VANDERBILT School of Medicine | Hearing and Speech Sciences

Specialty Training Track: School Speech-Language Pathology

The School Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Track offers specialty training in the practice of speech language pathology in schools working with students with disabilities ages 3 through 21. The track is designed for students who plan to pursue a career in the schools or who will work with children with disabilities in other settings where they will collaborate with school speech-language pathologists. The pediatric coursework in the MS-SLP required curriculum provides a foundation of knowledge and skills upon which School Track graduate students build a specialization in school speech-language pathology, where the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) drives policies for special education and related services, including speech-language services. The learning experiences are designed to prepare students for the unique roles and responsibilities of school speech-language pathologists (SLPs), which overlap but are quite differentiated from the roles and responsibilities of clinical SLPs.

In addition to the requirements of the MS-SLP program, students participating in the School SLP Track complete the following:

- **4+ seminar credits, depending on offerings (1 credit per semester)** Seminar topics include, for example, the practice of school speech-language pathology, collaborating with teachers and families, group intervention, individualized education programs (IEPs), and the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- **School Track Practicum Experiences:**
  - Preschool Child Find Developmental Screening, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS), typically 2 mornings per month for one semester
  - Literacy Project in the Child Language and Literacy Lab (PI: Schuele), minimally 24 hours of 1:1 literacy tutoring with a student with disabilities
  - Semester-long placement in a public, private, or charter school in the middle Tennessee area (3 days per week, Spring Y1)
  - Professional Development: e.g., (a) School Speech-Language Pathology Conference at Vanderbilt, held annually in August, (b) Fox Reading Conference, held at Middle Tennessee State University in spring semester

From 2024-2029 school track students can participate as funded (tuition support) or unfunded scholars on the US Department of Education training grant entitled Project AACCESS: AACelerating Communication-Focused Interventions in Educational Settings by Speech-Language Pathologists (H325R24007). This training grant is a collaboration between Vanderbilt's Hearing and Speech Sciences Department and Special Education Department. The training grant provides multiple value-added experiences, delineated on the reverse side. Funded scholars complete all value-added experiences and unfunded scholars can choose those value-added experiences of interest. Recruitment for funded positions occurs at the time of admissions and all applicants to the SLP program have the opportunity to apply for a funded position.

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https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/hearing-speech/msslp/specialty/

School SLP Track and Project AACCESS Activities and Experiences: Students who receive funding from the Dept. of Education/ OSEP training grant are required to complete requirements, noted as Project AACCESS Value-Added Components, below. These requirements are elective for unfunded school track students.

Fall Year 1	
School SLP Specialty track requirements	
SLP 5397 Speech-Language-Literacy Seminar	1 credit; 50-min per week; TOPIC: School SLP Practice
MNPS Preschool Child Find Screenings	1-2 times monthly, ½ days
Literacy Project Tutoring[1]	2 times weekly, 60 min sessions
Professional Development[2]	As available; excused from class/clinic
*Project AACCESS Value-Added Components**	
Monthly Interdisciplinary Seminar (SPED/SLP)	1 time monthly, 90 minutes
Spring Year 1	
Clinical Practicum: School Placement	3 full days per week
Case Conference (recommended: school-based case)	one time, assigned date per course instructor
School SLP Specialty track requirements	
SLP 5397 Speech-Language-Literacy Seminar	1 credit; 50 class min per week; TOPIC: Intervention in Schools
MNPS Preschool Child Find Screenings	as assigned if in MNPS for school placement
Literacy Project Tutoring	Optional; possible paid experience
Professional Development[2]	As available; excused from class/clinic
Project AACCESS Value-Added Components	
Monthly Interdisciplinary Seminar (SPED/SLP)	1 time monthly, 90 minutes
SPEDS 7100 AAC[3]	3 credit class
Maymester Year 1 (3 weeks in May)	
Project AACCESS Value-Added Components	
SLP 5325: Children with Complex Communication Needs	3 weeks, full time. e.g., Pediatric Speech-Language Clinic AAC Assessment, Monroe Carrell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt AAC Experience, School Classroom AAC Experience, Other AAC Experience in Community Settings
Literacy Project Tutoring	Optional; possible paid experience
Summer Year 1	
School SLP Specialty track requirements	
SLP 5397 Speech-Language-Literacy Seminar	1 credit; 50 class min per week; TOPIC: Collaboration with families, other educators, and community resources
Literacy Project Tutoring	Optional; possible paid experience
School SLP Conference at Vanderbilt	2 days in late July or early August; excused from class/clinic
All About Communication (AAC) Camp	1-week practicum in early June

Fall Year 2	
Case Conference (recommended: AAC case)	one time, assigned date by course instructor
School SLP Specialty track requirements	
SLP 5397 Speech-Language-Literacy Seminar	1 credit; 50 class min per week; TOPIC: Case studies
Literacy Project Tutoring	Optional; possible paid experience
Professional Development[2]	As available; excused from class/clinic
Project AACCESS Value-Added Components	
Monthly Interdisciplinary Seminar (SPED/SLP)	1 time monthly, 90 minutes
SLP 5323 Autism Spectrum Disorder	2 credit class
SPED 7500 Special Topics in SpEd: Trend and Issues Culturally Responsive AAC Practices	3 credit class
SPEDH 7410 Teaching Reading for Students with Severe and Persistent Learning and Behavior Difficulties[4]	3 credit class
Spring Year 2	
Externship (Feb., March, April) [5 semester students]	Option to complete a school placement externship and/or AAC-focused externship
Practicum [6 semester students]	Option to complete a school placement for one or more days per week (typically have 4 days per week for practicum)
Literacy Project Tutoring	Optional; possible paid experience
School SLP Specialty track requirements	
SLP 5397 Speech-Language-Literacy Seminar	Scheduled if multiple students completing school externships
Project AACCESS Value-Added Components for 6-semester students only	
Monthly Interdisciplinary Seminar (SPED/SLP)	1 time monthly, 90 minutes
Professional Development	As available; excused from class/clinic
SPEDS 7600 Teaching Reading to Students with Severe Disabilities[4]	3 credit class
Additional Experiences (not tied to a single semester)	
Support to attend a National Professional Development conference (funded students)	This experience will be coordinated by Project AACCESS Staff.
Thesis	Optional

* Project AACCESS Value-Added Components are required for funded school track students and optional for non-funded school track students.

[1] School track students are required to complete 24 hours of 1:1 literacy tutoring. Typically, this experience will begin/be completed in the first semester but may extend into the second semester or be completed in the second semester.

[2] A variety of local professional development experiences are available for School Track students. Students will be made aware of experiences as they are available. Some examples: Fox Conference (literacy) at MTSU in Spring, TAAT in Fall.

[3] School track students who take the special education AAC course are not required to take the SLP AAC course but are encouraged to access the adult content in the SLP AAC course (e.g., attend those lectures)

[4] Funded school track students are required to take one SPED course in reading in Fall of Y2 or Spring of Y2. Five-semester students completing an externship outside of Nashville will enroll in SPEDH 7410. Five-semester students completing an externship in Nashville may choose between SPEDH 7410 or SPEDS 7600, with permission of the faculty, dependent on the nature of the student's externship. Six-semester students will enroll in SPEDS 7600.