

MHS in Communication Disorders
Frequently Asked Questions
Fall, 2014

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GPA

What GPA is required for admission to the MHS program?

Grade point average (GPA) in the major is one of the most important factors in determining rank for admissions to the MHS in Communication Disorders program. To be eligible for admission, students must have an overall GPA as well as a major GPA of 3.0 or higher.

What is the average GPA of students admitted to the MHS program?

The average GPA in the major for applicants who were admitted for Fall of 2014 was 3.75.

What if my GPA does not meet the minimum?

Students who do not meet the minimum GPA but wish to apply must submit a petition letter explaining the reasons for asking for an exception, along with their regular application.

My GPA is not as high as I would like it to be. Should I retake some of my undergraduate courses?

Retaking courses is generally not recommended, except under extreme circumstances. There are two main reasons for this. First, when your transcripts are reviewed by an admissions committee, they will recognize that you have retaken courses, and may view this as an indication that you will have difficulty with graduate level coursework. Second, once you accumulate a large number of credit hours, the impact of a grade change becomes smaller. To illustrate, imagine two students. Student A has taken 4 courses in the major, and Student B has taken 10. Both students have one C, two Bs, and the rest of their classes are As.

	Student A	Student B
Course 1	A (4.0*3 credit hours)	A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 2	B (3.0*3 credit hours)	B (3.0*3 credit hours)
Course 3	B (3.0*3 credit hours)	B (3.0*3 credit hours)
Course 4	C (2.0*3 credit hours)	C (2.0*3 credit hours)
Course 5		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 6		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 7		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 8		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 9		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 10		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Total Credit Hours	12	30
Total Points	36	108
GPA in major (Points/Credit Hrs)	3.0	3.6

Now imagine that both students decide to retake Course 4, the course they got a C in, and that both of them get an A the second time.

	Student A	Student B
Course 1	A (4.0*3 credit hours)	A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 2	B (3.0*3 credit hours)	B (3.0*3 credit hours)
Course 3	B (3.0*3 credit hours)	B (3.0*3 credit hours)
Course 4	C (2.0*3 credit hours) A	C (2.0*3 credit hours) A
Course 5		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 6		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 7		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 8		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 9		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Course 10		A (4.0*3 credit hours)
Total Credit Hours	12	30
Total Points	36 42	108 114
GPA in major (Points/Credit Hrs)	3.0 3.5	3.6 3.8

Student A’s GPA rises by .5, but Student B’s GPA rises by only .2. To restate, the more credit hours you accumulate, the smaller the impact a retaken course grade will have on your GPA. You should learn to do your own GPA calculations and test out the “what if” scenario for yourself before retaking a class. Retaking classes is usually not a very productive strategy for raising your undergraduate GPA and improving your graduate school application, and is expensive as well as time-consuming. It is important to discuss your concerns with your advisor before deciding how best to proceed.

GRE

What is the minimum GRE score required for application to the MHS program?

GRE scores are not required for application to the MHS in Communication Disorders program at Governors State University at this time.

Clinic

How do students in the MHS program obtain clinical practicum experiences?

Students in the master’s program complete all of their academic courses first, and then proceed to external practicum experiences for their last three semesters.

Information

May I arrange a tour of your clinic?

The Department of Communication Disorders at GSU does not have a campus clinic. Tours of the university are available to all prospective students. Tours can take 30 minutes to an hour. If you have questions about visit times and dates contact nheidelberg@govst.edu or browse our [Tour FAQs](#) for quick answers. Tours require two weeks' notice.

Tours of the department or arrangements to speak with CDIS faculty may be requested by emailing cdis1@govst.edu.

When is the next information session?

The department regularly provides opportunities for students and prospective students to meet with the department chair in order to receive information about the graduate program. Information sessions are scheduled about twice per semester. Email cdis1@govst.edu for further information and to sign up.

Who can I meet with to get further information?

Most of the questions you have will be answered by visiting the department's webpage at www.govst.edu/chhs/dcd/mhs. Information sessions, tours, and individual appointments with an academic advisor or the department chairperson can also be arranged. Send requests to cdis1@govst.edu.

Can someone tell me exactly what I would have to take if admitted to the program?

The required courses for the MHS in Communication Disorders are listed on the program's website at www.govst.edu/chhs/dcd/mhs. Students who did not receive a bachelor's degree in CDIS from GSU may also need to take some undergraduate courses, if they did not already have the equivalent. An exact plan cannot be determined until you are admitted and meet with your assigned advisor.

Number of Applications

How many applications are submitted to GSU for the MHS program in Communication Disorders?

The Department of Communication Disorders receives an average of 300 applications per year for admission to the MHS program.

Number of Admissions

How many applicants do you admit each year?

The Department of Communication Disorders admits roughly 35 students to the MHS program each fall.

Graduate School Application Advice

How can I improve my graduate school application?

The three most important factors in your application are your GPA in the major, your letters of recommendation, and your personal statement. It is difficult to reach the top ranks of the applicant pool if you do not have a GPA in the major of at least 3.4. For this reason, we recommend that students take all due time completing their undergraduate coursework in order to achieve the best educational outcomes possible before graduating.

Letters of recommendation for top-ranked candidates come from at least two PhD faculty in communication sciences and disorders, and express confidence in the student's ability to successfully complete a graduate program and ultimately, practice as a speech-language pathologist. For this reason, we suggest that students take an active role in classes as an undergraduate, and participate in academic activities that give faculty an opportunity to get to know them. When requesting letters, we suggest that students provide faculty recommenders with a written request that provides a description of all of the classes they took with the recommender and what grades they received, as well as a resume that includes extracurricular activities relevant to the profession. This will allow recommenders to reflect specifically on the evidence supporting their recommendations, which results in a much more convincing and accurate letter.

Personal statements reflect a student's mastery of written communication. The admissions committee evaluates the organization, coherence, style, and accuracy of the personal statement. We recommend that students allow themselves time to draft, reread, and revise their statements, and to have another person read and edit them.

What if I can't reach former instructors for letters of recommendation?

If for some reason you are not able to obtain letters of recommendation from PhD faculty in the discipline, that is a good time to call the department chairperson to discuss your options.

I do not have a bachelor's degree in communication sciences and disorders. Can I apply to the master's program?

To be eligible for admission to the MHS in Communication Disorders at GSU, you must have a bachelor's degree in communication sciences and disorders or its equivalent by the date of admission. You do not have to have the bachelor's degree completed when you apply in January – the program admits students for the subsequent fall – but you must have at least five completed courses in the discipline when you apply.

I have a bachelor's degree in a different field. Can I apply to the master's program?

Having a bachelor's degree in any field gets you partway to being eligible for admission to the MHS program; however, you must also complete the equivalent of a communication sciences and disorders undergraduate curriculum as well. For most people in this situation, we recommend enrolling in a second bachelor's degree program like the one at GSU. This will give you the academic standing to have an advisor to help you plan out the courses you need, as well as status in the major, which is required for nearly all of the undergraduate courses in CDIS.