Communication Sciences and Disorders M.S.

Degree Requirements: 57 Credit Hours

Policies Requirements and Standards

Consistent with the mission of the university and the goals of the Waters College of Health Professions, the Communication Sciences and Disorders Program incorporates a teaching-centered, student-focused philosophy that promotes collaboration and evidence-based education in a context that acknowledges cultural and linguistic diversity.

The Master of Science Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA).

Address: Accreditation Unit, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Blvd, #310, Rockville, MD 20850; telephone, 301-296-5700, accreditation@asha.org.

Graduates of this program will:

1. Demonstrate the knowledge and principles necessary for prevention, evaluation, and treatment of communication impairments across the lifespan
2. Analyze factors important to diagnosis and treatment plan development
3. Document and effectively communicate their findings to the clients, their families and other professionals
4. Meet legal and professional standards of competence and ethics
5. Employ active learning methods that encourage self-reliance and promote continuous professional development
6. Integrate theoretical knowledge and therapeutic competencies through group discussions, laboratories, and clinical practice
7. Demonstrate the highest qualities of character and ethical behavior as well as the knowledge, skills, and disposition that support scholarship, professionalism, technology, and diversity
8. Demonstrate clinical skill in supervised practicum settings and document the minimum of 400 clinical clock hours with a variety of populations as described by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) for the Certificate of Clinical Competency

Criminal Background Checks

Clinical agencies utilized by the Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders as well as the campus-based university clinic require criminal background checks and/or drug testing prior to acceptance of the student into clinical facilities.

Admission Standards

1. Immunizations and physical exams as required of all Georgia Southern University students.
2. Applicants must complete the requirements for a baccalaureate degree in speech-language pathology from a regionally accredited institution or complete the requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a field other than communication sciences and disorders plus appropriate prerequisite coursework in the field of speech-language pathology/communication sciences and disorders in order to apply.
3. A cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0.
4. Admission requires a score of no less than 145 on the Verbal Reasoning section (or the equivalent score of 380) and 141 on the Quantitative Reasoning section (or the equivalent score of 430) of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Scores must be achieved within 5 years of the application due date. Retired GRE scores may only be submitted if taken in the last 5 years of the application due date. Otherwise, the new GRE scores must be submitted.
5. Documentation of the following after admission and prior to enrollment:
   1. Completion of 25 clinical observation hours as mandated by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
   2. Proof of professional liability insurance
   3. Proof of health insurance
   4. Clear background check and negative drug screen
   5. First aid/CPR certification by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association
   6. negative TB PPD skin test within thirty (30) days of enrollment
   7. Flu shot
   8. Final transcript(s) documenting all required coursework and conferral of baccalaureate degree
6. The following documents are required for admission to the Master of Science program in communication sciences and disorders and should be submitted via the Communication Sciences and Disorders Centralized Application System (CSDCAS).
   1. Official college transcripts requested using the CSDCAS transcript request form.
   2. Official GRE scores (Within 5 years of the application due date).
   3. Three (3) Completed CSDCAS Reference Forms
      1. At least two of the three forms should be completed by professors with knowledge of the applicant’s academic performance and professionalism. Professors in communication sciences and disorders are preferred.
      2. No more than one of the three forms should be completed by a professional reference such as an employer
   4. Personal Statement submitted via CSCCAS (Vital information from resume’s should be included in the Letter of Intent; however, resumes should not be submitted)
   5. Essential Skills Statement: The Essential Skills document includes essential functions you will be expected to perform during
your educational program as a student and professional career. Persons interested in applying for admission to the Communication Sciences and Disorders program should review this document in its entirety (cover sheet, Appendix A, and Appendix B) to develop a better understanding of the cognitive skills, physical abilities, and behavioral characteristics necessary to successfully complete the program and work as a speech-language pathologist. A cover sheet with acknowledgment, signature, and date MUST be obtained and submitted as part of the admissions packet via CSDCAS.

6. **Video Recording:** In lieu of onsite interviews, the CSDS program requires all applicants to submit a video recording as part of the admissions process. Information regarding requirements for the video can be found in the Questions section of CSDCAS.

7. **Additional Requirements:** The graduate program in Communication Sciences and Disorders is accredited by the Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA). Pre-requisite courses that provide a foundational understanding of speech, language, hearing, and swallowing, as well as (basic) courses in natural sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, and math must be completed to meet accreditation and certification standards. We require all courses be completed or in process of completion when applying to the program. These include:

1. Biological Science (Science of living things-Biology, Human Anatomy, etc)
2. Physics or Chemistry
3. Social Science (Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, etc)
4. Statistics

8. Meeting the minimum criteria for application for graduate school does not guarantee admission to the Communication Sciences and Disorders program. It should be noted that the pool of applicants for the Communication Sciences and Disorders program includes many highly qualified applicants, and the number of available positions is limited. Therefore, admission to the Communication Sciences and Disorders program is highly competitive.

**Admission Process**

1. The graduate admissions process for the masters of science degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders is managed by the Communication Sciences and Disorders Centralized Application System (CSDCAS). Applications may be obtained and submitted via CSDCAS.

2. The Georgia Southern graduate school application will NOT be accepted. Only materials submitted via CSDCAS will be reviewed.

3. Deadline: the CSDCAS application and all supporting materials should be submitted by January 15th of each year via CSDCAS.

4. Applications and support materials are reviewed, and a limited number of applicants are accepted into the program.

5. Students selected for admission must formally accept the position and submit a non-refundable deposit. Students who matriculate in the CSD Program at Georgia Southern will have their deposits refunded.

**Standards of Progression and Graduation**

**Program Progression Requirements**

1. Students must maintain a B average or better on all coursework taken as a graduate student. If the student's average falls below 3.0, the student will have one probationary semester to earn the required B average or better. The student must be registered for all of the required courses in the program of study during the probationary semester. If the average is not raised to a B or better in that term, or the student earns a C or below on more than 3 hours, the student will be dismissed from the program. Students who are dismissed due to unsatisfactory performance cannot reapply to the program.

   - The the probationary semester must be the semester immediately following the semester the student was placed on probation. Students who do not enroll for the probationary semester will be dismissed from the program and are not eligible to reapply unless non-enrollment is due to a university approved withdrawal relative to a medical condition or hardship.

   - In the case of a university approved withdrawal the student must enroll within two semesters or by the next semester when the required courses are offered.

A student, who earns a D, F or WF in an academic course or a grade of C, D, F or WF in clinical practicum but has not met the criteria for dismissal, must demonstrate mastery of the failed content before the program is completed and the degree is granted. The student may be required to retake the failed course or retake specific course content via independent study or special topics classes.

2. Students must be registered for all required courses in the program of study. Students who violate these rules and regulations will be dismissed from the program and are ineligible for readmission.

3. Graduate coursework and clinical practicum are completed simultaneously over five consecutive semesters, which includes summer. Students are admitted as full-time. If the student is not enrolled for two consecutive semesters, that student must reapply for admission.

4. Students must complete the program within five years.

5. Students who do not complete the program in five years must reapply for admission. Those students must begin to meet the program requirements in effect at the time of readmission. For clarification, refer to Readmission Procedures.

6. Students must annually present evidence of professional liability insurance, health/medical insurance, Negative TB PPD skin test, and first aid/CPR certification. In addition, students may need to provide evidence of preventative inoculations depending on external placements.

**Graduation Requirements**

1. Students are encouraged to apply for graduation two semesters before the anticipated date of graduation. Note: A copy of the official program of study must accompany the candidate's application. Students must take the Praxis II examination in speech-language pathology and present a passing score of 162 or higher to the program by February 15th if graduating in May, June 15th if graduating in August or October 15th if graduating in December. The program will accept scores for the Praxis only on examinations taken AFTER October 31st of the student's SECOND year of graduate study.

2. Students who do not earn a Praxis score of 162 must take a comprehensive assessment developed by the program and earn a score of eighty percent or higher.

3. Students must maintain a B average or better in the program.

4. Students must accumulate a minimum of 400 client contact hours as described by the department and set forth by the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association.
5. Students must demonstrate acquisition of knowledge and skills needed for a clinical fellowship-ready speech-language pathologist.

**Readmission Procedures**

1. The student must complete the readmission application and go through the readmission process by submitting the current graduate application for Georgia Southern University and the Communication Sciences and Disorders major.

2. The student will be required to meet admission requirements in effect at the time of application for readmission to the program.

3. The student's readmission will be based upon space available in the class into which the former student is seeking admission and recommendation of the department faculty.

4. The student may be required to retake all or some coursework previously completed if readmitted to meet the current accreditation standards and to obtain professional certification.

5. The student who has been dismissed for inability to meet minimum grade requirements or ethics violations is NOT eligible for readmission.

**Program of Study**

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Total Credit Hours: 57

- A maximum of 6 graduate credit hours of coursework may be evaluated as transfer credits from another institution at the discretion of communication sciences and disorders program faculty.
- Courses previously taken by readmitted students will be included in the new program of study based on the discretion of the program. Some or all new coursework may be required to meet the current accreditation standards.
- An individual student’s plan of study may reflect additional courses mutually agreed upon by the student and academic advisor and approved by the Program Director, but may include no less than the 57 credits listed above.