

## Speech Language Pathology Master's Program Graduate Course Descriptions

### **1. COMD 5352-Language Disorders I: Birth to Age 5**

This course focuses on the prevention, evaluation, and treatment of language disorders in children from birth through age 5 years. The course discusses the various biological, cultural, and socioeconomic factors that influence normal language development. Students will learn about the etiology of language disorders and comorbid disorders. They will analyze case studies and develop diagnostic impressions and treatment plans. Around 20-30% of the content will address diagnosis and around 70-70% will focus on treatment. Students will administer diagnosis assessment batteries and design treatment plans with measurable goals.

### **2. COMD 5360-Assessment and Diagnosis in Speech-Language Pathology**

This course will address critical issues related to the preparation, implementation, and documentation of the speech-language evaluation process. Topics include ethics of assessment; psychometric test properties; responsible test practices; test interpretation; federal special education and privacy laws; specific disorder-based assessment batteries; procedures and protocols; development of accurate diagnosis, differential diagnosis, prognosis, and recommendations. The rationale for the development of assessment batteries and the use of specific assessment instruments will be emphasized. Diversity issues that may impact the evaluation process are addressed.

### **3. 5350-Aphasia**

This course focuses on etiology, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of aphasia in adults and children. Students will also learn about health disparities, socioeconomic and cultural issues that pertain to the etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of aphasia. The various types of aphasia will be differentiated. Students will learn about diagnostic instruments and will administer them. They explore various treatment methods and design treatment plans with measurable goals.

### **4. COMD 5354-Clinical Practicum I: Initial**

Students perform their initial practicum experience at the SLHC during their first semester, where they will engage (under supervision) in the direct diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of communication and swallowing disorders in children and adults. They will participate in planning and debriefing meetings with their supervisors before and after therapy sessions. This course also includes a weekly 2-hour seminar.

### **5. COMD 5359-Research Methods & Evidence-Based Practice:**

This course provides an overview of clinical research and research-based decision making. Students will demonstrate knowledge of processes used in research and the integration of research principles into evidence-based clinical practice. They will study qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods; ethics of scientific research; positionality, bias, and objectivity; and the steps of the research process. They will learn how to identify a research topic and develop the appropriate framework for investigating this topic. They will practice with various search tools and procedures. They will explore data analysis methods, qualitative sampling, and data. Students will demonstrate their learning through a research project and a research paper on a topic pertinent to a communication disorder or dysphagia.

## **6. COMD 5353-Language Disorders II K-12**

The course focuses on prevention, assessment, and intervention of language disorders in children from kindergarten through grade 12. Students will explore biological, cognitive, cultural, and socioeconomic factors influencing normal language pertinent to language disorders. They will explore various assessment methods and diagnostic tests and will administer standardized tests. They will practice integrating case history information, clinical impressions, and test scores into cohesive, evidence-based diagnostic impressions. They will analyze case studies and answer analytic clinical/diagnostic questions. Students will study major treatment approaches and develop treatment plans with measurable goals. They will explore various therapy tools and materials and will write evaluation and treatment reports on an assigned case.

## **7. COMD 5358-Dysphagia**

The course explores the nature, etiology, and physiology of normal and abnormal patterns of swallowing across the life span. Students will learn about the nature and structure of medical settings where dysphagia intervention is provided. They will study the neurological and cognitive issues pertinent to dysphagia. They will practice the procedures for gathering case history, reading medical charts, and conducting bedside evaluations, including mini-mental exams. They will study the procedures and instrumentation involved in barium swallow testing. The class will also address interprofessional collaboration in medical settings, and relevant cultural and ethical issues.

## **8. COMD 5355-Advanced Clinical Practicum**

During their second semester (and given that they successfully pass COMD 5354), students will transition to external practicum sites to deliver diagnostic, treatment, and prevention services at medical and educational settings for a minimum of 15 hours per week. In accordance with ASHA Certification Standards, a student will receive supervision at least 25% of the time. In addition to direct SLP services, student clinicians will have hands-on experience with clinical documentation, billing, and patient/family counseling. They will conduct self-assessment and will be evaluated weekly by external site supervisor.

## **9. COMD 5351-Cognitive Communication Disorders**

This course focuses on 4 major areas: neural substrates underlying cognitive communication disorders, the diagnosis of cognitive communication disorders, prevention, and treatment of these disorders. The specific cognitive communication disorders addressed include right-hemisphere damage, traumatic brain injury, brain tumors, anoxia, stroke, dementia, developmental disorders (Pervasive Developmental Disorders, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Developmental apraxia), and executive dysfunction. Students will explore various diagnostic tests and therapy materials. They will analyze multiple case studies and develop evidence-based diagnostic impressions and measurable treatment goals.

## **10. COMD 5357-Augmentative and Alternative Communication:**

The purpose of this course is to teach about the available assistive and augmentative communication tools and how to use them to help individuals with severe communication impairments communicate. Students will learn how to evaluate the communication needs of individuals and determine the best assistive/augmentative communication tools that can help them communicate effectively. The course also addresses cultural, cognitive, socioeconomic, and psychological issues associated with severe communication disabilities and the use of assistive/augmentative communication instruments.

## **11. COMD 5356-Capstone Experience in Speech Language Pathology**

This course is designed as an opportunity for students to integrate the knowledge and skills that they have acquired in the graduate program. Each student will complete an evidence-based project focusing on a specific disorder of communication or swallowing. Students begin with choosing a diagnostic, prevention,

or treatment topic. Then, they conduct a detailed case study, present a portfolio, and produce a major research paper consisting of a literature review, case study, findings, and recommendations. They will also conduct a presentation in the presence of graduate and undergraduate students and at least 2 faculty members.

### **12. COMD 5361-Motor Speech Disorders**

The course focuses on prevention, assessment, and intervention of language disorders in children and adults. The course begins with an overview of the speech motor system and the neurophysiology of speech from planning to motor execution and refinement of motor movements. Students will study various motor disorders in children and adults and learn about diagnostic features and effective treatment methods. They will explore various treatment approaches and strategies. The course also addresses cultural, cognitive, and socioeconomic issues pertaining to the diagnosis and treatment of speech motor disorders.

### **13. COMD 5367-Aural Rehabilitation**

This course introduces to aural rehabilitation in children and adults. Students will learn principles of amplification, including hearing aid components, personal and group amplification systems, troubleshooting techniques, cochlear implants, assistive listening devices and soundfield acoustics. Students will apply these principles within their clinical sites, starting with the SLHC, where they will work with individuals diagnosed with varying degrees of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss. In addition, students will learn about the effect of hearing impairments on daily life and social communication. Students will design and apply various intervention methods to minimize the effect of hearing and will be introduced to vestibular rehabilitation and pharmacology of hearing.

### **14. COMD 5362-Speech Sound Disorders**

This course focuses on the prevention, assessment, and treatment of speech sound disorders, with the major focus being on children from 12 months through early adulthood. They will review the development and classification of speech sounds. Students will study assessment procedures, administer common diagnostic tests. They will study treatment approaches and techniques and will develop treatment resources. Students will be assigned patients to evaluate. They will write therapy goals, evaluation reports, and treatment plans.

### **15. COMD 5363-Voice and Resonance Disorders**

This course provides a comprehensive, up-to-date knowledge in the diagnosis and treatment of voice and resonance disorders across the life span. The course explores the following:

- Review of vocal-fold anatomy and physiology
- Acoustics: vocal frequency, vocal tract resonance, and vocal intensity
- Developmental considerations in voice and resonance
- Nature and etiology of voice and resonance disorders
- Perceptual and instrumental assessment of voice and resonance disorders
- Prevention and treatment of voice and resonance disorders in children and adults
- Delivery of diagnostic and treatment services to culturally and linguistically diverse populations
- Ethical considerations and counseling in the diagnosis and treatment of voice and resonance disorders
- Development of evaluation reports and treatment plans

### **16. 5364-Fluency Disorders**

This course is designed to provide an understanding of the complex issues surrounding the evaluation and treatment of fluency disorders. Students will analyze cortical centers responsible for speech coordination

and fluency and underlying neural substrates of stuttering and cluttering disorders. This course discusses the etiological factors of stuttering and related educational, neurocognitive, cultural, psychological, and socioeconomic issues. Students will study the diagnostic process, administer stuttering assessments, and write an evaluation report. They will study treatment methods, develop evidence-based treatment plans with measurable goals, and apply EBP in the diagnosis and treatment of fluency disorders.

**17. COMD 5366-Special Topics in Speech Language Pathology:**

This course focuses on a variety of topics in communication disorders on an as-needed-basis. Generally, the content will be determined based on emerging issues in the field. The course will allow for these topics to be addressed in a timely manner without having to go through governance approval. Topics to be addressed include (but may not be limited to) the following: autism and social communication disorders; cleft palate; and speech language services in medical and educational settings. Thus, the syllabus will be developed according to the specific topic to be addressed.