



## PATHWAYS TO BECOMING A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

The entry-level degree needed for clinical practice as a speech-language pathologist (SLP) in the United States is the master's degree in speech-language pathology. There are different pathways that students can take to achieve this goal.

Lewis University offers the master of science in speech-language pathology (MSSLP) degree program. In order to apply for admission to the MSSLP program, students must either:

- Obtain a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) from an accredited program (not offered at Lewis University), or
- Obtain a bachelor's degree in *any field of study* and complete coursework in the following prerequisite areas. These courses must be offered by a CSD or SLP department. They are available online from Lewis University, and at many other institutions:
  - Anatomy and physiology of communication and hearing mechanisms
  - Speech and hearing science
  - Normal development of speech, language, and hearing
  - Phonetics

Students must also have taken one course in each of the following areas. Each course must be *outside the CSD major*:

- Statistics (stand-alone course; not incorporate into a research methods or other related course)
- Biological science, related to human or animal science (biology, anatomy/physiology, neuroanatomy/neurophysiology, human genetics, veterinary science)
- Physical science (chemistry, physics)
- Social science (psychology, sociology, anthropology, public health)

Students who have obtained a bachelor's degree in CSD, or a bachelor's degree in another field of study plus the necessary prerequisite courses are eligible to apply if they meet the following additional criteria:

- Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 for full admission, or 2.75 for provisional admission
- Minimum major GPA (in all CSD courses, including a minimum of five completed courses at time of consideration) of 3.2
- GRE scores (verbal, quantitative, analytical writing): no minimum score required

Note that the major GPA is computed for all CSD or SLP undergraduate courses taken. Students must have completed *at least 5* courses offered by a CSD or SLP department at Lewis University or another accredited program. This allows us to evaluate your potential for success in graduate student in our discipline.

- Lewis students are advised to take the following undergraduate courses that we offer:
  - **SLP 20000 Introduction to Speech-Language Pathology (3 credit hours)**  
A survey course that introduces students to the role of speech-language pathologists (SLP) in education, healthcare, and private clinic settings. Covers the nine disorder areas that speech-language pathologists are prepared to address, including disorders of articulation, receptive and expressive language, voice, fluency, social communication, cognition, aural rehabilitation, , augmentative/alternative communication, and swallowing. This course is designed to help learners explore the knowledge and skills needed to become an SLP.
  - **SLP 30000 Phonetics (3 credit hours; online)**  
Phonetic transcription is a skill used by speech-language pathologists to record and analyze the speech production abilities of their clients. It is used when gathering speech samples of individual clients over time, to evaluate whether they demonstrate a speech articulation disorder or a dialectal difference, and to monitor progress of clients in intervention. In this course, students will learn to transcribe speech samples using the international phonetic alphabet (IPA), and will apply this skill to evaluation of speech articulation.
  - **SLP 31000 Anatomy and Physiology of Speech, Hearing and Swallowing (3 credit hours; online)**  
This course reviews anatomical structures of the head, neck and ear; and the physiology of speech production, hearing and swallowing. This course is designed for students who are preparing for a career in speech-language pathology or audiology.
  - **SLP 40000 Scientific Foundations of Speech and Hearing (3 credit hours; online)**  
This course covers the physical properties of sound, including how it is generated, received, and interpreted by humans. The importance of

environmental and linguistic sounds in the human experience will be explored. Learners will also discover the dynamic interplay of respiration, phonation, articulation and resonance that results in human speech.

- **SLP 41000 Speech, Language and Swallowing Development (3 credit hours; online)**

Human infants are born with reflexive feeding instincts that allow for their survival and ability to thrive. This course will explore the evolution successful feeding and swallowing in children. Babies are also predisposed to interact socially with caretakers and thereby learn to communicate. The amazing journey toward communicative competence is explored in detail, including the evolution of articulate speech patterns, and receptive and expressive language. The role of early literacy experiences in the development of oral and written language is outlined, as well.

### **Summary**

Pathway #1: Bachelor's degree in CSD from another university

- 3.0 cumulative GPA (or 2.75 for provisional admission)
- 3.2 major GPA (based on at least 5 courses)
- GRE scores submitted (no minimum)

Pathway #2: Bachelor's degree in any field of study from Lewis or another university

- Coursework in the prerequisite areas: phonetics, anatomy & physiology of communication mechanism, speech and hearing science, and speech and language development.
- One dedicated course in biological science, physical science, social science and statistics (From a department outside the CSD/SLP program).
- 3.0 cumulative GPA (or 2.75 for provisional admission)
- 3.2 major GPA (based on at least 5 courses)
- GRE scores submitted (no minimum)

If you are interested in becoming a speech-language pathologist, contact Admissions at Lewis University at [admissions@lewisu.edu](mailto:admissions@lewisu.edu), or the Speech-Language Pathology department at [checkch@lewisu.edu](mailto:checkch@lewisu.edu).