

Department Special Project:

Special Project may be chosen as the student's capstone experience at the initial program planning meeting or at any time during work toward the Master's degree even though the thesis option was initially selected. However, once a thesis proposal has been accepted by the Graduate School, a student may not select the Special Project.

When the Special Project track is chosen, students register for CMD 605, Special Project Seminar during their last semester of course work and/or practicum, if the last semester is a regular fall or spring semester. If a student's last semester is in the summer, CMD 605 will be taken in the prior spring semester.

The format of CMD 605, Special Project, is designed to provide students with a vehicle for completing the Special Project required for graduation. The course is graded on a pass/fail basis; student must receive a pass in order to graduate. If a pass grade is not attained, a "Q" grade is assigned and the student must repeat the course the next time it is offered.

CMD 605 Format:

The class gathers formally for 3 initial classroom meetings. During these meetings the process of completing an acceptable Special Project is discussed. The form and structure of the project, how it is to be presented, and limits regarding content are discussed. During these class meetings students select the content and scope of their project. The instructor facilitates the sharing of information from student clinical experiences and encourages student interaction as the Special Project topics are developed. The final order of business is the assignment of the oral presentation order. Students' names are drawn by lot to determine oral presentation order. Following the oral presentation assignment dates, class will not formally meet until oral presentations begin. Students use this time to prepare their projects. The course instructor will be available during the time class would normally meet to provide guidance regarding the Special Projects. Appointment times should be arranged formally with the instructor. The remainder of the class meetings is used for student oral presentations. One half-hour per student is allowed for each oral presentation.

Two copies of an eight-to-ten page paper (excluding references) must be handed in by each student on the date oral presentations begin. The student's name should appear only on the first cover page of the paper. A second cover page should be provided without the student's name. The first page will later be removed so that papers may be distributed anonymously to faculty for reading.

The papers will be read and evaluated by two SLP Department faculty assigned randomly. A pass grade must be given by both faculty readers to obtain a pass for the paper. If one reader passes and the other reader fails the paper, it will be submitted to a third reader. The third reader's pass/fail grade will be recorded as the paper grade.

Results of the oral presentation grading and the faculty evaluation of the written report dictate the

final pass/fail grade. Both the oral presentation and the written report must be passed to achieve a pass grade in the course. Students will be notified of the outcome in writing by the instructor at the conclusion of the semester.

Students are expected to complete the Special Project independently. With the exception of the course instructor, who may provide more specific assistance with regard to form, students **MAY NOT** solicit help from the faculty concerning Special Project content issues. Careful topic selection should allow students adequate direction when researching content information. The faculty has agreed upon a [Code of Professional Conduct](#) for CMD 605.

Special Project Information:

1. The project **must** be a clinical case presentation;
2. A case should be chosen that has been worked with, or is in the process of being worked with. If the case chosen has limited information available, the student would be expected to expose critical gaps in the case data and indicate what steps should be taken to rectify the situation.
3. The project is considered an opportunity for the student to: synthesize and integrate **academic and clinical** information into a “real life” situation; reflect critically on clinical practice; share experiences with peers; and, accomplish a culminating activity that will allow the Department to thoroughly evaluate student readiness for the Speech-Language Pathology Clinical Fellowship.
4. The project must minimally contain the following six elements (please note: #4 is considered a very crucial part of the project). The paper and the oral presentation **should address each of these areas specifically**. In both the oral presentation and the written report, **these areas should be highlighted or titled so that listeners and readers will know when they are being discussed**:
 1. Background information on the case, including: demographic information; the nature of the disorder; educational and/or medical history; and a summary of relevant assessment and intervention data;
 2. Discussion of the central issues, problems, and/or questions;
 3. Specifically, how problem, issues and questions identified are solved or are proposed to be solved. Include procedures and strategies, various solutions tried and/or considered even if they were not successful or were discarded;
 4. Theoretical considerations and research bases for solutions. **Be specific and use**

references for evidence based practice (EBP);

5. Description of results and current status including quantitative data when applicable as well as comparison of pre- and post-therapy data;
6. Discussion of specific lessons learned from preparing the case presentation;

The 30 minute oral presentation should provide 25 minutes of information and 5 minutes for questions. Students are expected to **engage** their audience in a lively exchange of questions and answers for the final 5 minutes of the presentation. The presenter can pose questions to the audience and can answer audience questions. Students are requested **not to read** their oral presentations. Cue/note cards are acceptable but only for brief reference. The student should speak the presentation to the audience. Visual aids may be used and are encouraged. Use visual aids appropriately. They should not make up the bulk of the oral presentation. A brief outline of the project arranged as it will be orally presented should be prepared as a hand-out for the class.

An [Oral Presentation Evaluation Form](#) and a [Paper Evaluation Form](#) are used to evaluate the Special Projects.