



COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Further Information

Individuals wishing to obtain more information about CSD at WCU are invited to contact:

Dr. Leigh Odom, Department Chair
Western Carolina University
College of Health and Human Sciences
Communication Sciences and Disorders Department
3971 Little Savannah Road, Office 158A
Cullowhee, NC 28723
(828) 227-3834
KMOdom@wcu.edu

The CSD Department is accredited by the:

- Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (NCSDPI)
- National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
- Western Carolina University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; telephone number 404-679-4501; www.sacscoc.org) to award bachelor's, master's, education specialist, and doctor's degrees.

Revised August 1, 2023 by Leigh Odom

FOREWORD

The faculty of the Western Carolina University Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) developed this student handbook to provide the student with specific guidelines, rights, and responsibilities regarding the undergraduate minor program and undergraduate bachelor's degree in CSD. This handbook is designed to supplement, and not replace, existing University policies and procedures, including those set forth in the University Catalog and University Student Handbooks.

Any questions regarding policies contained within this document should be directed to the Department Head of the CSD department. Every effort has been made to make this handbook as complete and current as possible; however, it should be recognized that circumstances will occur that the handbook does not cover. Changes will also be necessary in the handbook due to changes in the program. When this occurs, students will be notified in a timely manner of any changes or additions. New policies approved after this revision handbook may add to or supersede those contained herein.

When the handbook does not cover a specific circumstance or the interpretation is ambiguous, the Department Head will make the necessary decision or interpretation in consultation with full-time department faculty. The fact that written policies are not in the handbook should not be interpreted as an absence of a policy or regulation. If students have questions regarding a situation, they should discuss them with the Department Head.

We hope you find this manual helpful and wish you much success in your studies here at Western Carolina University.

FACULTY & STAFF

Carver, Kim, Administrative Support Associate, CSD
Cathey, Mabelle, MS, CCC-SLP, Western Carolina University, SLP, Clinic Director
De Nardo, Thales, PhD, CCC-SLP, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, SLP
Dorney, Kathryn, PhD, CCC-SLP, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, SLP
Kelleher, Kate, MA, CCC-SLP, Appalachian State University, SLP
Odom, Leigh, PhD, CCC-SLP, University of South Carolina, SLP, Department Head
Ogletree, Billy, PhD, CCC-SLP, Florida State University, SLP, Catherine Brewer Smith Endowed Chair
Price-Vinyard, Johanna, PhD, CCC-SLP, University of Memphis, SLP
Rice, Tracie, AuD, CCC-A, University of Florida, Audiology
Roellgen, Kate, Administrative Support Associate, SHC
Rose, Amy, PhD, CCC-SLP, University of North Carolina – Greensboro, SLP
Trivette, Laura, MS, CCC-SLP, Western Carolina University, SLP
Wofford, Claire, PhD, CCC-SLP, Florida State University, SLP
Young, Sarah, MS, CCC-SLP, Appalachian State University, SLP

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The CSD Department is organized within the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) at Western Carolina University (WCU). The Speech and Hearing Clinic (SHC) is housed on the ground floor of the Health and Human Sciences (HHS) building and shares personnel with the CSD Department. The SHC Director reports to the CSD Department Head, CHHS Director of Clinical Affairs, and the CHHS Dean.

The undergraduate program is pre-professional (non-certification) and designed to prepare students for graduate studies and subsequent certification by the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the NC Licensure Board, and the North Carolina (NC) Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

The WCU SHC is a training clinic affiliated with the CSD Department and CHHS. Students receive clinical experiences within the SHC and its outreach programs in surrounding counties in coordination with their academic preparation.

Philosophy:

The fundamental role of WCU is to develop a community of scholarship in which students, faculty members, administrators, and staff members learn and apply the products of learning. The guiding principle for instruction in the CHHS is that the best decisions are made after careful reflection and considering the interest and welfare of persons affected by decisions. The faculty and students in the CSD Department jointly engage in the acquisition of knowledge of communication and its disorders, exercise informed judgment, and accept challenges calling for innovative clinical responses. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs), as inviting, reflective decision-makers, interact with professionals across disciplines and settings. The CSD Department is committed to honoring the individual differences and needs of a culturally diverse population in relation to ethnicity, lifespan, gender, religion, and socioeconomic conditions. All members of the CSD Department, including students and faculty, continue to grow in awareness, knowledge, and experience to meet the challenges provided by ethical practices, changing populations, and scope of practice demands.

CSD Mission Statement:

The mission of the faculty, staff, and students of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is to engage jointly in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and dispositions to address communication and its disorders, exercise informed judgments, and accept challenges calling for innovative clinical responses. In the execution of this mission, we are committed to honoring the individual differences and needs of culturally and linguistically diverse populations and growing in awareness, knowledge, and experience to meet the challenges provided by ethical practices, changing populations, and scope of practice demands.

SHC Mission Statement:

The WCU SHC is committed to providing clinical services of the highest quality to individuals with communication disorders. The clinic also provides observation and training opportunities for the CSD students. Treatment of the whole person requires interdisciplinary resources; therefore, the clinic functions within a referral network of human service professionals.

CSD Diversity Statement:

A fundamental understanding and appreciation of diversity is basic to the provision of speech and language services to all age groups. WCU CSD students, faculty, and staff must be able to relate to persons of diverse nationalities, races, backgrounds, religious beliefs, disabilities, and sexual orientations.

CSD courses integrate an understanding, affirmation, and respect for people from diverse backgrounds. Culture and personal identity are emphasized. Diversity content ensures that students learn to provide speech and language services that meet the needs of all groups served. Students are taught to recognize how diversity within and between groups influences practice. They also learn to define, design, and implement practice strategies with persons from diverse backgrounds. Content relating to diversity is infused throughout all required courses in the CSD curriculum.

CSD Prevention Statement:

Prevention requires increased efforts to eliminate the onset of communication disorders and their causes and to promote the development and maintenance of optimal communication. Alternative professional roles and strategies must be developed, and the information and skills to promote and practice them must be acquired.

SECTION II: UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS AND DEGREES IN CSD

Western Carolina University (WCU) offers the undergraduate minor program and the bachelor's degree program in CSD.

Minor Program in CSD

Students who have declared the minor in CSD study the general practice of communication sciences (3 credit hours) in addition to the nature and development of communication competence (18 credit hours). The curriculum is pre-professional, providing the six academic courses required for graduate study. All program requirements are provided through the CSD Department. After completing the requirements of this program, students are eligible for the Minor in CSD upon meeting other graduation requirements.

There are no unique requirements to declare or remain in the CSD minor. Upon declaring the CSD minor, students are assigned an academic advisor in CSD. Students who have declared the CSD minor but have not yet been assigned to an academic advisor should contact the administrative assistant in the CSD Department as soon as possible.

The minor consists of 21 credit hours and includes the courses listed in Appendix A. Courses do not necessarily have to be taken in the order listed in Appendix A, with the exception of CSD 270 which should be taken prior to or during the first semester of CSD courses. Importantly, not all required courses are offered in both fall and spring semesters, and students should consider this when registering for classes. CSD 270 is offered in both fall and spring semesters; CSD 301, 370, and 450 are offered only in the fall semester; CSD 372, 380, and 472 are offered only in the spring semester.

Bachelor's Degree Program in CSD

Students in the bachelor's degree program study the nature and development of communication competence and the nature and management of disorders of communication. The curriculum is pre-professional, providing the academic courses required for graduate study as well as courses that will provide robust foundation into the SLP and AUD scopes of practice. All program requirements are provided through the CSD Department with the exception of SPED 240 offered in the College of Education. After completing the program, students are awarded the Bachelor of Science in CSD.

There are no unique requirements to declare and remain in the CSD major. However, students are required to earned a 2.0 GPA in CSD courses to graduate with the major. Upon declaring the CSD major, students are assigned an academic advisor. Students who have declared the CSD minor but have not yet been assigned to an academic advisor should contact the administrative assistant in the CSD Department as soon as possible. Undergraduate students typically begin the CSD curriculum in their sophomore year. The major consists of 42 credit hours that should be completed in the sequence illustrated in Appendix B. In addition, all students must complete an 18-credit hour Related Professional Courses (RPC) concentration or a minor (see Current Course Catalog). The remaining credits are earned through 42 hours of liberal studies and any number of electives needed to reach the required 120 credit hours for the degree. Biology; Chemistry or Physics; statistics; and Psychology classes are strongly recommended while completing liberal studies requirements as these will also meet eventual licensure requirements of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA); students intending to pursue graduate school in speech-language pathology or audiology after the bachelor's degree should discuss this requirement with their advisor.

Related Professional Courses: Related Professional Courses, commonly referred to as RPCs, can take the place of a minor degree requirement for the BS in CSD. Just as the name implies, RPCs are courses that are somehow related to the field of CSD and the professions therein, including speech-language pathology, audiology, and speech-hearing science. Students are required to complete 18 credit hours of RPCs to meet the requirement of the CSD degree. Students are encouraged to search the course catalog prior to each Advising Day for classes that may be of interest, that meet the criteria, and fit the student's schedule.

- **Finding RPC Courses:** One way to see what is offered each semester is to search the course catalog for undergraduate classes by *prefix*. Prefixes that tend to pair well with CSD include, but are not limited to, Biology (BIOL), Communications (COMM), Counseling (COUN), English (ENG), Environmental Health (ENVH), Health and Physical Education (HPE), Health Sciences (HSCC), Nutrition/Dietetics (ND), Nursing (NSG), Philosophy & Religion (PAR), Psychology (PSY), Sociology (SOC), Social Work (SOCW), Special Education (SPED).
- **Criteria to count as an RPC:** There are two requirements for a course to count as an RPC. First, it must be shown that it is related to the field of CSD and your eventual professional goals. Second, it must be a 300- or 400-level course. In some cases, your academic advisor may elect to waive the upper-level requirement given special circumstances; however, that decision is made between the academic advisor and the student. This is also true for substituting transfer credits as RPCs. The student should be prepared to show documentation (e.g., a course syllabus) if requesting that a transfer credit be substituted as an RPC. These substitution decisions are at the discretion of the academic advisor, and as a rule, the Department Head does not override the decision of the academic advisor.
- **Working around your CSD Schedule:** Remember to enter the mandatory classes into your proposed schedule before selecting RPC options. The priority should always be taking the CSD courses in the predetermined sequence. Failure to do so could extend your academic program by as much as one year.

SECTION III: CLINICAL OBSERVATION

Observing diagnostic and treatment sessions in SLP and audiology is a valuable and effective means of bridging theory and clinical practice, a skill that is required for clinical work. For students pursuing an advanced degree in CSD-related fields, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) requires that students complete 25 hours in guided observation before conducting any diagnostic or treatment sessions. This requirement is met by supervised observations of an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist or audiologist engaged in clinical practice. Other mechanisms, for example Master Clinician Network, often are adequate for completing observation hours; however, this may not be the case for all universities, and students are encouraged to consult with programs directly. Students are encouraged to observe often throughout their undergraduate program because observations provide valuable learning opportunities at all levels of experience.

Documentation and Retention of Clinical Observation Hours:

Students should document observations completed using the observation log provided in Appendix C or a similarly structured form. If supervision is not done by a WCU CSD Department faculty member, a copy of the observed clinician's ASHA card should be attached to the observation form. Once all 25 hours are completed, documentation of observations should be submitted to the CSD administrative support associate for filing in the students' undergraduate record. Students should keep copies of these forms for their personal records.

Scheduling Observations in the SHC:

The Clinic Director (or a designated representative) is responsible for assigning all observation sessions. To inquire about observing in the SHC, the students should complete the form in Appendix D and email the form to the Clinic Director. Information provided to the SHC Clinic Director must include observation availability and strict conflicts, such as academic courses and official university duties. Employment responsibilities are also considered in scheduling, but please be aware that the program cannot guarantee that adequate observation hours will be available if the student substantially limits available scheduling time. Changes in observation assignments are made by the Clinic Director and only if deemed necessary. Additional observation hours may be possible after the initial assignments are made and when slots are available.

Requests for additional hours can be made to the Clinic Director via email.

Due to varying numbers in the clinic at any given time, there may be times when you are scheduled to observe that you may be asked to postpone your observation. Priority for observation will be given in the following order: (1) family members; (2) supervisor; (3) observers fulfilling course requirements or supervisor assignment; and, (4) other observers approved by the supervisor.

Occasionally, treatment rooms are reassigned or sessions are cancelled. Room changes for a given client can be obtained from SHC office personnel. Observers will be notified of cancellations as soon as personnel are advised of them; however, clients may simply not show up for a session (i.e., it is not known beforehand in every case that a session will not be held.)

SECTION IV: DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Undergraduate students should be familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures set forth by the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Advising: All students who have declared the minor or major in CSD will be assigned a faculty advisor in the department. This advisor is in addition to the professional advisor in the Advising Center. Students majoring in CSD are required to meet with their faculty advisor at least one time per semester on or before the University's scheduled Advising Day. In addition to individual meetings, students who have declared the major are expected to attend a group meeting on Advising Day. Information about the group meeting will be sent to students by email, Outlook calendar invitation, and/or physical postings in the CSD department.

Students should collaborate with their assigned academic advisor for all matters related to academic matriculation and professional goals. If the academic advisor is unavailable and the matter is time-sensitive, the student may reach out to the Department Head for immediate assistance. All advising matters discussed with the Department Head will be shared with the assigned academic advisor.

Email Account and Correspondence/Information to/from Students: Faculty and staff in CSD send critical course and program information for students electronically using their catamount email address. Students must use their catamount email account for all academic and clinic-related correspondence. As is stated in WCU Policy 54, students are expected to check catamount email on a regular basis. The department recommends that students check catamount email at a minimum once a day.

SECTION V: UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Undergraduate students should be familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures set forth by the University. Much of this information is accessible online:

<http://catalog.wcu.edu/content.php?catoid=57&navoid=2226>.

Academic Integrity Policy and Reporting Process

"Students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Western Carolina University (WCU) strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community. While academic in scope, any violation of this policy is by nature, a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (Code) and will be addressed as outlined in that document. If the charge occurs close to the end of an academic semester/term or in the event of either party presenting a reasonable need for additional time to gather information, timelines may be extended at the discretion of the appropriate academic Dean" (<https://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/academic-integrity.aspx>). All accusations related to academic integrity violations will be handled per the University policy found at <https://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/academic-integrity.aspx>.

Attendance: The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders follows the recommendations set

forth by the University. In addition to the policies highlighted here, students should read the attendance policy stated in the course syllabus before missing class to avoid unintended consequences.

The University states that,

“Students with more unexcused absences than the credit hours given for a course (for example, three absences in a three-hour course) can expect the instructor to lower their final grade, especially in a 100-(first year) or 200-(sophomore) level course. Missing approximately 10 percent or more of class meeting times (for example, four to five MWF classes, three TR classes, or one laboratory or a class that meets once per week) means losing a significant amount of class work and experience that are very difficult, or impossible, to make up. Class attendance may be required of undergraduate students as a condition of admission or readmission to the university or of eligibility to continue enrollment.” (http://catalog.wcu.edu/content.php?catoid=57&navoid=2226#class_attend)

The University further elaborates on what constitutes excused absences.

“In addition to a documented and bona fide medical emergency, the death of an immediate family member, or pre-arranged absence for religious observance, excused absences are granted for university events such as the following:

- Performances and events sanctioned by the Chancellor to promote the image of the university
- Regularly scheduled university team competitions (athletic and otherwise), including postseason play (practices and training sessions are excluded)
- Student engagement sponsored by the institution and approved by the Provost (for example, research presentations and performances at national conferences or events).” (http://catalog.wcu.edu/content.php?catoid=57&navoid=2226#class_attend)

Appendix A

Course Sequence for the Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Semester/Academic Year	# Credit Hours	Course Prefix/Number	Course Name
Fall	3 CH	CSD 270	Introduction to Communication Disorders
	3 CH	CSD 301*	Speech and Language Development
	3 CH	CSD 370	Phonetics
	3 CH	CSD 450	Introduction to Audiology
Spring	3 CH	CSD 270	Introduction to Communication Disorders
	3 CH	CSD 372	Acoustics and Speech Science
	3 CH	CSD 380	Anatomy/Physiology of Speech Mech.
	3 CH	CSD 472*	Aural Rehabilitation
Total	21 Credit Hours (CH)		

You must pay close attention to the semesters in which these courses are offered to prevent extending your course of study unnecessarily. Fall only courses are only *reliably* offered in Fall, and Spring only courses are only *reliably* offered in Spring. Some courses (those marked by the *) are offered in the Summer; however, courses may be cancelled with short notice due to reduced enrollment.

If you have declared the CSD Minor but have not been assigned an academic advisor in CSD, please email Kim Carver (carverk@wcu.edu) to request a CSD advisor. If you need immediate CSD advising, please email Dr. Leigh Odom (KMOdom@wcu.edu).

If you are interested in pursuing a graduate degree in CSD, you will be required to demonstrate college credit earned in the biological, physical, and social sciences as well as statistics. It is recommended, but not required, that you choose the following courses when completing the Liberal Studies requirement at WCU. (If completing this requirement at another institution, speak to the Advising Center at that institution for equivalents.)

- C2, Math 170 (Applied Statistics)
- C5 (first discipline), BIOL 102 (Human Genetics) or BIOL 104 (Human Biology) (note: lab not required for ASHA)
- C5 (second discipline), CHEM 101 (Chemistry in Society) or PHYS 105 (Contemporary Physics) (note: lab not required for ASHA)
- P1 (one discipline), PSY 150 (General Psychology)

Appendix B

Course Sequence for the Bachelor's Degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders


Semester/ Academic Year	# Credit Hours	Course Prefix/Number	Course Name
Fall or Spring Soph.	3 CH	CSD 270	Introduction to Communication Disorders
Spring Soph.	3 CH	CSD 272	Professional Writing for CSD
Fall Jr.	3 CH	CSD 301	Speech and Language Development
	3 CH	CSD 370	Phonetics
	3 CH	SPED 240	The Exceptional Child
Spring, Jr.	3 CH	CSD 380	Anatomy/Physiology of Speech Mech.
	3 CH	CSD 372	Acoustics and Speech Science
Fall Sr.	3 CH	CSD 450	Introduction to Audiology
	3 CH	CSD 464	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice in CSD
	3 CH	CSD 470	Speech-Language Disorders - Adults
Spring Sr.	3 CH	CSD 421	Measurement Practices in Comm. Dis.
	3 CH	CSD 472	Aural Rehabilitation
	3 CH	CSD 477	Speech-Language Disorders – Children
	3 CH	CSD 479	The Clinical Process
Total CSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 42 Credit Hours (CH) 		
Total Degree Requirements	You must also take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 42 CH of Liberal Studies ● 18 CH of Minor Courses or Related Professional Courses (RPCs) ● General Electives to bring the total credit hours to 120 		

You must pay close attention to the semesters in which these courses are offered to prevent extending your course of study unnecessarily. Fall only courses are only *reliably* offered in Fall, and Spring only courses are only *reliably* offered in Spring. Some courses (those marked by the *) are offered in the Summer; however, courses may be cancelled with short notice due to reduced enrollment.

If you have declared the CSD Major but have not been assigned an academic advisor in CSD, please email Kim Carver (carverk@wcu.edu) to request a CSD advisor.

If you are interested in pursuing a graduate degree in CSD, you will be required to demonstrate college credit earned in the biological, physical, and social sciences as well as statistics. It is recommended, but not required, that you choose the following courses when completing the Liberal Studies requirement at WCU: C2, Math 170 (Applied Statistics); C5 (first discipline), BIOL 102 (Human Genetics) or BIOL 104 (Human Biology) (note: lab not required for ASHA); C5 (second discipline), CHEM 101 (Chemistry in Society) or PHYS 105 (Contemporary Physics) (note: lab not required for ASHA) P1 (one discipline), PSY 150 (General Psychology).

APPENDIX C

 Western Carolina University, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Cullowhee, NC 28723		<h2>OBSERVATION FORM</h2>			
		Student Name: Student 92#: Student cell #: WCU email:			
Use this form to document your observation of direct clinical evaluation and intervention conducted by an SLP or AUD with current ASHA certification. Do not round up; count the exact number of <i>minutes (not hours)</i> spent.					
Date	Duration*	Name of Site	Population Observed (adult or child; disorder; Dx or Tx)	Supervisor's ASHA #	Supervisor's Signature
Observation Reflection					
Observation Reflection					
Observation Reflection					

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION AVAILABILITY FORM

Student Name:

Student Cell #:

Student WCU e-mail:

What are your special interests for observations?

Directions for Availability Table: This table should reflect the times and days that you *are* available to observe in the Speech and Hearing Clinic. Highlight or otherwise mark the cell for the times and days that you *are* available to observe in the SHC. Partial time may be entered, such as 8:30-9:00 AM. Leave blank any cells during which times you are not available.

Times/Days	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:00					
9:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00					
11:00-12:00					
12:00-1:00					
1:00-2:00					
2:00-3:00					
3:00-4:00					
4:00-5:00					

Please read and initial each statement below. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these statements, please discuss them with the Clinical Director.

- ___ I will not miss class or other official events that require my attendance to observe in the SHC.
- ___ I understand that clients may cancel or fail to show without notice, and this is not the fault of the clinicians or SHC faculty or staff. I understand that SHC staff will notify me of cancellations as soon as possible, but I understand that I may not receive this notification before leaving for the SHC.
- ___ I understand that there is a dress code for observing in the SHC (e.g., business casual, closed-toe shoes, navy scrubs, no perfumes/colognes, nothing low-cut in the chest or low-waist).
- ___ I understand that confidentiality is essential in the management of clients. Clients' rights and welfare are central to ASHA's Code of Ethics for professionals and mandated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. I understand that I must read and sign the *WCU SHC Confidentiality/ Security Agreement* before beginning observations.
- ___ I understand that when occupying an observation room, I am in a professional setting, and professional behavior is expected at all levels of clinical involvement. I understand that clients can hear loud talking, laughter, or chairs bumping/scraping in the observation room. I understand that I may be asked to leave at any time if I fail to maintain the professional expectations of the SHC.
- ___ I understand that should make room for others who need to observe the session, and that the client's family members and supervisor always have top priority in observing a particular session.
- ___ I understand that a family or client may refuse me the opportunity to observe for any reason, and that is their right. Their decision will be respected.
- ___ I am not a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist. As such, I will not engage with the client or family in a therapeutic nature. All questions about case management will be referred to the supervisor or graduate student clinicians.