

COMMUNICATION DISORDERS, MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS)

The Master of Science degree is designed to equip the student with the academic and clinical skills required to function as a competent professional in the field of communication disorders. The master's graduate is qualified to provide clinical services to a wide range of communication disordered children and adults in a variety of professional settings. Upon completion of the graduate program, the student will have met all requirements for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) with the exception of the Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Fellowship (SLPCF). The student must also pass a national examination in speech-language pathology; most students take and pass the exam prior to earning the master's degree.

The graduate curriculum includes exposure to science and research areas as well as to clinical disorders and related practice. The graduate curriculum is part of a cooperative program between Eastern Washington University and Washington State University–Spokane, and is known as the University Programs in Communication Disorders (UPCD). The UPCD is housed in the Health Sciences Building on the Spokane campus. The undergraduate and graduate curricula are administered on a semester academic schedule in alignment with the academic schedule of Washington State University.

Admission Requirements/Preparation

Admission to the master's program includes the requirements of the graduate school as well as the GRE general and writing tests, letters of recommendation, a statement from the applicant outlining professional interests and intent and an application fee. The program utilizes a central application system. Application and the supporting materials are to be submitted to the CSDCAS program <http://www.capcsd.org/csdcas/>, a separate application is to be submitted to the EWU graduate program office. All application materials must be received by January 15 prior to the fall academic term of enrollment. Students entering the program must have completed an undergraduate major in communication disorders. Students with an undergraduate major in any other field must complete a post-baccalaureate year of required communication disorders courses prior to applying to the graduate program (see the separate section of this catalog entitled Pre-Professional Programs). In addition, students need to take an introductory statistics course prior to graduate school, as it is a requirement for professional certification.

Course selections made by the student and a departmental faculty advisor can be individually tailored to the student's professional goals. Course selection is guided by the knowledge and skills outcomes of the certification standards for the CCC-SLP as set forth by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

According to current ASHA certification standards, it is expected that candidates for the master's degree will have accumulated a minimum of 400 clock hours of clinical practicum with 25 hours spent in observation and 375 hours spent in direct client/patient contact. At least 325 of the 400 hours must be completed at the graduate level. This is accomplished by completing clinical practicum experiences (COMD 561, COMD 562, and/or COMD 563) and taking one required semester of COMD 697. Completion of the Master's degree and clinical experience qualifies the student for Washington state licensure in Speech-Language Pathology and makes that individual eligible for the CCC-SLP upon completion of

the SLPCF and upon passing the national examination (referred to as the PRAXIS exam).

Students who intend to be employed in the public schools of this state must meet Washington state educational certification requirements, which include three (3) semester credits of coursework and a Clinical Field Experience in the schools.

Research Requirement and Its Defense

A research project of some type (i.e., either thesis or non-thesis) must be completed by all graduate students. The selection of research option is accomplished during the first semester of graduate study in COMD 520. Selection of a research advisor also takes place while the student is enrolled in this course. Only those students who show excellent aptitude in research and scientific writing are given the thesis option. A thesis is intended to be an empirical study that is formal and rigorous. The non-thesis option includes any type of research (e.g., case study, empirical study, survey, etc.) deemed appropriate by the student's research advisor.

The fall semester of the first year of study is used to develop a research idea while enrolled in COMD 520. During the spring semester of the first year of study, the student and research advisor further refine the research idea and submit the proper paperwork to the Institutional Review Board, if required. The fall and spring semesters of the second year of study are used to complete and defend the research. Students who have been granted permission to conduct a thesis will enroll in 2 quarter (3 semester) credits of COMD 600 during the spring semester of their first year of study, and 2 quarter (3 semester) credits of COMD 600 during each of the fall and spring semesters of their second year of study, for a total of 6 quarter (9 semester) credits of research. Students who conduct a non-thesis research project will enroll in COMD 620 (2 quarter; 3 semester credits) during the spring semester of the first year of study, COMD 621 (2 quarter; 3 semester credits) during the fall semester and COMD 622 (2 quarter; 3 semester credits) during the spring semester of their second year of study, for a total of 6 quarter (9 semester) credits of research.

Two faculty members from the combined UPCD faculty form the student's research committee (the chair of the committee is the student's research advisor). The research advisor may be either a WSU or an EWU faculty member who holds graduate faculty status. If the research advisor is a WSU faculty member, the second committee member must be an EWU faculty member. If the research advisor is an EWU faculty member, the second committee member may be either a WSU or EWU faculty member. For the student's defense of his or her research, a graduate council representative is assigned by the Office of Graduate Studies as a third committee member.

Toward the end of their graduate program, students orally defend their research project in the presence of their committee members and other interested parties. Students who complete a thesis will make a formal presentation in front of an audience and will entertain questions from their committee members and other interested parties. Students who complete a non-thesis project will develop a poster that will be put on display. Students will stand by their posters and entertain questions from their committee members and other interested parties. The research defense will take place during a designated Research Day that will typically take place during the latter half of the spring semester each year. In some instances, two or more Research Days may be designated; the student will only have to defend his or her research at one of these scheduled Research Days.

At the defense, the student's research committee makes a decision as to whether or not the research project is successfully completed. If the research project is judged as not being successfully completed, the committee indicates what additional work must be accomplished and whether another defense will be necessary. If the research project is judged to be completed and satisfactorily defended, a grade is assigned to the thesis or non-thesis research project.

Policy Regarding Student Progress

In addition to maintaining an overall cumulative grade point average ≥ 3.00 to be retained in the program and to graduate with the MS degree, the student must earn a grade ≥ 2.7 or better in each of the graduate courses taken (exclusive of practicum courses). Earning a grade < 2.7 for any given course will require that the student repeat the course. If the course is a prerequisite for a higher-level course, the student will not be allowed to enroll in the higher-level course until a grade ≥ 2.7 has been earned in the prerequisite course. Additionally, ASHA requires that the program regularly assess each student's progress toward meeting knowledge and skills outcomes (KASA). Each graduate course has its own assessment plan with a built-in academic assistance plan for students who experience difficulty in the course. The program's Student Assistance Plan can be found on the department's website (<http://www.ewu.edu/commdisorders>).

Note: credits are listed as semester(s) and quarter(q).

Required Core

COMD 520	RESEARCH METHODS (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 538	PHONOLOGICAL ACQUISITION AND BEHAVIOR (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 542	INFANT AND TODDLER COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 543	SCHOOL-AGE AND ADOLESCENT LANGUAGE (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 547	AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 552	NEUROPATHOLOGIES OF LANGUAGE (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 554	MOTOR SPEECH DISORDERS (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 555	BILINGUAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES (2s; 3q)	3
COMD 559	DYSPHAGIA (3s; 4.5q)	4.5
COMD 568	ADVANCED ASSESSMENT: PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES (2s; 3q)	3

Electives

To be determined in consultation with the graduate advisor. All 500-level courses must serve as electives. A minimum of six semester (nine quarter) credits must be from courses within the department.

Practicum

COMD 561	CLINICAL PRACTICUM (minimum 2s; 3q credits. maximum 8s; 12q credits)	21
COMD 562	ADVANCED CLINICAL PRACTICUM (minimum 4s; 6q credits. maximum 16s; 12q)	
COMD 697	CLINICAL FIELD EXPERIENCE (minimum 8s; 12q. maximum 16s; 24q)	

Typically, students will be expected to enroll for at least two (2) credits of practicum per semester.

Students are required to complete at least one internship; those wishing to take additional internships may exercise the variable credit option.

Choose one of the following options

Non-Thesis Option

COMD 620	RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION DISORDERS I (2s; 3q)
COMD 621	RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION DISORDERS II (2s; 3q)
COMD 622	RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION DISORDERS III (2s; 3q)

Thesis Option

COMD 600	THESIS (minimum 6s; 9q)
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Total Credits 81

Student Learning Outcomes—students will

- demonstrate application of research in the discipline of communication disorders;
- use the products of technology in both scholarship and clinical applications;
- write and speak clearly and effectively;
- critically evaluate and utilize new information in the discipline of communication disorders;
- demonstrate through discussion and application in class and clinic the principles, processes and procedures for the prevention, identification, evaluation, intervention and management of communication disorders;
- demonstrate knowledge through adherence to the Code of Ethics of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in academic and clinical work.