



## UVA CSD Speech Language Pathology Clinical Training Arc

The goal of the UVA speech language pathology M.Ed. program is to prepare students to launch successful careers as clinical practitioners. With more than 80 years of experience, our program includes an efficient and curated arc of clinical training opportunities that fulfill American Speech Language Association (ASHA) certification requirements.

At UVA, all CSD graduate students begin their clinical training in the Sheila Johnson Center (SJC), our *in-house* clinical training facility. This is Phase 1 of the clinical training arc. When students enter SJC, they step into their first professional title: Associate Clinician. Our clinical training experiences are all about growth as a professional, as a clinician, and as an independent decision maker. Our expectations are high and achievable. We approach clinical instruction as two adults (Associate Clinician and Certified Clinical Supervisor) sharing the responsibility for providing evidence-based services for our clients. The focus of training in SJC is learning core clinical competencies that are fundamental for all service settings and populations. Students begin in SJC with a single client to whom they provide clinical services with the guidance of clinical supervisors who are full members of our graduate program. After a semester of focusing on a single client, students learn to manage services with more than one SJC client per semester in preparation to begin a series of three required external clinical placements. Students register for EDHS 8691 Clinical Practicum during semesters in which their clinical training occurs in SJC.

Throughout every phase of the clinical training process, students are supervised by licensed speech language pathologists who maintain national certification (CCC-SLP) and have met ASHA requirements to serve as a supervisor for graduate students.

After learning core clinical competencies in SJC, every UVA graduate student must successfully complete three external clinical placements prior to graduation: 2 externships (Phase 2) and one full-time internship (Phase 3). This ensures that each student meets ASHA certification requirements for training across the lifespan, across the full scope of practice in SLP, and in a variety of training settings.

### Student Preferences and Choices During Clinical Training

In the UVA CSD program, students have input into the development of their external clinical placements. All students are asked to provide their preferences for geographical locations, school age populations, and internship setting. In addition, all students may elect to move out of central Virginia after they complete their in-house clinical rotations and all in-person academic



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courses. Students who are following the Blue pathway may elect to complete the remainder of their graduate program elsewhere after they finish their first academic year in the program (first fall and first spring semesters). Students who are following the Orange pathway may relocate after they have finished their second academic year of graduate studies.

Clinical placements that are within driving distance from UVA are referred to as “in catchment” whereas placements that are far enough away from UVA that students usually must relocate are referred to as “out-of-catchment” locations. The catchment area is roughly 80 miles in any direction from Charlottesville. The greater Richmond metro area is within the catchment area, but the greater DC metro area, including Northern Virginia, is outside of the catchment area. The processes for securing clinical placements are different depending on whether the location is in or out of the catchment area. Students work with our External Placement Team to establish external rotations. The first decision to be made is whether the student wishes to seek external rotations inside or outside of the catchment area.

When students wish to secure external rotations outside of the catchment area, they inform our Team of their geographic preference(s). Then our Team will guide the student in how to identify appropriate agencies and search for potentially willing sites in their chosen location. Students know their own circumstances, including lodging and transportation resources, in addition to their relative priorities and are, therefore, best able to identify potential sites outside of central Virginia that will fit well for their needs and interests. Experience has proven that there are a few locations in which it is not possible to establish a legal contract (such as: New York City public schools and health care, Colorado health care, and some public schools in North Carolina) and others that have proven to be exceptionally difficult (including Florida public schools, Ohio public schools and health care, and Seattle public schools and health care). The Team will provide the student with up-to-date guidance that is congruent with our on-going placement activities. After the student finds an agency that is willing to further discuss the possibility of hosting, the student submits the agency’s contact information to our Team and all inter-agency discussions become the responsibility of our External Placement Team from that point forward, including the development of the legal contract. When a student proactively reaches out to find an out-of-catchment site, that placement is earmarked specifically for that student. As soon as the legal contract is finalized, that student knows where their placement will be. In our experience, some industrious first-year students on the Blue Path have their second-year, out-of-catchment externship and internship sites secured by the end of their first fall semester or early in their first spring semester. Other students continue to pursue options semester by semester.



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When students wish to remain within the catchment area for their external rotations, they inform the Team of their preferences for school age population and type of internship setting. Importantly, however, there are limited placement options within the central Virginia region. Therefore, prioritizing remaining inside the catchment area requires students to be willing to accept whatever assignment is available that semester and often requires students to wait until right before a semester begins before their placement can be finalized. The External Placement Team will always try to meet student preferences to the maximum extent possible, however, options are limited. Highest priority will be given to successfully completing the degree on time, even if the student's first setting preference is not available.

Importantly, students must be aware that the UVA Health System offers a very small number of training opportunities each semester. Those openings are available to students from across the nation on a competitive basis. UVA students are not guaranteed training opportunities in the UVA Health System. Thus, a student who is adamant that they want to secure a specific type of health care facility for their internship semester would be well-advised to proactively seek an external placement outside of the catchment area instead of hoping that a UVA medical placement might be available. Every year we place UVA students at UVA medical facilities, but UVA Health does not have enough capacity for most CSD students to be able to expect an internship in a UVA medical facility.

Although our CSD program does not offer specialization in bilingual speech language pathology, students who speak more than one language and who have an interest in pursuing a career as a bilingual SLP are encouraged to talk with our SJC Director of SLP Services and Clinical Training about their interests. In the past, we have successfully secured clinical training experiences and external placements to support this endeavor.

### Clinical Training Requirements and Options

#### **Required: School Externship (EHDS 8170, 4 credits)**

This externship takes place at a public school, two to three full days per week during spring or fall semesters. Students on the Blue and Orange pathways participate in school externships at different points in their programs of study according to the differing courses that they have completed beforehand. Please see the specific curriculum track for details.

Students are expected to accrue at least 100 clinical clock hours during this practicum experience.



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Concurrent with this externship, students are enrolled in academic courses.

### **Required: Adult/Low-Incidence Externship (EDHS 8170, 4 credits)**

This externship experience is fulfilled via standardized clinical training which consists of curated, computer-based, simulation training sessions that provide every graduate student with the opportunity for clinical training that is focused on the basics of services for adults and the basics of services for low-incidence disorders with clients of all ages. Students on the Blue and Orange pathways participate in training with standardized cases at different points in their programs of study according to the differing courses that they have completed beforehand. Students on the Blue pathway complete most of the standardized cases during the summer, with a few additional debriefing sessions that occur during J-Term of the second year of the graduate program after having completed the voice disorders, AAC, and aural habilitation courses in second fall semester. Students on the Orange pathway complete all standard cases during their second summer in the graduate program. Please see review the curriculum tracks for details. Standard cases with adults and low-incidence disorders yield more than 70 clock hours of clinical training and fulfill the EDHS 8170 requirements for 4 credits during summer. Concurrent with this externship, students are enrolled in academic courses during summer session.

Students on the Blue pathway do not register for J-term credits to complete the last few debriefing sessions for standardized cases. Nor are any students required to pay out of pocket for access to the computerized simulation training portal (Simucase). The UVA CSD Program covers the cost of student registration with Simucase and pays for experts in simulation training to provide supervision and debriefing sessions to ensure high-quality, optimal training and support with this specialized form of contemporary learning.

### **Required: Final Internship (EDHS 8800 for 9 credits of internship, plus EDHS 8801 for 3 credits of SLP Capstone)**

The full-time internship, five-days per week, takes place during the final semester of the program of study. Having completed an externship in public schools and the adult/low-incidence simulation training, students are encouraged to choose a setting of their preference for this placement.

Internships are defined as full-day, 5 days per week, external placements that span the duration of the semester. There is not a minimum or maximum number of clinical training clock hours



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that defines the internship experience. Instead, students should engage fully and learn as much as possible throughout the entire semester. The purpose of the internship is to provide an opportunity for students to further develop their clinical skills and prepare for full-time employment.

In general, students are expected to accrue a minimum of 180 clinical clock hours during the EDHS 8800 practicum experience. However, data reveals that students typically accrue substantially more than 200 hours during their internship. Some students accrue well more than 250 clinical training clock hours during the final internship semester.

Before beginning the final internship (EDHS 8800), students will have completed all disorders coursework. During this internship semester, students will also enroll in 3 credits of SLP Capstone studies (EDHS 8801) to complete the Praxis exam, comprehensive exams, and ASHA certification requirements prior to graduation.

### **Optional: in-person summer clinical training -Elective Independent Study (EDHS 5993)**

Students may also choose to enroll in 2 credits of elective independent study if they wish to complete an in-person external clinical placement while concurrently completing the summer standardized cases. Importantly, all optional external summer clinical training sites must be located at least 10 miles away from the UVA campus. The reason for this is that there are a very limited number of agencies and supervisors within that 10-mile zone. These opportunities must be reserved for required clinical training experiences (internships and school externships). We will try to find optional summer placements within the larger catchment area for students, but we cannot promise that this will be possible. Students may elect to complete an elective, in-person summer placement outside of the catchment area by following the same steps for establishing an external placement as described above for externships and internships.

An elective summer in-person externship experience usually takes place in non-school setting, for example: at a hospital, skilled nursing facility, rehabilitation center, or a private practice, but can be with any age population and any practice setting, including private or public schools. This practicum experience should be limited to two to three full days per week during the summer because students are concurrently completing the required externship via standard cases and will also be attending academic courses. EDHS 8170, plus academic courses, create a summer that is already filled with required activities. Before electing to take on an additional elective placement, or summer employment, students should consider their own capacity to sustain greater than full-time engagement throughout the summer.

The CSD Program does not have a requirement for the number of days per week for this type of placement, but the number of independent study enrollment credits is not variable. A student



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who wishes to have a one-day-per-week in-person placement may certainly do so, but they must still register for 2 credits of elective independent study. A 2 day per week placement would be most preferable, with a maximum of 3 days per week for students who are exceptionally energetic and fast learners. Students should think carefully before planning to do a 4 day per week summer placement because the standardized cases already constitute a full-time clinical learning experience in addition to the required academic summer courses. Because students must be enrolled in one or two academic courses during the summer, it is not possible to engage in a 5-day per week optional in-person placement during the summer.

If you want to enroll in these elective independent study credits, we will work with you to establish a legal contract and secure that placement.

Please note that elective independent credits will increase the number of summer enrollment credits and will, therefore, increase summer tuition costs.

Importantly, elective independent study is NOT a requirement for graduation.

### **Optional: in-person local summer clinical training -CARE Clinic Externship**

Students who wish to remain within the catchment area while concurrently completing the summer standardized cases may choose to engage in clinical training (and accrue clinical training hours) by participating in the CARE Clinic as an extern. CARE externs participate in advanced diagnostic evaluations on Wednesdays under the supervision of a CARE SLP during the four phases of evaluation each week: preparation, direct assessment, conferencing with client &/or caregivers, and evaluation report writing.

This clinical training option does not require enrolling in independent study credits and does not carry additional tuition costs.

Students who elect to pursue this training opportunity may include this experience on their professional resume as "CARE Clinic Extern, Summer 202x, University of Virginia, Sheila Johnson Center: advanced diagnostic evaluation training with individuals who have autism spectrum disorders".

In the past, we have been able to offer \$500 in financial support to a maximum of two CARE Externs during the summer. We hope to be able to continue to do so.

### **Optional: in-person local clinical training -CARE Clinic Internship**

Students who are completing an internship within the local catchment area may elect to develop advanced diagnostic skills by participating in the CARE Clinic as an intern. CARE interns



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participate in advanced diagnostic evaluations on Wednesdays during the internship semester under the supervision of a CARE SLP during the four phases of evaluation each week: preparation, direct assessment, conferencing with client &/or caregivers, and evaluation report writing.

Thus, CARE Interns report to their usual external placement on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays each week during the final internship semester. On Wednesdays, CARE Interns report to SJC to conduct evaluations with CARE clients.

This clinical training option does not require enrolling in independent study credits and does not carry additional tuition costs. For students who may be interested in this option, our External Placement Team will explore and discuss this possibility with internship supervisors while establishing the local internship placement.

Students who elect to pursue this training opportunity may include this experience on their professional resume as "CARE Clinic Intern, (semester) 202x, University of Virginia, Sheila Johnson Center: advanced diagnostic evaluation training with individuals who have autism spectrum disorders".

In the past, we have been able to offer \$500 in financial support to a maximum of two CARE Interns each fall and spring semester. We hope to be able to continue to do so.