Master of Science Graduate Program
Speech-Language Pathology

FAQ Responses & Helpful Information

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Program Information

1. Career Opportunities
   - Speech-language pathology (SLP) positions are readily available across Montana, the country, and internationally. Settings include schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, early intervention programs, private clinics, and may even include web-based tele-therapy.
   - Our Director of Clinical Education networks with potential employers and apprises graduating students and alumni about job opportunities.
   - Our alumni employment statistics are excellent. Starting salaries depend on geographical location, setting (urban/rural), and facility type. Detailed SLP salary data is available on the ASHA website.

2. Accreditation
   - Our M.S. program in speech-language pathology is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, Maryland 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5781.
   - Our graduate praxis pass-rate and alumni employment statistics are excellent.
   - Our students have been able to achieve full licensure and certification.

3. Program Delivery Options and Length
   - **Required Credits**
     - The number of required credits for the SLP degree for the non-thesis option is 53 and for the thesis option it is 56.
   - **On-campus Option**
     - Program applicants select an option via response to application supplemental questions.
     - Coursework
       - Students engage in traditional face-to-face classroom course delivery.
       - Full-time students can complete the program in a minimum of 5 terms including 1 summer session.
       - Part-time options are possible, developed on an individual basis, and have a 5-year completion limit.
     - Clinical Experiences
       - The 1st clinical experiences begin in the initial semester with our DeWit RiteCare Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic serving as the practicum site.
       - Subsequent clinical experiences each term take place in a variety of off-campus settings; the facility and location are coordinated by the Director of Clinical Education with consideration of student needs and preferences.
   - **Distance Option**
     - Program applicants select an option via response to application supplemental questions.
     - Coursework
       - Students participate in courses synchronously with the on-campus students via web-conferencing during regularly-scheduled class times for all academic courses.
       - Full-time students can complete the program in a minimum of 6 terms over 2 years (fall and spring semesters + summer term each year).
       - Part-time course plans are possible, developed on an individual basis, and have a 5-year completion time limit.
     - Clinical Experiences
       - The 1st clinical experience takes place in our DeWit RiteCare Clinic during the summer after the 1st academic year (connections for housing on campus, in Missoula, or with other SLP graduate students can be arranged).
       - Subsequent clinical experiences each term are coordinated by the Director of Clinical Education with consideration of student needs and preferences.
4. Clinical Experience Requirements
   - **Observation Hours**
     - 25 hours of client observation are required before graduate clinical work can begin.
     - Documentation of previously accrued hours is required upon admission.
   - **Clinical Practicum**
     - A minimum of 375 supervised clock hours of clinical practicum are required working with clients across the age span in a range of settings to meet the clinical competencies required for program completion.

Admission Requirements

1. Degree / Coursework
   - Applicants must have completed an undergraduate degree in communicative sciences and disorders OR completed a post-baccalaureate leveling series prior to the beginning of fall semester.

2. GPA Requirement and Averages
   - A minimum “overall” GPA of 3.0 is required (overall GPA includes “all” college-level course grades).
   - The average GPAs for the last 3 cohorts admitted are: 2012 = 3.52; 2013 = 3.60; 2014 = 3.65.

3. GRE Requirement and Averages
   - A minimum GRE of 291 (quantitative + verbal added together) is required.
   - The writing score is also considered, but separately from the above minimum score.
   - The average GREs for the last 3 cohorts admitted are: 2012 = 305; 2013 = 302; 2014 = 301.

4. International Students
   - **Additional Admission Requirements**
     - Details about University of Montana (UM) international student admission requirements are available on the UM Graduate School website.
   - **Resources**
     - UM Foreign Student and Scholar Services (FSSS) provides helpful information and a variety of resources.

Expenses

1. Tuition and Fees
   - **Overview and Calculations**
     - Tuition and fees are determined by credit load per semester; at 12 credits a flat spot is reached so no additional tuition or fees are added above 12 credits.
     - The UM tuition/fee schedules are separated into two sections “Campus-Based” followed by “Distance.” Each section shows various levels – choose “1st Level (Master)” for the applicable figures.
     - Note 1*: Estimated cost is based on the most recently available figures, which are summer 2014, fall 2014, and spring 2015 terms). Figures are based on full-time attendance.
     - Note 2*: Course sequencing is subject to change which may impact how tuition/fees break down per term.
     - Note 3*: Three elective credits are required for the degree; for calculation purposes, all 3 credits are added to Autumn #2 semester.
• **On-Campus Program *Estimate**
  (The on-campus estimate includes medical/dental care at the UM onsite student medical facility.)

  Autumn #1 (14 credits): Resident $3,451.48; Non-resident $12,447.88
  Spring #1 (15 credits): Resident $3,451.48; Non-resident $12,447.88
  Summer #1 (3 credits): Resident $818.37; Non-resident $3,067.47
  Autumn #2 (15 credits): Resident $3,451.48; Non-resident $12,447.88

  Spring #2 (6 or 9 credits depending on research paper or thesis option)
  Paper option (6 credits): Resident $1,602.49; Non-resident $6,100.69
  Thesis option (9 credits): Resident $2,756.47; Non-resident $9,503.77

  **Estimated Totals**
  Paper option: Resident $12,775.30; Non-resident $46,511.80
  Thesis option: Resident $13,929.28; Non-resident $49,914.88

• **Distance Program *Estimate**

  Autumn #1 (12 credits): Resident $3,261.00; Non-resident $7,585.20
  Spring #1 (12 credits): Resident $3,261.00; Non-resident $7,585.20
  Summer #1 (4 credits): Resident $1,088.61; Non-resident $4,087.41 (On-Campus)
  Autumn #2 (13 credits): Resident $3,261.00; Non-resident $7,585.20

  Spring #2 (6 or 9 credits depending on research paper or thesis option)
  Paper option (6 credits): Resident $1,645.50; Non-resident $3,807.60
  Thesis option (9 credits): Resident $2,463.25; Non-resident $5,696.40

  Summer #2 (6 credits): Resident $1,645.50; Non-resident $3,807.60

  **Estimated Totals**
  Paper option: Resident $14,162.61; Non-resident $34,458.21
  Thesis option: Resident $14,980.36; Non-resident $36,347.01

2. **Student Clinician Expenses**

   • Immunization Cost Estimate is approximately $222* (tests are required by all SLP master’s programs):
     o * = subject to change
     o TB ($10); Tetanus ($43*);
     o Hepatitis B, 3-shot series ($135*) or Hepatitis Titer ($70*);
     o MMR (~$30*);
     o Varicella titer ($14*);
     o additional immunizations/drug testing/flu shots may be required by a specific practicum site

   • Background Check: $62.50*

   • One-time fee of $75 for use of Typhon database (utilized for charting clients notes, supervisor comments, required practicum hours, and building résumé and portfolio).
     o The fee covers database use during the master’s program + 3 additional years beyond graduation.

**Funding**

1. **Graduate Assistantships**

   • We offer a limited number of graduate assistantships that are typically teaching assistantships, but can be designated for research as needed by the Department.
   • Assistantships are awarded for a semester at a time and include a semester stipend (currently $4500) distributed in 5 equal payments, plus a waiver of the tuition; however, student fees are not waived.
   • These assistantships are usually available only to current students.
   • All eligible students will be notified about the opportunities a few weeks in advance of the application deadline.
2. Instructional Assistants

- Another opportunity is to be an instructional assistant working with faculty members, typically with grading, study sessions, and management of undergraduate courses.
- All eligible students will be notified about the opportunities a few weeks in advance of the application deadline.

3. Scholarships (Department and College)

- Eligible program applicants and students are notified about scholarships offered by the CSD Department and our parent college, College of Education and Human Sciences, with ample notice to apply.

4. Other Funding Resources

- **UM Financial Aid Office**
- **UM Graduate School**
  - Financial assistance resources
  - Graduate scholarships and fellowships

Application Process and Details

1. Application Deadline

- Application submissions are due by December 31st for fall enrollment only; there is no spring admission.
- Approximately 30 students are admitted each year including campus and distance students.
- The number of distance students admitted is roughly 6-10, depending on the applicant pool each year.

2. Application Submission Overview

- **Document Submission**
  - All application materials must be submitted only to CSDCAS (Communication Science and Disorders Centralized Application Service) and received by them by the application deadline.
  - Several short-answer supplemental questions will be emailed individually prior to the deadline with ample response time provided. Please also see two-part application process below.

- **Two-Part Application Process**
  - Our application process is a 2-part process, which is explained on our graduate application webpage as well. This 2-part process is in place due to the high number of applications received.
    - (1) Initially, applications and materials are submitted to the CSDCAS only. This service helps expedite the time it takes the admissions committee to review applications and allows applicants to apply to a number of schools with one application.
    - (2) Once the CSDCAS applications are reviewed, the admissions committee will recommend to the top-tier applicants to complete part of the UM Graduate School application (required by UM). No additional document submission will be necessary until after admission; then a final transcript will be requested only if, at the time of transcript submission to CSDCAS, any courses were in progress or any grades not posted.

3. Application Requirements

- **Transcripts**
  - An official transcript from “each” college/university attended is required and all transcripts should be sent to CSDCAS only and so they are received by the application deadline.
  - The entirety of each submitted transcript is considered. If you need to explain any part of your academic history, please email a statement of explanation in pdf format and attach it to a request made to CSDmaster@umontana.edu to add to your application.
• Résumé
  o Applicants must enter résumé-type information into the categories offered in the CSDCAS application, such as employment, community service, volunteer activities, presentations & posters, honors/awards/recognitions, etc.
  o Also required is your résumé in pdf format to be uploaded into the CSDCAS application. Please note that this is NOT in lieu of entering the information as addressed above.

• GRE Scores
  o A minimum GRE of 291 (quantitative + verbal added together) is required. See also “Admission Requirements” on page 2 of this document.
  o GRE scores should be sent to CSDCAS only and so they are received by the application deadline. The GRE institution code is 0037.

• Recommendation Letters
  o Letters are submitted to the CSDCAS application system only.
  o Three (3) letters of recommendation submitted by persons who have direct knowledge of the applicant's character and abilities are required.
  o At least one letter should be from a current or former professor who can address the academic qualities of the applicant. Other letters may be from:
    − current or former employers/supervisors
    − someone who knows the applicant professionally who can address the applicant's qualifications, experience, and drive to become a speech-language pathologist
    − someone who can address the applicant's personal character qualities necessary for professional practice in speech-language pathology

• Essay
  o Only 1 (one) essay is required. It should be no longer than 2 pages double-spaced in a 12-point size type.
  o Since the CSDCAS application allows a maximum essay length of 5,500 characters, it is helpful to type the essay in software with a word or character count feature. Two double-spaced pages at 12-point type size equals approximately 4500 characters (including spaces).

• Supplemental Application Questions
  o Several customized short-answer questions that are part of our CSDCAS application require responses before your application will be reviewed.

Application Review & Admission Decisions

1. Review
   • Applications are viewed as a whole; however, the admissions committee must rate all components of the application, which include:
     o academics (GPA, transcripts, and GRE scores)
     o letters of recommendation
     o experience (paid & volunteer) and accomplishments
     o essay response
     o extent of extracurricular activities
     o second language education and experience

2. Decisions
   • The admissions committee hopes each year to have all applications reviewed by the end of February.
   • Once a decision is made regarding an applicant's status, the applicant will be notified about their status via email. The target is to notify all applicants by early March.
     o Applicants will be contacted as soon as a decision has been made.
     o Calls and emails requesting status update are discouraged.
Campus Visits

1. CSD Department
   - Department visits are invited. To arrange a date and time for a meeting with a faculty advisor and a department tour, please contact Cyndi Stary, assistant to CSD department chair, at CSDmaster@umontana.edu or 406-243-2365 or Dr. Amy Glaspey, CSD department chair, at amy.glaspey@umontana.edu or 406-243-2106.

2. UM Campus
   - A wealth of information is available on the Experience UM website. In-person guided tours are conducted daily except for holidays. Additionally, videos and a brochure for a self-guided tour are available as well as information on local accommodations.

Housing

1. On-campus
   - Residence Life: student housing and guest housing

2. Off-campus
   - Renter Center

Montana Residency

1. Criteria and Restrictions
   - Visit the Office of Registrar’s webpage on residency information for details on Montana residency.