MSc(SLP): OVERVIEW OF UNIT AND COURSE CONTENT

Please see Appendix for a description of course formats.

UNIT 1 (Year 1, September to November)

The aim of this unit is to provide students with foundational knowledge, frameworks, and theories related to communication and communication disorders across the lifespan, as well as basic skills in clinical practice and evidence-based practice.

General Development	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Motor, cognitive, social development ages 0-5 years • Intro to neurodevelopment and neuroanatomy (including gross anatomy and cranial nerves) • Normal aging of sensorimotor, cognition, language
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Application of typical developmental benchmarks
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Observational skills - speech and language in typically developing children and youth

General Frameworks, Roles, & Clinical Skills	*Inquiry Seminar*	• Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice (defining EBP, formulating clinically relevant PICO questions, conducting literature search strategies, critically appraising evidence, statistics, determining validity and clinical importance to warrant use in practice) • Introduction to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) • Introduction to the Rehabilitation Treatment Specification System (RTSS) • Linking theory to clinical practice • Frameworks for everyday ethical practice • Exploring personal perspectives on disability • Frameworks for reflective practice • Frameworks for client-centred practice • Introduction to equity, diversity, and inclusion • Role and scope of SLP, OT, and PT
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Ethical dimensions re missed appointments • Application of ICF, positionality, critical allyship • Application of client- and family-centred care • SLP scope of practice • Roles of other interprofessional team members • Psychosocial effects of communication disorders • Role of SLP in counselling
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Active listening and clinical interviewing • Obtaining a case history • Oral mechanism examination • Data tracking

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		• Explaining language and communication in lay terms

Developmental Language, Literacy, & Social Skills	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Language development (syntax, semantics, pragmatics): preschool, school-age, and adolescent
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Child language development from 18 months to 3 years
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Observational skills – children with language impairment • Introduction to language sampling and analysis

Articulation & Phonology	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Introduction to speech acoustics and phonetics • Speech sound development milestones • Introduction to anatomy and physiology of articulation
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Assessment of speech sounds at ages 3 and 4 • Child with cleft lip and palate from birth to JK • Grade 1 student with speech difficulties
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Phonetic transcription • Speech acoustics analysis • Evaluating speech intelligibility

Voice & Resonance	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Introduction to anatomy and physiology of respiration, phonation, and resonance
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Child with cleft lip and palate from birth to JK • Young adult with laryngectomy
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Introduction to perceptual assessment of voice

Acquired Language & Cognitive Communication	*Problem-Based Tutorial*	• Brief introduction to aphasia
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Observational skills – characteristics of aphasia • Implementing Supported Conversation techniques

Acquired Motor Speech	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Introduction to mechanisms and characteristics of movement disorders
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Adult with post-stroke dysarthria
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Evaluating speech intelligibility

Hearing	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Introduction to anatomy and physiology of the auditory system
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Introduction to middle ear infection and tubes

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UNIT 2 (Year 1, January to March)

The aim of this unit is to further develop students' foundational knowledge and skills, to develop clinical assessment skills, and to introduce them to varied practice settings, roles, and service delivery models.

General Development	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Genetics • Atypical neurodevelopment, developmental disorders • Introduction to the DSM-V

General Frameworks, Roles, & Clinical Skills	*Inquiry Seminar*	• Principles of measurement; psychometric properties • The lived experience of assessment and labels • Benefits and challenges of diagnostic labels • Frameworks of Assessment; Assessment across the lifespan using the ICF – what is being assessed and why • Measuring participation outcomes functionally and with Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS) • Models of service delivery including telepractice – when, how, and why • Considerations for service provision for Indigenous communities; culturally responsive practice • Specifying treatment ingredients and targets (the Rehabilitation Treatment Specification System)
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Models of service delivery, client-centred practice • SLP and other professional roles in varied contexts • Administration and interpretation of tests • Client/family interviewing and information sharing • Application of the ICF • Psychosocial effects of comm'n disorders and dysphagia
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Assessment planning with ICF, consent, capacity, case history, observation, functional probes, interviewing, environment, norm- vs criterion-referenced tools, understanding performance discrepancies • Interprofessional teamwork; circle of care • Translating assessment into intervention • Report writing • Specific, measurable, and meaningful goal writing • Measuring improvement in therapy • Scope of practice, Aud and SLP Act, Code of Ethics

Developmental Language, Literacy, & Social Skills	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Introduction to language disorders in children
	Inquiry Seminar	• Diagnosis of social communication and social language
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Child with Down Syndrome from birth to age 2

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		• Child in SK with language and related difficulties • Grade 1 student now testing in the normal range
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Administering, scoring, and interpreting tests • Analyzing language samples and play skills • Unique aspects of adolescent language assessment

Articulation, Phonology, & Motor Speech	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Speech perception, psychophysics, prosody • Introduction to speech sound disorders in children • Introduction to motor speech • Differentiating between dysarthria and apraxia in adults
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Child with Down Syndrome from birth to age 2 • SK student with articulation difficulties • Grade 1 student with cleft palate, slow progress
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Administering, scoring, and interpreting tests and other methods of speech assessment

Voice & Resonance	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Intermediate anatomy and physiology of phonation • Cleft palate and resonance disorders
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Grade 1 student with cleft palate, slow progress • Teacher and singer who is losing his voice
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Perceptual and instrumental evaluation of voice • Voice self-rating questionnaires • Multi-factorial influences on voice • Perceptual and instrumental evaluation of resonance

Acquired Language & Cognitive Communication	*Inquiry Seminar*	• Life Participation Approach for adults with aphasia
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Woman with aphasia living in a nursing home
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Aphasia: Framework for Outcome Measurement • Standardized language testing • Assessment of cognitive-communication disorders

Hearing	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Intermediate auditory anatomy; introduction to hearing loss, hearing assessment, and management
	Inquiry Seminar	• Ethics and inclusion for children with hearing loss
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Student with hearing aids entering high school
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Interpreting audiograms • Troubleshooting hearing aids and FM systems • Hearing screening, hearing assessment

Dysphagia	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Introduction to anatomy and physiology of deglutition/swallowing and swallowing evaluation
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Resident with signs of dysphagia in a nursing home

		• Patient in ICU post extubation following COVID-19

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UNIT 3 (Year 1, May to July)

This unit emphasizes assessment and treatment of children and adolescents with developmental communication disorders and also includes key themes of family-centered service, service delivery models for children, and transition to adulthood.

General Development	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Neural basis of development of cognitive functions (memory and executive functions), motor functions, brainstem functions (cranial nerves and consciousness)

General Frameworks, Roles, & Clinical Skills	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Social determinants of health
	Inquiry Seminar	• Family-centred practice • Foundational concepts and principles for early communication interventions • Approaches to service delivery and collaboration in the school setting; Universal Design for Learning and implications for the school-based SLP • Culturally and linguistically sensitive practice • Advocacy • Scholarly writing
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Principles of parent training
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Supervision of support personnel • Clinical documentation • Duty to report

Developmental Language, Literacy, & Social Skills	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Assessment and intervention for language disorders, birth to age 5 • Characteristics of and connections between oral language, learning, and literacy • Stages of narrative development and suggestions for narrative-based interventions • Characteristics and mechanisms underlying reading and writing disorders • Pragmatic language and social developments in children and adolescents
	Inquiry Seminar	• Professional approaches to reading and writing intervention
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Toddler with Fragile X syndrome and delayed receptive and expressive language • Classroom interventions for early literacy • Grade 1 student with difficulties telling stories and poor EQAO performance

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		• Grade 2 student with autism • Grade 4 student with reading and writing difficulties • Grade 4 student with history of self-regulation difficulties, now exhibiting aggressive behaviours
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Observations and intervention for early communication • Parent-based intervention in early childhood • Direct intervention for receptive and expressive language skills • Assessment and treatment of early literacy • Formal/informal narrative assessment approaches • Narrative intervention in the classroom • Reading and writing interventions

Autism	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Profiles and characteristics along the spectrum • SLP role in autism assessment and intervention
	Inquiry Seminar:	• Theories on nature of autism
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Preschooler using low tech AAC • Grade 2 student with social, behavioural, communication needs
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Evidence-based assessment and intervention methods for preschool and school-aged children

Articulation & Phonology	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Rationale and evidence for speech sound disorder interventions (articulation and phonology)
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• 8-year-old with /r/ difficulty • 4 ½ year old with phonological errors
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Intervention for articulation (oral placement) • Intervention for phonological processes

Acquired Language & Cognitive Communication	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Acquired injury in childhood and adolescence
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• 17-year-old student with TBI experiencing difficulty transitioning to high school

Fluency & Voice	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Nature and characteristics of fluency disorders • Evidence for fluency interventions • Introduction to pediatric voice disorders
	Inquiry Seminar	• Etiology and epidemiology of stuttering
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Child with dysfluencies from age 3 to 6 • 10-year-old with hyperfunctional voice
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Fluency assessment procedures for children • Fluency intervention procedures for children • Voice intervention procedures for children

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UNIT 4 (Year 2, October to January)

This unit emphasizes assessment and treatment of individuals with acquired communication disorders as well as individuals with developmental disorders who are now living as adults. A 2-unit course on Evidence-Based Practice begins in Unit 4 – see description in Appendix.

General Frameworks, Roles, & Clinical Skills	*Problem-Based Tutorial*	• Benefits and pitfalls of Electronic Medical Records • Preparing programming for nursing homes
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Project-based therapy

Fluency & Voice	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Overview of organic and inorganic voice disorders • • Nodules vs. Polyps • Neurological voice disorders • Muscle tension dysphonia • Characteristics of adult stuttering and interventions
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Telemarketer with muscle tension dysphonia • IT specialist who stutters is promoted to manager
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Review of voice and fluency assessments for adults • Person-centred management of stuttering in adults • Voice intervention procedures for adults using the RTSS

Acquired Language & Cognitive Communication	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Foundational knowledge in aphasia and cognitive-communication disorders (e.g., in dementia, RHD, TBI), including physiology of brain injury and general medical assessment and intervention procedures • Overview of aging and dementia in individuals with intellectual disability • Neuroanatomy review; blood supply; neuroimaging • Overview of neurophysiology and drug effects • Overview of COVID-19 pathophysiology, neurology, and neuropsychology
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Retired woman with left MCA stroke, initially in acute care and then transferred to inpatient rehab • Young adult with reduced insight and pragmatic difficulties two years after a brain injury • Consultant with frontal lobe glioblastoma • Guidance counsellor attempting to return to work after a concussion • Single mother of two with RHD after AVM rupture • Retired single woman diagnosed with early-stage dementia, progressing to nursing home admission
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Review of frameworks, goal setting, assessments

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		• Neuropsychological testing • Management of aphasia at the acute stage • Interventions for aphasia, including both impairment-level (e.g., semantic feature analysis) and participation-level (e.g., Supported Conversation) • Guidelines and interventions for acquired brain injury, ranging from mild (concussion) to severe, including strategy implementation, environmental supports, external aids, scripts. • Preparing return to work and return to school plans • Social-pragmatic assessment and intervention • Evaluating and managing cognitive and communication workplace demands • Cognitive-communication maintenance in dementia, including partner-training, environmental supports, language stimulation, spaced retrieval training

Acquired Motor Speech	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Assessment and treatment of motor speech disorders in adults • Speech subsystemsOverview of the principles of neuroplasticity and the principles of motor learning
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Man with dysarthria wanting to return to work • SLP running dysarthria group wonders if she could include a patient with apraxia
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Perceptual versus instrumental assessment methods • Designing motor speech intervention using the RTSS

Dysphagia	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Swallowing anatomy, physiology, neurological control • Typical versus disordered swallowing (e.g., signs/symptoms of aspiration and residue, swallowing pathophysiology) • Selecting appropriate instrumental assessment tools
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Client with Parkinson's progressing from mild symptoms to moderate symptoms with reduced self-monitoring once admitted to a nursing home • Man develops voice and dysphagia symptoms 5 years after radiation and chemotherapy
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Dysphagia screening and assessment (bedside and instrumental) procedures; MBSImP training (VFSS) • Designing dysphagia rehabilitation using the RTSS • Dysphagia management, including IDDSI methods and other compensatory strategies • FEES methods

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		• Issues associated with medication delivery when on thickened fluids

Hearing	*Problem-Based Tutorial*	• Spouse complaining of hearing loss in husband
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Evaluating and managing room acoustics • Aural rehab and counseling for adults

UNIT 5 (Year 2, March-April, July)

The aim of this unit is to prepare students for the transition to professional practice. This advanced unit provides students with knowledge and skills to assume current and emergent health care roles in the community, with an emphasis on complex conditions across the lifespan. Students also continue to apply advanced evidence-based practice skills to a community research project – see description in Appendix.

General Frameworks, Roles, & Clinical Skills	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Overview of complex disabilities • Mental health and addiction diagnoses, characteristics, and implications for intervention • Counseling for clients with communication disorders • Caregiver mental health • SLP in the ICU – ethics, communication, and models of service delivery • Cultural competence, including LGBTQ considerations, poverty, privilege, and allyship
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Impact of culture on clinical approaches • Implementing trauma-informed care principles • Working in remote, Indigenous communities • Applying ethical frameworks • Critical illness conversations • Social determinants of health
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Practice complexities: palliative care, capacity to consent, MAiD, transition to adulthood, hard-to-reach families, interpreters, communication intermediaries, intellectual disabilities and sexual violence • Behaviour management • Motivational interviewing • Mental health and counselling • Private practice • Overview of newer practice areas • Interventions for complex populations (e.g., dysarthria in CP, gender-affirming voice, selective mutism, MCS)

English Language Learners	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Accent training
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Student in grade 1 having difficulty learning English
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Speech and language assessment and intervention

Childhood Apraxia of Speech	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Typical motor speech development • Subtypes of Speech Sound Disorders • Nature and characteristics of CAS
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Preschooler where SLP queries CAS

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	Clinical Skills Lab	• Differential diagnosis of articulation delay vs motor speech and subtypes of motor speech • Treatment principles, approaches, and techniques

Hearing	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Auditory processing disorder
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Two children with severe hearing loss, one whose parents opt for full hearing technology and one whose parents opt for sign language only • Adolescent with auditory processing disorder
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Implementing auditory verbal therapy techniques

Dysphagia	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Development of the upper aerodigestive tract • Benchmarks in development of feeding and swallowing
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Feeding in an infant with cerebral palsy • Final stage patient with ALS requests to discontinue PEG tube feeds
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Overview of trachs and vents • Hospital- vs community-based assessment and intervention for pediatric dysphagia • Dysphagia considerations in palliative care

AAC	*Foundational Knowledge*	• Types and components of AAC systems and evidence-based approaches for customizing AAC • Key barriers and facilitators to access to AAC • Key considerations for prescription of AAC in the ICU and palliative care
	Problem-Based Tutorial	• Determining underlying cognitive-language skills for a grade 9 student with complex motor impairments • Assisting a teenager with cerebral palsy as he transitions from school to adulthood • Retired man with ALS, progressing from low tech to high tech communication needs • Supporting an ALS patient with eye gaze communication at end-of-life • AAC solutions for complex physical profiles • Communication solutions for mechanically ventilated patients
	Clinical Skills Lab	• Assessment procedures for AAC • Programming and using high tech AAC devices • Understanding AAC service/referral options (individual authorizer, clinics, ADP, etc.)

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APPENDIX: Course Formats

Foundational Knowledge
Units 1-5
These courses are primarily lecture-format with quizzes and exams to assess knowledge. Classes occur twice weekly for 1.5 hours each. Students are expected to learn the facts relating to normal and disordered communication and swallowing.

Clinical Skills Lab
Units 1-5
These courses involve direct teaching, followed by guided practice and application of skills in small groups, then sharing of and reflection on learning with the large group. Classes are 3 hours in length and occur twice weekly. Clinical skills are typically evaluated by individual and group take-home assignments, presentations, timed tasks, and Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs).

Problem-Based Tutorial
Units 1-5
These courses are the heart of a problem-based learning program. Students work in small groups to examine clinical cases, with the support and guidance of a speech-language pathologist tutor. Classes are 2.5 hours long and occur twice weekly. Students brainstorm learning objectives for a new case, then have 3 days to do independent research, then return to share and compare their results and make final decisions. Students are evaluated based on performance in-class and in open-book, cased-based exams. Requirements include professional behaviour, contribution to group process, evidence-based practice, and clinical reasoning.

Inquiry Seminar
Units 1-3
These courses occur twice weekly for 1.5 hours in large group format with a mix of lecture, student presentations, and small group analysis. Knowledge is typically evaluated through scholarly papers, presentations, reflective writing assignments, and class participation. Students are expected to learn the foundations of evidence-based practice, as well as models and theories relating to normal and disordered communication and swallowing.

Evidence-Based Practice
Units 4-5
In this course, students work in collaborative teams with community clinicians or faculty members on a research project that aims to advance clinical practice in speech-language pathology. During the first term of this course in Unit 4, students advance their knowledge and skills related to study design, data acquisition, and data analysis methods; searching and critically appraising the literature; and constructing logical, compelling arguments for clinical research questions. During the second term of the course in Unit 5, students execute their project, integrating their findings with the literature and generating a final knowledge translation product.