Introduction
The Graduate Handbook is a source of basic information to help the student understand and be guided through the graduate program. It is not intended to be all inclusive. Other information may be found on our website (http://education.byu.edu/comd), the BYU Graduate Studies website (https://gradstudies.byu.edu/), the David O. McKay School of Education website (http://education.byu.edu/), the University website (https://home.byu.edu/home/), the ComD Speech and Language Clinic Handbook (http://education.byu.edu/sites/default/files/COMD/documents/SL_clinic_handbook.pdf), and the ComD Graduate Student Info Hub on Learning Suite (https://learningsuite.byu.edu/.G8J1/cid-2QpIlYVD8FGN/home).

It is the student’s responsibility to be current in policies and procedures regarding their graduate program and progress throughout the program of study. It is also the student’s responsibility to meet all current requirements at the time of graduation. If you should have questions, please contact the Graduate Coordinator regarding information in this handbook or for other information regarding our graduate program.

Overview of the graduate program
The graduate program in ComD at BYU is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The program leads to the Master of Science (MS) degree and to the completion of all ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) requirements in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP), pending the completion of a Clinical Fellowship Year (CFY). Upon completion of the program, you will be eligible to start your CFY and you will have met the requirements for a Utah school license.

Students entering the program with all undergraduate prerequisite courses completed typically take six semesters to complete the program, with spring and summer terms counting together as one semester. All students complete required courses, clinical assignments, and a thesis. The program is divided into roughly three equal areas: academic coursework, clinical practicum, and the thesis. It is strongly recommended that a student not leave the geographical area or obtain full-time employment until all of the program requirements have been met. To do so could lead to increased time-to-graduation.

Admissions
The ComD department makes admission decisions once per year; the deadline for having all materials submitted to the BYU Graduate Studies office is February 1st. The application is made online at http://www.byu.edu/gradstudies and involves submitting (a) an application form and fee, (b) transcripts from all colleges or universities attended, (c) Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores, (d) three letters of recommendation, (e) a letter of intent, and (f) an ecclesiastical endorsement. An undergraduate major in ComD is recommended but is not required to apply for admission.

The admission process includes a review of the applicant’s file, an interview, and selection by an admission committee consisting of ComD faculty. The applicant has until April 15th to accept the admission offer. After April 15th the offer may be withdrawn by the department.
Students who are admitted and who have not met all of the prerequisite requirements for our graduate courses must complete the prerequisites prior to enrolling in many of the graduate courses or clinical experiences. The Graduate Coordinator will assist in evaluating equivalent courses completed at other universities or in other majors. Taking prerequisite courses could prolong the time-to-graduation.

**Initial Matriculation**
All accepted applicants enter the graduate program Fall semester. Since the course sequence is “fixed” we are unable to offer admissions beginning Winter semester, or Spring and Summer terms. In addition, courses are offered only once per academic year.

You must register for a minimum of two credit hours for each semester or term (spring or summer). Students may petition to waive this requirement in some instances. See the Graduate Coordinator for more information.

**Financial Aid Opportunities**
The department has scholarships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships that are available through an application process. The scholarships are awarded by the ComD department and the assistantships are awarded by individual faculty members. All incoming matriculated students may be awarded a scholarship for a maximum of four semesters, issued each Fall and Winter semester. All funding types, including scholarships, are awarded based on availability of funds. Adjustments to funding may be made during the award period; however, the intent is to have the same amount available for all four semesters.

**Overview: Coursework**

**Course Registration**
The required courses for the MS degree are listed below by the semester offered. In addition, but not listed, you will need six hours of thesis credit, 699R. If you are not enrolled in courses and working full-time on your thesis, you may petition for equivalent of full-time status as long as you are registered for a minimum of 2 credits during that time period. This petition must be renewed each semester or term. This is accepted by both Brigham Young University and the federal government.

**Minimal Full-time Requirements**
The University (for federal government loan purposes) defines the full-time academic load for Fall and Winter semesters as a minimum of 8.5 credits per semester. University requirements for Spring/Summer terms are 2 credits, and for the federal government 4.5 credits. The Spring/Summer credit requirement may be taken in one term, either Spring or Summer, or split between the two terms. Failure to follow the federal government requirements for those students with federal government loans may require immediate loan repayment.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>610</td>
<td>Assessment &amp; Diagnosis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>657</td>
<td>Voice, Resonance, Upper Airway</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>676</td>
<td>Aphasia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>690</td>
<td>Clinical Practices in Speech Sound Disorders</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>688R</td>
<td>Practicum in Communication Disorders</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[699R Master’s Thesis (1-6)]*</td>
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**Fall Year 1 (13)**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>630</td>
<td>Early Childhood Language Intervention</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>633</td>
<td>Swallowing Disorders</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>634</td>
<td>Cognitive Communication Disorders</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>679</td>
<td>School-Age Language Disorders</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Practicum in Communication Disorders</td>
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<tr>
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**Winter Year 1 (13)**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>674</td>
<td>Autism &amp; Severe Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>675</td>
<td>Motor Speech Disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td>688R</td>
<td>Practicum in Communication Disorders</td>
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**Spring Year 1 (9)**

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<td>Practicum in Communication Disorders</td>
<td>1-2</td>
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**Fall Year 2 (2)**

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**Winter Year 2 (2)**

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<td>1-2</td>
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<tr>
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**Spring Year 2 (5-6)**

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<tr>
<td>636</td>
<td>Multicultural Issues in Speech-Language Pathology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>658</td>
<td>Fluency Disorders</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>688R</td>
<td>Practicum in Communication Disorders</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[699R Master’s Thesis (1-6)]*</td>
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</table>

* ComD 420 or equivalent is a prerequisite.
** A total of 6 credits of COMD 699R (Master’s Thesis) are required.
Graduate students may NOT register for more than 22 credits in a semester (Fall/Winter) or 11 credits in a term (Spring/Summer).
If your undergraduate degree was in ComD but was not from BYU, it's important to meet with your temporary advisor (or the graduate coordinator) before the start of your first semester. This is so that differences in your program (and any possible gaps) may be identified and resolved earlier rather than later. BYU's graduate program must certify to ASHA that the requirements for clinical certification have been met. Thus, the ComD department needs to be convinced that undergraduate courses you took elsewhere are equivalent in breadth, depth, and rigor to BYU’s courses. Courses for which equivalence cannot be established should be listed on your Program of Study and will be taken as part of your graduate program.

If your degree was from not from BYU, your advisor will match the classes you took to the equivalent BYU undergraduate classes and note the equivalence on your Program of Study online in your Graduate Progress page (https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/), which is kept in your folder. You may need to meet with the instructor of each BYU equivalent ComD class, prepared with documentation such as texts, syllabus, exams, and notes to allow them to determine course equivalence.

The ASHA standards implemented in 2014 specify that "...the applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of the biological sciences, physical sciences, statistics, and the social/behavioral sciences." You will want to talk with your advisor about your background classes in these areas, so you can remedy any deficiencies in a timely manner.

Undergraduate classes taken at other universities may not be used to meet graduate course requirements at BYU.

Graduate orientation meeting
A graduate orientation meeting is usually held during the first week of the Fall semester for both new and continuing graduate students. This is a required meeting to attend, as introductions are made and revised handbooks, forms, and other information are presented.

Setting up your advisory committee
Soon after the start of your graduate program, we suggest that you review the research focus of each graduate faculty member on the ComD website and in the Learning Suite Graduate Student Info Hub (https://learningsuite.byu.edu/.G8J1/cid-2QpIIVD8F GN /pages) and meet each member of the graduate faculty and talk with each about their research areas and thesis possibilities. One graduate faculty member will be your advisory and thesis committee chair; you negotiate this role with them. This person will be a mentor to you, especially in learning to do the research that will be the basis of your thesis. Students should select a thesis advisor by the end of the first Fall semester. You will need two other graduate faculty members to complete the committee (at least one of whom is from the ComD department); your chair may suggest who these might be. This advisory committee will also function as the oral examining committee for your thesis.

When these faculty have agreed to be on your committee, you make it official by requesting their approval in the Graduate Progress website (https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/). After they confirm electronically that they will serve on your committee, the approval of your Program of Study will be complete. The Program of Study should be completed by the third week of your second semester in the program. With advisory committee consent, changes in this Program of Study can be made, including changes in advisory committee membership.

Minimum registration
BYU sets a minimum registration level of 6 credit hours per academic year, plus (a) you must register for and complete at least 2 credit hours EVERY semester or term of graduate study. Spring and Summer terms are counted together as being a single term for these registration requirements. Most students will take many more than 6 credit hours in their first year.

**Maximum registration during Spring term**
During Spring term, a student must not register for more than 9 hours of ComD classes (though clinic and thesis hours may also be taken at this time).

**Making progress toward graduation**
The graduate program is designed to be completed in 2 years (4 semesters and 2 terms) by students who had a ComD undergraduate major. Students coming from a different undergraduate major usually take 3 years (6 semesters and 3 terms). Our department evaluates your progress after each term, so that any concerns can be handled quickly. Progress is defined as acceptably passing all required courses (with a grade of B- or better), progressing toward the successful completion of the thesis, and clinic requirement completion.

**Course performance expectation**
You must earn a grade of B- or better in any class for the class to count toward degree requirements. Courses with grades lower than B- will require remediation, and your progress for that term will be rated as unsatisfactory. In addition, it may be necessary to work with the instructor to assure competence in the deficient areas.

**Clinic education**
Clinical expectations are detailed in the *Speech and Language Clinic Handbook*; in this document we provide an overview as to how your clinical experiences relate to the rest of your program. The clinical experiences are the "labs" for the academic courses in both disorders and scientific foundations. As mentioned earlier, clinic constitutes about one-third of your graduate workload. You are expected to abide by the *BYU Honor Code* [https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church-education/honor-code?lang=eng] and the *ASHA Code of Ethics* [https://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/]. Additionally, criminal background checks, fingerprinting, and drug tests are required by various practicum placement settings.

Most students begin their clinical education fall semester. Approximately one month before the semester begins, students will receive a clinical orientation packet. Students are expected to complete the list of tasks contained in the packet prior to fall semester. The first two weeks of fall semester, students will participate in an on-site orientation of the BYU Speech and Language Clinic.

Please note:
- Students who anticipate completing the program in 2 years should register for ComD 688R section 1 the first fall semester they begin their program.
- Students who anticipate completing the program in 3 years should register for ComD 688R section 1 the second fall semester of their program.
- Students will complete two semesters and a term in the BYU Speech and Language Clinic and two semesters or terms of externship experiences (a pediatric rotation and an adult rotation). Students must successfully complete their three rotations of clinic work at the BYU Speech and Language Clinic before applying for and completing either of their externships.
**Clinical hours**

A minimum of 400 clinical hours are required by ASHA and for BYU graduation. Students generally earn approximately 100 hours at the on-site clinic at BYU before applying for any externship sites. Students then earn their remaining hours in at least two externship sites, generally one adult (typically a hospital or rehabilitation center) and one pediatric setting (which is typically a public school). You will plan your externships by consulting with the externship coordinator.

A site (extern site or BYU clinic) is a complete experience. You do not "get hours" at your convenience; you work as a professional at a site on that site’s terms until the experience is complete. Your cooperation with site requirements helps the ComD department to maintain harmonious relationships with the various sites, and it also helps you have a less fragmented, more satisfying and useful experience.

Your clinical progress is assessed by the clinic director and externship coordinator, with input from on- or off-site supervisors. Progress ratings are based on a list of global and specific competencies, as described in the *Speech and Language Clinic Handbook* and in accordance with the current ASHA Certification Standards.

You are responsible to ensure that your practicum hours are accurately recorded the CALIPSO database.

**A reminder about client confidentiality**

You must have a signed Client Confidentiality Agreement form (included in the clinic orientation packet) in your file in the ComD department office before participating in any observation, assessment, or treatment hours at the BYU Speech and Language Clinic and/or subsequent clinical rotation sites. Client confidentiality is mandated by law and the code of ethics of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

All client records at the BYU Speech-Language Clinic are confidential. All information regarding clients is privileged communication. You are granted access to clinic information for only those individuals that you are treating. Files, videos, language sample transcriptions, data sheets, and anything else pertaining to your client are stored in the file cabinet located in the student preparation room. Shred all paperwork regarding clients when it is no longer required. A shredding bin is located in Room 136 and at the receptionist’s desk.

Discussions of a client’s case should never take place in the hallways or other unsecured locations. Please use a therapy room or office. Client names should only be used when absolutely necessary. Clients should never be discussed with roommates, family, or others not directly associated with the client’s case. Do not invite friends, family members, or others to observe you.

If you must leave a message for a client over the phone, leave only your name, state you are calling from the BYU Speech and Language Clinic, and your phone number. Do not mention the client’s name or why you are calling; the person receiving the message will usually understand why you are calling.

Information regarding a client, including the fact that the client is receiving treatment at the clinic, can only be released to an outside agency with the written permission of the client or a person responsible for the client.
Remediation Policies
One of our goals as a preparation program for SLP clinicians is to ensure that each student is capable in all of the important knowledge and skill areas covered in each course. Sometimes concern may arise that a student isn't mastering the skills or foundational knowledge covered in a course, and so a procedure known as remediation is undertaken. This remediation typically consists of extra study and/or demonstration tasks that indicate that the necessary knowledge or skills have now been acquired. These tasks may include such activities as retaking a test, taking an alternate form of a test, redoing a project or oral report, writing a paper, rewriting a paper, or retaking the class; however, the particular procedures and tasks differ for each course and are specified in the course syllabus.

Student Evaluation
You will be evaluated after each semester, with spring and summer terms considered together as one term. Each semester or term, the faculty meet and consider progress made by each student in terms of courses taken and grades received, reports from clinical settings, and work on the thesis. Your progress is rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. You will receive a letter summarizing each progress evaluation.

If corrective advice is given in the evaluation summary letter, try to remedy things as soon as possible. If you do not, a satisfactory rating could become an unsatisfactory rating upon the next evaluation. An unsatisfactory progress evaluation may result from
(a) poor performance in a class, such as a grade less than a B-. Remediation will be specified by the instructor as is described above in Remediation Policies.
(b) poor performance in a clinical setting. This may require an additional turn in that or a similar setting.
(c) the cumulative graduate GPA falling below 3.0.
(d) a violation of the BYU Honor Code or the ASHA Code of Ethics.

Students are dropped from the graduate program by the office of Graduate Studies if they receive two consecutive unsatisfactory ratings. Also, students are dropped from the graduate program by the ComD department the third time they receive an unsatisfactory progress evaluation.

The ASHA NTE Praxis Exam in Speech-Language Pathology
Students should take the exam early enough that they can send the PDF of their passing score to the ComD department secretary prior to the university deadline for graduation.

Overview: Thesis
A thesis is a written document that describes a completed research project which represents an original contribution to the knowledge of the field. This document describes the study's rationale, hypotheses, relevant literature, methods, findings, and conclusions. It is written to allow others to learn how and why the study was done, what was found, and what these findings might mean for the field.

Your thesis is a result of your close collaboration with one or more faculty members. Upon completion, an electronic copy of the thesis (in PDF format) is submitted to the university library. This allows the thesis to be read by --and be of use to-- people around the world. Assistance on electronic submission may be obtained from the Graduate Studies ETD (Electronic Theses & Dissertations) website, the
ComD 600 course instructor, or the ComD graduate coordinator. The university requires that you take a cumulative total of (at least) 6 hours of thesis credit (ComD 699R).

You select your thesis chair from among the ComD graduate faculty. Chair selection is made mainly on the basis of your interest in doing a thesis in a faculty member’s area of research expertise. When chosen, the thesis chair takes over as your general academic advisor as well. The selection of a thesis chair is made official by having that person electronically sign (as chair) on your Program of Study on the Graduate Progress website (https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/). If circumstances change, such as major changes in thesis topic, preference, or faculty availability, you may select a different chair.

Selecting a Thesis Advisor

There is no expectation that you select a thesis advisor before starting the graduate program. It is, however, important that you identify a thesis advisor and complete your Program of Study Plan by the 3rd week of the Winter semester of your first year. The following timeline outlines how this process unfolds.

Timeline for selecting a thesis advisor

- **Summer before starting graduate school** – You may elect to review the profiles and research interests of COMD faculty online to identify potential interests. Information can be found here https://education.byu.edu/comd/directory, and here https://learningsuite.byu.edu/G8J1/cid-2QpJIYVD8FGN/pages.
- **Fall semester of your first year**
  - **Beginning of semester** – Faculty members will provide a short synopsis of their ongoing projects here https://learningsuite.byu.edu/G8J1/cid-2QpJIYVD8FGN/pages.
  - **Orientation meeting** – Research interests of faculty members and potential thesis projects will be presented at the Graduate Student Orientation meeting in September.
  - **During the semester** – During the Fall semester, you should have conversations with faculty members whose research topics interest you. These can be informal conversations. Discuss their research, your interests, their preferred timelines for the thesis. You are trying to identify a good fit for you in terms of topic and advisor.
  - **End of semester** – You should have identified a thesis advisor by the end of the Fall semester, so you can move forward to prepare your program of study. You will attend the Thesis Orientation in the department scheduled towards the end of the semester.
- **Winter semester** – Your program of study is due during the 3rd week of the Winter semester. This is the hard deadline for identifying a thesis advisor and graduate committee.
- **2nd-6th semesters** – You will work with your thesis advisor to create a timeline for your thesis work during the remainder of your master’s program. These timelines will be individualized, given your advisor and topic.
- Each student will have a different trajectory for their thesis. Your thesis advisor and graduate committee must sign your Program of Study Plan by the 3rd week of your first Winter semester. You will be making appropriate progress on your thesis if you meet that deadline and will not be behind in any way. Focus on your individual thesis path with the guidance of your advisor.
- Please note that faculty may have different timelines for their thesis students. As you talk with potential thesis advisors, you should ask questions about those timelines so that you are able to find the best fit for you.
- You will spend a great deal of time on your thesis over the course of your graduate program. Don’t rush this decision.
Thesis credits are spread across the 2 years of your program. Discuss your plans for thesis credits with your advisor. You must be registered for thesis credits the semester/term that you graduate.

The thesis requirement is a 2-year process, which requires ongoing, consistent attention on your part. Your advisor will help guide and support you in this process. Your success is dependent upon continual progress, which is the responsibility of each individual student. Discuss any concerns with your thesis advisor.

A prospectus is a formalized plan for carrying out your thesis research. It describes the topic to be studied, justifies the study of a topic in light of published studies, and specifies the subjects, instruments, and procedures to be used in the study. Its preparation and the negotiation for its approval helps clarify your thinking about the proposed research. The prospectus is essentially the thesis minus the Results and Discussion sections and appendices containing data. The prospectus serves as a contract between you and your advisory committee. It states in effect that if the student carries out the study as described and approved, the advisory committee will accept it no matter what it may find, when the thesis is written and formatted acceptably. The prospectus is also a description of the study to those who review it for human subject guideline compliance (the Institutional Review Board) or to those who can grant access to subjects.

At least one meeting of the advisory committee is designated as the prospectus defense. In this meeting, you present your prospectus and answer any questions about the study or the document. Your goal is to convince the committee that the study is doable, important, and that -in general- you know what you are doing.

A prospectus defense may be held as soon as the advisory committee agrees to hold one. You should email your prospectus to each committee member in advance of the prospectus defense, giving them adequate time to review your work. You must also upload your prospectus document to the graduate progress webpage (https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/). After the prospectus defense, you make any necessary changes to the prospectus and request the approval of committee members online at https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/.

The sections of the thesis
- University pages: Several pages at the front of the thesis are mandated by Graduate Studies, such as a title page, an abstract page, and an optional acknowledgments page. The etd.byu.edu site has guidelines and template for these pages available in electronic format.
- TABLE OF CONTENTS: A table of contents is required. The titles of the table of contents, the list of tables, etc. should be in all uppercase characters.
- DESCRIPTION OF THESIS STRUCTURE: Describes that your thesis is in the format of a journal article with an annotated bibliography in an appendix. This section may also mention that your thesis is part of a larger project that may result in publications upon which you may be listed as a co-author.
- Body of the Thesis: The body of the thesis consists of sections called Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, and References. The References section includes the articles, books, and so on that were cited in the thesis body (that is, the journal article manuscript).
- Appendices: An annotated bibliography is included as an APPENDIX of the thesis. The content, organization, and format of the annotated bibliography are specified by your advisory committee. Your committee may also specify the inclusion of raw data, additional tables or figures, the informed consent form, etc. as additional appendices. Appendix items do not need to be in "APA format" as described below.
Specific guidelines regarding thesis format

The body of the thesis is written using the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition, commonly known as the APA Manual or APA7, which specifies APA Style. However, the ComD department specifies a few changes from APA7’s style:

1. Do not include a second, journal article title page; use only the University title page.
2. "Running heads" (APA7 p. 30) are not used.
3. Tables may be single spaced, but they must be either all single spaced or all double spaced; do not mix spacing styles. Have the same spacing around the spanner lines as is used between the rows in the table. If a table continues on to another page, do not have a bottom spanner line until the end of the table. You may put a line saying "(table continues)" at the bottom right of the first page(s) of the table, but this line is optional. Shorter tables are embedded in the text.
4. Use a decimal tab to align columns of numbers in a table.
5. The top of sideways tables should be on the left, whether it is on an odd- or even-numbered page.
6. Tables and figures are mixed into the text, or if large enough to be on separate pages, should be collated into the text so as to be the next page after the page of first mention. The title or caption should be kept with the table or figure.
7. Text must be double spaced. References must be double-spaced. Appendices may be single spaced.
8. Turn "widow/orphan" control on.

The McKay School of Education (MSE) may make other format or content requirements for theses.

The Thesis Defense

The thesis defense is a public meeting in which you present and defend the thesis by answering questions regarding the background, motivation, method, findings, and implications of it. You may invite anyone to attend your thesis defense, however only your thesis committee members will actively participate in the process (e.g., ask questions, provide comments).

You schedule your thesis defense in advance, usually two weeks before the defense date, giving your committee members sufficient time to review your work. At a minimum, your defense must be scheduled 24 hours prior to the defense date. Your thesis must be uploaded to the graduate progress website and your committee must indicate that they agree to hold a thesis defense meeting (/approval at https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/) prior to holding your defense. Typically, the process involves:

1. Your thesis chair agrees that the thesis is ready for the other committee members to evaluate it. This means that your thesis is in final form. For the thesis to be in final form means that its format, citations, and bibliographic style are consistent, acceptable, and fulfill university style requirements, and that illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place.
2. You will upload your thesis to /approval at https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/, and email your thesis to your committee. You should also email a copy of your thesis to the graduate coordinator, who also must approve scheduling of the thesis defense.
3. The committee members should be given at least 5 working days to read the thesis – yet 2 weeks is recommended. Some committee members will submit revisions or corrections to you prior to your thesis defense. Some thesis chairs may require you to make those suggested changes prior to the thesis defense. Other thesis chairs may wish for you to wait until after the defense to make all mutually agreed upon changes to your thesis. All thesis committee members will indicate that they agree to hold your defense at a pre-arranged day and time.
4. The date for the defense must be a time when the university is in session (i.e., during class or final exam days). You work with your thesis committee to find a mutually acceptable date and time.
Students typically email their committee an online poll to help identify a defense date and time that is acceptable to all committee members.

4. The committee specifies the manner in which you present the thesis. This may involve an oral narrative or a multimedia presentation. Committee members ask questions about the study and the thesis. When finished, the student and any observers are excused and the committee votes on the student’s performance.

**Possible Thesis Defense Outcomes**
The committee vote specifies one of four possible outcomes

1. Pass: no changes are necessary; the thesis is accepted, approval is entered online at the graduate progress website, and the thesis is sent to the graduate coordinator, department secretary, and the MSE for review.

2. Pass with qualifications: The thesis needs minor changes. The committee chair does not approve of the thesis defense until the changes have been satisfactorily completed. Then you "pass." This is the typical outcome. Often the committee indicates their approval of the thesis defense online immediately after the defense, yet the thesis chair does not do so until all mutually agreed upon changes to the thesis have been made.

3. Recess: The thesis needs revision, further writing, or other edits. Another defense is necessary but must be held at least one month later.

4. Fail: The student’s degree program is terminated immediately.

Your thesis chair and committee should not let you schedule a defense if they think that outcome 3 or 4 might occur.
Thesis Process from Inception to Defense

Meet with the Graduate Coordinator/Advisor to establish your Program of Study (fall first semester).

Learn about faculty research interests on the Department webpage, Learning Suite, and from the Student Orientation in September.

Communicate with faculty who are researching topics of interest (fall first semester).

Identify your thesis advisor and committee members (by the third week of second semester).

Finalize Program of Study by obtaining thesis committee approval on the graduate progress website (by the third week of second semester).

Draft the introduction and method sections of your thesis. Hold your Thesis Prospectus Defense with your committee.

Complete all sections of your thesis (TOC, introduction, method, results, discussion, tables, figures, annotated bibliography and other appendices etc.).

Email your final thesis to the Graduate Coordinator and to your committee. Schedule your Thesis Defense at least 24 hours prior to defense date.

Defend your thesis on or before the Department deadline to meet graduation deadlines.

Submit a printed, one-sided copy of your Final thesis (with all corrections) to the Department Secretary and email an electronic copy to the Graduate Coordinator.
After the Thesis Defense

After passing the thesis defense (which included making any changes mandated by the committee):

1. Your committee indicates their approval of your defense at [https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/](https://gradprogress.sim.byu.edu/). When outcome 2 (above) is the result of your defense, the committee often submits their approval of your defense immediately after the defense and your chair is given the sole responsibility to ensure that you will make the recommended changes. After the you have made the required changes, the chair will then indicate their approval online. It is your responsibility to request online approval from your committee members and chair.

2. After you have made all the required changes to your thesis, you submit a digital copy of the thesis to the ComD graduate coordinator and a printed version, single-sided, to the ComD department secretary. These copies get reviewed as to format and content. Corrections might be specified; when the thesis has been corrected, the ComD graduate coordinator indicates their approval online.

3. The student sends a MS Word version of the thesis to msegradsec@byu.edu, who is the secretary to the associate dean in charge of theses. The Dean's Office is allowed up to 10 work days for this review. Corrections to the thesis might be specified at this level of review; if there are to be changes, the committee chair and the ComD graduate coordinator should also be notified. When the student has made any recommended changes, a pdf of the thesis is submitted as an ETD through Graduate Studies (see their web page regarding ETD submission). The ETD is reviewed at the department and college level before being approved and sent to the library. When that happens, you should receive an email notification. The following flowchart details the thesis approval process:
Other Useful Information

The Exit Interview
Each student must have an exit interview with the department chair. This interview is scheduled in advance of the graduation deadline (but after completion of your thesis defense) to allow a review of your file, including the checking of clinical requirement completion. The department chair interviews you about the quality and appropriateness of your graduate experience and collects any suggestions you wish to offer.

Graduation
Students who have passed the ASHA-Praxis exam and their thesis oral defense prior to the graduation ceremony may walk in the MSE Convocation and have their names read, even if they have not met the university deadline for graduation that term.

   **Everything** must be done by the graduation deadlines for the term you plan to finish, including your thesis being approved and submitted to the library, or you will have to pay for two credit hours registration in the **subsequent** term.

Current Ecclesiastical Endorsement
A student's ecclesiastical endorsement must be current throughout their program. Note that if your graduation is delayed, an additional endorsement may need to be filed to remain current.

**How long records are kept?**
Student files are archived indefinitely. Student files older than 8 years will not be reviewed for certification compliance; however, former students may request copies of non-confidential information in their file. A fee may be charged for this.

**Faculty access and availability**
Faculty are typically under contract for Fall and Winter Semesters and for Spring Term. Faculty should advise their thesis students of longer (one week or more) planned absences. You need to take faculty availability into account in your planning and scheduling. Generally, the faculty are not available Summer term.

**Student mailboxes**
Mailboxes are provided in room 154 TLRB.

**Lab access and TLRB access**
Access to labs is gained through ComD faculty; the ComD secretary can submit your ID number to the University to let you use your Student ID card to open the outside entry doors to the Taylor building when the building is locked (for example, on holidays.)

**Student Organizations and Representation**
NSSLHA, the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association, is the student branch of ASHA. Membership in national NSSLHA currently costs about $60 and includes on-line access to all ASHA journals as well as a discount on the cost of joining ASHA. NSSLHA membership also allows a reduced price on registration for the annual ASHA national convention, access to a job placement service, etc. Members of the local NSSLHA chapter elect a president, who is invited to attend ComD faculty meetings, where they get information, present concerns, advise the faculty, etc.

One graduate student is elected by graduate student peers to attend ComD faculty meetings to represent the graduate students in the same way the NSSLHA president represents ComD students in general. This election process is carried out by the graduate coordinator.

You may also participate in the BYU Graduate Student Society (GSS), which unites and assists graduate students throughout the university, publishes a newsletter, and sponsors graduate student social events, student travel awards, and other workshops and speakers throughout the year. If there is interest, a student can be elected as the ComD representative to the GSS. The GSS can be reached at [www.byu.edu/gss](http://www.byu.edu/gss).

**Graduate Student Input**
The ComD department actively solicits graduate student input; such input is the primary function of the graduate student representative, who is elected by their peers during the Fall semester of the first year. Students may also make suggestions (orally or in writing, anonymously if desired) to the department chair or graduate coordinator. Each student is also asked for feedback and suggestions as part of the exit interview. Student suggestions are discussed in faculty meetings and will be implemented when they will improve the quality of the graduate program.

**Grievances**
Concerns or grievances may be general (i.e., changes needed in the curriculum, policies, etc.) pertaining to all students, or they may be specific to a student or exist between a student and faculty member. General concerns should be voiced to the graduate student representative (or the NSSLHA president), who may present the issue in ComD faculty meeting.

For specific concerns, we follow the university Grievance Policy: [http://saas.byu.edu/catalog/2013-2014ucat/GenerallInfo/Records.php](http://saas.byu.edu/catalog/2013-2014ucat/GenerallInfo/Records.php) (scroll down just a bit). Students may also contact the CAA, the accrediting affiliate of ASHA. The address of the CAA is: Council on Academic Accreditation, 2000 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, Maryland 20850-3289, 1-800-498-2071.

Preventing Sexual Harassment
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895 or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847.

Students With Disabilities
Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete a course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and course instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, located in D-382 ASB.

Equitable Treatment Statement
In our clinic, services are provided on equitable basis without regard to gender, sexual orientation, age, race, creed, national origin, or disability.

ASHA Code of Ethics may be viewed at the following URL: [http://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/](http://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/)