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January 6, 2026

From: Eric Bielefeld, Chair of the Department of Speech and Hearing Science

To: Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee

Re: Proposal for revision to the master of arts in speech-language pathology (MA-SLP) curriculum

On behalf of the MA-SLP program faculty, the department is requesting a revision to the MA-SLP program. The rationale for the change is presented below in the proposal. The goal is for the change to go into effect starting with the first-year class in Autumn semester 2026.

Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns as the proposal moves through the college and university review bodies. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric Bielefeld".

Eric Bielefeld, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Dept of Speech and Hearing Science
The Ohio State University

Background

The MA-SLP is a base five-semester Master of Arts program in the Department of Speech and Hearing Science. It is the entry-level degree into the field of speech-language pathology. Our students graduate with eligibility to become licensed in most states/territories in the U.S. Our certifying organization is the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The MA-SLP program at Ohio State has been accredited by ASHA's accreditation body for several decades. Our curriculum consists of two years of coursework combined with precepted clinical practicum experiences. The current curriculum is presented in Appendix A.

Proposed change and rationale

Currently, SPHHRNG 6150 The SLP's Role Working with Individuals with Autism is a required three-credit course in the second-year of the program. In a separate proposal, we are revising the course to two credit hours, and in the current proposal, we are proposing to change the course from required to elective. Students are currently required to take seven credit hours of electives in the MA-SLP program. That will not change, and SPHHRNG 6150 will be added to the list of elective options the students can use to fulfill the requirement. The result is a net reduction of three required credit hours for the program. See Appendix B.

The rationale for the change is based on student feedback and subsequent faculty review. Students are required to demonstrate competency in working with cognitive and social aspects of communication, which include working with clients with autism diagnoses. However, student feedback has indicated that the course is redundant with education they receive on autism in the undergraduate curriculum, in other courses throughout the MA-SLP program, and in clinical practicum experiences. The revision of the course down to two credit hours is intended to remove redundancies and increase focus on advanced topics and clinical applications. Because it will focus on advanced topics, it will be an excellent course for students working in schools, pediatric clinics, or clinics with a focus on autism. That applies to many students, but certainly not all. Thus, it makes more sense in the program for this to be an elective course, rather than required. The basic content all students need to achieve appropriate competency in the area is already being delivered in other courses and clinical experiences.

Executive Summary

The proposed change is requested in response to ongoing programmatic assessment through exit interviews from students. The current iteration of SPHHRNG 6150 has been identified by many students as an unnecessary requirement and redundant with other education in the program. Focusing on advanced topics as an elective will serve the students who intend to work with this client population. Removing it as a required course reduces credit hour and time burden on the students in the second year of the program, but offering it as an elective maintains the content for those graduate students who are interested in this advanced topic as part of their elective-course content.

Transition Plan

The proposed changes are targeted to go into effect in Autumn 2026. New cohorts beginning in Autumn 2026 and current students whose year 1 of the program is the 2025-2026 academic year will complete the revised curriculum in Appendix B. They will automatically switch to the revised

curriculum. Because the proposed change is not adding new requirements, the transition is not expected to privilege any students over any others. Every student will still be able to take the SPHHRNG 6150 course as an elective.

Learning Outcomes Assessment

The program goals for the MA-SLP will not change with these proposed changes, nor will learning outcomes assessment. Outcomes assessment for the program is focused on meeting necessary competencies in mandatory areas. The instruction students will receive on autism outside of the 6150 course will enable them to still meet competencies in all required areas for licensure and certification in speech-language pathology.

Process

The proposal was generated by the department's Speech-Language Pathology Oversight Committee leadership. It was approved by the committee in Autumn 2025 and approved by the department chair immediately thereafter.

Appendix A: Current Curriculum sheet for the MA-SLP program

Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology (MA-SLP) Degree Requirements 2024-2026

Successful completion of this degree prepares students to meet the requirements for the State of Ohio Licensure in Speech-Language Pathology and the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Students in the MA-SLP program must complete either a thesis or non-thesis option for the Master's program of study, with the choice between these options made by the end of Year 1. Students must pass the NTE Praxis examination as a requirement for graduation and typically take it Spring of Year 2.

Thesis option. The option requires that the student conduct original research under the guidance of a Master's committee (an advisor and, minimally, one other graduate faculty member from the Department). Students choosing this option must complete all required coursework and a total of 3 or more credits of SPHHRNG 7999 Thesis Research. This option requires a prospectus meeting prior to data collection, carrying out of the research itself, preparation of the thesis document, and a thesis defense.

Non-thesis option. This non-thesis option requires that the student complete all required coursework and 7 elective credits that form the non-thesis track including the 1 credit SPHHRNG 6990: *Capstone Experience in Speech-Language Pathology* that is taken during the Spring semester of Year 2 to represent work with an advisor on the poster presentation. In addition, students pursuing this option must complete and defend a poster presentation in their final semester. NOTE: Possible electives are printed in italic type in the schedule below and can be taken to meet the non-thesis requirement, typically in Year 2 of the program. Students can choose to take other electives with faculty approval. See additional information below.

As can be seen in the course distribution below, the maximum number of credits any student should be taking in any semester is 17. With the maximum number of allowable full-time credits for graduate students capped at 18, there is no situation in which a student should need to exceed that maximum in order to complete the program on time.

REQUIRED COURSES—YEAR 1

Year 1: Autumn

Number	Course Title	Credits
6710	Speech sound disorders in children	3
6725	Language acquisition and early intervention in language delay	3
6466	Normal Swallowing	2
6762	Language disorders in adults	3
6751	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – I	1
6752	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – II	1
6844	Clinical practicum	2
Total Credits:		15

Year 1: Spring

Number	Course Title	Credits
5741	Voice disorders and cleft palate	3
6764	Evaluation and Treatment of Dysphagia in Adults and Children	3
6761	Cognitive communication disorders in adults	3
6763	Motor speech disorders	3
6753	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – III	1
6754	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – IV	1
6844	Clinical practicum	2
Total Credits:		16

Year 1: Summer

Number	Course Title	Credits
6860	Augmentative and alternative communication	3
6726	Disorders of Language and Literacy: School Age	3
6740	Seminar in fluency disorders	3
6755	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – V	2
6844	Clinical practicum	2
	Elective coursework	0-2
Total Credits:		13-15

REQUIRED & ELECTIVE COURSES—YEAR 2**Year 2: Autumn** (Note: 8 credits are required for full-time status)

Number	Course Title	Credits
7742	Advanced clinical seminar	1
7844	Advanced clinical practicum	8
OR		
6189	Field Experience in the schools	8
OR		
7844 + 6189	Advanced clinical practicum +Field Experience in the Schools	2+6
6770	Elective coursework	2-4
7999	Thesis research (in consultation with advisor, required for thesis option)	0-1
Total Credits:		11-14



Year 2: Spring (Note: 8 credits are required for full-time status)

Number	Course Title	Credits
6150	The SLPs role in autism spectrum disorders	3
7742	Elective coursework	0-4
7742	Advanced clinical seminar	1
7844	Advanced clinical practicum	8
	OR	
6189	Field Experience in the schools	8
	OR	
7844 + 6189	Advanced clinical practicum + Field experience in the Schools	2+6
6990	Capstone experience in Speech-Language Pathology	1
	OR	
7999	Thesis research (in consultation with advisor, required for thesis option)	1
Total Credits:		13-17

Year 2: Summer (Note: 4 credits are required for full-time status)

Number	Course Title	Credits
7844	Advanced clinical practicum	0-8
	Elective coursework	0-4
Total Credits:		0-12*

* Students have the option of completing the program in five semesters. This term is only for those who need or choose to extend the program to the sixth semester.

Total program credit hours: 68-89

ELECTIVE COURSES

The purpose of elective courses is to allow students to (a) extend their studies in directions suited to their interests, (b) meet non-thesis requirements for the MA-SLP, and (c) meet requirements for school certification by the State of Ohio Department of Education and enable one to obtain school licensure in Ohio and other states.

Ohio Department of Education has two options for SLPs working in school settings: licensure or registration. School licensure requires 2 courses: one related to school SLP and regulations (SPHHRNG 6170) and the other that provides a clinical experience in the school setting (SPHHRNG 6189). These electives are taken by most MA-SLP students, regardless of their immediate career goals. Many school districts in Ohio prioritize hiring those with the school license and many other states require the licensure requirements and do not have a registration option. SPHHRNG 6189 can only be taken by enrolled MA-SLP students. Therefore, taking these electives and pursuing school licensure provides valuable career flexibility. The two courses and their associated credits are:

- SPHHRNG 6170 Clinical and Education Methods in Schools (2 credits)
- SPHHRNG 6189 School Placement/Internship (6-8 credits); can only be taken in the semester the student has a school placement/internship

Note: Only SPHHRNG 6170 can be counted toward the non-thesis option; SPHHRNG 6189 cannot be counted for that purpose.

Non-thesis electives (7 credits in an integrated content area). Students pursuing the non-thesis option create select elective courses in consultation with their academic advisor, based on their interests. In addition to the elective courses offered by the department, which are listed in the tables above, students may also select elective courses to be part of their non-thesis option from departments across the university including, but not limited to, several OSU Graduate Interdisciplinary Specializations:

- HTHRHSC 5000: Interdisciplinary Case Management for Working with Underserved Populations (2 credits)
- [Aging](#)
- [Applied Developmental Science in Education](#)
- [Disability Studies](#)
- [Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology](#)
- [Second Language Studies](#)
- [Singing Health](#)

Appendix B: Proposed revised Curriculum sheet for the MA-SLP program

Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology (MA-SLP) Degree Requirements 2024-2026

Successful completion of this degree prepares students to meet the requirements for the State of Ohio Licensure in Speech-Language Pathology and the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Students in the MA-SLP program must complete either a thesis or non-thesis option for the Master's program of study, with the choice between these options made by the end of Year 1. Students must pass the NTE Praxis examination as a requirement for graduation and typically take it Spring of Year 2.

Thesis option. The option requires that the student conduct original research under the guidance of a Master's committee (an advisor and, minimally, one other graduate faculty member from the Department). Students choosing this option must complete all required coursework and a total of 3 or more credits of SPHHRNG 7999 Thesis Research. This option requires a prospectus meeting prior to data collection, carrying out of the research itself, preparation of the thesis document, and a thesis defense.

Non-thesis option. This non-thesis option requires that the student complete all required coursework and 7 elective credits that form the non-thesis track including the 1 credit SPHHRNG 6990: *Capstone Experience in Speech-Language Pathology* that is taken during the Spring semester of Year 2 to represent work with an advisor on the poster presentation. In addition, students pursuing this option must complete and defend a poster presentation in their final semester. NOTE: Possible electives are printed in italic type in the schedule below and can be taken to meet the non-thesis requirement, typically in Year 2 of the program. Students can choose to take other electives with faculty approval. See additional information below.

As can be seen in the course distribution below, the maximum number of credits any student should be taking in any semester is 17. With the maximum number of allowable full-time credits for graduate students capped at 18, there is no situation in which a student should need to exceed that maximum in order to complete the program on time.

REQUIRED COURSES—YEAR 1

Year 1: Autumn

Number	Course Title	Credits
6710	Speech sound disorders in children	3
6725	Language acquisition and early intervention in language delay	3
6466	Normal Swallowing	2
6762	Language disorders in adults	3
6751	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – I	1
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6844	Clinical practicum	2
Total Credits:		15

Year 1: Spring

Number	Course Title	Credits
5741	Voice disorders and cleft palate	3
6764	Evaluation and Treatment of Dysphagia in Adults and Children	3
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Total Credits:		16

Year 1: Summer

Number	Course Title	Credits
6860	Augmentative and alternative communication	3
6726	Disorders of Language and Literacy: School Age	3
6740	Seminar in fluency disorders	3
6755	Clinical seminar in speech and language disorders – V	2
6844	Clinical practicum	2
	Elective coursework	0-2
Total Credits:		13-15

REQUIRED & ELECTIVE COURSES—YEAR 2**Year 2: Autumn** (Note: 8 credits are required for full-time status)

Number	Course Title	Credits
7742	Advanced clinical seminar	1
7844	Advanced clinical practicum	8
OR		
6189	Field Experience in the schools	8
OR		
7844 + 6189	Advanced clinical practicum +Field Experience in the Schools	2+6
6770	Elective coursework	2-4
7999	Thesis research (in consultation with advisor, required for thesis option)	0-1
Total Credits:		11-14



Year 2: Spring (Note: 8 credits are required for full-time status)

Number	Course Title	Credits
	Elective coursework	0-2
	Elective coursework	0-2
7742	Advanced clinical seminar	1
7844	Advanced clinical practicum	8
	OR	
6189	Field Experience in the schools	8
	OR	
7844 + 6189	Advanced clinical practicum + Field experience in the Schools	2+6
6990	Capstone experience in Speech-Language Pathology	1
	OR	
7999	Thesis research (in consultation with advisor, required for thesis option)	1
	Total Credits:	10-14

Year 2: Summer (Note: 4 credits are required for full-time status)

Number	Course Title	Credits
7844	Advanced clinical practicum	0-8
	Elective coursework	0-4
	Total Credits:	0-12*

* Students have the option of completing the program in five semesters. This term is only for those who need or choose to extend the program to the sixth semester.

Total program credit hours: 65-86

ELECTIVE COURSES

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