

TO: Senate Council

**Contact:** Dr. Karen Badger, Associate Dean ([kbadger@uky.edu](mailto:kbadger@uky.edu)) and Dr. Anne Olson, Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) Department Chair ([aolso2@uky.edu](mailto:aolso2@uky.edu))

**Submitted September 24, 2020**

**RE: Request for modification of Academic Calendar for Spring 2021: MS in Communication Sciences and Disorders**

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We request approval to modify *the start date* of the Spring 2021 semester January 11, 2021 (no spring break) and will keep the approved end date of May 13, 2021 for the course, ***CSD 659 Clinical Rotation in Speech Language Pathology***.

This is a one-time request for modification of the University Senate approved Academic Calendar to a nonstandard calendar for these courses in response to the revised calendar proposed and approved due to implications of COVID-19.

**Rationale:** This course is taken by 2nd year CSD Master's students to fulfill the program's clinical hours requirement. The Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) for Communication Sciences and Disorders requires speech language pathology (SLP) students in CSD programs to complete a minimum of 400 clinical hours prior to graduation and to demonstrate they are entry-level practitioners and have had experiences in an appropriate variety of clinical facilities with a variety of populations. Fulfilling this standard requires students to have adequate time during a semester to acquire these experiences so that they are eligible to 1) ensure an on time graduation and 2) apply for certification through the American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) which is required by employers.

Second year graduate students acquire these clinical experiences in CSD 659, an off campus clinical rotation setting. Acquisition of the hours is essential for the development of their clinical skills and specified as a standard for our program accreditation the program must meet. Our clinical site partners have also needed to adjust to COVID-19 circumstances, resulting in some sites reducing the number of patient visits or limit the number of students present or the weekly hours for which they can be on site. These adjustments create a challenge in assuring that all students acquire the accreditation required number of hours in a 15 week semester. Therefore, a calendar with an earlier start date of January 11<sup>th</sup> is requested for CSD students enrolled in CSD 659 to allow for additional time to meet this requirement. Students will then be able to obtain their hours in the spring semester block of January 11<sup>th</sup> through May 14<sup>th</sup> (including the week designated spring break in the previously approved calendar). Given that the *Playbook* acknowledges the importance of accreditation required experiential learning and the need for on-time completion, it is imperative that CSD Master's students be allowed this additional opportunity to acquire their required hours, which will better position them for on time matriculation.

***The proposed nonstandard calendar for CSD 659 in the Spring 2021 semester does not and does not have the potential to violate SR 5.2.2, specifically in relation to student load.***

Thank you for your consideration of this request and collective help on this pressing issue. Please let us know if you are in need of additional information.

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