitted narrative, behavior, and documentation is consistent with their professed belief.
 - ii. there is no evidence indicating that their request is based solely on secular reasons
 - iii. the accommodation would not create an undue hardship on the university or pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others

Assignments for clinical instruction is by nature an individualized process, where student needs are balanced with client needs and availability. Students with an approved accommodation will be provided clinical assignments aligned with their needs as balanced with client needs and availability. For example, they may be given priority for limited tele-practice and simulation opportunities as available within the Charles Van Riper Language, Speech & Hearing Clinic.

It is worth noting that we cannot guarantee required external field placements for students who have a minimal work requirement accommodation. College-wide specifications regarding external field placements are available [here](#). Given the restricted external field placements available to students who do not meet minimal work requirements, graduation may be delayed or potentially deferred altogether for students who have a minimal work requirement accommodation.

Request for Religious Accommodation Form

1. From which minimal work requirement(s) are you seeking religious accommodation?
2. What is the specific religious tenet or principle that leads you to request this accommodation?
3. What other documentation do you have to support the connection between your religious belief and the need for this accommodation (e.g., reference to a sacred text, supporting letter from a relevant religious leader)?
4. How has your prior pattern of behavior aligned with this religious belief as it pertains specifically to this accommodation request? In the case of religious accommodation from vaccination, a medical record or letter from a health provider attesting to refusal of prior vaccines would support your request.
5. Given the [scope of practice](#) for your chosen profession and the associated [code of ethics](#), how do you suggest mediating any potential threat to the health and safety to others that may be posed by this accommodation?

Students should submit this form to the Clinical Coordinator and upload any supporting documentation into [CALIPSO](#) (or via a mutually agreed upon alternative means).

Clinical instructors should submit this form and any supporting documentation in-person to the departmental hiring agent (or via a mutually agreed upon alternative means).

Please allow at least 2 weeks for review.

Final Decision: Approved/Denied

Department Chair Signature:

Date:

Appendix D
Charles Van Riper Language, Speech & Hearing Clinic
Dress Code and Appearance Guidelines

The purpose of considering how we present to others is to support our ability to effectively perform within our scope of practice and to cultivate an environment of mutual respect. According to this, the questions below should be considered in decisions about personal presentation:

- Will my personal presentation support the perception of a clean and sanitary clinical environment?
- Will my clothing allow for safe and easy range of movement needed in my scope of practice?
- Will my personal presentation support positive rapport with my clients/patients?
- Will anything on my person communicate disrespect for a historically marginalized population?
- Will anything in my bodily presentation distract me or my clients/patients from working effectively?
- Have you considered potential allergies or sensitivities that might be present in persons with respiratory and/or sensory compromise (such as scented lotions, perfume, cologne)? For the health and well-being of others, we ask that you refrain from wearing any scented products while in a clinical/professional environment.

If at any time your preceptor clinical instructor has questions or concerns regarding your appearance or dress, these questions will be used to facilitate a discussion to ensure the safety and comfort of yourself, your preceptor, clinical instructor your peers and your clients.

Off campus placements are likely to follow different guidelines. The student is responsible for discussing dress code expectations with their preceptor at their respective field externship sites.

Appendix E

Improvement Plans

Improvement plans are designed by the instructor to help students successfully meet academic and clinical competencies. The instructor will identify and discuss concern(s) with the student; measurable goals and a timeline for their completion will be developed. It is recommended that any improvement plan be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the deficiency occurred. If either the student or the instructor fails to meet the agreed upon improvement plan, the problem will be referred to the Department Education and Coordination Committee as set forth in the following section on Procedures and Hearings. The necessity of an improvement plan may delay the course of study.

Strategies contained in an improvement plan may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

1. Structured observation of peers or professionals
2. Independent reading and/or written assignments
3. Interactions or work sessions with course instructor
4. Revising the student's schedule or reducing the course load
5. Repeating a course or a portion of a course
6. Remedial coursework in or outside of the department
7. Revision of assignments for a course
8. Leave of absence from the program

Appendix F

Acknowledgment of WMU SLHS Graduate Student Manual

For those that accept admission, please read and **initial** each of the following indicating your acknowledgment and understanding of each statement:

_____ **(initial)** I understand that, while Western Michigan University does not currently require students to have received the Covid-19 vaccine, many of the clinical sites that the program partners with for student experiences do require proof of vaccination (in addition to numerous other vaccinations and health requirements). Should an admitted student choose to not receive the Covid-19 vaccine prior to the start of classes, the program is not responsible for creating alternative learning opportunities or identifying clinical sites that do not require students to be vaccinated.

_____ **(initial)** I have reviewed and accepted the terms of the WMU CHHS Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences Graduate Student Manual and will comply with the policies (and any revisions) throughout the duration of my academic program.

Students attending practice sites for their chosen profession through CHHS must meet all minimal work requirements (MWR) established by all associated practice sites. In addition to vaccines, such requirements often include health and drug screenings, OSHA and HIPAA training, and background checks. Failure to meet external placement site requirements may delay progress toward graduation and could deter successful graduation altogether.

Sign and return this form to Leesa Jaquays at SPPA-info@wmich.edu prior to orientation on 9/1/23.

Name (Printed)

Signature

Date

Appendix G

SLHS Self-Advocacy Support

Learning to navigate interpersonal tensions related to an colleagues, supervisors, or other professional relationships is an important life-long set of competencies that are grounded in our ASHA Code of Ethics (Principle IV) and professional standards (CFCC IV-G & CAA 3.1.6). We recognize that power differentials can make these dynamics especially difficult, and we can all benefit from external support in such cases.

If you would like assistance from a trusted member of SLHS (e.g., advisor, instructor), we will walk you through the following process and complete the associated form together, preferably *in person*. Our goal is to support you in developing a concrete plan to share your concern with the most relevant persons. It is **not** the faculty's role to evaluate or receive formal complaints against fellow faculty members.

Reporting to the WMU Office of Institutional Equity

If the issue is related to discrimination or harassment that violates the law or that limits opportunities of admission, employment, or education based on the protected classes of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, height, weight, or marital status, we can assist you in contacting the Office of Institutional Equity, Public Safety. Depending on the situation, we may be required to report the incident, particularly for sexual misconduct that needs to be directed to the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) and/or for issues involving immediate safety that need to be directed to [WMU Public Safety](#) (269) 488-8911. An online Incident Reporting Form for sexual misconduct is available [here](#).

Support for Managing Interpersonal Tensions

For managing interpersonal tensions, our goal is help address the issue as directly as possible with the involved persons, while also recognizing that you may need support in developing professional skills/competences around conflict resolution and self-advocacy. Please complete the form specified on p.2, which will be submitted to the departmental chair (or Dean in CHHS when the Chair is the subject of concern) if not resolved by the mutually agreed upon timeline. If resolved by the agreed upon time, the form will stay between the people who completed it, with a general notation in the student advising log.

Additional Resources

Students and faculty are encouraged to seek advice and support through professional counseling services (e.g., [Sindecuse Counseling Services](#)), the [University Ombuds](#), or [Gryphon Place](#), a community-wide resource.

If a student believes their complaint(s) is not being handled satisfactorily through university and program processes, their concern may be directed to the national accrediting body, [the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology](#).

Advocacy Support Form

Date: _____

Person Reporting Concern: _____

Recipient of the Concern: _____

1. Does the person reporting their concern understand that we may be required to report the concern to the WMU Office of Institutional Equity (269-387-6316), particularly in regard to sexual misconduct?
2. What is the person's goal for consultation?
 - a. _____ If primarily seeking validation, a chance to vent, or emotional support, please pause and consider redirecting the conversation to a trusted person outside the program and/or one of the following resources ([Sindecuse Counseling Services](#), [University Ombuds](#), or [Gryphon Place](#))
 - b. _____ If primarily wanting help to resolve interpersonal tensions, please continue.
3. Document a brief description of the concern:
4. What ways might the current tension be influenced by cultural differences, power dynamics, and/or implicit biases?
5. Which, if any, of the following forms of support would the person reporting their concern like to explore today?
 - a. _____ Suggestions for how I might approach the issue
 - b. _____ Role-playing the interaction
 - c. _____ Joining me in approaching the other person
 - d. _____ Recommend resources (counseling, Ombuds, Gryphon Place)
 - e. _____ Other:

6. Based on any supports requested above, what are the related action items:

Proposed Action(s)	By Whom?	By When?

7. Was this concern resolved in the timeline specified to the satisfaction of the reporting party?
- ☐ YES, form to remain between signing parties and generally noted in the student advising log
 - ☐ NO, then please submit this form to the departmental chair or the Dean in CHHS (in cases where the Chair is the subject of concern or the original recipient of the concern).

Recipient of Concern: Signature

Person Reporting Concern: Signature