

Comprehensive Examination Syllabus

Spring COMD 6900

Instructor: Sandi Gillam PhD., CCC-SLP

Office: EEJECERC, Language and Literacy Clinic, Room 222

email: sandi.gillam@usu.edu

See the COMD website for formal Comprehensive Exam policy.

<http://comd.usu.edu/htm/policies>

Course Description: The comprehensive exam is the culminating experience to demonstrate knowledge gained during the graduate program by demonstrating a “knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including their biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural bases.” The comprehensive examination also provides an opportunity for you to “demonstrate knowledge of the nature of speech, language, hearing, and communication disorders and differences, as well as swallowing disorders, including etiologies, characteristics, and anatomical/physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, linguistic, and cultural correlates” (Council on Academic Accreditation 2008 Standards) associated with communication disorders.

The comprehensive examination is a graduation requirement if a student elects to complete the Plan C option. This examination will cover your graduate coursework taken at USU across the lifespan areas of: research, articulation and phonology, cognitive aspects of communication, language (including social communication), voice, fluency, dysphagia, and motor speech.

The examination is designed to reveal the candidate’s knowledge of speech, language, and hearing development and disorders as well as assessment, identification, diagnosis, intervention, current research and follow-up services for individuals with speech and language disorders. Students will be evaluated on the level of their knowledge as well as their ability to express their knowledge in acceptable written form.

Enrollment Information: The date for the exam will be mid- to late January for all SLP graduate students. You will be notified in your graduate orientation meeting as to the exact date of the exam.

You must enroll in COMD 6900 under Dr. Sandra Gillam’s section during the Spring semester that you will be taking your examination.

If you are enrolled in a Plan A or B, you must seek notification from your primary mentor on or before the midterm of the semester before the scheduled comprehensive exams to determine whether you have made sufficient progress to continue or should enroll in COMD 6900 and take the comprehensive examination (Plan C) with your peers.

Course Requirements

The exam will be administered through Canvas. You will be notified of the location of the exam by the head of the comprehensive examination committee (Dr. Sandi Gillam). On the day of exam, you will be given one question in the morning for 2.5 hours and one in the afternoon for 2.5 hours. The question(s) will be chosen by the Comprehensive Exam Committee. There will be 2 2.5 hours.

Nature of Written Comprehensive Questions

The graduate faculty will create comprehensive examination questions that are focused on children and adults. The question will cut across course lines.

Example: Discuss what evidence-based practice is and how it affects assessment and intervention practices for school-aged children with articulation, language, and/or reading disorders.

Scoring Procedure

The examinations will be coded so raters will be blind to the students' identity while they are being scored. Each answer will be rated by at least 2 members of the graduate faculty as 4 (excellent), 3 (pass), 2 (poor), or 1 (fail). All ratings for each student's answers will be averaged for a total score in order to determine the outcome of the student's examination. Students must pass each question with an average score of 2.8 or higher in order to pass the comprehensive examination.

A mean rating of 3.6 to 4.0 means the student passed the comprehensive examination question with a commendation from the Department.

A mean rating of 2.8 to 3.59 means the student passed the comprehensive examination question.

A mean rating of 1.0 to 2.79 means the student failed the comprehensive examination question.

Mean Ratings below 2.8

Students who receive a mean rating of 2.79 or below on a comprehensive question will have failed the question. If a student receives a score of 1.0-2.79 on both of the examination questions, he/she will be dismissed from the program as per graduate program policy.

Supplementary Exam

The ratings for each student's answers will be averaged for a total score in order to

determine the outcome of the student's answers will be averaged for a total score in order to determine the outcome of the student's examination. Students must earn an average score of 2.8 or higher in order to pass the comprehensive examination.

Students who earn an average score of 2.79 or below on a question must take a supplementary examination. The purpose of the supplementary examination is to give the student an opportunity to answer a question(s) in the same topic area as presented on the original examination. The supplementary examination shall be graded by an examination committee comprised of two to four faculty members. The committee will consist of professors with whom the student has studied, if possible.

Evaluation: You will be allowed the opportunity to speak with the primary faculty member in each area to obtain feedback on questions that you do not pass prior to engaging in your supplementary examination.

At the end of the supplementary exam, the committee will evaluate the adequacy of the student's performance and determine the future course of action in consultation with the program director.

Required Texts/readings: There are no required texts for this course. You are encouraged to keep organized notes, articles and other relevant information from each of your core classes as you move through your graduate program. You may use this information to prepare for the comprehensive examination.

Preparation: You are expected to be prepared. Toward that end, you are encouraged to engage in group study sessions beginning the semester before the exam (or earlier). Faculty members routinely incorporate case study methodology/tests/practice into your courses as well. These kinds of case studies will be used for the comprehensive examination.

ATTENDANCE: You must attend the examination on the scheduled date. Emergency arrangements for taking this exam at a different time must be made PRIOR to the scheduled time of the exam. Please do not request alternate exam dates for non-emergency reasons (e.g., a family vacation, wedding).

Academic Integrity - "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to establish the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.

The Honor Pledge: To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A

student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
 - Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
 - Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.
-

Grievance Process (Student Code)

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated [in matters other than (i) discipline or (ii) admission, residency, employment, traffic, and parking - which are addressed by procedures separate and independent from the Student Code] may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student

Code: http://studentlife.tsc.usu.edu/stuserv/pdf/student_code.pdf (Article VII. Grievances, pages 25-30).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes knowingly "representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined by the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as any "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature." If you feel you are a victim of sexual harassment, you may talk to or file a complaint with the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office located in Old Main, Room 161, or call the AA/EEO Office at 797-1266.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Center, course materials can be provided in alternative format, large print, audio, diskette, or Braille."

Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term 'extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.