

Frequently Asked Questions: Communication Disorders (CD) Program

Educational Psychology & Special Education Department
College of Education, Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA

Is your program accredited?

- YES. The CD Program is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA), an organization that is affiliated with the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

How long will it take me to complete the program?

- If you have an undergraduate major in CD or have taken nearly all of the prerequisite courses, you can usually complete the program in six (6) semesters (including summers). If you have an undergraduate degree in another area or have only taken a few prerequisite courses, you can usually complete the program in nine (9) semesters (including summers).

When should I submit my application?

- All applications must be complete and all materials submitted to the Office of Academic Assistance in the College of Education no later than **January 15th**. No applications received after this date will be considered for admission for the current year. Since a complete packet of materials is required by the College of Education (transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc.), we encourage you to gather your materials early and submit them in November. **DO NOT** wait until late December or early January to complete and submit your application packet.

What materials are required to be included in the application packet?

- You must submit the completed application form, two copies of sealed, official undergraduate transcripts, a minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation, and a 300-500 word essay about why you want a Master's degree in CD.

Who should write my letters of recommendation?

- You want individuals who know your academic potential to write letters of recommendation for you. Typically this would be academic faculty members who taught courses in which you were enrolled. You are not limited to two letters, so an employer or supervisor might also be an appropriate person to write a letter. Personal friends, friends of the family, family members, etc. are not the best sources for recommendations.

What are the minimum grade point average and GRE scores required for the CD Program?

- The Georgia State University College of Education requires that you have a **minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.5 and a minimum GRE score of 800** in order to be considered for admission. The CD Program also requires that you score a minimum of 400 on both the Verbal and the Quantitative sections of the GRE. However, simply meeting the minimum requirements does not insure you will be selected for admission.

What is the GPA and GRE score of a typical person accepted into the CD Program?

- The mean GPA for students accepted into the CD Program is **3.5** and the mean GRE score is **1050**. You are encouraged to re-take the GRE before you apply if you do not believe your scores are a reflection of the best you can do.

Is the GACE or Praxis I Exam required for admission into the CD Program?

- For some applicants it will be required. You will be exempt from the GACE or PRAXIS I Exam if you score a minimum of 1030 on the GRE, a minimum of 1000 on the SAT, or a minimum of 43 on the ACT. If you do not meet one of these criteria you must take and pass the GACE (if you are an in-state applicant) or the PRAXIS I: Academic Skills Assessment of Reading, Mathematics, and Writing (if you are an out-of-state applicant).

What can I do to strengthen my application to the CD Program?

- You should be certain that you are knowledgeable of the profession of speech-language pathology no matter what your undergraduate major was. You should visit the website of the national professional organization, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, at www.asha.org to learn as much as possible about this career field. You also should contact speech-language pathologists in your community and make arrangements to meet with and observe them in their day-to-day activities. Be sure to observe individuals who are employed in different settings (schools, rehabilitation facilities, hospitals, private practice, etc.) to understand the various roles and activities of speech-language pathologists.

How do you decide who to admit to the CD Program?

- Your application will go through several reviews. The initial review is done by the Office of Academic Assistance to ensure that it is complete and that you meet the minimum requirements established by the College of Education. If your complete application meets the minimum requirements and is received by January 15th, it will be reviewed by the CD faculty. The best qualified applicants (highest GRE scores and undergraduate GPAs, most appropriate goal statements, strongest letters of recommendation, etc.) will be invited to campus for an interview. The final admission decision is made by the CD faculty based on your application and your interview performance.

Why do you interview applicants?

- Interviews give you the chance to learn about our graduate program and tour our facilities. You want to know as much as possible about a program before you make the important decision of where to do your graduate studies. Also our faculty members have found that interviewing gives us a chance to get to know you better than a paper application does.

When would I come for the interview?

- If you have been selected for an interview you will receive a phone call in late January or early February to schedule the interview. Interviews are typically scheduled for two Fridays in mid to late February. For 2010, the interview dates most likely will be February 26 and March 5.

What happens if I can't come to an interview on those days?

- If you know you will be unable to attend the interview, you must submit a letter to the Coordinator of the CD Program asking for an exception to the on-campus interview at the scheduled times. You need to have a strong rationale for why you are unable to attend (e.g., living outside the United States, enrolled in a study abroad program). You must submit the letter requesting the exception at the time you submit your application and must include the reason you are unable to attend the interview and indicate what alternative interview options you can meet (e.g., interview prior to the scheduled dates). The CD faculty will review your request for an exception and inform you of the decision.

When will I know if I am accepted into the program?

- You should receive your letter of acceptance to the program from the Office of Academic Assistance in late March.

What semester would I start the program if I am admitted?

- You would begin the CD Program in the fall semester along with the other individuals who have been admitted. Summer admission is possible; however, it will not shorten your program length, just lighten your course load in some semesters.

Do I need to take prerequisite courses before I apply to the program?

- No. You do not need to take prerequisite courses before applying to or being admitted to the CD Program. If you are missing any of the prerequisite courses, they will be included in your program plan during advisement. If you want to take prerequisite courses prior to admission, you must apply as a post-baccalaureate student to the Communication Department in the College of Arts & Sciences. You will only be allowed to take undergraduate courses if space is available. Admission as a post-baccalaureate student does not increase the chances of being admitted into the graduate program.

Do I need to have an undergraduate degree in Communication Disorders to apply?

- No. An undergraduate degree in CD is not required to apply for the Master's program. However, the program length for individuals without a degree in CD is typically three (3) semesters longer than programs for those with the undergraduate degree.

How many students are typically admitted each year?

- The CD Program faculty limits the number of students admitted each year to maintain a high level of program quality in both academic instruction and clinical supervision. Each year, we target 18-20 students to enroll as a cohort.

Are there scholarships/graduate assistantships and financial assistance options available?

- Yes. Our program offers a limited number of graduate assistantships and these assistantships vary in terms of type of work, tuition payment, and stipend. Once you have been admitted into the program, we will send you a graduate assistantship application if requested. If an assistantship is not obtained from the CD program, there are other options available within Georgia State. Other departments within the College of Education and other colleges at Georgia State offer graduate assistantships for which you can apply by contacting those departments. Financial aid is also available through the Office of Financial Aid (http://www.gsu.edu/es/financial_aid.html)

When will I know what courses I will take?

- Once you are admitted to the CD Program you will be assigned an advisor. You will meet with your advisor to plan your program (determining specific courses needed and when they will be taken) in May or early summer.

When will I start my clinical practicum?

- If you have an undergraduate degree in CD, you will start your clinical experience in the first fall semester of your program in *EXC 7630 Policies, Procedures & Programming in CD*. In this class you will learn about the provision of clinical services and the procedures used in our on-campus clinic. You will participate in supervised observations and shadow an experienced clinician with a specific client. This experience will prepare you

to start your clinical practicum (*EXC 7910*) in the next semester providing services to clients assigned to you. If you do not have an undergraduate degree in CD, you will start this sequence of experiences in the fall semester of your second year in the program.

How many semesters of on-campus clinical practicum will I have?

- You will take three (3) semesters of on-campus clinical practicum. Each semester you enroll in clinic, your clinical experiences will increase to include more clients and responsibilities to prepare you for your internships.

Will I do any off-campus practicum?

- Yes. You will have a one semester full-time internship in a school setting and a one semester full-time internship in a medical setting. The locations for these internships include nationally recognized hospitals and medical centers, rehabilitation centers, private practices, and public and private schools throughout the metropolitan Atlanta area. You will complete these internships in the last year of your program.

Do I have to find my own internship placements?

- No. Your internship placement will be determined by our Clinic Director in consultation with the faculty based on your interests and need for client clock hours. We have contracts established with hospitals and medical centers, rehabilitation centers, private practices, and public and private schools throughout the greater Atlanta area.

Do you offer distance learning or on-line courses?

- At this time, the CD Program does not offer these academic options.

Can I take classes only at night?

- No. You will need to take classes both during the day and in the evening. The time each class is scheduled may vary from semester to semester and most classes are only offered once per year. In addition, students must be available to participate in clinical practicum experiences during the day.

Can I maintain a part-time job while in the Master's program?

- Most students cannot maintain a part-time job, unless it is for only a few hours each week and the hours are flexible. Remember, once admitted to the program, you are a full-time student. The CD Program is intensive in both academic and clinical work, leaving little time for outside employment.

Does your program offer a tour of the facilities on campus?

- If you would like a tour of the Georgia State University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, please contact the Clinic office at 404-413-8044 to schedule an appointment. For campus tours, please contact the Georgia State University Welcome Center at 404-413-2063. If you apply to the program and are invited for an interview, you will have an opportunity to tour the clinic and meet with current students at that time.