



What can I do with a Major in... Speech-Language Pathology

What is Speech-Language Pathology at U of L?

Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Louisville is a well-established program that provides challenging academic coursework and clinical experience to Master's degree candidates. Our program is accredited by the Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA), the recognized national certifying organization for speech-language pathology. Students, staff, and clients are treated equitably without regard to gender, sexual orientation, age, race, creed, national origin, or disability. The institution and program comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders pertaining there to.

As a division within the Department of Surgery at the University of Louisville School of Medicine, our students are uniquely positioned to take advantage of the our ties with the Louisville medical community. From observations of surgeries and lectures by visiting physicians, to opportunities for interaction with our colleagues in the Department of Surgery's Otolaryngology Division, our students benefit from the knowledge of noted experts in related fields

Degrees in Speech-Language Pathology at U of L:

Master of Science Degree in Speech-Language Pathology

Occupational Overview

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), sometimes informally referred to as “speech therapists,” are health professionals who specialize in identifying and treating communication disorders along with swallowing dysfunction (dysphagia) in children and adults, and feeding disorders in infants.

The broad category of communication disorders includes: the inaccurate production of speech sounds; rhythm and fluency problems, such as stuttering; impairments of vocal quality such as inappropriate pitch or harshness; cognitive disabilities in understanding and producing language, memory, and problem solving; language rehabilitation for users of hearing aids or cochlear implants; and accent reduction and modification. The profession draws on knowledge from numerous disciplines: anatomy and physiology, audiology, neurology, linguistics and psychology to name a few.

Educational Requirements

A Master's degree and state license are the minimum credentials for most speech-language pathology positions. Speech-language pathology Master's degree programs in most universities require a minimum of two years of coursework, 450 hours of supervised clinical experience, and comprehensive exams (or a thesis), which are followed by 9 months of post-graduate clinical experi-



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ence.

Most SLPs will take an exam to qualify for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP), which shows that they have met the standards of ASHA, the national certifying body for the profession.

Career Opportunities in:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, SLPs held about 94,000 jobs in 2002.

Employment opportunities in the field are expected to increase in the coming years because of the expanding elderly population whose members frequently experience medical conditions that result in speech, language, and swallowing disorders.

Employers/Industries and Success Strategies:

SLPs work with varied populations: patients with acquired disorders, such as those that result from stroke and brain injury; tracheotomy patients; individuals with dementia and cognitive deterioration; those with organic disease processes such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, and ALS. And they treat individuals with developmental disorders and syndromes such as cleft palate, mental retardation, Fragile X, Cri du Chat and others. In cases where a client is unable to use voice for communication, an SLP will work on developing or identifying an appropriate alternative augmentative means of communication (AAC) such as Bliss Symbols, sign language or electronic communication devices.

SLPs work in countless different settings: hospitals, private practices, outpatient rehabilitation centers, public and private schools, universities, nursing homes, centers for people with disabilities, state sponsored programs and other facilities.

Related Links in the Speech-Language Pathology Discipline:

Kentucky Speech-Language-Hearing Association

<http://www.kysha.org/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

<http://www.asha.org/default.htm>

Salary/Outlook Info

Median annual earnings of speech-language pathologists were \$49,450 in 2002. The middle 50 percent earned between \$39,930 and \$60,190. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$32,580, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$74,010. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of speech-language pathologists in 2002 were as follows:

Offices of other health practitioners \$53,090

General medical and surgical hospitals \$52,940

Elementary and secondary schools \$46,060

According to a 2003 survey by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the median annual salary for full-time certified speech-language pathologists who worked on a calendar-year basis, generally 11 or 12 months annually, was \$48,000. For those who



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worked on an academic-year basis, usually 9 or 10 months annually, the median annual salary was \$44,800. Certified speech-language pathologists who worked 25 or fewer hours per week had a median hourly salary of \$40.

Starting salaries for certified speech-language pathologists with one to three years experience were \$42,000 for those who worked on a calendar-year basis and \$37,000 for those who worked on an academic-year basis



<http://online.onetcenter.org>



<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>