**Advanced School-Based Speech-Language Pathology**

**Post-Master’s Certificate**

1. Curriculum Outline

Title: Advance School-Based Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Certificate

Course Sequence

* CDIS 6103 – Literacy for Learning in Educational Settings
* CDIS 6203 – Advanced Assessment & Intervention of Fluency Disorders
* CDIS 6303 – Effective Augmentative and Alternative Communication Services in Schools
* CDIS 6403 – Advanced Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing Assessment & Intervention
* CDIS 6503 – Behavior Management in Educational Settings
1. 15 credit hours are required for the Graduate Certificate.
2. New Courses and New Course Descriptions

1. CDIS 6103 – Literacy for Learning in Educational Settings

An examination of language-based literacy skills, including consideration of development, disorders, assessment and intervention.

2. CDIS 6203 – Advanced Assessment & Intervention of Fluency Disorders

An examination of fluency disorders including theory, etiological factors, and development. In addition, the course is designed to address assessment and management of fluency disorders consistent with evidence-based practice for prospective speech-language pathologists.

3. CDIS 6303 –Effective Augmentative and Alternative Communication Services in

 Schools

This course will support current SLPs in becoming more effective SLPs as it relates to the provision of AAC services in schools. Throughout this course, students will (a) identify a barrier they wish to address relevant to their current service provision or their current caseload, (b) discover strategies for addressing that barrier, and (c) develop a plan for improving their AAC service provision through the implementation of those strategies in their own professional work.

4. CDIS 6403 – Advanced Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing Assessment & Intervention

Study of the etiology, assessment, and remediation of feeding and swallowing disorders in children.

5. CDIS 6503 – Behavior Management in Educational Settings

The course provides an introduction to behavioral management across a variety of settings highlighting best practices from organizing time, materials, and room space. Strategies for managing individual and large group student behaviors, transitions, and other arrangements will be presented in addition to basic federal and state laws as they pertain to the legal procedures for all professionals, including educators of students with disabilities and ESL students.

1. Program Goals & Objectives

Goals:

1. Institute a nationally recognized premier program to provide deep training across specialty areas of speech-language pathology served in educational settings.
2. Provide a foundation of deep knowledge for communication disorders in educational settings that can be used to facilitate critical thinking and interdisciplinary collaboration.
3. Provide graduates with knowledge to facilitate leadership opportunities in workplace and community settings.

Objectives:

1. Provide students with advanced studies across key areas of service delivery so graduates can return to their professional careers with deep knowledge of functional content to make them experts on their campus.

2. Structure engaged learning across the domains of speech-language pathology in order to support student understanding of engagement, participation, and health as they pertain to the school-age population.

3. Bridge application of research to clinical practice as typified by evidence-based best practices in speech-language pathology.

4. Provide a foundation of resources and references to facilitate continuity of care within the school and home settings for school-age children who receive speech-language pathology services.

e. Expected Student Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for graduates of the Advanced School-Based Speech-Language Certificate Program are:

* Understand pre-literacy skills as well as literacy skill development in educational settings
* Exhibit high quality interdisciplinary communication, including academic/professional writing and implementation of interventions
* Demonstrate knowledge of theory and practice related to assessment and treatment of fluency disorders in educational settings
* Interpret research and assessment results to make data-based decisions
* Describe evidence-base for pediatric feeding/swallowing intervention
* Identify effective augmentative and alternative communication options and interventions in educational settings
* Describe and implement behavior management strategies to be used in educational settings

*All students in the Advanced School-Based Speech-Language Pathology Certificate program are required to complete a written comprehensive examination. The examination will be embedded within CDIS 6503, Behavior Management in Educational Settings.*

**f. Documentation that program meets employer needs**

According to the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA), more than half of all SLPs (56%) work in educational settings. SLPs in these settings conduct screenings, diagnostic evaluations and provide intervention for a wide range of communication disorders across all 9 areas of speech-language pathology (articulation, fluency, voice and resonance, receptive and expressive language, hearing, swallowing, cognition, social communication, and communication modalities).

The entry level degree to work as an SLP is a Master’s Degree. To advance within the school-based setting, SLPs must complete additional education. This certificate not only allows SLPs to advance within the educational setting, but it also provides an in depth knowledge of 5 of the most sought-after professional development topics in the field of speech-language pathology (augmentative and alternative communication, fluency disorders, literacy development and intervention, pediatric swallowing, and behavior management). There is often limited experience and training at the graduate level with the course topics that will be offered via this program. Therefore, graduates of this program will be better positioned to provide even higher quality speech-language pathology services to the children served in schools. Employer needs will be met through the outcomes of having better trained service providers in their school districts. Currently, there are no post-master’s certificate programs designed specifically for school-based SLPs in the United States.

**g. Student demand (projected enrollment)**

**Target Group**

Master’s Level: Speech Language Pathologists

**Anticipated Demand**

**In Arkansas:** (\* As reported via email by ABESPA, January 25, 2017)

**Speech Language Pathologists** registered with the *Arkansas Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology (ABESPA)*:

\* 2,626 – Active licenses (Some SLPs maintain license in more than one state)

\* 2,401 – Arkansas residents

\* 599 – School-based SLPs

\*\*It has been confirmed through ASHA that selected coursework throughout this certificate program can be used as professional development. SLPs are required to complete 30 hours of ASHA CEUs every 3 years. Coursework from this program will easily provide 30 hours of professional development.

**Certified Teachers (Master’s Level):** The Arkansas Department of Education reports there are over 32,000 certified teachers in the state of Arkansas.

Master’s level = 13, 244

Educators’ salaries are based on the education level and experience. Speech-language pathologists do not have a separate pay scale in school-based settings. For educators with a master’s degree who are interested in additional education, but are not interested in a Specialist’s Degree or completing research for a Ph.D., there are currently no opportunities to increase pay scale other than becoming a Nationally Certified Teacher (<http://www.boardcertifiedteachers.org/> ), merit increases, or experience increases. Becoming a Nationally Certified Teacher is not applicable to school-based SLPs. This certificate would provide an avenue for many SLPs to attain additional education for merit increases within their district.

**Nationally:**

As of 2017, there are 156,254 licensed Speech-Language Pathologists

The field of speech-language pathology is on the rise. Job opportunities are anticipated to grow 21% by the year 2024 (ASHA, 2017).

Several state’s public school salary schedules are similar to Arkansas’ in that an additional +15 or +30 hours in Master’s level coursework (even without a completed degree) can result in a pay increase.

**Needs Assessment:**

In the fall of 2016, a needs assessment was completed via a survey to all licensed speech-language pathologists in Arkansas only. 506 responses were collected. 391 respondents reported working full time and 243 reported working in a school setting (an additional 149 reported working in preschool setting).

When asked about general interest in an online certificate program opportunity, 103 respondents reported there would be “many interested” SLPs while 154 reported “a few would be interested” and 243 reported they were “unsure” of the interest in this program.

When asked about personal interest in completing an online certificate program, 63 respondents reported they would “definitely” be interested, 207 reported they “might” be interested, 59 said they “weren’t sure,” 79 said “probably not” and 92 said they had “no interest” in this program.

Given that this certificate program would reach far beyond the state of Arkansas and that over 200 respondents from Arkansas indicated a moderate to significant interest in the creation of this program, a need for this program was established. Anticipated enrollment is 15-20 students per cohort. Each cohort will start in the fall and finish in the summer.

**h. Program approval letter from licensure/certification entity, if required**

NA

**j. Scheduled program review date (within 10 years)**

Program is to be initiated in the fall of 2020. First program review is scheduled to be in 2023-2024, which will be consistent with the Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders.