



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Communication Sciences and Disorders MA Graduate Program Handbook

Last updated April 7, 2015

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Communication Sciences and Disorders MA

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

Introduction

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (DCSD) is part of the College of Health and Public Affairs (COHPA). The Department has a current enrollment of approximately 740 bachelor's-level majors and 200 master's-level majors. With 22 full-time faculty and numerous affiliated faculty, the Department offers students a broad academic curriculum, comprehensive clinical experiences, and ongoing research opportunities in human communication sciences and disorders.

Vision Statement

The Department is a community of scholars and clinicians collaborating to achieve excellence in education, research and regional service, and for a diverse society. Working together in a collegial and student-centered environment, we foster university and community partnerships, opportunities for lifelong learning, and respect for all people. Our goal is to enhance the quality of services for speech, language, hearing, and associated disorders.

Mission Statement

The faculty and staff of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders are dedicated to the preparation of speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and communication scientists who will achieve the highest standards of academic learning, scientific inquiry, and clinical service. We work together in an environment of integrity, cooperation, enthusiasm, and mutual respect to educate scientists and clinicians who are sensitive to issues of diversity, embrace the highest ethical standards, provide quality services, and advocate for the well-being of individuals and families impacted by speech, language, hearing, and associated disorders.

Plans of Study

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders offers three plans of study leading to the Master of Arts degree: the Traditional, Consortium (Summers Mainly) Out-of-Field and Accelerated programs. Each program is intended for those interested in working with children and adults who have communication disorders and is based on the same curriculum of course work and degree requirements but allows students to follow different plans of study. Students enrolled in each program must follow a prescribed sequence of academic and clinical courses developed by their faculty advisors.

Traditional

The **Traditional** program is a two-year, full-time program (six consecutive semesters, including two summers) for students with undergraduate degrees in Communication Sciences and Disorders or Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. For students with undergraduate degrees in other majors (out of field), the program requires additional prerequisite course work prior to enrolling in graduate courses. Students are required to meet with their faculty advisor to design a prescribed plan of study.

Accelerated

The **Accelerated** program enables highly qualified undergraduate majors in Communication Sciences and Disorders to achieve a master's degree in the UCF Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders graduate program in one fewer semester. This program is a BA/BS to MA program. Students enroll in 16 credit hours of graduate-level courses while completing the bachelor's degree.

Consortium (Summers Mainly)

The **Consortium** program is a five-year (Summers Mainly) program, including five consecutive summers of full-time enrollment and occasional enrollment during fall or spring semesters. The goal of this program is to address the critical shortage of public school speech-language pathologists and is a cooperative effort between the UCF Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and the Central Florida Public School Consortium. Participating school districts in the Central Florida Consortium are: Brevard, Citrus, Flagler, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter and Volusia.

Each plan of study provides academic and clinical education experiences necessary for certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE), and licensure by the state of Florida. The Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the ASHA has accredited the Master of Arts Degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders since 1986.

PhD Track in Education

The College of Education also offers the Communication Sciences and Disorders PhD track in Education. This track in the Education PhD program is designed specifically for those who wish to pursue careers as scholars, teachers and leaders in the area of school speech-language pathology with a content focus on language disorders and literacy (see healthprofessions.ucf.edu/csd/doctor-of-philosophy/).

Policies and General Information

Student Responsibility

You are expected to be aware of and understand department, college, and university policies relative to graduate education. It is your responsibility to be informed of all rules, regulations, and procedures required for graduate study at UCF. Requirements and policies cannot be waived or exceptions granted based solely on your ignorance of a policy or failure of an advisor to notify you of policies.

We encourage you to review the "General Policies" and "Graduate Program Policies" sections of the UCF Graduate Catalog for complete information regarding graduate study at UCF. The Graduate Catalog is available online at (catalog.ucf.edu/index.php).

In addition, we encourage you to review the UCF Golden Rule for policies specifically related to academic behavior, student conduct, and other rights and responsibilities associated with education at UCF. The Golden Rule outlines the appeals processes for grades, academic misconduct, and other matters involving instruction, research, or academic freedom. The Golden Rule is also available online at goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Admissions Status

At the time of your admission to the university and the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, you receive an admission classification based on your academic credentials. Descriptions of the admission classifications can be found in the Admissions section of the Graduate Catalog.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Review of Performance. After admission, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, with assistance from the College of Graduate Studies and the College of Health and Public Affairs, reviews your academic progress each semester. To maintain satisfactory academic progress and to pursue further study in the program, you must first satisfy any conditions or restrictions of your admission. Additionally, you must meet the academic standards of the Department and the University following each semester of enrollment.

The minimum Department and University standards for satisfactory academic performance to continue graduate study and fulfill degree requirements are:

- A GPA of 3.0 in all graduate courses specified in the graduate plan of study
- No grades of D+ (or below) or U grades in graduate-level coursework or graduate plan of study
- No more than two grades or six semester credit hours, whichever is greater, of C+ (or lower) in graduate-level coursework or graduate plan of study
- Maintenance of academic and professional integrity expected in the discipline and program

The undergraduate prerequisites courses are part of the graduate plan of study. Out of field students must also meet the minimum standards for satisfactory academic progress and must not earn more than two grades or six semester credit hours, whichever is greater, of C+ grades (or lower).

Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades. A student may apply a maximum total of six semester credit hours of "C" grades (C, C+, C-), or the "C" grade credits associated with at most two classes, whichever is greater, to satisfy degree program requirements. Receiving grades of D+ (or lower), grades of U, more than two grades of C+ (or lower), or failing to resolve grades of "I" may be grounds for dismissal from the program. In consultation with your advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator, you may petition to repeat courses in which you have achieved unsatisfactory grades to improve your grade. The opportunity to repeat courses is at the discretion of the Department and the University and will not be granted if you are dismissed from the program. In cases where courses are repeated, both grades are factored into the graduate GPA. There is no forgiveness policy on graduate grades.

Dismissal from the Program. In any term where the GPA drops below 3.0 in a plan of study, you will be placed on probationary status for a maximum of 9 credit hours. If you fail to attain a GPA of 3.0 by the end of the 9 credit hours, you will be dismissed from the program. Appeals regarding dismissal should be filed first with the Graduate Program Coordinator. Students who are dismissed for unsatisfactory progress will be removed from current semester courses and any future semester registration will be cancelled. Dismissed students will not be allowed to take additional courses in Communication Sciences and Disorders. After Dismissal, a student may only continue graduate study at UCF by applying as a non-degree seeking student or applying to another graduate program.

A degree program may dismiss any graduate student at any time when, in its judgment, the individual is deemed incapable of successfully performing at required standards of excellence. If a student is dismissed, reinstatement to graduate student status in the same program can occur only through a formal appeal process.

Transfer of Academic Credits

The UCF Graduate Catalog (catalog.ucf.edu/index.php) includes a description of the Transfer Credit Policy for the Division of Graduate Studies. Based on these regulations, the Department will allow you to transfer a maximum of 9 academic credit hours into your plan of study under the following conditions:

- You completed the courses as a post-baccalaureate student at UCF.
- You completed the courses at another accredited college or university.
- You completed the appropriate courses in another major at UCF or as part of a UCF graduate certificate program.
- You earned a grade of “B” or better or the equivalent in the courses.
- The Graduate Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and your advisor approves these courses as part of your Plan of Study.

Transfer of Clinical Clock Hours

To satisfy the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders, you must complete a minimum of 400 clock hours of supervised clinical experience in the practice of speech-language pathology, including 25 hours of clinical observation and 375 hours of direct client/patient contact. The Department permits you to transfer all 25 hours of clinical observation and a maximum of 50 hours of direct client/patient contact from another college or university under the following conditions:

- You submit an official record of your clock hours, signed by your clinical educator, to the Chair of the Board of Clinical Educators at the UCF Communication Disorders Clinic.
- The clinical educator must hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.
- The clinical educator must have provided supervision during a minimum of 25% of your therapy hours and 50% of your diagnostic hours.
- You must have received a grade of “B” or better if letter grades were assigned or a “Pass” if the experience was graded pass/fail.

Grade and Enrollment Policies

Grading System. UCF’s Grading System permits the use of +/- grades; however, some instructors may opt not to use the +/- feature of the system. Individual syllabi will indicate if your instructor has chosen to use this feature for a specific course. In particular, you should note that a B- falls below a 3.0 GPA (Grade Point Average). The system, with a grade point equivalent per credit hour, appears in the table below.

Letter Grade	GPA	Letter Grade	GPA	Letter Grade	GPA
A	4.00	C+	2.25	D-	0.75
A-	3.75	C	2.00	F	0.00
B+	3.25	C-	1.75	NC	No Credit
B	3.00	D+	1.25		
B-	2.75	D	1.00		

Incomplete Grades. You may receive a grade of “I” (Incomplete) when you are unable to complete a course due to extenuating circumstances and when you can clearly complete all requirements within a year from the time you received the incomplete. When an “I” grade is assigned, an instructor will complete an Incomplete Graduate form online specifying what is necessary to complete the course and setting a deadline for completion of the requirements.

You must resolve “I” grades within one year or by the withdrawal deadline of your final semester, whichever comes first. Unresolved “I” grades are automatically changed to “F” or “U” grades if a grade is not assigned within the allowed time period. Thesis students and students with financial aid or fellowships should refer to the Graduate Catalog for additional policies related to “I” grades.

Enrollment Requirements and Policies. University policy stipulates that students must enroll for 9 credit hours in the Fall and Spring semesters and 6 credit hours in Summer to be considered full-time; and, you may not

exceed 14 credit hours in any one semester without special permission from the Master's Program Coordinator. However, please note that the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders policy requires that you be continuously enrolled every semester according to a prescribed curriculum.

Some courses require **prerequisites** which may prevent you from registering for a course. In cases where course substitutions from outside the department or transfer credits are being used to meet the prerequisite requirement, Course Overrides or Course Registration Permissions are necessary for you to register.

Course Overrides and Course Registration Permission may only be granted by the department offering the course. When you take courses outside the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, you should consult with your advisor prior to requesting a Course Override from the department offering the course. The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders cannot provide a Course Override or Registration Permission for courses outside the program.

Holds may be placed on your registration, because of financial or other obligations to the University. You must resolve the hold before registration overrides can be processed or registration permission numbers can be used.

You must register for at least one course by the end of the regular registration period or you will be charged a \$100.00 **Late Registration Fee**. Additionally, you will be assessed a Late Registration Fee if you are registering for the first time during the "Late Registration" period.

Withdrawing from Courses. During the first week of each semester, there are 4 days of "Add/Drop" and a fifth and final day of "Add only". During this week, you may "Drop" a class without penalty, provided you have received consent of your advisor and the Master's Program Coordinator or Department Chair. You will not be charged for courses dropped during this first week, and the courses will not show on your academic record. If you fail to drop a course on the 4th day, you will be charged for that course.

If you choose not to continue in a class after the first week of the semester, you must withdraw from the course with the consent of your advisor and the Master's Program Coordinator. You are still financially liable for these courses, and the courses will appear on your academic record. The withdrawal period begins after "Late Registration and Add/Drop" and continues through mid-term. The Academic Calendar specifies the exact withdrawal deadline each semester. You will receive a "W" on your academic record if you withdraw during this time period.

There are three considerations related to withdrawing from courses:

- The Department has a prescribed sequence of courses for both the Traditional and Consortium Tracks leading to the Master of Arts Degree. Any deviation from this sequence must receive approval from your academic advisor and the Master's Program Coordinator prior to withdrawing from prescribed courses. Failure to follow the prescribed sequence may delay your graduation.
- Reducing your course load during any term may affect eligibility for financial aid, fellowships or graduate assistantships. Therefore, you should consult with your academic advisor, the Master's Program Coordinator, the Department Chair, and the COHPA Office of Graduate Studies prior to withdrawing from a course.
- You are not automatically withdrawn from a course for not attending. If you do not attend and do not withdraw, you are considered active in the course and will receive a grade of "F" at the end of the term. This "F" grade is considered part of your academic progress, regardless of whether or not you attended class.

No withdrawals are permitted after the stated deadline except in extraordinary circumstances. If you need to apply for a **Late Withdrawal**, you should consult the Withdrawal Policy in the Graduate Catalog at catalog.ucf.edu/index.php. For additional information about Medical Withdrawals, consult the Graduate Catalog.

Continuous Attendance. You are expected to maintain continuous enrollment and complete your graduate degree as expeditiously as possible. Following three consecutive semesters of non-enrollment, you will

be **discontinued** from your degree program. This is not the same as being **dismissed**. If you are discontinued for non-enrollment, you may apply for readmission to your original degree program through the normal application process. Students who are readmitted are automatically placed under the current Graduate Catalog in effect at the time of readmission, not under the original catalog year.

If you anticipate an extended period of absence from UCF (at least three semesters), you should apply for a **Special Leave of Absence**. Please make sure that you meet with your faculty advisor to notify him/her that you are anticipating an extended period of absence. Receiving a Special Leave of Absence prevents discontinuation and allows you to remain in your current catalog year. This Special Leave of Absence does not extend the maximum of seven years allowed for degree completion. Details regarding the Special Leave of Absence process are available in the Graduate Catalog.

Seven-Year Rule. You have seven years from the date of admission to the master's program to complete the degree, excluding the time required to complete pre-requisite course work. Courses older than seven years at the time of graduation may not be used in the plan of study. For example, if you were admitted to the program for the 2011 Fall semester, then you must complete all degree requirements by the end of the 2018 Summer sessions. On occasion, you may petition to waive the Seven-year Rule for specific courses.

Registration in the Term of Graduation. You must be enrolled during the term in which you graduate even if you have completed all required coursework for the degree. If you have completed all course requirements, you must enroll in and pay tuition for the one credit hour course IDS 6999, which does not have any academic requirements or bearing on your plan of study. IDS 6999 simply serves to show you are enrolled.

If you are resolving "I" (Incomplete) grades during your final semester, you are exempt from this enrollment requirement as the "I" grade is still considered an active course. "I" grades must be resolved by the withdrawal deadline of the final semester.

Knowledge and Skills Acquisition for Certification in Speech-language Pathology (KASA)

The 2014 ASHA certification standards are effective beginning September 1, 2014. Information about the 2014 ASHA Standards for Speech-Language Pathology are available on the ASHA website at asha.org/Certification/2014-Speech-Language-Pathology-Certification-Standards/. We recommend that you become familiar with these standards during your first semester of graduate study and review the standards periodically throughout your program.

As you progress through the program, you will have multiple opportunities to complete competencies across the scope of practice with individuals across the lifespan and to record the attainment of these competencies on the KASA.

The following is a summary of purposes and procedures for tracking the acquisition of knowledge and skills as they are met as well as an explanation of remediation procedures.

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders uses CALIPSO (Clinical Assessment of Learning, Inventory of Performance, and Streamlined Office-Operations) to track student academic and clinical competencies. CALIPSO is a web-based application that manages key aspects of academic and clinical education designed specifically and exclusively for speech-language pathology graduate preparation programs.

Policy

All incoming graduate students must register with CALIPSO by the established university tuition and fee payment deadline in the semester of admission.

Procedures

- The student is required to follow procedures for CALIPSO registration as provided in the mandatory student orientation meeting of newly admitted graduate students.
- Students will receive a PIN number via email for CALIPSO registration. Students must complete online CALIPSO registration by the established university payment deadline. This deadline can be found on UCF's Academic Calendar (registrar.sdes.ucf.edu/calendar).
- Students are required to pay the fee online directly to CALIPSO at the time of registration.
- Students who are not able to register as directed due to extenuating circumstances will need to meet with their faculty advisor.
- Students who have not registered by the stated deadline will not be able to enroll in clinical courses. The department cannot determine if the student has the competencies necessary to engage in clinical practice until CALIPSO registration has been completed by the student.
- Non-degree seeking students will need to discuss CALIPSO registration with the Master's Program Coordinator.

Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

Timeline for Completion

Sample Plan of Study

Traditional Track with a Non-Thesis Option

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 6204: Articulation/Phonological Disorders (3 credit hours) • SPA 6211C: Voice Disorders (4 credit hours) • SPA 6496: Language Disorders in Children and Adolescents (6 credit hours) • SPA 6551: Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level I (1 credit hour) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 6225C: Fluency Disorders (4 credit hours) • SPA 6410: Aphasia and Related Disorders (3 credit hours) • SPA 6559: Augmentative and Alternative Communication Systems (3 credit hours) • SPA 6503: Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level II (1 credit hour) • SPA 6503L: Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level II Application (1 credit hour, taken twice) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 6327: Aural Habilitation/Rehabilitation (3 credit hours) • SPA 6565: Feeding and Swallowing Disorders (3 credit hours) • SPA 6805: Research in Communicative Disorders (3 credit hours) • SPA 6942: Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level III (1 credit hour) • SPA 6942L: Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level III Application (1 credit hour, taken twice) • SPA 6553L: Clinical Practice in Differential Diagnosis in Speech and Language Pathology (1 credit hour, taken twice)*
		<i>*Taken two times in Semester 3, 4, or 5, but not in all three semesters.</i>

Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 6236 Motor Speech Disorders in Adults and Children (3 credit hours) • SPA 6474 Assessment and Management of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations (3 credit hours) • SPA 6943C Clinical Practice: Level I (3 credit hours) • Elective (3 credit hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 6946 Clinical Practice: Level II (3 credit hours) • Elective (3 credit hours) • Elective (3 credit hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 6946 Clinical Practice: Level III (10 credit hours)

Prerequisites

- To be certified to practice by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, all students must have transcript credit, which could include course work, advanced placement, CLEP, or examination equivalency, for each of the following areas: biological sciences, physical sciences, social/behavioral sciences, and mathematics or statistics. Courses may consist of any number of credits and must be taken outside the discipline.
- All students must complete at least 3 credit hours in statistics (STA 2014C Principles of Statistics, STA 2023 Statistical Methods I), or the equivalent with a grade of "C" or better. Course work in statistics is a prerequisite to SPA 6805 Research in Communication Disorders.
- Out-of-field students must complete the following undergraduate prerequisite courses or their equivalents:
 - STA 2014C Principles of Statistics (3 credit hours) or STA 2023 Statistical Methods I (3 credit hours)
 - LIN 3713 Language Science (3 credit hours)
 - LIN 3716/3716L Language Development: Birth Through 8 Years (5 credit hours)
 - SPA 3101 Physiological Bases of Speech and Hearing (3 credit hours)
 - SPA 3104 Neural Bases of Communication (3 credit hours)
 - SPA 3112/3112L Basic Phonetics and Lab (4 credit hours)
 - SPA 3011/3011L Speech Science I: Production and Lab (4 credit hours)
 - SPA 3123/3123L Speech Science II: Perception and Lab (4 credit hours)
 - SPA 4032 Audiology (3 credit hours)
 - SPA 4326 Hearing Across the Lifespan (3 credit hours)

Examination Requirements

Departmental Examination Policy

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders requires that master's degree students in Speech-Language Pathology pass the Comprehensive Examination in partial fulfillment of the master's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders. This requirement will be waived if the student successfully passes the Praxis Examination in speech-language pathology prior to their date of graduation.

Procedure

You are required to complete the Praxis Exam in your second to last semester in the Master's program. Students who do not pass the Praxis Exam in speech-language pathology in the second to last semester in their program must contact the Master's Program Coordinator to discuss the following options to insure on-time graduation: (1)

retaking the Praxis Exam in either their second to last semester or last semester or (2) passing the Departmental Comprehensive Exam in their final semester.

Registration

Online registration for Praxis is completed with the Education Testing Service (ets.org/).

Examination

The CSD Comprehensive Examination requires that you integrate knowledge across the curriculum. The examination time will be limited to a maximum of 2 ½ hours and is to be completed in a single session in a designated classroom.

Students registered with the Office of Student Disability are eligible for test accommodations. In addition, if you are a non-native English speaker approved by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to take the Praxis with special arrangements, you can also request test accommodations for the comprehensive examination. Documentation from ETS must be submitted to the Master's Program Coordinator at the time of registration for the comprehensive examination.

Pass/Fail

A passing score on the comprehensive exam is a 70%.

Unsuccessful Performance on the Departmental Comprehensive Examination

Students who do not pass the CSD Comprehensive Examination will be required to retake the exam in the following semester and graduation will be postponed. Graduating students must be enrolled at UCF during the term of graduation (see UCF Graduate Catalog (catalog.ucf.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=235)). Prior to retaking the examination, you will need to meet with the Master's Program Coordinator to discuss area(s) of weakness. Procedures to register for the examination will be provided.

You will be allowed no more than two attempts to pass the departmental comprehensive examination. If you do not pass the Comprehensive Examination after two attempts, you will be dismissed from the Master's program.

NOTE: The program will not accept Praxis scores earned prior to enrollment in the second to last semester and the completion of all required core academic coursework.

Thesis Requirements

Thesis Option

The Thesis Option is designed specifically for those of you who wish to pursue doctoral studies or careers as research scientists and assistants. This program option requires a serious commitment to the research process and should only be undertaken with the notion of engaging in a project from the beginning stages of conceptualization to the ending stages of manuscript preparation, presentation and possible publication. The Thesis Option will provide you with hands-on research experiences under the mentorship of a faculty advisor and committee who will guide you through the entire process. When completed with the right spirit, the Thesis Option can be one of the most growth-producing experiences of your master's program. Without a doubt, this option will prepare you for advanced study and the completion of a doctoral dissertation.

University Dissertation Requirements

A thesis is optional for this program; the following information is intended for those choosing to complete a thesis.

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) Site.

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Your program or college may have other earlier deadlines; please check with your program and college staff for additional deadlines.

The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at editor@ucf.edu.

Selecting a Topic

First, you need to select a topic. This is a multi-step process in which you begin by thinking about general areas in which you have an interest. You may also review assignments from previous classes, old papers, or collaborative group projects. You can review key research articles in your interest area, too. Most research articles typically include suggestions for further research. Finally, you might wish to enroll either in SPA 6805 Research in Communication Disorders or SPA 6938 Evidence-Based Practice in Speech-Language Pathology during your first or second semester in the program. In both of these courses, you will learn about the research process, and you will develop a proposal based on your interests.

As you consider various areas of interest, you may wish to talk with faculty members who conduct research in this area. They will help you refine your idea, or they may suggest new ideas. They may even invite you to work on a project that they are already researching. At this stage, it is likely that you will talk with more than one faculty member. It is appropriate to let each of them know that you are talking with several faculty members, because you are undecided about which topic you would like to pursue. Choosing a topic is a significant decision. You are going to be living with your choice for many months. So, it is important that you choose a topic that you like and enjoy and want to learn more about.

Selecting a Thesis Advisor

Selecting a topic goes hand in hand with selecting a thesis advisor. An advisor should be someone who shares your interest in the topic, someone who is familiar with your work, and someone whose work style you find compatible. Preferably, the Advisor should be someone you have studied with before, someone whose writing style you respect, and someone you trust. After all, your Advisor is going to be responsible for guiding the direction of the thesis, advising you about its development, and providing feedback on research and writing. You should contact a professor in the Department and discuss whether or not he/she would be interested in directing you as a thesis student. This person can be a Full, Associate, or Assistant professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. As soon as you decide upon a topic and a thesis advisor, which should be done early in your graduate studies, it is courteous to thank the other faculty members you have talked with for their guidance and to let them know the topic you have decided to research and the mentor who you have chosen. Preferably, by the beginning of the second semester of graduate studies, you should know the area that is of major interest to you and have an initial idea about the topic you would like to investigate. These early decisions are necessary, because it usually requires at least a year to complete a thesis. Thus, it is important to get started early.

Selecting a Thesis Committee

Once you have selected a thesis topic and an advisor, you're ready to select thesis committee members. A thesis committee minimally consists of three members. At least two of the three committee members need to be full-time faculty members of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. Again, your choice of a topic determines the composition of your committee. First, you should discuss potential committee members with your advisor and carefully consider some of the following questions: Whom have I worked with successfully in the past? What do I consider to be the most important characteristics in a committee member? Who do I know that has a background or interest in my research topic? Who do I know that could bring a fresh perspective to my research topic? Who do I know that could challenge my thinking? Who do I know that could add expertise in a related area such as statistical analysis? After you and your thesis advisor discuss the selection of thesis committee members, you typically contact potential members in order to determine if they are willing to serve on the committee.

Finally, you need to fill out the Thesis Committee Membership Form, have it signed by the thesis advisor, committee members, and the department chair; and, place it on file with the Coordinator of Academic Support. This document is an agreement between you and your committee to engage in research on the thesis topic proposed.

If you should decide not to write a thesis or to change your topic, you must inform your thesis advisor immediately. Your advisor will discuss the situation with you and assist you with next steps. If you are no longer interested in your current topic, you will need to engage in the exploration phase of developing a new topic. This should only be undertaken after a discussion with your advisor. After developing your new topic and selecting a new chair and committee, you will need to file another Thesis Committee Membership Form with the Coordinator of Academic Support.

Developing a Prospectus

The prospectus is a research proposal that provides sufficient information to allow committee members to determine whether the proposed research fulfills a need and will make a contribution to the literature. You and your advisor will discuss the process for developing the thesis prospectus. Although advisors require different Prospectus formats, typically the Prospectus should include an introduction, an abbreviated or full review of the literature, a statement of purpose, research questions, and a substantial methods section. The methods section

should include a description of participants and selection procedures, equipment and materials used in data collection, and data collection and procedures. In addition, the research design and data analysis procedures should appear in the methods section. Typically, you will begin with a review of the literature pertinent to your chosen topic. Then, you and your thesis advisor will discuss the current status of the research in the proposed area of study to determine whether the research fills a need or will make a contribution to the body of literature in the area. Based on your determination of need and contribution, you will either move forward with your topic or modify it. A well-developed prospectus can serve as the first draft of some thesis sections.

Meeting about the Prospectus

The purpose of the Prospectus Meeting is to evaluate the proposal and discuss the viability of the proposed questions and research methodology. Once your advisor has approved your prospectus, you will schedule a Prospectus Meeting with all committee members and provide them with a copy of the prospectus at least two weeks prior to the meeting. This will give committee members sufficient time for careful review and consideration of the proposed investigation.

At the Prospectus Meeting, you will make a brief presentation. Then, the committee members will be invited to ask questions about the proposed study and to recommend modifications that will strengthen the study. If general agreement is reached with respect to the purpose, design, and methodology of the study, the committee members will sign the Thesis Prospectus Approval Form (See Appendix) stating that they give their approval for you to conduct the investigation as proposed.

Conducting the Research Study

Now that you are ready to conduct your research investigation, you will need to seek approval from UCF's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB reviews all research proposals involving human participants in order to ensure that their welfare is protected throughout the investigation. Information detailing the application process for IRB approval, along with appropriate forms, may be found at: research.ucf.edu/Compliance/irb.html. As part of the IRB approval process, you must take the online CITI course for the Protection of Human Research Subjects. Once you have received approval from the IRB, you may proceed with data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Writing the Thesis

As you are conducting the study, you will be refining the initial sections of the thesis manuscript, beginning with the Introduction (review of the literature) and Methods. Each section will likely require several drafts before your advisor determines that the content and style meet expected levels of quality and professionalism. Once data collection and analysis are complete, you will discuss the results with your advisor prior to writing the sections on Results, Discussion, and Summary and Conclusions.

As you are preparing the manuscript, you must pay careful attention to avoid plagiarism--the "intentional or accidental misrepresentation of someone else's work, ideas, or words as your own" (UWC). The best way to avoid plagiarism is to use appropriate citation procedures for any material that you have quoted or paraphrased from specific sources. The University Writing Center (uwc.cah.ucf.edu/) has style guides, handouts, and web pages that can help you in correctly documenting your work. In Communication Sciences and Disorders, APA style is typically the style used by most journals. The APA Manual also contains some of the same information on citations. Finally, you must check your work for plagiarism prior to submitting your manuscript to your committee members. UCF uses a service called Turnitin.com which will analyze your manuscript for originality. The review of your work through Turnitin.com should be arranged through your committee chair. The University now requires you to submit your manuscript to Turnitin.com prior to distributing it to committee members.

Defending the Thesis

When your advisor approves the final draft of your thesis, you are ready to set a date for your oral defense. You must request a date and time at least six weeks before the last day of classes (See ETD) and provide a final copy of the thesis to the committee members a minimum of two weeks prior to the defense. Please check with your advisor relative to the date by which the Dean's office needs to receive a copy of your thesis. This is typically 3 weeks prior to the deadlines published by the College of Graduate Studies. The COHPA Graduate Coordinator will advertise your thesis defense by means of an electronic announcement to all departments and schools in the College. Other members of the community (e.g., students) and family members are welcome to attend the defense in addition to the committee members.

The format of the oral defense resembles a research presentation at a professional conference. You will prepare a brief presentation of your study which will be followed by a question and answer period. Many students design a Power Point presentation to accompany their remarks. According to protocol, committee members ask questions first and then the floor is open to questions and comments from other attendees. Once the defense is over, all attendees except the committee members will leave, so that the committee can deliberate about the acceptability of the thesis as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master's degree. If all committee members agree that the thesis has been satisfactorily completed and defended, they will sign the Approval form available in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The final copy of the thesis must be submitted electronically to College of Graduate Studies for format review and final submission.

As you proceed through the thesis process, you are encouraged to address questions or concerns with your thesis advisor, the Department Chair, the Graduate Program Coordinator, or any faculty member. We all want you to be successful in completing this process. Engaging in a thesis can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your graduate program. Throughout the process, you will grow immensely in independence, critical thinking, professional writing, and self-confidence. We wish you the best in your pursuit of this scholarly endeavor.

Portfolio/Clinical Education Experience Requirements

Philosophy and Goals

Supervised clinical practice is an integral part of the graduate program in Communication Sciences and Disorders. It provides you with an opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to the evaluation and management of individuals with a wide variety of communication disorders. The primary goal of clinical education is to prepare speech-language pathologists who will demonstrate general competence across the scope of practice in nine communication disorder areas across the life span. The nine disorder areas are: articulation, voice, fluency, receptive and expressive language, communication modalities, social communication, cognitive communication, swallowing, and hearing. Through sequenced clinical experiences and assignments, you will learn to:

- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate an extensive body of knowledge in communication sciences and disorders;
- Develop evidence-based practice in the selection of evaluation and treatment protocols;
- Achieve high levels of competency in prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment of clients with varied communication disorders;
- Communicate effectively and professionally;
- Employ self-evaluation strategies that lead to development of new and improved skills; and
- Demonstrate ethical and responsible professional conduct.

The ultimate goal of clinical education is to provide you with the knowledge and skills to practice as speech-language pathologists in diverse educational, healthcare, and rehabilitation settings. (Adapted from: *University of Pittsburgh Clinical Practicum Manual*, August 2005)

Clinical Practicum and Externship Experiences

You will complete three clinical practica, with associated seminars, in the UCF Communication Disorders Clinic and other affiliated facilities. In addition, you will be enrolled in two externships in schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, skilled nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, community clinics, or private practices. Through the practica and externships, you will obtain a minimum of 400 clock hours of supervised clinical experience in accordance with the guidelines outlined by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Clinical practica and externships vary in length and do not always coincide with the academic calendar. Upon completion of the master's level clinical education program, you will meet all of the requirements for certification by ASHA, the Florida Department of Education, and Licensure by the State of Florida.

UCF Communication Disorders Clinic

The UCF Communication Disorders Clinic (CDC) is the clinical centerpiece of the undergraduate and graduate programs in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (DCSD). The CDC has a threefold purpose: (a) to provide a quality clinical education for undergraduate and graduate students in the Communication Sciences and Disorders program, (b) to serve the needs of children and adults with communication and other associated disorders in the greater Orlando area and the region; and, (c) to provide a laboratory for student and faculty research in communication and related disorders. To this end, the CDC offers a full range of services that address pressing community needs. One of the Clinic goals is to provide low cost services for individuals who are underinsured, uninsured or who have exhausted their insurance benefits. Therefore, it is the Clinic's policy to serve all individuals regardless of their ability to pay. Thus, no clients are ever turned away because of an inability to pay.

At the UCF CDC, graduate students evaluate and treat clients with various communication disorders under the direct supervision of certified, master, and doctoral level speech-language pathologists. Each semester, the Clinic provides speech, language and hearing services to many children and adults from the Greater Orlando area, including Brevard, and Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Volusia, Counties. In addition, student clinicians and faculty participate in numerous community outreach activities, such as annual pre-school screening for children at daycare and preschool facilities. Currently, the CDC provides cross disability services in the following areas:

- Comprehensive speech, language and hearing evaluations for children and adults;
- Hearing aid evaluations and fittings;
- Auditory processing evaluations and treatment;
- Individual and group treatment for children and adults with a variety of communication disorders resulting from autism, Down syndrome, pervasive developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury, stroke, Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and other degenerative diseases;
- Assistive technology evaluations and treatment, with particular emphasis on augmentative and alternative communication;
- Bilingual assessments and treatment, with particular emphasis for individuals speaking Spanish and English;
- Accent reduction programming;
- Assessments and treatments (including intensive treatment) for individuals with fluency disorders
- Voice care;
- Evaluations and treatment for severe reading and writing disabilities; and
- Memory-related interventions for individuals with dementia.

Other Affiliated Facilities

To earn clinical hours, several facilities serve as extensions of the UCF CDC. In addition to the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST) Atlantic Regional Demonstration Center, co-located at the CDC, community facilities such as private practices, skilled nursing facilities, public and private schools, and adult developmental sites provide clinical experiences for students. In all of the facilities, the site supervisors and

clinical educators guide your professional development following the same standards as those embraced at the UCF CDC.

The services provided at these settings include:

- FFAST: demonstration, evaluation, and management of assistive technology
- Private Practices: individual evaluation and intervention for infants, toddlers, pre-school, and school-age children with severe oral-motor, feeding, and communication disorders
- Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFS): evaluation and management of adults with an emphasis on speech, language, and feeding/swallowing disorders.
- Schools: screening, evaluation, and treatment of school-age children who exhibit articulation/phonological and language disorders.
- Adult Developmental Sites: evaluation and management of adults with developmental disabilities.

Practicum Requirements

Your Clinic assignments provide you with opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills you have learned in the classroom to the evaluation and management of individuals with a wide variety of communication disorders. Thus, you are assigned to clients in disorder areas in which you have already completed coursework or you are concurrently enrolled in coursework. In UCF's program, you enroll in your first practicum experience during your second semester in the program. In this way, you will already have taken the following courses: SPA 6204 Articulation/ Phonological Disorders; SPA 6496 Language Disorders in Children and Adolescents; SPA 6211C Voice Disorders; and, SPA 6551 Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level I. By frontloading your coursework, we provide you with maximum knowledge and skill before your first clinical experience. In as much as possible, your clinic assignments across the practica will be as follows:

- **SPA 6551 Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level I**
Strategic application of knowledge in normal communication sciences and development to clinical practice through creating, testing and developing hypothesis about the nature of communication disorders
- **SPA 6503 Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level II**
Seminar preparing graduate clinicians for practicum with pediatric/adolescents across varied communication disorders: clinical decision-making, generalization, transfer, maintenance, service delivery, ethics, public policy and professional issues.
- **SPA6503L Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level II Application**
Supervised practicum across a variety of communication disorders within the pediatric and adolescent population. May be repeated for credit. Minimum of 20 clock hours required.
- **SPA 6942 Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level III**
Seminar preparing graduate clinicians for practicum with adults who have acquired disorders: clinical decision-making, generalization, transfer, maintenance, service delivery models, ethics, public policy and reimbursement.
- **SPA6942L Foundations of Clinical Practice: Level III Application**
Supervised practicum including acquired disorders with the adult population. May be repeated for credit. Minimum of 20 clock hours required.
- **SPA6553L Clinical Practice in Differential Diagnosis in Speech and Language Pathology**
Clinical application of diagnostic process and assessment procedures for a variety of communication disorders across the life span. May be repeated for credit.
- **SPA 6943C Clinical Practice: Level I**
Clinical practicum for the demonstration of knowledge and skill application in the diagnosis, treatment and management of persons with complex communication disorders across the lifespan.
- **SPA 6946 Clinical Practice: Level II**
Clinical practicum in the diagnosis, treatment and management of persons with communication disorders across the lifespan in specialty clinics and/or off-campus facilities.

- **SPA 6946 Clinical Practice: Level III**
Clinical practicum in the diagnosis, treatment and management of persons with communication disorders across the lifespan in specialty clinics and/or off-campus facilities

As you can see, you begin your clinical experiences at the UCF Communication Disorders Clinic or affiliated facilities. At the affiliated facilities, you will be guided by clinical faculty, employed by the Department, to mentor your professional development and growth. They are all part of our clinical team, and they follow all CDC policies and procedures relative to supervision and evaluation of your clinical performance.

At the CDC and other affiliated facilities, clinical educators provide supervision in accordance with ASHA standards. You can expect that a minimum of 25 percent of all treatment sessions and 50 percent of each evaluation will be supervised. We typically schedule our clients so that clinical educators may adjust the amount of supervision depending on your proficiency and the difficulty of the case. For evaluations, our clinical educators supervise 100 percent of the time. In addition to direct supervision, clinical educators schedule individual and group conferences to assist in planning for client management and to provide feedback relative to your performance. All practica are scheduled with weekly seminars to provide additional information about the management of the communication disorder area to which you have been assigned. Attendance at these seminars is mandatory and is a part of your clinic practicum obligation. Failure to attend may result in lowering your Clinic grade or in revocation of your Clinic privileges.

Clinic Expectations

Enrollment in clinic practicum and externships will place significant time demands on you during the week. For each 3 credit hour assignment, you should be prepared to devote approximately 6 to 10 hours per week to planning, implementing, and evaluating your clinical experiences. Over the course of Fall and Spring practica, you will obtain between 60 and 72 direct clinical contact hours, and during the Summer, between 48 and 60.

In preparing for clinic, you must hold paramount the welfare of the clients you serve. Thus, you must always be prepared, provide your services competently, and act professionally. While in clinic, you are expected to abide by the ASHA Code of Ethics (asha.org/default.htm). Ethical violations may result in permanent dismissal from practicum placement opportunities and may also subject you to dismissal from the academic program. Additionally, strict adherence to HIPAA guidelines (hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/index.html) is essential to protect the confidentiality of clients served at the CDC and other affiliated facilities. It is important to remember that the welfare of our clients is just as important as your clinical education needs. Participation in clinic should be viewed as a privilege rather than a right. When in Clinic, you are expected to maintain professional attire and demeanor at all times. Unprofessional conduct, or conduct which compromises the quality of services to clients, may result in dismissal from clinical practicum placements and from the academic program.

Externship Placements and Requirements

Externship is the clinical capstone experience of the graduate program in Communication Sciences and Disorders. It plays a critical role in your continued clinical skill acquisition and allows you to apply theoretical principles and management strategies learned in classes and clinical practica to real-world work settings. Externship should be a time of guided learning, improved competency, and progressive independence. There are three main purposes of the externship requirement:

- To provide you with a continuing series of practical experiences geared to your level of clinical expertise.
- To demonstrate how to assume professional roles in clinical settings while becoming accustomed to a variety of organizational structures, working relationships, and job expectations.
- To develop your professional identification as a speech-language pathologist and to gain experience in fulfilling a role as a team member working with other professionals and families in the treatment process.

You will have externship experiences during the last two semesters in the program. The last semester will be a full-time externship. The part-time externship always precedes the full-time externship, except in some cases where students in the Consortium Track must reverse these experiences to complete the full-time externship in a school setting. Externships provide you with expanded opportunities to develop proficiency in the practice of speech-language pathology.

You are eligible to enroll in externship upon demonstration of the following:

- Satisfactory completion of all required pre-professional and professional courses in Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Satisfactory completion of at least 150 clinical clock hours of graduate practicum
- Submission of the Externship Checklist and Clinical Hours Summary forms
- Completion of all adult coursework prior to enrolling in an adult externship, or all pediatric coursework prior to enrolling in a pediatric externship.

The CDC has collaborative agreements with approximately 200 hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, long term care units, rehabilitation centers, private practices and schools in the greater Orlando area and throughout the state of Florida to provide you with a variety of quality experiences in the community. Typically, externships last 15 weeks during the Fall and Spring semesters, and 12 weeks in the Summer, unless an externship site requires a different schedule. One of your externships must be completed with children and the other with adults. The order of these placements is at your discretion and is determined by your clinical and career interests. For example, if your intent is to pursue a career working with children, then you would, more than likely, opt to complete your full-time externship in a pediatric setting and your part-time externship in an adult setting. You must be present at the externship site for a minimum of 20 hours per week during the part-time externship and 40 hours per week during the full-time externship. Unprofessional conduct, or conduct which compromises the quality of services to clients, may result in dismissal from externship placements and from the academic program.

Dress Code

The CSD Clinic provides services to the community for reimbursement. Participation in the clinic is viewed with importance equal to that of a job. Student clinicians are expected to conduct themselves and to dress for a professional business environment.

The CSD Clinic Mandatory Dress Code is:

- Black polo (polyester or cotton) with the approved logo (Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders)
- Black or khaki slacks
- Black knee-length skirt unless a longer skirt is a religious requirement

The uniform must be worn for the following:

- All activities conducted in any area of the UCF Communication Disorders Clinic whether students are providing client services or visiting the student workroom area. (This includes the FAAST Center, Suite 200, Suite 155 and the Aphasia House or any other clinic area.)
- All service learning activities on and off campus.
- Any activities in which you, as a student, are representing the Department (Voice Day, preschool screenings, etc.).
- All UCF clinic outsourced sites (Bridges, Nemours, Brain Fitness, ODN, OCPS, etc.).
- Any part or full-time externship site unless an alternate uniform is required at that site/location.

Criminal Background Checks

All graduate students in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders work with vulnerable populations in the provision of speech, language and hearing services and have access to confidential client information. Therefore, the Department requires you to sign a form every year stating that your status, documented on the criminal background check submitted upon admission, has not changed. Changes to your status may serve as grounds for denial of enrollment in clinical courses and placement at clinical sites, removal from clinical courses and sites, or ultimately in dismissal from the program.

Off-Campus Practicum and Externship Placement: Prior to placement in practicum and externship sites, you may be required to comply with additional background check requirements for a specific site.

Appeals Process: If you commit a criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation after admission to the graduate program, you must notify the Graduate Program Coordinator within 72 hours of the offense. Failure to notify the Department may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

The appeals process for reinstatement in clinical courses, clinical placements, or the graduate program is as follows:

- Contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to discuss the offense.
- Submit the following documents to the Executive Committee in one packet:
 - Arrest and court records of the offense(s), including the final disposition(s). Every page of the court records must have a court seal. If the official records are not available, you must submit a letter from the court and/or law enforcement agency on official letterhead with the court or agency seal on it stating that the record has been purged.
 - Proof of the restoration of your civil rights if they were taken away due to an offense.
 - A letter that explains the offense, the circumstances surrounding it, and how you propose to rehabilitate your reputation and standing in the profession.
 - Letters of recommendation from three people, including one from a current or most recent employer, who can endorse you as a future health provider. Letters from family members will not be accepted.
- Present your appeal to the Executive Committee of the Department, in person, if you elect to do so. The committee will review all documents, discuss the appeal with you if you choose to be present, render a decision, and send a letter to you with the result of the appeal.

If you have any questions, please contact the Master's Program Coordinator, Faculty Advisor, or Department Chair.

Graduate Research

For information on research conducted in the discipline visit the [Faculty Research](#) and [Student Research](#) webpages on the College of Health and Public Affairs website.

Financial Support

UCF Graduate students may receive financial assistance through fellowships, assistantships, tuition support, loans or other means. The number of graduate students awarded financial support varies from semester to semester, depending on availability of funding and the competitiveness of applicants' credentials. Options for support through the College of Graduate Studies and the Office of Student Financial Assistance include fellowships, assistantships, loans, and federal work study; whereas, options for support through the department include positions as graduate student workers, graduate teaching assistantships, tuition waivers, and other special awards. You may review a brief description of each type of support below and access more detailed information at funding.graduate.ucf.edu/ or finaid.ucf.edu. If you require financial aid counseling, you should contact the UCF Office of Student Financial Assistance. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) website (asha.org/students/financial-aid.htm) also provides information on financial aid. On this website,

you will find information on types of funding (e.g., scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study programs), sources of funding (federal, state, and local governments; private agencies; foundations; and service organizations such as fraternities and sororities) and financial aid for specific groups or recipients (racially/ethnically diverse, those with disabilities, mature returning students, and gender specific).

Fellowships, Loans, and Work Study

Fellowships

Fellowships are awarded based on various criteria, including financial need, campus/community activities, leadership positions, academic success, and work experience. Fellowship rewards, encourage, and assist you in pursuing academic excellence and leadership roles. Upon admission as a full-time student into the master's program in Communication Sciences and Disorders, you are eligible to apply for a limited number of University fellowships to support your graduate education. These fellowships are awarded on the basis of academic merit to the most highly qualified applicants, with some available only to applicants from under-represented groups.

If you are interested in being considered for a fellowship, you are strongly encouraged to apply for admission by the priority date and to communicate your interest in receiving a fellowship. Most fellowship procedures require Master's Program Coordinators to nominate you to the College of Graduate Studies through the College of Health and Public Affairs and the department. All admitted graduate students are automatically considered in this nomination process. Other fellowships, however, require you to fill out a fellowship application. For more details about graduate fellowships, visit graduate.ucf.edu/fellowships/.

Loans

Loans are borrowed funds that must be repaid. They provide you with an opportunity to invest in your future. To receive federal loans, you must be enrolled at least half-time in UCF classes that count toward degree completion. To be eligible for loans graduate students must enroll in a minimum of 4.5 hours per term for Fall or Spring, or 3 hours in the Summer.

Federal Work Study

Federal Work Study is designed to provide students who demonstrate financial need, a chance to earn money while pursuing a degree. Individual departments hire students while the Office of Student Financial Assistance determines the eligibility, award amount, and pay rate.

USDOE Personnel Preparation Grant

USDOE Personnel Preparation Grant: University of Central Florida Collaborative for Preparing School Speech-Language Pathologists to Serve Listening and Spoken Language in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Project LSL-CLD). The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders has a five-year personnel preparation grant to prepare speech-language pathologists to work with children, including infants and toddlers, who are deaf and hard of hearing and who come from culturally and linguistically diverse homes. This is a collaborative initiative between the University of Central Florida and University of South Florida departments of Communication and Disorders.

Graduate Student Assistant (GAs)

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and the UCF Communication Disorders Clinic employ graduate student assistants throughout the semesters contingent on funding. These students assist with advising and clinical operations and provide general faculty support in teaching and research. If interested, students must file an application with the department.

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and Tuition Waivers

Teaching assistantships are available through the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders contingent upon funding. The GTAs typically require between 10 (.25 FTE) and 20 (.50 FTE) hours of work per week and pay a stipend commensurate with the number of hours worked. Full-stipend students (20 hrs/wk) receive a minimum stipend of \$6,600 per academic year (fall and spring semesters) require students to perform assistantship assignments for a minimum of 20 hours per week and half-stipend (10 hrs/wk) students receive a minimum of \$3300 per academic year. All Graduate Teaching Assistants are eligible for tuition waivers but only those with a .50 FTE appointment are eligible for health insurance. Graduate Teaching Assistants with .25 FTE assignments receive a waiver for half of their tuition each semester. Specific questions concerning the amount of tuition included with Graduate Teaching Assistantship appointments may be directed to the UCF College of Graduate Studies at gradassistantship@ucf.edu.

GTAs may become Graduate Teaching Associates, Assistants, or Graders and perform some of the following duties:

- Preparing materials for classroom presentations
- Monitoring and grading examinations
- Providing classroom demonstrations and presentations
- Teaching laboratory sections for phonetics, speech science and language development
- Conducting library research
- Holding office hours for students
- Providing review sessions for course material or examinations

You are encouraged to apply for positions as Graduate Student Workers or Graduate Teaching Assistants at the time of application to the program by obtaining an application from the Department and submitting it to the Master's Program Coordinator (See Appendix). In the application, you should note any special skills and experiences that you have had that would assist you in performing the duties of GTAs. On occasion, additional assistantships will be available as you progress through the program. Therefore, we encourage you to check back with us to determine if there are openings.

Determination of Offers and Continuation of Appointments

Most fellowship awards are for one-year and are made at the beginning of your graduate program. To continue to receive a fellowship award, you must be in good standing and make satisfactory academic progress. To be considered in good standing, you must maintain the following standards:

- You must be fully accepted into a graduate degree program at UCF.
- You must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student.
- You must maintain a minimum graduate grade point average of 3.0 each term of the award.
- You must receive a satisfactory progress report from your academic advisor each term of the award.
- You cannot receive a grade of incomplete (I).

Failure to meet any one of these standards will cause cancellation of the fellowship. In rare instances, the Division of Graduate Studies may grant exceptions to this policy after reviewing evidence of mitigating circumstances.

Appointments to positions as GAs and GTAs typically continue through the second to last semester of your academic program when you will be placed in a full-time externship. Each semester, your faculty mentor will evaluate your performance based on your assigned responsibilities. Continuation in your position will be based on satisfactory performance of all duties, recommendation of your faculty mentor, and satisfactory progress in your academic program.

Student Travel for Presentations at Professional and Research Conferences

Faculty members in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders encourage all students to submit independent or collaborative professional/research conference presentation proposals. When you have a conference presentation proposal accepted, the department would like to support your professional efforts as much as possible.

Please review the information in the following table to determine how you may be able to access travel funding. It is your responsibility to make the relevant requests and to locate any updated information on the funding sources listed in the table.

Potential Funding Source	Eligible Students	Information
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders	Graduate Students	When funding is available, the department will offer a maximum of \$200 toward travel expenses per conference. Contact Amy Casady for additional information: amy.casady@ucf.edu
College of Health and Public Affairs	Graduate Students	Contact Dean's office.
Student Government Association	Graduate Students	Website: www.ucfsga.com/
College of Graduate Studies	Graduate Students	Graduate Travel Fellowship
RAMP Program	Graduate Students, RAMP Students	Up to \$200 per year. Contact: RAMP Office 407-823-1815 Website: www.ramp.ucf.edu
McNair Program	McNair Students	Contact: McNair Scholars Office (407) 823-1817 Website: www.mcnair.ucf.edu/
NSSLHA	Active NSSLHA (UCF Chapter) Student Members	Contact: NSSLHA Officers www.nsslhaucfbranch.webs.com Policy: Requests are typically considered for students presenting at the ASHA Annual Convention. Funding is not always available since support is accessed through a group SGA proposal.
ASHA	Graduate Students	Contact: ASHA website www.asha.org/students/awards.htm

Other Financial Assistance Opportunities

There are a number of scholarship and fellowship opportunities available for graduate study from professional, philanthropic, and other organizations. Some of these opportunities have work-related obligations upon completion of graduate study. The following is a partial list of these opportunities:

AMBUCS Scholar Program ambucs.org/therapists/scholarship-program/

\$500 to \$1500 per year

Apply by April 15

American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation asha.org/

\$2,000 to \$4,000 per year

Check website for deadline and application information

Bilingual Therapies, Inc. Scholarship bilingualtherapies.com/

\$2,500 per semester

Apply by July 15 (for fall semester) or November 15 (for spring semester)

FLASHA Graduate Student Scholarship flasha.org/

\$1000 per year

Apply by March 15

Progressus School Therapy Career Vision Scholarships progressustherapy.com

\$3000 per year

Check website for deadline and application information

Sertoma Communicative Disorders Scholarship Programs sertoma.org/

\$1000 per year

Apply by March 30

Graduate Student Associations

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/.

For a listing of discipline affiliated organizations visit the [Resources webpage](#) on the department website.

Professional Development

Professional Portfolio

A professional portfolio is an organizational tool that provides you with a means to document your progress toward achieving professional competence as a speech-language pathologist. Your portfolio is a personal representation of your journey through the graduate program in communication sciences and disorders and should reflect what you have learned along the way, (i.e. formative assessment) about the practice of speech-language pathology as well as what you know and can do (i.e. summative assessment) by the conclusion of the program. The portfolio may include a variety of artifacts that demonstrate your knowledge, your skills, and your beliefs or attitudes about the practice of speech-language pathology. Just as an artist's portfolio shows the evolution of the artist's craft over time, your portfolio should demonstrate your growth and development as a speech-language pathologist. Those who access your portfolio should have a clear understanding of your current knowledge and skill levels and an impression of how you arrived at where you are today.

We recommend that you begin to collect artifacts from your courses and clinical practica as soon as you begin taking classes. For both formats, you should date the completion of all materials, include any grading rubrics or instructor's comments, and remove identifying information for all individuals other than the author. You may want to store your artifacts in a three-ring binder or album. The portfolio should be designed so that you can add, delete, or edit materials easily. It is suggested that you organize information clearly with tabs or section dividers. Additionally, clear plastic sleeves or page protectors will allow for easy editing, as well as addition or removal of materials, as you make changes to the portfolio throughout your educational program.

Federal Work Study

The following is a list of suggested materials that could be included in your portfolio:

- Informational Data Sheet (Name, Address, E-mail address, Phone number)
- Table of Contents
- Resume
- Supervisory evaluations of all practica and externships
- Artifacts: “tangible evidence of knowledge that is gained, skills that are mastered, values that are clarified, or dispositions and attitudes characteristic of you” (Campbell, 2003). All artifacts must be the original work of the student. If an artifact has been modified, the original source must be cited. All artifacts must respect confidentiality by not disclosing names or any other identifying information. If artifacts contain photographs, videos, audio recordings, or student work, the candidate must have obtained a letter of consent /assent.
- Research Papers
- Research Proposals
- Journal Article Critiques
- Research Presentations
- Service-Learning Projects
- Case Studies
- Evaluation Reports
- Documentation of pure-tone screening and audiogram
- Progress Reports
- Lesson/session plans
- Treatment plans
- SOAP notes
- Sample of student work
- Observation form (completed by mentor)
- Intervention management philosophy and plan
- Communication to parent/caregiver
- Photographs of teaching and learning environments
- Letters of recommendation

Further information and instruction, regarding Professional Portfolios, is discussed in Clinic Seminar.

Student Advisement

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders offers a full range of advising services, including academic, professional, and personal advisement. The Department provides you with two types of advisors: **Academic Advisors** and **Faculty Advisors**.

Academic Advisors are non-faculty, professional staff members who are knowledgeable about departmental program requirements and university guidelines for admissions, registration, and graduation. Prior to registration for your first semester of graduate study, Academic Advisors and Coordinators of Externship will assist you in the development of Academic and Clinical Plans of Study. As you progress through your program, Academic Advisors will continue to help you update your degree plans, aid in the selection of classes, assist you in registering each semester, and advise you about graduation requirements. Academic Advisors have regularly scheduled hours for walk-in advising.

Faculty Advisors are full-time professors in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. When you enter the graduate program, you will be assigned to a faculty advisor who will be responsible for academic and professional advising. Faculty Advisors typically schedule five office hours during the week. At peak advising times, such as registration, they will often schedule additional hours. To assure successful progress through the program, you will be required to meet with your Faculty Advisor each semester prior to registration to affirm that you are “on track” for completion of the program.

As you move through the program, you will be following a prescribed sequence of courses. This sequence can only be changed under extraordinary circumstances. If you need to request a change in either your Academic or Clinical Plans of Study, you will be required to provide your request, in writing, first to your Faculty Advisor who will then refer you to a Master's Program Coordinator. The Master's Program Coordinator will be responsible for approving all changes to Plans of Study. A request to change a Plan of Study will be granted only for the most significant and serious reasons.

Student advising is readily available in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. Open advising with Academic Advisors is offered Monday through Thursday during specific times posted each week. You may call, stop by the departmental office or go online to healthprofessions.ucf.edu/csd/ to check the current 'open advising' schedule. You may also contact the academic advisor at csdgraduate@ucf.edu.

Depending on the question or subject matter, you may be advised by advisors in the Office of Academic Support, the Master's Program Coordinator, Coordinators of Externship, or Faculty. Advisors are a valuable resource for issues such as the review of extenuating circumstances, discussion of department-specific appeals, requests for course overrides, and consultation for poor academic performance. Faculty and staff, however, will not complete tasks for which you are responsible, such as course registration and completion of financial aid documents. Also, you should be aware that the person you seek advising from may only be available during select days and times, or only by appointment. Some advising questions or concerns may not be addressed immediately if faculty or staff members are already addressing other concerns or emergencies for the department or another student.

Below is a list of the most common advising referrals for different faculty and staff in the Department:

Faculty

- Development of mentor relationships with students
- Discussion of potential topics for thesis and research
- Discussion of an incomplete grade or review of a potential grade change
- Review of clinical hours and requirements (students should consult the appropriate Clinic faculty or staff)
- Consultation relative to completion of the KASA
- Development of, and review of changes to, a clinical plan of study (students should consult the appropriate Clinic faculty or staff)

Master's Program Coordinator

- consultation relative to failing Comprehensive exam or Praxis scores
- consultation relative to completion of the KASA
- consultation relative to poor academic performance (including grades of 'C', 'D', or 'F')
- interest in the LSL-CLD Programs
- discussion of concerns not resolved between a student and a faculty member
- review of proposed changes to an academic plan of study

Coordinator of Externship

- placement into an externship site
- discussion of concerns with on-site supervisor or working conditions at the externship
- consultation relative to completion of the KASA

Academic Advisors

- development of, and review of changes to, an academic plan of study
- request for a course override based on space limitations, prerequisites, or credit hours
- substitutions approved for a graduate plan of study
- submission of Praxis examination scores

- completion of ASHA paperwork after graduation

Student Resources

Communications Disorders Clinic

The UCF Communication Disorders Clinic provides a full range of services for children and adults with speech, language, hearing, swallowing and related disorders. To schedule an evaluation or treatment, you may contact the Clinic at (407) 882-0468.

Counseling Services

The [UCF Counseling Center](#) is comprised of professional mental health counselors, psychologists, and graduate interns who offer a variety of counseling services including individual and group services and career or crisis counseling. All counseling services are offered free of charge for currently enrolled UCF students. Visit the UCF Counseling Center website for further information on services and hours of operation.

Multicultural Academic and Support Services

The [Office of Multicultural Academic and Support Services](#) (MASS) provides comprehensive academic support, cultural enrichment, consultation, and referral services that promote the recruitment, admission, retention, and graduation of African American, Hispanic American, Asian American and Native American students. MASS offers personalized advising and support, monitors academic progress, sponsors a six week summer program, called Seizing Opportunities for Achievement and Retention (SOAR), and designs and coordinates cultural and social activities to assist multicultural students in realizing their academic, career and personal goals. MASS serves as the focal point of operations in addressing the specific needs, issues and concerns that confront multicultural students at UCF.

Center for Multicultural Multilingual Studies

The [UCF Center for Multilingual Multicultural Studies](#) provides English language programs for international students who desire to enhance their educational and/or research experience at UCF. The Multicultural Center also promotes multicultural awareness in the UCF community.

Student Accessibility Services

[Student Accessibility Services](#) provides information and individualized accommodations to UCF students according to each student's documented disability (UCF Student Disability Services, 2006). To request special testing or find out about eligibility status for disability accommodations, please visit the UCF Student Disability Services website or call (407) 823-2371.

Student Health Services

The [Student Health Services Center](#) offers medical services to all currently enrolled UCF students. Some of the current services provided by the UCF Health Center include: Women's Health, Travel Clinic, Smoking Cessation, Men's Health Clinic, Medical Records, Flu Shots, Emergency/Urgent Care, On-Campus Chiropractic Care, Ask-A-Doc service, and Reach for Wellness service.

For operating hours and information regarding scheduling of appointments, please visit the web site. A pharmacy is also located on-site at the UCF Health Center for students' use. Operating hours and frequently asked questions may be found their website.

Victim Services

The UCF [Victim Services](#) team offers free, confidential support to UCF students, faculty, and staff concerning crisis intervention and victim advocacy. For further information on Victim Services, please visit their website or contact a victim advocate 24 hours a day at (407) 823-5555.

International Services Center (ISC)

The [International Services Center](#) (ISC) provides leadership, advocacy and support services for prospective and current international students, scholars, and employees at the University of Central Florida, as well as assistance in adjusting to a new academic environment and culture. Furthermore, ISC will devote its efforts, plans and processes to ensure legal compliance with the federal regulations, so international students can maintain their status while at UCF. Contact Information: 407-823-2337

Job Search

For information regarding career opportunities in the field of communication sciences and disorders, including speech-language pathologists; audiologists; and speech, language and hearing scientists, visit the [Career Opportunities](#) webpage on the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders website.

Career Services and Experiential Learning (CSEL)

Career Services and Experiential Learning (CSEL) offers a comprehensive range of services to help you reach your academic and career goals. A talented staff of career and experiential learning specialists will assist you with all phases of career development and applied learning experiences to include:

- Major and Career Choices
- Academic and Career Information
- Experiential Learning Opportunities (co-op, Internships, Service Learning)
- Resumes and Cover Letters
- Interviewing Skills
- Job Search Strategies
- Employment Assistance (Career Fairs, On-Campus Recruiting, Job Postings and Resume Referrals)

Graduate School Information

These programs and services are available through walk-in assistance, scheduled appointments, workshops, and major events. For more information visit the Career Services website at career.ucf.edu/.

Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Master of Arts in Communication Sciences and Disorders Forms](#)
Information page for Communication Sciences and Disorders graduate students including all advising information and forms.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not

available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

Useful Links

- [School of Communication Sciences and Disorders](#)
- [College of Health Professions and Sciences](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Florida Department of Health](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [Library](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

Grad Faculty

Asterisk = has previous committee experience, which qualifies the person to serve as vice chair

Barrett, Amy

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Contact Info: Amy.Barrett@ucf.edu

Carnaby, Giselle *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Contact Info: Giselle.Carnaby@ucf.edu

Carson, Cecyle *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Research interests: Cleft Palate, Velopharyngeal Dysfunction, Voice, Late-talking Preschoolers, Phonological Development

Contact Info: Cecyle.Carson@ucf.edu

Crary, Michael *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Michael.Crary@ucf.edu

DiNapoli, Joseph

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Joseph.DiNapoli@ucf.edu

Dreilinger, Gillian

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Gillian.Dreilinger@ucf.edu

Ehren, Barbara *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Barbara.Ehren@ucf.edu

Ehren, Tom

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: tom.ehren@ucf.edu

Harrington, Nancy

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Nancy.Harrington@ucf.edu

Harvey, Charlotte *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Research interests: Language Acquisition and Early Intervention, Clinical Applications in Fluency Disorders
Contact Info: Charlotte.Harvey@ucf.edu

Hoffman Ruddy, Bari *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Bari.HoffmanRuddy@ucf.edu

Hostetler, Jane

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Jane.Hostetler@ucf.edu

Kent-Walsh, Jennifer *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: jkent@ucf.edu

Kong, Anthony Pak Hin *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: pkong@ucf.edu

Lieberman, Rita

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: jlieberm@ucf.edu

Parsons, Carla

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: cparsons@ucf.edu

Puig, Enrique *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: enrique.puig@ucf.edu

Ratusnik, David *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: ratusnik@ucf.edu

Resnick, Pamela

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Pamela.Resnick@ucf.edu

Rivers, Kenyatta *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: krivers@ucf.edu

Rosa-Lugo, Linda *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Research interests: Language and Literacy Development in English Learners, Aural Rehabilitation, Phonological Development, Professional Issues in Speech Language Pathology
Contact Info: Linda.Rosa-Lugo@ucf.edu

Ryalls, Jack *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: ryalls@ucf.edu

Schwartz, Jamie *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: jschwartz@ucf.edu

Scott, Andrea *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Andrea.Scott@ucf.edu

Towson, Jacqueline *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Jacqueline.Towson@ucf.edu

Troche, Joshua

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Joshua.Troche@gmail.com

Utt, Harold

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: hutt@ucf.edu

Vanryckeghem, Martine *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: martinev@ucf.edu

Whiteside, Janet *

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: janet.whiteside@ucf.edu

Wilson, Lauren Bislick

College: College of Health Professions and Sciences
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Lauren.Bislick@ucf.edu

Zraick, Richard *

College: College of Health and Public Affairs
Disciplinary affiliations: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Contact Info: Richard.Zraick@ucf.edu

Contact Info

- **Linda Rosa-Lugo**
Associate Professor, Director of UCF Listening Center
HPA II 110
Phone: 407-823-4805