

**M.A. in Communication
Sciences and Disorders
Academic Assessment Plan
2012-13**

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Office of the Provost

*University of
Florida*

*Institutional
Assessment*

*Continuous Quality
Enhancement*

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Academic Assessment Plan for M.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders

College of Public Health and Health Professions

A. Mission

The mission of the Master's of Arts program in Communication Sciences and Disorders is to prepare students to become speech-language pathologists who work to preserve, promote, and improve the functioning and general well-being of individuals who wish to improve functioning in the areas of communication and swallowing. The goal of our program is to prepare professionals who are well qualified for employment in a range of education- and health-related settings and who, once employed, are recognized for their competence, leadership, ethics, and commitment to service and life-long learning. Our program strives to attain this goal by developing students who can independently design and deliver effective, culturally-sensitive, and evidenced-based clinical services to individuals with differences or disorders in communication and swallowing. Toward this end, our program strives to provide students with a high-quality academic experience that is directed by an internationally recognized faculty and based upon cutting-edge research, active learning, expert mentoring, and spirited engagement in service activities.

Our program's mission is closely aligned with that of the College of Public Health and Health Professions through its focus on preparing graduates who are well-prepared to address the multi-faceted needs of the general population in the areas of communication and swallowing, and its commitment to the provision of excellent educational programs, the implementation of evidenced-based practice that is rooted in basic and applied research, and active engagement in service to the university, professional organizations, individuals, and communities. Our program's mission is closely aligned with that of the University of Florida as well, by virtue of its emphasis upon excellence in teaching, research, and service; its incorporation of a multicultural perspective when assessing, diagnosing, and treating speech and language disabilities; and its attention to improving the quality of life for disabled individuals in Florida and beyond.

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

SLO	Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Method	Degree Delivery
Knowledge 1	Students will apply knowledge of speech, language, hearing, and swallowing processes, including their biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, linguistic, and cultural bases.	Students will demonstrate their knowledge by achieving passing scores on exams based on the grading rubrics designed by the instructors of the courses in the program.	Campus
Knowledge 2	Students will apply knowledge of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for people with communication and swallowing disorders, including consideration of anatomical/physiological, psychological, developmental, social, linguistic and cultural correlates of the disorders.	Students will demonstrate their knowledge by achieving passing scores on exams based on the grading rubrics designed by the instructors of the courses in the program.	Campus
		Students will demonstrate knowledge in these areas by attaining a passing grade on a standard performance rubric used by faculty to assess clinical performance.	Campus
		Students will demonstrate knowledge in these areas by obtaining a passing grade, as defined within a faculty-designed grading rubric, on the program's comprehensive exam.	Campus
		Students will submit a passing score on the PRAXIS examination in speech-language pathology.	Campus
Skill 1	Students will display clinical skills needed to assess and diagnose speech, language, and swallowing disorders.	Students will demonstrate knowledge in these areas by attaining a passing grade on a standard performance rubric used by faculty to assess clinical performance in the areas of assessment and diagnosis.	Campus
		Students will demonstrate their skills by achieving passing scores on exams based on the grading rubrics designed by the instructors of the courses in the program.	Campus
Skill 2	Students will apply clinical skills needed to provide efficacious and appropriate intervention for individuals with speech, language, and swallowing disorders.	Students will demonstrate knowledge in these areas by attaining a passing grade on a standard performance rubric used by faculty to assess clinical performance in the areas of intervention.	Campus
		Students will demonstrate their skills by achieving passing scores on exams based on the grading rubrics designed by the instructors of the courses in the program.	Campus

SLO	Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Method	Degree Delivery
Professional Behavior 1	Students will apply knowledge and performance of legal and ethical behaviors in all interactions with clients/patients and their families/caregivers, as well as with other professionals.	Students will demonstrate mastery in these areas by obtaining a passing grade, as defined within a faculty-designed grading rubric, on the program's comprehensive exam.	Campus
		Students will demonstrate knowledge in these areas by attaining a passing grade on a standard performance rubric used by faculty to assess clinical performance in aspects of professionalism.	Campus
Professional Behavior 2	Students will apply knowledge and performance of effective communication, counseling, and collaboration with clients/patients and relevant others, recognizing the needs, values, preferred mode of communication, and cultural/linguistic background of the client/patient, family, caregivers, and relevant others	Students will demonstrate knowledge in these areas by attaining a passing grade on a standard performance rubric used by faculty to assess clinical performance in aspects of professionalism.	Campus

C. Research

The Master's of Arts in Communication Sciences and Disorders is not a research degree. Students are, however, required to take SPA 6805 *Introduction to Graduate Research* as part of their coursework. In this course, students learn essential concepts that pertain to research design, research evaluation, and statistical analysis. Students then apply these concepts to evaluate discipline-relevant research articles within the context of evidence-based practice. Concepts from this class are infused within all other academic courses in the program, and within clinical courses as well. Thus, throughout the course of the program, students evaluate a variety of research articles for the purpose of determining the extent to which various assessment and treatment practices in speech-language pathology are supported for use with patients.

D. Assessment Timeline

Program M.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders College Public Health and Health Professions

Assessment	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3	Assessment 4
SLOs				
Knowledge	Instructor-based Examinations	Clinical Performance Rubric	Program-based Comprehensive Examinations	PRAXIS
#1	Years 1 & 2			
#2	Years 1 & 2	Years 1 & 2	Year 2	Year 2
Skills				
#3	Years 1 & 2	Years 1 & 2		
#4	Years 1 & 2	Years 1 & 2		
Professional Behavior				
#5		Years 1 & 2	Year 2	
#6		Years 1 & 2		

E. Assessment Cycle

Assessment Cycle for:

Program M.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders College of Public Health and Health Professions

Analysis and Interpretation: May – June

Program Modifications: Completed by December

Dissemination: Completed by January

SLOs	Year	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Content Knowledge							
#1		X			X		
#2		X			X		
Skills							
#3			X			X	
#4			X			X	
Professional Behavior							
#5				X			X
#6				X			X

F. Measurement Tools

Direct Assessment Measures

The American Speech Language Hearing Association has created, in conjunction with Educational Testing Services, a national *PRAXIS* examination in speech-language pathology. Scores on this exam document acquisition of foundational knowledge related to the practice of the profession, and are used by the faculty to assess areas of programmatic success and/or shortfall.

Instructor-based examinations assume a variety of written and oral response formats. Examples of written response formats include the following: responses to objective-style test questions (e.g., multiple-choice items, terminology identification, error identification and correction in written text); responses to essay and short-answer style prompts; completion of research article analysis rubrics; preparation of Power-Point-style slides that summarize academic or clinical information; written reports that summarize analyses of clinical data from simulated or actual cases. Examples of oral response formats include the following: descriptions of clinical assessment and treatment procedures to patients or patients' family members; patient counseling sessions; class presentations on specific assessment and treatment procedures; an in-depth verbal description of a plan-of-care that is suitable for specific clinic case.

Rubric for evaluation of clinical performance. The program has a standard multi-page assessment tool that faculty and external supervisors use to evaluate the performance of students within clinical settings. The tool includes sections for skills related to the assessment of communication and swallowing; prevention and treatment of disabilities that arise from communication disorders, communication differences, and swallowing

disorders; and professionalism, which includes behaviors and practices related to ethics, communication, collegiality, and responsibility.

The program's comprehensive examination consists of 9 discipline-specific areas which are evaluated within the context of a one-day oral examination. Students respond to faculty-developed case study questions in each of the 9 areas. Students respond to the questions orally, and their responses are evaluated by faculty members who are experts in the areas that are being assessed. Responses are graded using a rubric that captures the accuracy, completeness, organization, and manner of the student's response.

Indirect Assessment Measures

The specialized accrediting body for educational programs in speech-language pathology, the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association requires our program to collect periodic feedback on programmatic success from relevant parties. An annual exit survey is completed by all graduating students in the final two weeks of the program. In addition, an alumni survey is administered every 3 years to individuals who have graduated from MA-SLP program. In these surveys, students are asked to evaluate their experience in the MA-SLP program; to identify areas that they consider strengths and weaknesses; and to make suggestions for changes or improvements to the program. In addition, clinical externship supervisors are asked to evaluate the preparation of our students and the quality of our program annually. Consumer comments about our program are solicited as part of our program re-accreditation every 8 years. Results of these measures (blinded for source) are presented to the speech-language faculty at their annual planning meetings to identify needed revisions to the program.

G. Assessment Oversight

Name	Department Affiliation	Email Address	Phone Number
Scott Griffiths	Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences	sgriff@ufl.edu	352-273-3736
Kenneth J. Logan, Ph.D.	Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences	klogan@ufl.edu	352-273-3726

Figure 1: University of Florida Graduate/Professional Program Assessment Plan Review Rubric

Related resources are found at <http://www.ua.assessment.edu>

Program:

Year:

Component	Criterion	Rating			Comments
		Met	Partially Met	Not Met	
Mission Statement	Mission statement is articulated clearly.				
	The program mission clearly supports the College and University missions, and includes specific statements describing how it supports these missions.				
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Assessment Measures	SLOs are stated clearly.				
	SLOs focus on demonstration of student learning.				
	SLOs are measurable.				
	Measurements are appropriate for the SLO.				
Research	Research expectations for the program are clear, concise, and appropriate for the discipline.				
Assessment Map	The Assessment Map indicates the times in the program where the SLOs are assessed and measured.				
	The Assessment Map identifies the assessments used for each SLO.				
Assessment Cycle	The assessment cycle is clear.				
	All student learning outcomes are measured.				
	Data is collected at least once in the cycle.				
	The cycle includes a date or time period for data analysis and interpretation.				
	The cycle includes a date for planning improvement actions based on the data analysis.				
	The cycle includes a date for dissemination of results to the appropriate stakeholders.				

Figure 1: University of Florida Graduate/Professional Program Assessment Plan Review Rubric, continued

Component	Criterion	Rating			Comments
		Met	Partially Met	Not Met	
Measurement Tools	Measurement tools are described clearly and concisely.				
	Measurements are appropriate for the SLOs.				
	Methods and procedures reflect an appropriate balance of direct and indirect methods.				
	The report presents examples of at least one measurement tool.				
Assessment Oversight	Appropriate personnel (coordinator, committee, etc.) charged with assessment responsibilities are identified				

Figure 2: Department of Speech, Language, & Hearing Sciences Scoring Rubric

Department of Speech, Language, & Hearing Sciences
Scoring Rubric for Program-wide Comprehensive Examination
M.A. program in Communication Sciences & Disorders

Student:			Faculty Member:			Subject Area:			Date: Time:
Criterion	Poor				Average				Excellent
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Accuracy of information									
Completeness/Depth of response									
Organization of information									
Presentation style									
Notes/Comments:									Total Score /36