

Pre-Speech-Language Pathology

What Does a Speech-Language Pathologist Do?

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) assess and treat persons of all ages with speech, language, voice, and fluency disorders. They may also work with people who have oral motor problems that cause eating and swallowing difficulties. They use special instruments, as well as written and oral tests, to determine the nature and extent of impairment, and to record and analyze irregularities in language, speech, swallowing and respiration. For individuals with little or no speech, speech-language pathologists select alternative communication systems, including automated devices and sign language, and teach their use. Entry level positions require at least a Masters degree.

Speech-Language Pathologists are health and education professionals who work closely with teachers, physicians, psychologists, social workers, rehabilitation counselors, and other members of an interdisciplinary team, but are autonomous and do not work under direct medical supervision.

They provide professional services in:

- public and private schools
- hospitals
- rehabilitation centers and nursing care facilities
- community clinics
- college and university clinics
- private practice offices
- state and local health departments
- state and federal government agencies
- home care
- adult day care centers
- centers for the developmentally disabled
- research laboratories
- industries

Degree, Licensure and Certification Requirements

For professional certification as a speech-language pathologist a Master's degree is necessary. All states that license SLP professionals require master's level training. In addition, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) requires both completion of a master's degree and a year of clinical internship (Clinical Fellowship Year) for

the certificate of clinical competence (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology.

Employment Outlook

Employment of Speech-Language Pathologists is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2010. Recent estimates place speech-language pathology in the top 10 of 'growth professions.' Employment in the health care industry is projected to grow faster than the average for all occupations, while employment in education is expected to grow only as fast as the average.

Employment in the health care industry will increase as a result of several factors. Because hearing loss is strongly associated with older age, rapid growth in the population age 75 and over will cause the number of hearing-impaired persons to increase rapidly. In addition, baby boomers are now entering middle age, when the probability of neurological disorders and their associated speech, language, and hearing impairments, increases. Medical advances are also improving survival rate of trauma victims, who then need treatment.

Employment in schools will increase as elementary and secondary school enrollments grow. Recent Federal legislation guaranteeing special education and related services to all eligible children with disabilities, while originally designed for school-aged children, was recently extended to include children from 3 to 5 years of age. This legislation will also increase employment in day care centers, rehabilitation centers, and hospitals. In Ohio dozens of school based positions go unfilled every year.

Preparing for the MA Degree in SLP

Obviously, the simplest way to prepare for the Master of Arts degree with professional certification and licensure in Speech-Language Pathology is to earn a bachelor's degree from an accredited program. At Ohio State, the Department of Speech and Hearing Science offers the Bachelor of Arts degree. Successful completion of the undergraduate major in Speech and Hearing Science at Ohio State

should prepare the student for entry into any accredited graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology.

However, there are many undergraduate majors that can lead to entry into the graduate program at Ohio State. Undergraduate majors in linguistics, psychology, education, or biology offer very good preparation for work in Speech-Language Pathology. Those who began as pre-medical students, or planning for other health-related careers usually have very good preparation for the MA program in SLP.

Recent graduate students have majored in foreign languages, business, journalism and communication, and even physical science or engineering.

While it is not necessary to complete all of the requirements for the bachelor's degree in Speech and Hearing Science, some prerequisite courses are necessary. Generally the following courses, or their equivalent, are necessary for entry into the graduate program:

- **Principles of Phonetics** [SHS 320]
- **Language Acquisition** [SHS 330]
- **Bioacoustics** [SHS 340]
- **Observation in Communication Disorders** [SHS 360]
- **Introduction to Speech Science** [SHS 420]
- **Introduction to Hearing Science** [SHS 440]
- **Introduction to Speech-Language Pathology** [SHS 520]
- **Introduction to Audiology** [SHS 540]
- **Introduction to Aural Rehabilitation** [SHS 734]

These courses are offered on campus; many are offered twice each year at Ohio State, and most are offered via distance-learning through the OSU Office of Continuing Education. Equivalent courses may also be taken at any accredited program offering degrees in Speech and

Hearing Science, Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, or Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Students in other majors considering graduate work in Speech-Language Pathology, may also elect to minor in Speech and Hearing Science.

The Minor in Speech and Hearing Science

This is a 25 credit minor. Fifteen of the 25 credits are required of all students and include the following three courses, which are also required of all majors:

- A. Exploring Communication Disorders SHS230
- B. Principles of Phonetics SHS320
- C. Bioacoustics SHS340

Following the satisfactory completion of these three courses, students will choose one of four options, each of which will supply the remaining 10 credits.

Option 1. For students interested in Speech-Language Pathology.

- A. Introduction to Speech Science SHS420
- B. Introduction to S-LP SHS520

Option 2. For students interested in Audiology.

- A. Introduction to Hearing Science SHS440
- B. Introduction to Audiology SHS540

Option 3. For students interested in the field as it relates to multicultural and disability issues.

- A. Improving Intercultural Speech-Language Skills SHS310
- B. Disability Studies in Context SHS510

Option 4. For students interested in Speech and Hearing Science.

- A. Introduction to Speech Science SHS420
- B. Introduction to Hearing Science SHS440

Administration and Advising

The Minor in Speech and Hearing Science is listed in the OSU Bulletin and administered by the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Department. To declare the minor, students should call 292-8207 and make an appointment with an undergraduate advisor.