Masters Program
Communication Sciences & Disorders

Case is the Place

The Communication Sciences (COSI) Master’s Program prepares students for careers in medical and clinical speech language pathology. The program is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA). Rates for program completion, employment and national praxis examination passing are 100%. With a 4:1 student/faculty ratio and the extensive resources of the University and medical community, the program offers individualized instruction, cross discipline training, strong clinical practicum offerings and opportunities to participate in research. The program is located in the new headquarters of The Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center (CHSC). Built in 2009, it offers state of the art instructional research facilities.

Clinical Training
in Speech Language Pathology

The clinical training component of the M.A. Program is unique and is consistently cited as a strength of the program by outside reviewers. The Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center (CHSC) serves as the initial training site for the Program of Communication Sciences. Students are supervised by practicing speech-language pathologists and audiologists at the CHSC for part of their practicum experience. The clinical staff provides beginning graduate students with one-on-one supervision to help develop clinical skills through a variety of specialized CHSC programs. Students also participate in an externship program that includes medical and clinical placements at sites throughout the greater Cleveland area. Students are assigned to at least two different externship sites. Our clinical affiliations include: University Hospitals of Cleveland, MetroHealth Medical Center, The Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism, The Monarch School and The Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center.
Spotlight on Our Students

“I am glad I chose Case. I feel the smaller program makes it easy to contact professors, ask questions and learn much more during class and clinic. I also have enjoyed all of my placements that I have been assigned so far; it has been a great experience and the variety has shown me the different populations that I can work with as a future speech-language pathologist.”

Cara Colak, Second-Year Graduate Student, Clinical Extern at Monarch Center for Autism and the ALS Association

“Throughout my application and decision-making process I felt that the faculty really cared and was there to help me (which hasn’t changed throughout my time in the program). Case has a great reputation for being an academically challenging school with high expectations. I knew that coming here, I would get a good education and really be pushed to do my best and become a competent SLP. I really liked the resources available to us as student clinicians. We get the opportunity to work with diverse populations. There are definite advantages to having our classes in the Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center. This provides a lot of great resources; both materials and clinicians to help us learn and grow as future SLPs. I am glad I chose Case because I really like how small the program is. I feel I get a lot of individual attention and if I have a difficult time with something, the faculty is not too busy to really try to help me understand the concepts I need to know to be a good clinician.”

Melissa Clampitt, Second-Year Graduate Student, Clinical Extern at The Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism

“I chose Case because I was interested in specializing in medical speech pathology. I knew that the location of the program offered a lot of medical externship opportunities. Additionally, the size of the program was really attractive because it allows for students to form relationships with one another and with faculty. The facilities in the Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center are really nice; there is convenient access to materials and resources and also an office space for graduate students to work. Cleveland is also a great city to live in. There are a lot of places to go and see no matter what kinds of activities you like. The faculty members are really engaged with students and are very accessible to them. The clinical opportunities at the Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center are wonderful for students just starting practicum and then there are a lot of great externship sites that allow students to try out their particular interests. The small classes allow for a lot of flexibility, discussion and interactive projects. Neuroanatomy in the medical school turned out to be a really rewarding experience and a good opportunity to teach a bunch of future doctors about speech-language pathologists and what they do. All of my clinic experiences have had really supportive supervisors who have worked hard to both teach me about the profession and guide me in establishing my personal skills.”

Bethany Pasternak, Second-Year Graduate Student, Clinical Extern at Metro Health Medical Center

“I chose Case for its medical focus, dedicated faculty, and variety of research. In my two years at Case, I have grown to really appreciate the size of the program. The smaller class size allows students to integrate their personal clinical experiences with classroom learning, and promotes an environment where students learn as a team and build off each other’s experiences.”

Alexandra Krill, Second-Year Graduate Student, Clinical Extern at Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center
Spotlight on Our Faculty

Patrizia Bonaventura, PhD, a speech scientist and phonetician, is an assistant professor in the COSI Program with a secondary appointment in Cognitive Sciences. She teaches courses in phonetics and phonology, speech science, instrumental measurements and research methods. Dr. Bonaventura has previously worked on phonetic modeling for speech synthesis and recognition; her current research focuses on speech disorders that affect coordination of articulatory organs, on biomechanics of tongue movements in deglutition and on affective, cognitive and linguistic factors that impact the production of prosody. She directs the CWRU Cognitive Phonetics Lab and the Laboratory for Applied Research in Cognitive Semiotics. Dr. Bonaventura can be reached at patrizia.bonaventura@case.edu.

Barbara A. Lewis, PhD, CCC-SLP is a professor in the COSI Program and an adjunct professor in the Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine. Her interests include the etiological bases of child language disorders with a focus on genetic, medical and neurological conditions that impact speech and language development. Dr. Lewis is the principal investigator on an NIH-funded project investigating the genetic basis of speech sound disorders. She is also a co-investigator on a longitudinal project examining speech, language, academic and social outcomes of children exposed prenatally to cocaine. Dr. Lewis can be reached at barbra.lewis@case.edu.

Jennell Vick, PhD, CCC-SLP is an assistant professor in the COSI Program. Her research focuses on the movements of the tongue and lips during speech production. She is particularly interested in the development of these movements in infants and children, as well as how these movements are produced by preteens, teens, adults with neurological speech disorders. Dr. Vick uses data from different levels of the speech system to identify potential new diagnostic subcategories and paths of typical development. She is also the principal investigator on a project to create a computer animated treatment for severe speech sound disorders that uses the real-time movements of the patient’s tongue and lips to drive the movements of a 3D avatar. Dr. Vick can be reached at jennell.vick@case.edu.

Angela Hein Ciccia PhD, CCC-SLP is an assistant professor in the COSI Program. Her overall interest area is acquired neurogenic communication disorders across the lifespan. Dr. Ciccia’s current research projects focus on social information processing after traumatic brain injury in adolescents and adults using both behavioral methods and functional magnetic resonance imaging. Her research collaborators include the Cognitive Science Department and the Department of Pediatrics at Case as well as the Division of Radiology at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Clinically, she sees adolescent and adult clients with a variety of acquired neurogenic communication disorders. Dr. Ciccia can be reached at angela.ciccia@case.edu.
Graduate Students

The MA Clinical Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders accepts students from across the United States. We accept a small number of students a year to insure high quality training and opportunities to participate in research. Our graduates go on to successful careers in the field working in hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation facilities, private practices and early intervention programs.

Graduate Admissions

We expect our applicants to document a strong undergraduate record. The GRE is required. Successful applicants will have strong letters of recommendation that highlight the applicants understanding of the profession. The applicant’s statement of purpose is also a vital component of the admission process. Open Houses for prospective students are held throughout the year. Please visit our website for more information. www.case.edu/artscli/cosi

Living in Cleveland

Western Reserve College was established in 1826, and merged with the Case Institute of Technology in 1967. Case is located in University Circle, a neighborhood of Cleveland that is surrounded by parks and museums. The university is within walking distance of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, the Cleveland Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Cleveland Institute of Art, the Botanical Gardens, the Historical Society, and Severance Hall, the home of the Cleveland Orchestra. Also within a short walk are some of the best medical centers in the country, with University Hospitals located on campus, and the Cleveland Clinic just down the street. Cleveland hosts professional sports teams for baseball, football, and basketball. Housing is affordable, with many faculty and students living in the nearby communities and older suburbs. Cleveland includes a rich tapestry of culture and ethnic communities such as Little Italy. Many local communities celebrate a broad spectrum of cultural diversity.

Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

A graduate certificate in gerontology is available to master’s students at CWRU. This multidisciplinary program is coordinated through the University Center on Aging and Health and prepares students for careers in geriatric speech-language pathology.