

# Clinical & Developmental Linguistics

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Here you can find ...

- [recommended coursework](#) for students wishing to go on in communication disorders and related fields
- the best [advice](#) we have on preparing for graduate study

Professional practitioners in Speech-Language Pathology or Audiology (SLP/A) should have a master's degree from an accredited program in communication disorders, and professional certification. In most jurisdictions they must be registered with a local professional oversight body, such as the [College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Manitoba](#) (CASLPM, formerly the Manitoba Speech-Hearing Association). The curriculum in **Clinical and Developmental Linguistics** was developed for students preparing for graduate study in SLP/A and eventual certification with either the [Speech-Language & Audiology Canada](#) (S.A.C., formerly the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) or the [American Speech-Language Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#).

Almost all SLP/A graduate programs require strong undergraduate backgrounds in linguistics, psychology, and research methods (or statistics). Many also require or prefer a background in science and math. Specific questions should be directed to the [Clinical and Developmental Linguistics advisor](#) or to the graduate program you are interested in.

## Coursework recommendations

These recommendations are based on our best information regarding the requirements and recommendations from Canadian and select US programs regarding their successful applicants. Admission rates are extremely competitive (SAC numbers indicate approximately 1 admission for every five applicants).

### Prerequisite Courses

These courses are required as prerequisites to other courses in the curriculum. They are also prerequisites for many courses (especially "core" courses in the Linguistics Major or Psych Minor). They should be completed as early as possible.

- [LING 1200](#) Intro to Linguistics
- [LING 1380](#) General Phonetics
  
- [PSYC 1200](#) Intro to Psychology

### Recommended courses

Most UofM students making successful applications for graduate study in SLP/A have taken most of these courses. While no single course is absolutely critical, it is important that you know what the rest of the applicant pool has in their background. Where courses are known to be equivalent to required or suggested courses at various schools, this is indicated. In any event, if you're planning for a career in SLP/A, your competition will have many of these courses. Please note, that some of these courses are typically offered in alternating years.

- [LING 2800](#) Communication Disorders [sugg:und]
- [LING 2830](#) Linguistic Anatomy and Physiology 1 (Speech Production)
- [LING 2850](#) Linguistic Anatomy and Physiology 2 (Neural Organization) [req:ubc,ua]
- [LING 3860](#) Language Acquisition (co-offering with [PSYC 3680](#)) [req:ubc,ua; sugg:uo,und]
  
- [PSYC 2250](#) Intro to Psychological Research [req:ubc,ua,uo,ut,mc; sugg:dal,und] [[see note](#)]
- [PSYC 2260](#) Intro to Research Methods in Psychology [req:ubc,uo,ut,mc; sugg:und] [[see note](#)]
- [PSYC 2290](#) Child Development [req:ubc,ua,uo;sugg:und]
- [PSYC 3860](#) Language Acquisition (co-offering with [LING 3680](#)) [req:ubc,ua; sugg:uo,und]

### Other recommended courses

This list of 'other' courses is a list of courses regularly offered at the UofM which may be relevant to the field. It is not expected that you will take all of these courses, but again "most" of our successful students have taken "some" of them. Many are courses which fill a Linguistics or Psych major or minor anyway.

- Linguistics
  - [LING 1440](#) Rules of English Grammar [sugg:und]
  - [LING 2200](#) Syntax
  - [LING 2440](#) Phonology
  - [LING 2460](#) Morphology [sugg:ubc uo]
  - [LING 2880](#) Acoustic Phonetics [req: ubc; sugg:und]
  - [LING 3120](#) Syntactic Theory [req: ubc]
  - [LING 3140](#) Phonological Theory [req: ubc]

- LING 3300 Structure of ASL
- Psychology
  - PSYC 2310 Adolescent Development [req:ubc]
  - PSYC 2370 Developmental Psychology from Adolescence to Old Age [sugg:und]
  - PSYC 2470 Learning Foundations of Psychology[req:ua]
  - PSYC 2480 Cognitive Processes [sugg:ubc,uo]
  - PSYC 3330 Elements of Physiological Psychology [req:uo?]
  - PSYC 3430 Sensory Processes [req:ubc]
  - PSYC 3580 Language and Thought <[sugg:ubc]
- Other
  - BIOL 1000 Foundations of Life *or* BIOL 1020 Biology 1: Principles and Themes [sugg:und]
  - CHEM 1000 Understanding the World through Chemistry *or* PHYS 1020 General Physics [sugg:und]
  - STAT 1000 Basic Statistical Analysis 1 [see note]
  - STAT 2000 Basic Statistical Analysis 2 [see note]

**Note:** Programs may indicate 'statistics' rather than research methods, in which case you may want to consider STAT 1000 and 2000. However, we still recommend courses in psychological (behavioural) research methods.

## Useful advice for preparing for SLP/A admission

There is much more to getting into a graduate program than having a strong transcript. You must demonstrate knowledge of the field and familiarity with clinical situations, as well as good grades in applicable areas. Volunteering time with a practicing Speech Language Pathologist in a school, hospital or private practice will also strengthen your application, and you will develop a professional contact you may need for a letter of recommendation.

Your transcript is *not* just to list things you've studied in the past – it should convince an admissions committee that you are prepared for and can handle the courses and practica they will provide.

Below is our best advice for anyone wanting to get into a graduate school in communication disorders. We make absolutely no promises about the accuracy of this information. Specifically we make no promises about which U of M courses other universities will accept as equivalent to theirs. The only person responsible for making sure you have the right entrance requirements is you. Check the calendars of the universities you're interested in (either on the web or in the Career Resource Centre on the fourth floor of University Centre). If in doubt, ask the grad program directly.

- If you have a specific graduate school in mind, get the list of courses that that school expects and make sure you take the U of M equivalents for as many of them as possible.
- The list of recommended courses above is designed to help you fulfill the entrance requirements for a wide range of graduate programs. Even if you have a specific grad school in mind which has fewer requirements, you want to look as well-prepared for graduate studies as possible.
- By itself, missing one of the courses that a grad school lists as "suggested" or even "required" won't get you rejected. But it may make a difference when the committee has to choose between you and another applicant with the same GPA and volunteer experience.
- On the other hand, most admissions committees are at least a little bit flexible. If you are an absolutely outstanding student who is missing one of their required courses, you may still be accepted. Many graduate programs allow students to enrol in a "pre-masters" year where they can catch up on missing entrance requirements.
- While most programs are nominally two-year Masters' programs, most schools (particularly US schools) will have some preparatory coursework they will require before you can 'officially' begin Masters' degree work and see patients in the clinic.
- We're finding that students are placed more successfully if they have the equivalent coursework to an undergraduate degree in communication disorders. The courses we offer cover some of that material, but not all of it. It is becoming increasingly common for students to go on to do preparatory work at another school before applying for graduate work. Such 'post-baccalaureate' or 'pre-masters' programs are available at many schools; we commonly hear of students going to UND, Minot, Moorhead, and St Cloud as the nearest options. Programs in Canada may offer similar coursework as part of a continuing-education system (whether part of a formal program or not). Generally speaking, if you have a close analog of a course from the UofM, that particular requirement may be waived from the post-baccalaureate program. Post-bacc programs typically offer one intensive year of coursework and clinical practica (30-36 credit hours) after which an application may be made to any graduate program in communication disorders.
- A number of grad programs, particularly in Canada, accept students from a wide range of disciplines, without a lot of training in things related directly to SLP/A. One of the things these admission committees will be looking for is interesting, well-rounded human beings. If you're interested in botany or medieval Icelandic literature or jazz clarinet performance, by all means take courses in them.
- All programs want to see that you have some kind of practical clinical experience. The school divisions and most of the hospitals with SLP/A programs are often in need of volunteers to assist with treatments, as are many day-programs, nursing homes, rehab clinics, etc.
- The other part of practical experience is that you will work with certified clinicians. Almost all programs require three letters of reference: two academic (from professors able to assess your potential for graduate study) and one clinical (from a certified professional able to assess your potential for professional practice). While we don't recommend you view your practical experience as 'networking', it is an opportunity to interact and get to know professionals, and for them to get to know you.
- **US Graduate Programs:** Most US programs ask for an undergraduate degree in communication disorders or its equivalent. While no such degree is offered at the U of M (or any other Canadian university), it's still possible to get a BA from the UofM while taking almost all the same courses that you would have taken for a communication disorders bachelors degree from an American university. In general, expect to be required to do post-baccalaureate work when applying to a US program

