Communication Sciences and Disorders Program
Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers) About Graduate School

Application Questions

1. What are the minimum GPA and GRE scores necessary to be accepted to the Communication Sciences and Disorders program?
The Graduate School requires a minimum 3.0 GPA. We do not have a minimum GRE. We look at the entire application packet (letters of reference, personal statement, experiences, etc.). We do look for individuals who are well rounded and are strong in all areas of their application packet.

The average GRE and GPA of students enrolled in UGA’s CMSD graduate program for the last several years has been around a score of 300-310 GRE with a 3.5-3.9 GPA. In 2017, the average GRE was 306 and the average cumulative GPA was 3.78. Please note that this means some individuals’ scores are below these numbers and some are above. They are not a ‘standard’ or ‘minimum’ for applying to our program and will vary from year to year based on the pool of applicants.

2. I have an undergraduate degree in something other than CMSD. May I apply to UGA’s master’s program?
Applicants to our master’s degree program must have completed a bachelor’s degree in communication disorders, or have completed a bachelor’s degree in another area and also completed additional coursework to prepare for graduate level work in communication disorders. Being on-track at the time of application to have completed this work prior to enrolling in graduate courses is acceptable. Students without the necessary background will need to complete the required prerequisites before applying to the master’s program.

3. How do I know if my bachelor’s degree is acceptable? Can I take my missing prerequisite courses at UGA?
We do not expect that every course in your undergraduate degree program would necessarily be an exact match for a course in our own bachelor’s degree program. Essentially any bachelor’s degree that is titled communication disorders, speech-language pathology, speech and hearing sciences, or anything similar is probably adequate preparation. Similarly, if you have completed post-baccalaureate work to supplement a bachelor’s degree that was in another area, we do not expect that you would have necessarily completed any specific “leveling” program or any specific set of courses. Depending on your individual background, however, the courses that have typically been completed at the undergraduate level or as post-baccalaureate work include the following:

- Courses in biological science, social or behavioral sciences, and physical science (chemistry or physics)
- Any statistics course
- Survey of Special Education
- Anatomy and Physiology of the Speech and Hearing Mechanism
- Phonetics for Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Speech/Voice and Hearing Science
- Language Development
- Introduction to Audiology
- Speech and/or Language Disorders
- Aural Rehabilitation
- Professional/Clinical Issues for SLP
If you have not had these courses, it may be possible for you to take them at other universities, including possibly online. You can find a list of these universities on http://www.asha.org/. The UGA CMSD program is currently preparing an online pre-professional/prerequisites program. Information about that program will be made available soon!

4. How do I apply to the program?
More information regarding the application process is located on our website at http://www.coe.uga.edu/apply/program/med/communication-sciences-disorders. You must complete the CMSD Program application as well as the Graduate School application. The deadline for our master’s program application is January 10th every year, to start the following fall. The program application also includes a personal statement, GRE scores, GPA (transcripts), three letters of recommendation, and a resume. This program does not accept MAT scores; GRE scores are required. Please note there are two applications: the Graduate School application and the CMSD Program application. Both are due on the 10th along with all other materials (GRE scores, letters of recommendation, etc.).

5. If there’s an area that really interests us, like cochlear implants, can we specialize or focus on that area?
Much of your master’s level coursework will be dictated by the certification and licensing requirements that your program is designed to prepare you to meet. On the other hand, you can ‘specialize’ by doing thesis research in a given area, by selecting certain optional courses, by doing directed reading or research with a given professor, or by requesting certain types of clinical placements. When selecting a graduate program and you know you are interested in a particular topic, find a department that has active researchers and/or clinicians working in that area. Take a look at our faculty web page to see if our faculty are doing research in an area you are interested in pursuing.

6. What if you’re interested in the PhD program?
Great! There is a shortage and need of PhDs in the field. Take a look at the consecutive MA/PhD program we (and other) universities offer or look at other related fields (i.e., neuroscience or linguistics).

Financial Questions
7. How do you get an assistantship?
Assistantships tend to be awarded to truly top-tier students. They also tend to be awarded based on academic/scholarly criteria, including grades, GRE scores, and demonstrated interest in research or teaching (and awarded only to people who apply for them, so apply for everything for which you qualify). Be sure to indicate your interest in an assistantship on your CMSD application (you will see a question related to this on page one of the application).

Example Costs for Fall 2017 (College of Education - Graduate)
http://busfin.uga.edu/bursar/bursar_quick_links/

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Hours Registered</th>
<th>In-State Tuition</th>
<th>Out-of-State Tuition</th>
<th>Total Student Fees</th>
<th>Total in-State Tuition &amp; Fees</th>
<th>Total Out-of-State Tuition &amp; Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 or more</td>
<td>$4913</td>
<td>$12,731</td>
<td>$1133</td>
<td>$6046</td>
<td>$13,864</td>
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For more information regarding financial aid, contact the UGA Office of Student Financial Aid. [https://osfa.uga.edu/index.html](https://osfa.uga.edu/index.html)

Program Questions

8. **How many students graduate each year from the CMSD program?**
   Our number of graduates typically varies from approximately 20 – 28. Our average class size over the last three years is 23.

9. **Is your program offered online? Can someone complete the program part-time?**
   Our master’s programs in speech-language pathology are full time and take place on campus. Students are expected to be available on campus during the day and into the early evening for courses and clinical assignments. Exceptions can be made in the case of documented special needs, such as for students with physical or learning disabilities who require the accommodation of a part-time program extended over more calendar years (contact the graduate coordinator).

10. **What is the difference between the MA and the MEd degree?**
    The MA incorporates research by allowing you to complete a master’s thesis, and the MEd requires comprehensive exams toward the end of your program instead of a thesis. Both programs typically require the same coursework and clinical practicum. After graduating, there isn't any difference in terms of jobs. If someone is interested in pursuing a PhD, we encourage those individuals to complete the MA degree (but an MA is not required for a PhD).

11. **What is the pass rate for UGA’s students who take the PRAXIS II?**
    All our graduating students (100%) in the past have passed the PRAXIS II for speech-language pathology. Many of these students not only pass the PRAXIS II, but also well exceed the minimum requirement.

12. **What are the employment rates for graduates of the CMSD program at UGA?**
    Our employment rate has been 100% for the master’s degree program over at least the last 10 years.

13. **UGA’s program is in a college of education. Does UGA only train SLPs to work in the schools?**
    No. You will complete medical and school internships, and you will be prepared to work in essentially any work setting. The average over the years is usually that about half of our graduates work in educational settings and about half work in medical settings, depending on job openings and students’ preferences. Some years more go into the schools, and some years more graduates start in a medical setting.

14. **I’ve heard UGA is a research-intensive university. Does that mean I must complete research in the master’s program?**
    No. Many CMSD faculty members are researchers, and as a program we are committed to research and to evidence-based practice (EBP) in our clinic and academic coursework, but most of our master’s students complete the MEd degree rather than completing a research thesis. All students are expected to read and apply research to clinical practice.

15. **How long is the program? When can I start?**
    The master’s program is slightly less than 2 calendar years. It starts with UGA’s "Second
Short Session” in a summer semester, which typically begins at approximately July 1. The scheduled completion date for students following the typical program sequence is the end of spring semester of the second year, typically in mid-May. You can see UGA’s academic calendar schedule [here](#).

16. **What makes the UGA CMSD program special?**
Our faculty are committed to incorporating evidence-based practice into all aspects of our program, including class and clinic collaborations. Students benefit from clinical experiences in our on-campus clinic and in community settings; state-of-the art clinical resources, such as a new video observation system and videostroboscopy equipment; and an active outreach program into the Athens community. Our program prepares students to work with clients across the lifespan in a variety of settings, and UGA and the College of Education provide many opportunities to collaborate with students and faculty in such areas as early childhood literacy, autism spectrum disorders, and neuroimaging research with older adults.

**Clinical Questions**

17. **I’ve heard it’s important to attend an accredited program. Is UGA Communication Sciences & Disorders Program an ASHA Accredited program?**
Our master’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. Students earning either the MEd or the MA are qualified upon graduation to apply for the Certificate of Clinical Competence from ASHA, professional licensure in speech-language pathology granted by the Georgia State Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, and/or teacher certification in speech-language pathology (Georgia Standard Professional Service Level 5 certificate) granted by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

18. **How many clock hours are required in your program?**
A minimum of 403 hours total, including 25 hours of observation plus 378 hours of supervised clinical practicum, is required for graduation from the UGA CMSD program. This exceeds the ASHA requirement of 400 clock hours. The 25 hours of observation must be completed prior to the first day of graduate school for MEd and MA students (CCC- SLP signature and current ASHA certification/number required).

19. **How are 1st year graduate students involved in the UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic?**
Graduate students in their first semester of clinic are provided with various types of support to facilitate client management, which may include working with clients in student pairs. Students receive assistance with clinical procedures from clinic faculty and through a weekly clinic class.

20. **Do you have any other clinical training opportunities beyond the UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic?**
Yes. Students may request part-time placements in off-campus locations in addition to on-campus courses and clinic, which may begin after the first semester of clinic practicum. Possible settings include schools; private practice clinics; and acute-care, outpatient, inpatient rehabilitation, or long-term care medical facilities.

21. **What about internship placements? Do I have to find my own?**
Assuming you have successfully completed academic and on-campus clinical requirements, the final two semesters of your master’s program will include two full-time internships, one in a medical setting and one in a school. Your fall semester internship will typically be
scheduled for approximately 12 weeks, and your spring semester internship will typically be scheduled for approximately 15 weeks.

Internship coordinators make these arrangements for our students, including assigning you to a school or medical setting for fall or spring semester. You are not responsible for finding your own internships and should not make independent contacts or arrangements. We cannot guarantee particular placements for students; however, every effort is made to address individual circumstances and requests and to make a compatible match between the student’s needs and the internship’s requirements.

**Athens**

22. *What about Athens? Is it a nice town in which to live?*

We think so! Of course, it may not be for everyone. Take the time to determine if the program, university and town are a good fit for you. More information about Athens is located at [http://www.libs.uga.edu/athens/](http://www.libs.uga.edu/athens/) There is a visitor center for Athens ([http://www.visitathensga.com/stay_and_do/athens_welcome_center](http://www.visitathensga.com/stay_and_do/athens_welcome_center)) and for UGA ([http://visit.uga.edu](http://visit.uga.edu)) that will give you more specific information about the community.

**A final note: Good luck! Please feel free to contact me or any of the CMSD faculty, if you have other questions – we would be happy to talk with you.**

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