



## Master of Science Speech-Language Pathology (MS SLP) FACT SHEET

### About Us

At Pennsylvania Western University (PennWest), we offer a Master of Sciences in Speech-Language Pathology (MSSLP) program at each of our campuses: California, Clarion, and Edinboro. Each of the three campuses fall under one unified department, each with its own on-ground faculty, face-to-face classes, and on-campus clinic. We are pleased to offer a newly developed curriculum with access to experts in diverse topic areas across the field! Our faculty are clinicians, scientists, and educators who have a deep appreciation for our discipline. We are eager and committed to helping graduate students become future speech-language pathologists and colleagues!

[In this welcome video](#), Graduate Program Director, Dr. Mary Weidner, answers frequently asked questions about the program and how to apply!

### Our Mission

The mission of the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department is to provide a high quality, academic and clinical education which enables program graduates to become competent, fully credentialed speech-language pathologists serving the needs of the region, Commonwealth, and beyond.

### Accreditation

The Master's Programs in speech-language pathology at California, Clarion, Edinboro are each accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, Maryland 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5700.

Individual accreditation at each campus will be maintained during the accreditation process as PennWest.

## How to Apply to the MS SLP Program

**Application System.** Applicants will apply to our program online using the CSDCAS application system by searching “Pennsylvania Western University.” Within the PennWest application, applicants will indicate the campus or campuses for which they would like to be considered (i.e., California, Clarion, and/or Edinboro). To learn more about the CSDCAS application process, visit <https://csdcas.liaisoncas.com>

### **Deadlines.**

- Applications for Spring 2024 enrollment must be submitted by 11:59 PM ET on October 15, 2023.
- Applications for Summer 2024 enrollment must be submitted by 11:59 PM ET on January 15, 2024(only for students currently enrolled in the 5-year program)
- Applications for Fall 2024 enrollment must be submitted by 11:59 PM ET on February 1, 2024.

To ensure your application is verified on time, submit your application materials through CSDCAS at least four weeks before the deadline.

**Review Process.** Applications for each campus location are reviewed by a committee on an ongoing basis. Applications will only be reviewed once the application is complete, all transcripts are verified, and three letters of recommendation are present with your CSDCAS application. Decisions are made by placing candidates into tiers of admission as applications are reviewed. Do NOT submit payment, transcripts, or GRE directly to PennWest University. We welcome applications from individuals from any state or country.

### **Application Requirements.**

1. Transcripts from all institutions where college credit was received toward your baccalaureate degree to date (submitted to and verified through CSDCAS)
2. Three letters of recommendation regarding your ability to succeed in an SLP graduate program
3. Personal essay (specific prompts for this essay are within the application)
4. Resume
5. Submission of a 2–3-minute video (specific prompts for this video are within the application)

Applicants seeking Fall enrollment will have an opportunity to add Spring, 2023, transcripts in January, and this is strongly recommended for students whose applications are otherwise fully submitted prior to the end of Fall, 2022. In addition, the GRE is NOT required for applicants.

## Eligibility

***Students with a CSD undergraduate degree.*** Students with an undergraduate degree in CSD from any university will have fulfilled the necessary CSD coursework for continued studies at the Master's level. Transcripts will be verified to ensure all other ASHA requirements (biology, social science, physical science, and statistics) have been successfully met. Any missing coursework will be incorporated into the student's plan of study. An Overall and CSD Grade Point Average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required for full-time admission. A student may be admitted for provisional enrollment with an Overall or CSD GPA between 2.5-3.0 when the applicant possesses a degree and shows academic promise but does not meet the criteria for full admission.

***Students without CSD undergraduate pre-requisite coursework: Prep Program.***

Students with undergraduate backgrounds in disciplines other than CSD, or those who have not yet completed preparatory coursework elsewhere, are encouraged to apply as "Prep Program" applicants. For students with no prior CSD courses, the PennWest Prep Program coursework typically involves 8 undergraduate CSD courses over 2 semesters and other unmet ASHA requirements. Simply indicate in your cover letter that you are applying for admission pending the completion of all or most of your prep coursework.

***Students without CSD undergraduate degree, but who have completed preliminary coursework or an SLP-A program.***

Students with undergraduate backgrounds in disciplines other than CSD but who have completed some coursework in CSD, such as a minor in SLP or an SLP-A program, may be eligible for the MSSLP program, pending transcript review. Transcripts will be verified to ensure students have the requisite CSD coursework and that all ASHA requirements (biology, social science, physical science, and statistics) have been successfully met. Students may need to take additional coursework either during or before the MS SLP program.

If you have any questions about the Prep Program, or for assistance with transcript review, please contact Dr. Mary Weidner [mweidner@pennwest.edu](mailto:mweidner@pennwest.edu).

## Plan of Study

***Overview.*** The Master's Program is a two-year program, consisting of 60 credits across 5 semesters: 4 academic semesters and a 5th semester consisting of off-campus externships. Clinicals will take place at students' on-campus speech and hearing clinic as well as at various sites in the surrounding regions and across the country. Students will also be required to pass the national exam in Speech-Language Pathology and comprehensive examinations during their program.

***Courses.*** The curriculum for the MS SLP program covers the nine areas of clinical practice (disorders of articulation, fluency, language, swallowing, voice and resonance, hearing, social aspects of language, cognitive aspects of language, and augmentative and alternative communication) with a deliberate focus on advocacy, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The curriculum will be the same at each campus location; however, sequence of courses may differ. Requirements are as follows:

| Course  | Credits   |
|---|-----------|
| <b>I. Prerequisite Courses if needed</b>                      |           |
| <b>II. Core Courses</b>                                       | <b>47</b> |
| CSD 6100 Speech Sound Disorders                               | 3         |
| CSD 6200 Child Language Disorders B-5                         | 3         |
| CSD 6300 Aphasia and Other Adult Language Disorders           | 3         |
| CSD 6400 Adult Swallowing Disorders                           | 3         |
| CSD 6500 Introduction to Clinical Methods – Diagnostic        | 1         |
| CSD 6600 Introduction to Clinical Methods – Treatment         | 2         |
| CSD 6700 Fluency Disorders                                    | 3         |
| CSD 6800 Voice and Upper Airway Disorders                     | 3         |
| CSD 6900 Augmentative and Alternative Communication           | 2         |
| CSD 7100 Research Methods in SLP                              | 3         |
| CSD 7200 Motor Speech Disorders                               | 3         |
| CSD 7300 Child Language Disorders – School-Age and Adolescent | 3         |
| CSD 7400 Cognitive and Neurogenic Communication Disorders     | 2         |
| CSD 7500 Audiology for the SLP                                | 2         |
| CSD 7600 Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing Disorders           | 3         |
| CSD 7700 Professional Issues and DEI in SLP                   | 3         |
| CSD 7800 Counseling in Speech-Language Pathology              | 2         |
| CSD 7900 Medical Speech-Language Pathology                    | 3         |
| <b>IV. Clinical Education (13)</b>                            | <b>13</b> |
| CSD 7000 On-campus clinic                                     | variable  |
| CSD 7050 Off-campus clinic                                    | variable  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>60</b> |

**Course Delivery.** Students can expect most of their courses to be offered in a traditional face-to-face format. To provide students with access to faculty experts based at other PennWest campus locations, some specialized courses may be offered in an online format. In such cases, students will *not* be required to travel to other campuses. We believe that students learn best by being challenged to apply theory to the resolution of clinical problems and situations. Our courses are designed to provide focused academic content while facilitating student engagement through integrative active experiences.

**Clinic Experiences.** Students will complete clinic rotations, which will provide well-rounded experiences working with persons with various communication disorders across the lifespan. Each campus maintains its own on-campus clinic with clients from the surrounding community. PennWest currently has affiliations with over 200 off-campus sites across the country. The Director of Clinical Education at your campus will work closely with you to select appropriate sites for your off-campus experiences.

## Extracurriculars and Special Programming

**National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Chapter:** Graduate students at each campus have very active NSSLHA chapters through which they organize and participate in various events including fundraising, social outings, service, and attendance at state and national conferences.

**Research and Creative Projects.** Research opportunities and involvement with other creative projects may be available with some faculty members. Availability of opportunities across the campuses will vary semester to semester.

**Study Abroad.** Students can expect at least one opportunity to apply for a study abroad experience during their program. Programs are affiliated with Therapy Abroad, a company that provides clinical services in regions throughout the world. Locations, which have previously included Turks and Caicos and Belize, are subject to change. Students may earn clinical clock hours. Cost of study abroad is managed through Therapy Abroad and unaffiliated with PennWest tuition.

**Professional Development.** Students are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of professional development opportunities to advance their career goals, community engagement, and commitment to the profession. The following are some ways to engage in professional development, which may differ based on campus location.

- Pennsylvania Speech-Language Hearing Association (PSHA)
- Southwestern Speech-Language Hearing Association (SWPSHA)
- National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing (NBASLH)
- Location-specific Graduate Student Council, Clubs, and Organizations

### **Other Opportunities:**

- Grant-Funded site for SPEAK OUT! ® and LOUD Crowd ® services for individuals with Parkinson disease. Graduate students will have the opportunity for clinical training in these services, and we intend to apply for funding to continue to train students for many years to come.
- Rigid and flexible endoscopy for providing graduate students the opportunity to learn the basic skills of Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) and videostroboscopic examination of the vocal folds for voice
- Ongoing vocal health workshops, free to the community
- Collaboration with the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, Erie office: <https://refugees.org/uscri-erie/>
- Opportunity for guided simulation education in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit services for neonates with feeding and swallowing challenges
- Brain Safety Awareness and Prevention Events with the Brain Injury Association of PA

## Cost and Support

**Tuition.** Prior to each academic year, university tuition is posted. Current tuition rates can be accessed here: <https://www.pennwest.edu/tuition-and-aid>.

**Graduate Assistantships.** The CSD Department currently offers a fixed number of Graduate Assistant (GA) positions, distributed across the three campus locations. Students are also eligible to apply for positions outside of the department. At this time, GAs earn a competitive hourly stipend. Students interested in a GA position will be invited to apply following their admission to the program.

## Contact

Please reach out with any questions! We look forward to connecting with you!

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