



Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program Academic Handbook

**Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences**

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	2
I. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ACQUISITION (KASA)	3
II. SLP PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS STATEMENT	3
III. CONDITIONAL ADMISSION.....	4
IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS.....	4
A. Academic Coursework.....	4
B. Plan of Study.....	5
C. Clinical Coursework (24 credits).....	6
V. ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.....	7
A. Thesis Option.....	7
B. Non-Thesis Option	10
VI. ACADEMIC PROGRAM	11
A. Residential Students.....	11
A. Suncoast Consortium Students	11
VII. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS	12
VIII. STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM	12
IX. CODE OF ETHICS.....	13
X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.....	14
XI. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.....	14
A. National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA USF Chapter).....	14
B. Bilingual Language and Literacy Investigative and Networking Group (BLLING).....	15
C. The Sertoma Collegiate Club	15
XII. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	15
A. Comprehensive Examination	15
B. PRAXIS Examination	16
C. Graduation Application	16
XIII. CERTIFICATION.....	17
A. National Certification.....	17
B. Summary of Standards for National Certification.....	17
XIV. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.....	21
XV. STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS.....	21

I. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ACQUISITION (KASA)

In 2005, ASHA moved to a competency-based system of assessment, known as 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 will be documented, and a written version will be placed in the student's academic folder. Documentation should be signed by the instructor and the student when competencies are 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 relevant faculty members, area and clinic directors, and the student. Interventions for academic course competencies typically involve independent study. Intervention for clinical competencies typically involves additional supervised clinical experiences.

II. 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.

III. CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

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

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Academic Coursework

The curriculum of the residential 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 USF speech-language clinic. 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 (29 hours required)</u>		<u>CR</u>	<u>SEM</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
SPA 5204	Advanced Clinical Phonology	3	_____	_____
SPA 5403	Lang. Learning 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	Seminar in 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 credits 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 6320	Aural Rehabilitation Across the Lifespan*	3	_____	_____
SPA 6401	Pediatric Language Disorders	3	_____	_____
SPA 6404	Language Learning Disabilities	3	_____	_____
SPA 6564	Seminar in Aging, Cognition, & Comm.	3	_____	_____
SPA 6473	Bilingual Assessment & Intervention	3	_____	_____
SPA 6461	Family-Centered Intervention	3	_____	_____
SPA 6253	SLP Mgmt of Complex Movmt Dis.	3	_____	_____
SPA 6930	Advanced Medical SLP	3	_____	_____
SPA 6930	Autism	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 lower in two courses will be dismissed from the program.

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:

Sample IPS					
Semester 1 Fall (12 credits)		Semester 2 Spring (12 credits)	Semester 3 Summer (8 credits)		
SPA 5204 Adv Clin Phon	3 cr.	SPA 6565 Sem. in Dysphagia	3 cr.	SPA 6805 Res Methods	3 cr.
SPA 5403 Lang Lng.	3 cr.	SPA 6225 Adv. Fluency Dis.	3 cr.	SPA 6211 Adv. Vocal Dis.	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.	Adult Practicum	
		Pediatric 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* via an online survey. Students who have not completed an undergraduate course in Aural Rehabilitation are 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. Students must also be advised that the 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 credits)		Semester 5 Spring (10 credits)		Semester 6 Summer (9 credits)	
SPA xxxx Spec. Course #1	3 cr.	SPA 6559 AAC	3 cr.	SPA xxxx Spec. Course #3	3 cr.
SPA 6571 Ethical 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.	4 cr.		

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF SPECIALTY COURSES		
Semester 4 Fall	Semester 5 Spring	Semester 6 Summer
SPA 6564 Aging, Cog, Comm SPA 6401 Pediatric Language Disorders	SPA 6473 Bilingual Assessment and Intervention SPA 6232 Neuromotor Disorders SPA 6930 Autism SPA 6930 Advanced Medical SLP	SPA 6320 Aural Rehab Across the Lifespan SPA 6403 Lang Learn Disabilities SPA 6461 Family-Centered Intervention for the SLP SPA 6253 SLP Mgmt. of Complex Movement Disorders

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 clinical practica sequence must be approved by the SLP Clinic Director prior to the final approval of the Plan of Study Modification by the Program 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.

V. ADDITIONAL 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.

Completing a thesis develops a student's research, writing, and knowledge within a specialized area of study, and is an outstanding addition to a professional resume. Students who elect to complete a thesis will work with a thesis advisor to develop a course of study and clinical work that will provide them with time to complete the thesis and meet 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 nine research credits. This plan allows the student to take the same number of hours (i.e., 62 credit hours) as a non-thesis student.

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. Thesis students will integrate facets of their 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 strong, or strong potential for, research and writing skills.

Guidelines for the Thesis Process

- A.** During the first or second semester in the program, the student will indicate an interest in completing a thesis to their Advisor, the Program Director, or a Faculty Mentor. If the 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:** Student should register for one credit of Directed Research (SPA 6910) with their thesis advisor (i.e., Chair) no later than the next semester after indicating their plan to complete a thesis.

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 officially begins thesis work 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 USF Office of Graduate Studies requires that a student register for at least 2 credits for each semester that the student is enrolled in thesis. 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 Office of 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 the student is enrolled in Directed Research, the student, along with guidance from the thesis Chair, will select a thesis committee. See requirements below:
- i. The Thesis Committee must consist of three members
 1. The Chair (1 or 2 may Co-Chair) as previously specified, must 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 Department 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 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 a related 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 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 hour of Directed Research plus 8 Thesis credit hours)
 Registration Requirements:

- a. The student must register for a minimum of 2 credits with their Thesis Chair each semester that they are working on their thesis for a minimum of 8 hours of thesis (plus 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 Thesis Chair will ensure that any changes suggested by the Committee are 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 Thesis Chair.
 - 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 Academic Program Assistant.
 - iv. The defense date should be advertised so that interested parties may attend. An approved flyer must be utilized for this purpose. The student should discuss this with their Thesis Chair.
 - v. The final document is sent to all members of the thesis committee **minimally** one week prior to the defense date. Please check the submission dates with the Office of Graduate Studies, as these dates tend to be much earlier than the end of each semester, particularly for summer graduates.

- vi. The thesis defense must be attended by three 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. Thesis Chairs should allow sufficient time for the student to make any necessary corrections prior to final submission to ProQuest.

F. Submission – Please check electronic submission deadlines:

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	Register for:
Fall, Spring, or Summer (at latest) Year 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research – writing of literature review and methodology 2. Prospectus meeting 3. Application for IRB as needed 	Thesis credits
Fall or Spring, Year 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect data, analyze data 2. Write results/discussion 	Thesis credits
Spring or Summer, Year 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare defense 2. Format check (adhere to dates to prevent graduation delays) 3. Sign certificate of completion 4. Submit thesis electronically via ProQuest 	Thesis credits

B. Non-Thesis Option

As previously mentioned, students who do not complete a thesis project must enroll in three specialty courses, for a total of 9 credit hours. See specialty courses listed in the Plan of Study section.

VI. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

A. Residential Students

To assist with the scheduling of initial and advanced plans of study, core courses and first year practicum assignments are scheduled before students begin their first semester in the graduate program. The sequencing of core courses ensures students receive conceptual preparation prior to or at the same time as a related clinical experience. Adjustments or accommodations necessitating a change in course progression must be approved by the Program Director and students must provide documentation for any alterations (e.g., reduction of course load). In instances where adjustments to scheduling of core or specialty courses may be needed, students must schedule a meeting with the Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program Director and/or the Clinical Director during the **first** week of classes. Students **cannot** adjust 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** adjust the scheduling of practicum courses without authorization from the Clinic Director.

Prior to the start of each semester, the Academic Program Specialist will issue course permits to all students in the program. In the spring or summer semester of their first year, students will receive a survey to select and rank their specialty course preferences for upcoming semesters. As a reminder, specialty course offerings are subject to faculty availability. Individual advising meetings related to courses are not held every semester*. Individual advising meetings are only held when there are specific questions or needs by a student. In these instances, students should contact the Program Director via email to request a mutually agreeable date and time for a meeting.

*To support any other queries or concerns related to the graduate school experience, and to receive essential departmental/program information, students are assigned advisors prior to starting in the program. During the first year of study, students will meet with their advisors once per semester. Advisors are available to meet more frequently as needed. Students may also have the option of attending small group advising meetings. If there are specific concerns about academic training, students are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the Program Director. For concerns about clinical training, students should contact the Clinic Director.

A. 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. Student coursework is completed using a combination of distance and on-site teaching technologies. Students will progress through the program as a cohort. Thus, all course selections and practicum assignments are made by the Program Director.

The Academic Program Specialist will issue course permits each semester. If there is a need to make an adjustment to the scheduling of courses, students must discuss this with the Program Director. Students **cannot** change the scheduling or sequence of their courses or clinical practica without authorization from the Program Director.

VII. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate assistantships (GAs) are competitively assigned during the admission process. Applications, however, 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. 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.

Second year students who desire to maintain their assistantships must apply to and to complete part-time externships (i.e., no more than 30 hours per week). Any further questions regarding graduate assistantships should be directed to the Program Director.

NOTE: There is no guarantee of summer assistantships, which are communicated in the spring semester of each year. GA positions are generally NOT awarded during a student's last summer semester before graduation.

VIII. STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The Student Ambassador Program is comprised of a select group of second-year student volunteers dedicated to supporting, promoting, and representing the program's mission, and to serving as liaisons or mentors for first year students in the Speech-Language Pathology master's program. The application is sent via email to all first-year students in late spring by the Program Director.

Student Ambassadors demonstrate excellence in leadership, academic work, and service skills. All applicants must have attended the master's Program for two semesters prior to applying to the program, be a full-time student, and must have a minimum 3.8 cumulative GPA. Ambassadors serve for one year, their second year in the Graduate Program. The application/nomination process takes place early in the summer semester of year 1. Student Ambassadors are introduced to the new graduate class during Orientation in the fall.

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, and events.
2. Serve as 'representatives of the graduate experience' in such events as Open Houses, New Student Orientation, and as guides for visiting prospective students and family.
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 and/or other events to benefit students that align 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, and faculty can strengthen the members' interpersonal and professional skills 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. This may add a dimension of practical knowledge 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 their Clinical Fellowships.

IX. 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). As part of the initial practicum, students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of the Code and agree to adhere to the Code.

X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The USF policy on Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty will be followed in all courses. This policy 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>.

XI. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA USF Chapter)

NSSLHA is a student professional organization for undergraduate and graduate students interested in human communication sciences and disorders and is the student branch of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). NSSLHA is a national organization with local chapters at universities and colleges. 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 ASHA publications:

American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology (AJSLP)
American Journal of Audiology (AJA)
Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research (JSLHR)
Language, Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools (LSHSS)
ASHA Leader
Contemporary Issues in Communication Science and Disorders (CICSD)

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 <https://www.nsslha.org/membership/>.

At the local level, the USF chapter offers students the chance to meet with graduate and undergraduate peers, to discuss the program, courses, participate in community events, and to learn about the field of communication sciences and disorders. Program meetings are planned to present topics of interest to students at all levels, and suggestions for meeting topics come from NSSLHA members. Other activities include fund raising, public relations, and social functions. Students are encouraged to join a growing number of students who find 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. NSSLHA facilitates locker rental 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), a 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 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 screenings for speech, language, and hearing of Spanish-speaking, English language learning children ages 3-5 years are conducted. (b) 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. (c) BLLING student members participate in book fairs, cultural studies, or literacy nights 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.

XII. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Comprehensive Examination

All graduate students are required to pass a departmental comprehensive examination prior to graduation. This is an oral exam in which students will receive a set of cases, select two, and then respond to a series of questions from two departmental faculty. Students may offer supplemental information and/or rationales for their responses, and they may receive clarifying questions from faculty. Scoring will follow a rubric, the two faculty will compare scores, and any scoring discrepancies will be discussed. In the event of a significant scoring discrepancy, a third

faculty member will be consulted to facilitate consensus. The comprehensive examination will be administered in the spring semester of students' second year in the program. Students who do not pass the oral examination will be given a comprehensive written examination. The Program Director will provide study guidance prior to the student sitting for the written examination, which will be scheduled at the start of the summer semester.

B. PRAXIS Examination

Students must also take and pass the PRAXIS Examination in Speech-Language Pathology prior to graduation. These examinations are offered several times each month (see <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. Students are typically advised to take this examination by the middle of the spring semester in their second year. This timeline allows sufficient time for the Department to receive official test results which can take up to **4 weeks**. This also gives the student time to retake the examination, if necessary, prior to graduation. At the time of registration for the examination, students should request that a copy of their test results be sent directly to the Department (USF Institution Code is RA 0053; enter 0053).

C. Graduation Application

Students must apply for graduation, as this is not an automatic process that occurs when courses and practicum assignments are complete. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process by completing the graduation application form before the deadline. This form is available online through Student Self-Service (formerly OASIS). This process must be completed by the assigned date in the semester in which you plan to graduate (usually within the first month of the semester). The deadline for on-time graduation application submission is set each semester by the Registrar's Office: <https://www.usf.edu/registrar/services/apply-for-graduation/>. The Academic Program Specialist will also send an email reminding students to apply for graduation, but the student is responsible for checking important deadlines on the Registrar's website. If the student does not complete the graduation application on time, he/she cannot graduate that semester.

Prior to each student's last semester, the Academic Program Specialist will review their records to ensure that the student is on track to complete the program. The Academic Program Specialist will confirm that the Graduate Program contract and the Certification for Graduation forms are completed. If there are any course or practicum discrepancies, these must be resolved prior to certification for graduation. All 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 email, of ineligibility to graduate. The student will retain that standing until after the beginning of the following semester.

XIII. CERTIFICATION

A. National Certification

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) 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 USF 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 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 the USF 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.

Following graduation, and typically after completing their Clinical Fellowship (CF), students will apply for ASHA Certification: <https://www.asha.org/certification/slpcertification/>. The Program Director will receive a separate notification from ASHA via email when a student has applied for their CCC-SLP. The Program Director will then certify that the student has completed all academic and clinical courses and met all KASA standards. Note: If student records are not complete (e.g., missing CF information), the student will be contacted by the Academic Program Specialist to submit the required information before the Program Director will certify the application.

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

The applicant for certification must have a master's or doctoral or other recognized post-baccalaureate degree

STANDARD II: Institution of Higher Education

All graduate coursework and graduate clinical experience must have been initiated and completed in a CAA-accredited program or in a program with CAA candidacy status.

STANDARD III: Program of Study

The applicant must have completed a program of study (a minimum of 36 semester credit hours at the graduate level) that includes academic coursework and supervised clinical experience sufficient in depth and breadth to achieve the specified knowledge and skills outcomes stipulated in Standards IV-A through IV-G and Standards V-A through V-C.

STANDARD IV: Knowledge Outcomes

IV-A The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of statistics as well as the biological, physical, and social/behavioral sciences.

IV-B The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including the appropriate biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural bases. The applicant must have demonstrated the ability to integrate information pertaining to normal and abnormal human development across the life span.

IV-C The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of communication and swallowing disorders and differences, including the appropriate etiologies, characteristics, and anatomical/physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates in the following areas:

- Speech sound production, to encompass articulation, motor planning and execution, phonology, and accent modification
- Fluency and fluency disorders
- Voice and resonance, including respiration and phonation
- Receptive and expressive language, including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics (language use and social aspects of communication), prelinguistic communication, paralinguistic communication (e.g., gestures, signs, body language), and literacy in speaking, listening, reading, and writing
- Hearing, including the impact on speech and language
- Swallowing/feeding, including (a) structure and function of orofacial myology and (b) oral, pharyngeal, laryngeal, pulmonary, esophageal, gastrointestinal, and related functions across the life span
- Cognitive aspects of communication, including attention, memory, sequencing, problem solving, and executive functioning
- Social aspects of communication, including challenging behavior, ineffective social skills, and lack of communication opportunities
- Augmentative and alternative communication modalities

IV-D For each of the areas specified in Standard IV-C, the applicant must have demonstrated current knowledge of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for persons with communication and swallowing disorders, including consideration of anatomical/physiological, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates.

IV-E The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of standards of ethical conduct.

Implementation: The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of the principles and rules of the current [ASHA Code of Ethics](#).

IV-F The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of processes used in research and of the integration of research principles into evidence-based clinical practice.

Implementation: The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of the principles of basic and applied research and research design. In addition, the applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of how to access sources of research information and must have demonstrated the ability to relate research to clinical practice.

IV-G The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of contemporary professional issues.

Implementation: The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of professional issues that affect speech-language pathology. Issues may include but are not limited to trends in professional practice; academic program accreditation standards; [ASHA practice policies and guidelines](#); cultural competency and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); educational legal requirements or policies; and reimbursement procedures..

IV-H The applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of entry level and advanced certifications, licensure, and other relevant professional credentials, as well as local, state, and national regulations and policies relevant to professional practice.

STANDARD V: Skills Outcomes

V-A The applicant must have demonstrated skills in oral and written or other forms of communication sufficient for entry into professional practice.

V-B The applicant must have completed a program of study that included experiences sufficient in breadth and depth to achieve the following skills outcomes:

1. Evaluation

- a. Conduct screening and prevention procedures, including prevention activities.
- b. Collect case history information and integrate information from clients/patients, family, caregivers, teachers, and relevant others, including other professionals.
- c. Select and administer appropriate evaluation procedures, such as behavioral observations, nonstandardized and standardized tests, and instrumental procedures.
- d. Adapt evaluation procedures to meet the needs of individuals receiving services.
- e. Interpret, integrate, and synthesize all information to develop diagnoses and make appropriate recommendations for intervention.
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support evaluation.
- g. Refer clients/patients for appropriate services.

2. Intervention

- a. Develop setting-appropriate intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals that meet clients'/patients' needs. Collaborate with clients/patients and relevant others in the

planning process.

- b. Implement intervention plans that involve clients/patients and relevant others in the intervention process.
- c. Select or develop and use appropriate materials and instrumentation for prevention and intervention.
- d. Measure and evaluate clients'/patients' performance and progress.
- e. Modify intervention plans, strategies, materials, or instrumentation as appropriate to meet the needs of clients/patients.
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support intervention.
- g. Identify and refer clients/patients for services, as appropriate.

3. Interaction and Personal Qualities

- a. Communicate effectively, recognizing the needs, values, preferred mode of communication, and cultural/linguistic background of the individual(s) receiving services, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- b. Manage the care of individuals receiving services to ensure an interprofessional, team-based collaborative practice.
- c. Provide counseling regarding communication and swallowing disorders to clients/patients, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- d. Adhere to the ASHA [*Code of Ethics*](#) and behave professionally.

V-C The applicant must complete a minimum of 400 clock hours of supervised clinical experience in the practice of speech-language pathology. Twenty-five hours must be spent in guided clinical observation, and 375 hours must be spent in direct client/patient contact.

V-D At least 325 of the 400 clock hours of supervised clinical experience must be completed while the applicant is enrolled in graduate study in a program accredited in speech-language pathology by the CAA.

V-E Supervision of students must be provided by a clinical educator who holds ASHA certification in the appropriate profession and who, after earning the CCC-A or CCC-SLP, has completed (1) a minimum of 9 months of full-time clinical experience (or its part-time equivalent), and (2) a minimum of 2 hours of professional development in clinical instruction/supervision.

V-F Supervised practicum must include experience with individuals across the life span and from culturally/linguistically diverse backgrounds. Practicum must include experience with individuals with various types and severities of communication and/or related disorders, differences, and disabilities.

VI: Assessment

The applicant must have passed the national examination adopted by ASHA for purposes of certification in speech-language pathology.

VII: Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Fellowship

The applicant must successfully complete a Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Fellowship (CF).

VII-A The CF must consist of clinical service activities that foster the continued growth and integration of knowledge, skills, and tasks of clinical practice in speech-language pathology consistent with ASHA's current *Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology*. The CF must consist of no less than 36 weeks of full-time professional experience or its part-time equivalent.

VII-B The Clinical Fellow must receive ongoing mentoring and formal evaluations by the CF mentor. Mentorship must be provided by a clinician who holds the CCC-SLP and who, after earning the CCC-SLP, has completed (1) a minimum of 9 months of full-time clinical experience (or its part-time equivalent), and (2) a minimum of 2 hours of professional development/continuing education in clinical instruction/supervision.

VII-C The Clinical Fellow must demonstrate knowledge and skills consistent with the ability to practice independently.

VIII: Maintenance of Certification

Certificate holders must demonstrate continued professional development for maintenance of the CCC-SLP.

XIV. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The University of South Florida is a diverse community that values and expects respectful 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.

XV. 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 their concern. If the Program Director or Clinic Director cannot resolve the situation, the student will be referred to the

Department 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>.