Doctor of Speech-Language Pathology

Cohort: SLPD 22 LR (Summer 2025 start)

Rocky Mountain University

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Program Description

The vision of Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions (RMU) is to advance the quality, delivery and efficacy of healthcare. The Doctor of Speech-Language Pathology (SLPD) develops evidence-based clinician with advanced clinical skills who can critically evaluate the literature and participate in the research process through identification of best practice and apply that to independent clinical research.

The core and concentration courses are designed to enhance clinical, research, teaching, and leadership skills. The SLPD program with its limited-residency and online-only models will provide the flexibility for the practitioner to continue professional work obligations during the seven-semester, 40-credit program. The capstone emphasizes application of scientific principles related to the clinical problems seen in the discipline.

The purpose of the SLPD program is to prepare professionals focused on developing scientifically-trained and clinically-experienced master speech pathologists as leaders and change agents by providing broad knowledge of social, political, and economic forces at work in society. Graduates of this program will increase their contribution to healthcare through the knowledge and skills developed through active use and integration of research and concepts of evidenced-based practice, clinical quality improvement, organizational development, leadership and advocacy. The program prepares and supports students in completing a clinical doctoral degree that can provide opportunities for employment in healthcare agencies, schools, and as academic faculty in institutions of higher education.

Degree Objectives
The SLPD program is committed to the development of the healthcare professional who can:
- Demonstrate analytical methodologies for the evaluation of clinical practice and the application of scientific evidence.
- Initiate evidence-based practice and policy strategies that optimize access to care and clinical outcomes
- Develop knowledge expertise in an area of clinical research;
- Influence ethical and legal management of healthcare through education of providers, consumers, and society at large;
- Collaborate with interprofessional teams necessary to improve clinical care for populations of clients;
- Integrate leadership expertise with clinical perspective and sound business practices to help transform the evolving healthcare system at local, regional, national, and international levels.

Curriculum
Core Courses: All students are required to complete research methods/biostatistics courses as well as required leadership courses. These courses provide the foundation for the concentration courses and the ability to participate in and critique research.

Speech-Language Pathology Courses: These courses focus specifically on the discipline of speech-language pathology, emphasizing ethics, supervision, and evidence-based SLP practice.

Clinical Research Concentration:
This track is for SLPs new to the profession (less than five years of professional experience) or SLPs with an interest in clinical research. The SLPD Clinical Research (CR) Concentration track offers a course of study for the SLP working in clinical practice that addresses the need for locating, understanding, and synthesizing research to meet the needs of complex clinical clients. Doctoral candidates will gain competencies related to the application of evidence-based practice concepts to determine efficacy of treatments or to compare treatments for challenging clients. Students will conduct a clinical investigation using a single-case research design. The investigation will include determination of a clinical research topic based on an intervention, appraisal, and synthesis of the evidence in the selected topic, and creation of a five-chapter evidence-based capstone project. Graduates may choose to advance the speech-language pathology practice through clinical research by submitting a presentation at a local, state, or national conference or by submitting a peer-reviewed journal.

Healthcare Professions Education Concentration:
This track is for SLPs with more than five years of professional experience, with current job roles related to adult learning. The SLPD Healthcare Professions Education (HPE) Concentration track leads the student who would like to focus on teaching and learning in clinical education, precepting, continuing education, or higher education. Doctoral

students will explore the dimensions of adult learning, instructional design principles, and andragogical methodology through a variety of courses while including practical applications for the development of healthcare professions education students. Coursework includes instructional theory, design/delivery, evaluation and assessment of learning, educational technology, and curriculum development focused specifically on healthcare professions. Students will determine a research topic related to adult learners, locate, appraise, and synthesize evidence in the selected topic, and create a five-chapter evidence-based capstone project for submissions to a peer-reviewed journal.

Admission Requirements
1. A master's degree from an accredited college or university.
2. Have a minimum grade point average of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) on all work completed during the master's degree.
3. Possess writing and oral communication skills sufficient to conduct and deliver the results of meaningful research. Must submit an essay that includes current personal, intellectual and professional interests and why the student is applying to the degree program.
4. Submit a current curriculum vita and submitted other application requirements.
5. Possess information technology skills sufficient to participate effectively in the RMU SLPD program.

Program Outline

Course Code & Title	Credits
Health Sciences Core Courses *(5 courses, 13 credits required)***:**	
All courses listed are required:	
HS 710 Evidence-based Practice	3
HS 712 Research Methods: A Quantitative Approach	3
HS 714 Scientific/Professional Writing	1
HS 720 Qualitative Research	3
Health Sciences Core Required Credits:	**13**
Speech-Language Pathology Courses *(7 courses, 18 credits required)***:**	
All courses listed are required:	
HS 751 Case Series Single Subject Design	3
SLP 601 Evidence-based Practice in Speech-Language Pathology	3
SLP 602 Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Supervision I	3
SLP 605 Ethics in Speech-Language Pathology	2
SLP 606 Capstone I: Speech-Language Pathology	3
SLP 611 Research Writing	2
SLP 721 Biostatistics Interpretation	3
SLP 727 Speech-Language Pathology Practice: Organization & Management	2
Speech-Language Pathology Required Credits:	**21**
Concentration Courses *(Students select one track; 3 courses, 9 credits required)***:**	

Clinical Research Track	*All courses required:*	
	HLA 620 Healthcare Leadership	3
	SLP 607 Capstone II: Speech-Language Pathology	3
	SLP 609 Capstone III: Speech-Language Pathology	3
Healthcare Professions Education Track	*Required courses:*	
	HPE 740 Learning Theory & Design	3
	HPE 760 Instructional Strategies for Healthcare Educators	3
	Concentration Elective, students required to complete one of the following:	
	HPE 754 Evidence-Based Assessment in Healthcare Professions Education **-OR-** HPE 752 Curriculum Design for Healthcare Professions	3
Concentration Courses Required Credits:		**9**

Course Code & Title	Credits
Optional Course *(not required)***:**	
HS 770 Research Practicum *Optional course, may be taken in substitution for another course, with Program Director approval. May be repeated up to 6 credits.*	(1-2)
SLP 744 A Mentored Teaching Practicum *May be repeated once as SLP 744 B, for a total of 6 credits between the two courses.*	(3)
Total Program Required Credits:	**40**
Capstone Residency:	
Enrollment in SLP 711 A, SLP 711 B, etc. required until program completion:	
Capstone Residency—SLP 711 A, SLP 711 B, etc. as needed (3 credits per course/semester, all online). *Continue with 3 credits per semester until degree completion. Not included in program tuition.*	

Program Calendar

Semester	Course	Credits	On-site Dates
Semester 1 **Summer 2025** *May 5-Aug. 22*	HS 710 Evidence-based Practice	3	June 13-17
	HS 712 Research Methods: A Quantitative Approach	3	June 13-17
	HS 714 Scientific/Professional Writing	1	Online
	Semester Total:	**7**	**June 13-17** Orientation Jun 13
Semester 2 **Fall 2025** *Sep. 2-Dec. 19*	SLP 601 Evidence-based Practice in Speech-Language Pathology	3	Online
	SLP 602 Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Supervision I	3	Online
	Semester Total:	**6**	**Online**
Semester 3 **Winter 2026** *Jan. 5-Apr. 24*	Concentration Course 1	3	CR-2 days HPE-Online
	SLP 606 Capstone I: Speech-Language Pathology	3	1 day
	Semester Total:	**6**	**Feb. 27-Mar. 2**
Semester 4 **Summer 2026** *May 4-Aug. 21*	HS 751 Case Series Single Subject Design	3	Online
	SLP 611 Research Writing	2	Online
	SLP 727 Speech-Language Pathology Practice: Organization & Management	2	Online
	Semester Total:	**7**	**Online**
Semester 5 **Fall 2026** *Aug. 31-Dec. 18*	HS 720 Qualitative Research	3	1.5 days
	Concentration Course 2	3	CR-2 days HPE-Online
	Semester Total:	**6**	**Oct. 23-26**
Semester 6 **Winter 2027** *Jan. 4-Apr. 23*	SLP 605 Ethics in Speech-Language Pathology	2	Online
	SLP 721 Biostatistics Interpretation	3	Online
	Semester Total:	**5**	**Online**
Semester 7 **Summer 2027** *May 3-Aug. 20*	Concentration Course 3	3	Online
	Semester Total:	**3**	**Online**
Optional courses, taken in any semester	HS 770 Research Practicum *(optional course)*‡	(1-2)	Online
	SLP 744 A Mentored Teaching Practicum *(optional course)*	(3)	Online
	Optional Course Total:	**(6)**	**Online**
Semester 8 to Program Completion	Capstone Residency—SLP 711 A, SLP 711 B, etc. as needed (3 credits per course/semester, all online). *Continue with 3 credits per semester until degree completion. Not included in program tuition.*		
Total Program Required Credits:		**40**	
Five-year deadline for program completion from start of program is May 5, 2030			

‡Research Practicum course credits may be substituted for another course, with Program Director approval. May be repeated up to 6 credits.

Concentration Track Courses

Course Sequence	Course Code & Title
Clinical Research	
1	HLA 620 Healthcare Leadership
2	SLP 607 Capstone II: Speech-Language Pathology
3	SLP 609 Capstone III: Speech-Language Pathology
Healthcare Professions Education	
1	HPE 740 Learning Theory & Design
2	HPE 754 Evidence-Based Assessment in Healthcare Professions Education **-OR-** HPE 752 Curriculum Design for Healthcare Professionals
3	HPE 760 Instructional Strategies for Healthcare Educators

Course Descriptions

Health Science Core Courses

HS 710   Evidence-based Practice   **(3 credits; 2 days on-site)**
This course is designed to prepare healthcare professionals with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to make independent judgments about the validity of sources of evidence. The primary focus is on critical appraisal of research, including identifying potential sources of bias and making a professional judgment of the seriousness of the risk of bias. This course will also cover the concepts of evidence-based practice with emphasis on forming answerable clinical questions and effective literature search strategies. The evaluative approach to appraising the research literature will prepare the students to critique and judge evidence based on the accuracy and validity of diagnostic tests, effectiveness of clinical interventions, prognosis for patients with health-related conditions, and chance of harm or benefit from select preventative and therapeutic factors. Within key activities and assignments, students will formulate a key clinical question, rapidly search medical and health-related databases, perform a critical appraisal of research evidence, and describe the application of the evidence.

HS 712   Research Methods: A Quantitative Approach   **(3 credits; 2 days on-site)**
This course provides an introduction to general research principles and research ethics. The student will be introduced to the following topics in the research process: question formulation, principles of measurement, basic design and methodological features, issues of reliability and validity, and fundamentals of conducting a literature review. A quantitative article critique will be conducted in class and outside of class. The class format will include lecture, small group discussion, and practice.

HS 714   Scientific/Professional Writing   **(1 credit; Online)**
This pass/fail course reviews PubMed, Index Medicus, other search methodologies, American Psychological Association editorial format, the composition of a scientific/professional manuscript, and the style of scientific/professional writing, its construction and formats.

HS 720   Qualitative Research   **(3 credits; 1.5 days on-site)**
This course introduces the student to qualitative research methods and their applications to problems and phenomena in healthcare. Emphasis is placed on the appropriate use and differences of qualitative methods, their philosophical underpinnings, and application to clinical issues.

HS 751   Case Series Single Subject Design   **(3 credits; Online)**
This course will seek an in-depth exploration and practice regarding the mechanics, design and construction of case series and single subject research designs in a healthcare environment. Students will develop and submit a single subject/case series research

design related to individual dissertation topics or to relevant clinical questions.

Speech-Language Pathology Courses

SLP 601   Evidence-Based Practice in Speech-Language Pathology   (3 credits; Online)
This course is designed to prepare speech-language pathology students with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to make independent judgments about the validity of clinical research and to implement evidence-based clinical practice in clinical environments. This course focuses on the concepts of evidence-based practice, with emphasis on forming answerable clinical questions and effective literature search strategies. The EBP approach prepares students to find, appraise, and integrate evidence for clinical decision-making, with particular emphasis in this course on (a) prognosis for a given client, and (b) effectiveness of clinical interventions. Based on presentation of case scenarios, students will formulate the key question(s), rapidly search medical and health-related databases, select best available evidence, appraise the evidence using the EBP approach, and describe application of the evidence in a clinical context.

SLP 602   Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Supervision I   (3 credits; Online)
This course is designed to prepare the student with knowledge to assume the role of a speech-language pathology clinical supervisor. Topics related to supervision include its definition, history, theories, resources, major roles/responsibilities/styles of clinical supervisors, diversity, and expectations/needs of supervisees; the supervision of graduate students, speech-language pathology assistants, Clinical Fellows, and other rehabilitation professionals will be discussed.

SLP 605   Ethics in Speech-Language Pathology   (2 credits; Online)
This course provides a comprehensive overview of ethics in the clinical practice of speech-language pathology (SLP). Students define and distinguish moral, ethical and legal foundations in clinical practice, analyze the cardinal documents of the profession, and compare and contrast national and state ethical standards. Additional topics include theories of ethics, professional malpractice, ethical principles of research, ethical decision-making, and how ethics can impact the various environments in which SLP practice occurs.

SLP 606   Capstone I: Speech-Language Pathology   (3 credits; Online)
This course is designed to provide students with the foundation for successful completion of an evidence-based practice (EBP) project. This course emphasizes knowledge of current expectations for speech-language pathologists engaging in EBP in clinical practice, familiarizing students with capstone progression, project quality and scope, and doctoral-level communication requirements. Each student is expected to develop the introduction, literature review, and method for the capstone project, and, if appropriate, submit the project to the Institutional Review Board.

SLP 611   Research Writing   (2 credits; Online)
This course provides students with skill sets to analyze and synthesize selected research complementary to a research topic. Students will obtain the ability to complete editing reviews. Submission of a comprehensive literature review will be required.

SLP 721   Biostatistics Interpretation   (3 credits; Online)

The purpose of this course is to learn basic interpreting biostatistics reported in peer-reviewed journal articles. Topics will include ways of describing data, how to graphically display data, and looking for and testing relationships or differences in data.

SLP 727   Speech-Language Pathology Practice: Organization   (2 credits; Online)
**   & Management**

The primary professional focus for speech-language pathologists (SLPs) typically involves clinical practice; that practice can occur in a wide variety of settings, each with its own unique challenges and opportunities. This course explores current issues of organization and ongoing management of SLP clinical practice, with an emphasis on administration/organization/management of healthcare, school, and private practice settings.

Clinical Research Concentration Courses

HLA 620   Healthcare Leadership   (3 credits; Online)

Concepts of leadership related to current healthcare organizations are examined. Specific concepts including communications, public relations, team building, negotiation, and conflict resolution are explored. Strategic aspects such as vision, viewpoint and admission are included. Managing uncertainty is discussed in relation to healthcare organizations. Contemporary leadership challenges, communication strategies and crisis communication are explored. Leadership functions and decision-making are analyzed.

SLP 607   Capstone II: Speech-Language Pathology   (3 credits; Online)

This course is the second of three that are specifically designed to provide students with the foundation for successful completion of an evidence-based practice (EBP) project. This course emphasizes knowledge of current expectations for speech-language pathologists engaging in EBP in clinical practice, and familiarizing students with capstone progression, project quality and scope, and doctoral-level communication requirements. Prerequisite: SLP 606.

SLP 609   Capstone III: Speech-Language Pathology   (3 credits; Online)

This course is designed as a culmination of the student's learning experiences, with an emphasis on the implementation and presentation of a complete evidence-based practice (EBP) project. Students are expected to demonstrate depth of knowledge in select areas of clinical practice through the advanced synthesis of information and expertise in interpreting and applying clinical research. The ultimate goal of the capstone project is that students will demonstrate the ability to function as independent clinician researchers and to use their knowledge and skills in order to effect systems change in professional environments. Prerequisite: SLP 607.

Healthcare Professions Education Concentration Courses

HPE 740   Learning Theory & Design   **(3 credits; Online)**
This course incorporates a learner centered approach to course development and instructional delivery based on the best evidence of how people learn. Students will demonstrate both traditional and innovative instructional techniques and strategies for teaching in didactic settings based upon the evidence-base of best teaching practices.

HPE 752   Curriculum Design for the Healthcare Professions   **(3 credits; Online)**
Students will learn how effective health professions curricula must integrate the basic and clinical sciences, connect didactic to experiential learning, be competency-based and time-variable, include andragogic underpinnings and approaches of delivery, and create meaningful program outcomes and assessment opportunities that verify quality and excellence. In addition, timely issues such as the curricular incorporation of clinical experiences/education, the sociocultural aspects of healthcare, and pertinent accreditation issues and constraints for healthcare professions will be addressed.

HPE 754   Evidence-Based Assessment in Healthcare   **(3 credits; Online)**
**   Professions Education**
This course explores contemporary, evidence-based models and techniques for assessing student classroom and clinical performance, instructor effectiveness, and overall educational program quality. Emphasizing a unique and modern approach to programmatic assessment, students will design and implement comprehensive assessment plans, interpret diverse data sources, and develop strategies for continuous improvement. Through a focus on programmatic assessment, students will learn to create cohesive, longitudinal assessment systems that provide insight into educational effectiveness.

HPE 760   Instructional Strategies for Healthcare Educators   **(3 credits; Online)**
This course provides a comprehensive exploration of instructional strategies and technologies essential for effective teaching in healthcare education, covering online, blended, and traditional classroom environments. Emphasis is placed on the design and delivery of low and high fidelity, simulation-based, and mixed media resources that support dynamic and interactive learning experiences. Students will examine best practices in course design and instructional delivery, engaging with current instructional technologies.

Optional Courses

HS 770   Research Practicum   **(1-2 credits; Online)**
Faculty-directed clinical, basic, or applied research practicum, which may include but not limited to review of literature preparation, human subjects committee proposal development, data collection, and presentation/manuscript preparation. Graded Pass/Fail. *(Optional course. May be taken in substitution for another course, with Program Director approval. May be repeated up to 6 credits.)*

SLP 744 A   Mentored Teaching Practicum   **(3 credits, online)**
This course is designed to mentor students in the scholarship of teaching and learning. This is a faculty-directed teaching practicum for Doctoral students which may include but is not limited to the development and review of syllabi, course content creation & delivery, assessment design, delivery, and review. Graded Pass/Fail. *(Optional course. May be repeated as SLP 744 B. Max of 6 credits between the two courses.)*

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