

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SACRAMENTO

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

CSAD 500C – Comprehensive Examination

We are pleased that you have decided to complete the **CSAD 500C - Comprehensive Examination** for your culminating experience, leading to the degree of Master of Science – Speech-Language Pathology. The comprehensive examination is completed in the final semester of the CSUS CSAD MS program. We wish you much success as you embark on this culminating experience.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to demonstrate your competency in terms of knowledge in the major as well as the ability to apply the core academic content to clinical case studies and scenarios. It also prepares students to successfully pass the national PRAXIS examination, a requirement to earning the Certificate of Clinical Competency (CCC) from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA).

It is highly recommended that graduate students review and study individually and collectively to best prepare for the Comprehensive Examination. **All CSAD undergraduate and graduate curriculum** may be included in the Comprehensive Examination. Fall Start Students will be studying during the winter break, while Spring Start Students will be preparing during the summer break. Regardless of whether a student is in a fall or spring cohort, the CSAD 500C Comprehensive Examination is taken on the Thursday and Friday before the first day of instruction of the 4th Semester of Clinic (e.g., the final semester of the graduate program).

Students will respond to a total of eight (8) questions, four on Thursday and four on Friday. Students are given 1.5 hours to answer each comprehensive question using an **essay format**. There are formal, scheduled 15-minute breaks between each exam question as well as a formal 45-minute lunch hour. Specific details regarding the location, dates, and times for the Comprehensive Examination will be shared with students by the Graduate Coordinator.

Students will receive their scores for the Comprehensive Examination by email within 4-6 weeks of the semester from the Graduate Coordinator. Each of the eight questions will receive one of the following scores:

- a. **Outstanding**
Excellent response; no further work needs to be done
- b. **Pass**
No further work needs to be done
- c. **Pass with a conference**
The student has passed this question, but the faculty who wrote and is grading your response was unclear and/or concerned about something that was written. All “pass with a conference” must be cleared prior to the Friday **before** “dead week.” Failure to do so may result in a significant delay (e.g., a minimum of one semester delay) with the conferral of your MS degree and ability to obtain employment as a speech-language pathologist.

It is important to note that **the student** is responsible for contacting the faculty member for that question. Please do not delay in communicating with the faculty member and clearing the comprehensive examination question. Faculty will **not** initiate any communication with the student. If a student waits until the end of the semester, the faculty member may not respond until the following semester. *Remember: If all of a student’s comprehensive examination questions are not cleared on time, graduation may be delayed!*

There are a variety of ways to “clear” a question. For example, some faculty require that you meet with them. Others may require a brief paper discussing the issue that lacked clarity or specificity, while some faculty may perform this activity in a “group” or an “individual” format. It is up to the discretion of the faculty how a comprehensive examination will be “cleared.”

d. **No Pass**

A student's response on a question was insufficient to pass. The student will need to contact the faculty reading the examination response, and establish a time and procedure to **rewrite the question**. As mentioned earlier, this must be completed by the end of semester, **provided that the student needs to rewrite 2 or fewer questions**.

If a student received a "no pass" for **more than** 3 hours of examination, they will need to retake CSAD 500C during the next time the comprehensive examination is offered (e.g., at the end of the following semester). **No exceptions**.

The vast majority of CSAD MS students (>95%) successfully fulfill the culminating experience via the comprehensive examination. If you have any follow-up questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Graduate Coordinator.

We wish you great success with the CSAD 500C - Comprehensive Examination!

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