

**University of Vermont**  
**Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders**  
**Graduate Student Portfolios – Comprehensive Exam**

**The Intended Function of Portfolios**

By creating individualized portfolios, students share evidence of growth and the integration of clinical skills and academic knowledge over the course of their graduate training. This evidence includes essays, written each semester, that demonstrate reflection and progress in their coursework and clinical experiences. Documentation of evidence is offered in the form of artifacts (i.e., exemplary works created during the MS program) selected by the student to reflect development in specific areas of academic and clinical knowledge and skills required by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Vermont Agency of Education. Students carefully select artifacts that represent a breadth and depth of experiences and cover both clinical and academic competence (research papers, class assignments, thesis or non-thesis documents, clinic reports and materials, treatment plans, discharge summaries, etc.). Additional aspects of growth include increasing academic rigor, professionalism, critical thinking, and methods of inquiry for research and its application. UVM's Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders uses the Portfolio as a form of Comprehensive Examination. Thus, it is meant to provide a rich demonstration of the students' achievements across their graduate program.

- *Note: Portfolios are created and organized using Microsoft Teams (licensed through UVM). Each student will be invited to a team by the Graduate Program Coordinator. Teams consist of the Student, the Graduate Program Coordinator, the student's matched mentor(s)/reviewer(s), and the CSD Graduate Program Administrative Assistant.*

**Portfolio Structure, Submission, and Evaluation**

Portfolio development is meant to be an ongoing process with regularly scheduled faculty feedback and grading. This culminates in a final review of the comprehensive student work demonstrating acquired "knowledge and skills in sufficient breadth and depth to function as an efficient, well-educated, and competent clinical speech-language pathologist" (CAA p.18 3.1B). Faculty members evaluate each portfolio carefully with the intent of providing formative feedback at the end of each semester and summative review after the final submission (see schedule of submissions and review below).

## Writing:

- All written Semester Essays and Case Studies should be typed, double-spaced, 12pt font, with 1" margins. Artifacts can be left in the original formatting of the assignment.
  - Semesters and essays are labeled as follows: Fall of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year, Spring of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year, Summer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year, Fall of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Final Essay (Spring of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year).

## Artifacts:

- Each semester, a minimum of 4 artifacts should be chosen to address ASHA and VT AOE standards (See *MS in CSD Table of Portfolio Standards - ASHA & VT AOE 2020*).
  - Each semester submission must include at least 1 academic artifact and 1 clinical artifact. Please include at least 1 reflection about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and/or interprofessional activities (IPE/IPP), respectively each semester.
  - Students are required to provide a minimum of one artifact for each of the ASHA & VT Standards (see CSD Table of Portfolio Standards). In total, 15-20 artifacts will be necessary to complete the entire portfolio project.
  - *Note for the summer semester:*
    - Artifacts may be clinical only if no CSD Graduate coursework was taken.
    - Case studies will serve as a type of artifact for the summer semester and are expected as part of the summer contribution (see details below).
    - In many summer placements, typical artifacts are not possible due to confidentiality guidelines. However, artifacts can be included from the summer in addition to the case studies as permitted by the placement.
- To the greatest extent possible, artifacts submitted should be a version that includes the grade and supervisor/faculty comments. If this is not possible, please include your grade on the assignment and the name of the faculty/supervisor in your essay description.
- If an artifact was completed as part of a group or team project, you must detail your role in creating the artifact. Be specific!
- Artifact document files should be de-identified according to HIPAA standards
- Artifact document files should have password-protection removed
- Artifact documents should be named and identified accordingly: Artifact #, Title of Document, Semester & Class Artifact was Created, & Standard(s) addressed.
  - *For example: **#12, TBI Express Presentation, Fall 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, CSD 353 Neurogenic Communication Disorders 2, ASHA Standard V-A.***
- Artifacts should be added to the CSD Table of Portfolio Standards-ASHA & VT AOE each semester. The naming and identifying of artifacts should be consistent with what is included in the portfolio.
- Students are required to clearly define how and artifact meets a standard.

## Submission & Faculty Evaluation

- Communication Sciences and Disorders graduate program faculty members are assigned to follow and provide critical feedback to students throughout the course of the portfolio. Student faculty assignments are made by the graduate program coordinator using random number generation. These pairings are maintained throughout the entirety of a student's graduate program.
- Feedback from the faculty should remain visible to faculty reviewing revised versions. Therefore, students should either 1) upload the revised version as a separate document, labeled the date of revision or 2) work directly in Teams when making changes. If you choose the second option, leave track changes on and keep the faculty comments and suggestions.
- Portfolios are turned in for review at specified times throughout the program (see Table below).

| <b><u>Semester</u></b>      | <b><u>Due Date:</u></b>                         | <b><u>Content</u></b>   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> Year   | First Friday of the following semester (Spring) | Introductory Essay, Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Essay, Associated Artifacts   |
| Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> Year | First Friday of the following semester (Summer) | Spring 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Essay & Associated Artifacts  |
| Summer 1 <sup>st</sup> Year | First Friday of the following semester (Fall)   | Summer 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Essay & Associated Artifacts  |
| Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year   | First Friday of the following semester (Spring) | Fall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Essay & Associated Artifacts<br>*Additional artifacts from previous semesters can also be included here to complete <u>MS in CSD Table of Portfolio Standards - ASHA &amp; VT AOE 2020</u> . These must be described in the semester essay<br>*All artifacts fulfilling the standards outlined in the Portfolio Standards-ASHA & VT table must be met at this time. |
| Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year | March 31 <sup>st</sup>                          | Final Reflective Essay  |

### Notes:

- *Semester essays and related content will be reviewed by faculty two weeks after submission. The exception to this rule is the Spring 1<sup>st</sup> year submission, which will be reviewed in the Fall of the second year (at the same time as the Summer submission).*
- Failure to submit the portfolio on time could lead to the student being placed on academic probation.

## Grading

- The grading standard benchmark is equal to or greater than 3, based on a 4-point scale (see related document [MS in CSD - Portfolio Grading Rubric](#)). That is, each and every section in every category must meet this standard. Students will be given constructive feedback and will be required to revise and resubmit work that is below the standard.
  - Failure to attain the minimum evaluation standard after a second revision will lead to the activation of an in-depth review committee. The committee will determine the future direction of remediation for the student.
  - An in-depth review committee will consist of the graduate program coordinator, and two other faculty members outside of the student's team. This will most commonly include the clinic director and department chair as available.
    - Substandard work and revisions can lead to the student failing the CSD MS Comprehensive exam and potential recommendation for dismissal from the graduate college.

## Introductory Essay

Include your personal essay from your UVM CSD Graduate Program application or your UVM early admissions essay (for Early Admissions Students Only).

## Semester Essays for - Fall 1<sup>st</sup> Year, Spring 1<sup>st</sup> Year, Summer 1<sup>st</sup> Year, Fall 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

Description/Instructions: Compose a reflective essay that describes your academic and clinical work undertaken during this semester. The student is advised to avoid generic platitudes (e.g., "this really helped me grow", "this artifact meets this standard"). This essay should include the following information:

- A. REFLECTION: Reflect on your overall semester development as a student, clinician, and future speech-language pathologist. Examples of reflection could include: personal and professional growth, discovering new challenges, overcoming or working to overcome challenges, new ways of understanding yourself and others, interprofessional/collaborative experiences, knowledge regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), etc.
  - Example: *"The fall semester has been the most challenging yet most rewarding experience I have ever had. I have grown in many different facets of my life that have made me a better person, student, and future clinician. Academically I struggled with the demand of graduate coursework and creating a work life balance. Clinically I struggled with*

*feeling as though I had no right to be making decisions that would impact a person's life. Finally, I struggled with finding what I want to do in the future as a Speech Language Pathologist".*

- Example: *"Through coursework and interacting with clientele, I was challenged to adopt better approaches to teamwork, to decipher and synthesize scientific research, to work through personal discomfort and view it as educational, and to produce clinical documentation more efficiently."*

B. COURSES: Describe the courses taken during the semester (if applicable) and the impact the course had on your development of knowledge and skills as a future speech-language pathologist.

- Example: *"I feel as though my first client was a great learning opportunity for me to grow as a clinician. I took information from the Speech Sound Disorders class on how to treat my client with articulation and phonological awareness differences."*
- Example: *"Clinic preparation and management helped me learn about all the clinical documentation that was required for each client a semester. Without this knowledge clinical writing would have been much more taxing."*

C. CLINICAL EXPERIENCE: Describe the clinical experiences from the semester and the impact the experiences had on your development of knowledge and skills as a future speech-language pathologist (e.g., interpersonal skills, writing, interprofessional collaboration, cultural humility). In these clinical experiences, describe how you applied specific information from your previous coursework.

- Example: *"One area that still needs to be improved is my clinical writing skills. I found it more difficult to submit my best work due to the demand of having three clients. To help with this, I made templates that made the process of writing more streamlined and easier to complete."*

D. ASHA & VERMONT STANDARDS: Describe the artifacts you have chosen that reflect academic and clinical growth in knowledge and skills related to professional standards of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the Vermont Agency of Education (AoE), and the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). Other aspects of growth to be demonstrated include increasing rigor in critical thinking and methods of inquiry for research and its application.

- Example: *"This class was extremely useful for clinical success as we practiced many skills that I still use today in the clinic room. **Artifact #3, Ethical Dilemmas, Fall 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Neurogenic Communication Disorders 2, ASHA Standard IV-E** as we were given different scenarios in which the ASHA code of ethics were being violated."*

- Example: *A final poster presentation, **Artifact #6, Spring 1<sup>st</sup> Year, NH 399 Research Poster, Standard IV-F** was the culmination of that teamwork and evidence of not only my, but our entire group's growth across the semester.*

### **Summer Semester**

Choose 1-2 different case studies from your summer placement and describe how they contributed to your growth with respect to the professional standards of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the Vermont Agency of Education (AoE), and the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). These will serve as summer artifacts.

- *For each case, include a brief background, your role on the case (assessment/treatment etc.), list of client challenges, evidence-based intervention(s) and the outcome. You are especially encouraged to include examples that demonstrate:*
- *Diversity, equity, and inclusion (cultural humility)*
- *Interprofessional Practice (IPP, clinical work with other professionals)*
- *Other artifacts can be included from the summer in addition to the case studies, as permitted by the placement.*

*NB: All artifacts and written work in this portfolio must be de-identified in accordance with HIPAA standards. It should be made clear when a pseudonym is included, or fictional client information is being used.*

### **Final Reflective Essay (~2-3 pages maximum)**

Look back over your entire portfolio, starting with your Introductory/Graduate Application personal essay and reflect on your growth.

- What have your challenges been and how did you meet them?
- How did your experiences prepare you for a professional career?
- What strategies do you have in place to maintain critical thinking and self-assessment?
- What strategies will you use to continue to implement EBP?
- In what areas do you anticipate needing or wanting more preparation?
- How will you give back to your chosen profession in the future and what leadership roles might you take?
- Where do you see yourself in the future and discuss your thoughts on your upcoming CF experience?