West Texas A&M University
Department of Communication Disorders

Graduate Student Handbook

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Mrs. Rebecca Linke, Clinical Coordinator
This handbook belongs to: ________________________________

My academic advisor is: ________________________________

Advisor’s Office: ________________________________

Office Telephone: ________________________________

WTAMU website: www.wtamu.edu

Department of Communication Disorders site: http://www.wtamu.edu/academics/communication-disorders.aspx

ASHA: www.asha.org

West Texas A&M University Department of Communication Disorders does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, handicap, or national origin. West Texas A&M University, according to Affirmative Action Goals, encourages qualified men, women, and minorities of all ages to apply.
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## Table of Contents

Mission and Strategic Goals..............................................................................................6  
Program Outcomes...........................................................................................................7  
Student Learning Outcomes............................................................................................7  
Graduate Curriculum........................................................................................................8  
Academic Advising ...........................................................................................................9  
Comprehensive Exams .....................................................................................................10  
Thesis Guidelines ............................................................................................................11  

Appendices

ASHA Code of Ethics.......................................................................................................12  
CAA Information ........................................................................................................... 12

Signature Page ..................................................................................................................13

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### About Your Graduate Handbook

The Graduate Handbook has been designed to provide information about the intents, policies, and procedures for the CD curriculum and program. The CD program is an integral part of the university and the graduate school and the policies and procedures for the speech-language pathology graduate program are aligned with those entities. The handbook contains information about policies and procedures adapted to the CD graduate program.
Department of Communication Disorders

Mission and Strategic Goals

Mission

It is the mission of the Communication Disorders Department at West Texas A&M University to facilitate learning the knowledge and skills underlying communication sciences and disorders; to prepare students for careers in speech-language pathology; to help meet the need for speech-language pathologists in the region surrounding Canyon and Amarillo; to educate students in the use of evidence-based research in clinical program solving; to value the cultural differences of the clients and families they serve; to advance the knowledge in the fields of speech, language, hearing, and swallowing and to encourage life-long professional learning throughout their careers.

Department of Communication Disorders Strategic Goals

1. To provide curriculum that is based in evidence based practice. This includes the commitment to review textbooks every two years for new adoptions to stay current.
2. To provide clinical practicum that will develop the students skills, provide hours, and help them grow as clinicians to become the future of our field.
3. To prepare each student to be able to critically think. The ability to tie the academic education and the clinical education is imperative for success in this field. The student must be prepared to use research, sources, and experience to work through each new client.
4. To provide a well-rounded faculty. Tenure track, research, and clinical abilities.
5. To provide an undergraduate education that will adequately prepare the students for a graduate program. Recruit and retain high quality students in the BS program.
Program Outcomes:

1. The PRAXIS three-year average pass rate will stay above the expected 80%.
2. The program will continue to have a 100% pass rate on comprehensive exams.
3. The program will continue to have above the expected 80% on job placement.
4. The program will continue to have above the expected 80% for on time graduation.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The student must have demonstrated knowledge of the biological sciences, physical sciences, statistics, and the social/behavioral sciences.

2. The student must have demonstrated knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including the appropriate biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural bases. The applicant must have demonstrated the ability to integrate information pertaining to normal and abnormal human development across the life span.

3. The student must have demonstrated knowledge of communication and swallowing disorders and differences, including the appropriate etiologies, characteristics, anatomical/physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates in the following areas: artic, fluency, voice/resonance (including respiration and phonation), receptive and expressive language in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, hearing, including the impact on speech and language, swallowing, cognitive aspects of communication, social aspects of communication, and augmentative and alternative communication modalities.
**Graduate Curriculum**

ASHA requires a stand-alone statistics course, a course in either chemistry OR physics (physical science), a behavioral science, and a biology course to receive your licensure. 25 hours of observation will be obtained prior to graduate clinical practicum.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year/Graduate One</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD 6330 Aphasia and Right Brain Disorders</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>CD 6305 Neuromotor Speech Disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD 6370 Articulation &amp; Phonological Disorders</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>CD 6315 Research Methods in CD</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD 6375 Language Disorders in School-Age Children</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>CD 6340 Dementia and Head Injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD 6398 Clinical Practicum</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>CD 6410 Voice Disorders</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12 hrs</td>
<td>CD 6398 Clinical Practicum</td>
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<td><strong>CD 6301 Thesis (Optional)</strong></td>
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<td>3 hrs</td>
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<td>6 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<th>Second Year/Graduate Two</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD 6320 Language Disorders in Children: Birth to 5</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>CD 6699 External Clinical Practicum</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD 6335 Fluency Disorders</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td><strong>CD 6302 Thesis (Optional)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>CD 6450 Swallowing Disorders</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD 6399 External Clinical Practicum</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>(9 hrs)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13 hrs</td>
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<td>(16 hrs)</td>
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The Thesis option will add 6 hours to your degree plan. If you elect to complete a thesis you will need to identify a topic, a chair, and a committee within the first semester of graduate school.

**Graduating from our graduate program meets all Texas licensure requirements as indicated by the State Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology of Texas. WTAMU’s graduate program is also accredited with the CAA and ASHA.**
Plan of Study
Each student will consult with Dr. Cross to design their Plan of Study (Degree Plan). The Plan of Study is filed at the Graduate School and becomes the basis for the graduation check by the Graduate School. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain a copy of the approved plan from the academic advisor.

Changes in Plan of Study
All changes to the Plan of Study will go through Dr. Cross. The new plan of study will then be filed at the Graduate School.

Students with a Disability
An alternate form of administration of any examination will be available to students who have appropriately followed the procedure for disabled students (See WTAMU Student Handbook).

Filing for Graduation
It is the student’s responsibility to be informed of the filing dates, graduation application dates, and fees required for graduation. This information is available from the Graduate School Office in the Kilgore Research Center. Students are responsible for meeting all deadlines associated with graduation and the completion of the degree. All students who wish to receive a diploma must file for graduation even if they do not intend to attend the graduation ceremony.

Semester Advising
Each semester Dr. Cross will meet with you to verify that you are on schedule, completing all courses with a ‘B’ or better, and are ready for “green-lighting”. This opens your account for registration. During this appointment we discuss the current semester courses and clinic placements.
Comprehensive Exams

The Department of Communication Disorders utilizes comprehensive exams as a summative assessment for student learning. The exams are administered over two days and are given in the Hastings Electronic Learning Center. There are nine to ten subtests, covering all areas taught during their graduate curriculum. There are also subtests that ensure that the ASHA Big 9 (to include Audiology and Aural Rehab), evidence based practice and research are evaluated.

Comprehensive evaluations are scored using a rubric and in a blind format (student’s exams are coded by their Buff ID number). This ensures that all exams are scored equitably.

Remediation Plans
If a student does not pass a section of the comprehensive evaluation they are allowed to remediate. A remediation plan is agreed upon by the instructor of the section and the chair.

The first remediation stage is another written comprehensive evaluation. This allows the student to focus on the area in question. If the student proves competency then they receive a passing score. IF the student still is not proving competency then the second stage of remediation is an oral comprehensive evaluation. The student must pass the oral stage of remediation or they will not move to graduation. At this time they will register in the course again the next time it is offered. This will require an extended time in the program.
Thesis Option

Each student is presented the option to complete a thesis during the first advising meeting with Dr. Cross. If a student determines that they are interested in the thesis track they are advising to identify a chair and schedule a meeting. During the meeting with the chair a topic is decided on, a committee is formed, and a timeline is established. If the student requires human subjects then an IRB is obtained utilizing our resources in the Kilgore Research Center, Graduate School.

The actual courses assigned for thesis (CD 6301 and 6302) are taken in the second year of the program; however, the IRB process and literature review will begin in the first year of the program.

Upon completion the student will defend their thesis. The defense will be an open invitation to the members of the faculty, the program, and the college. The committee will determine if the student successfully passed their defense, and the Graduate School will be notified for their records.

Please refer to the Graduate School website to determine specific publishing/printing protocols for a complete thesis.
APPENDICES

ASHA CODE OF ETHICS

HTTP://WWW.ASHA.ORG/UPLOADEDFILES/ET2010-00309.PDF

CAA INFORMATION

HTTP://WWW.ASHA.ORG/ACADEMIC/ACCREDITATION/
I have read and reviewed the WTAMU University Academic Manual. I understand all of the provisions, and agree to abide by the codes listed therein.

I also understand that failure to comply with these codes can result in one or all of the following:

- Academic Suspension
- Clinical suspension
- Removal from the program
- Removal from the university
- Delayed graduation

____________________________________   ____________
Student’s Signature       Date