



COMD 4372

Term: *Spring 2026*

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Office Hours: Th, 9:20-11:20am, by appointment

Course Dates: Jan 12 - May 2, 2026

Course Times: Face-to-Face, TTh, 8:00-9:20am

Classroom: HPC 3010

Course Overview

This course is designed to introduce undergraduate students of communication sciences and disorders to the disorders of voice and fluency. The first part of the course will provide a review of the anatomy of the phonatory system and the mechanics of voice production. It will discuss the various parameters of frequency and intensity and the norms across the lifespan. It surveys diagnostic procedures and voice therapy techniques. The second part of the course focuses on fluency disorders with a major focus on stuttering. It starts with an analytic review of the contemporary research on the etiologies (especially genetic and neurological) of stuttering disorder. The primary focus of this part will be on the diagnostic procedures and treatment methods. Both parts of the course will address the various ethical, legal, psychosocial, and cultural aspects associated with voice and fluency disorders.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course pertains to the following certification standards set by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA)

- Standard III-B pertaining to normal dysfluency, stuttering and other disorders of fluency; stuttering in the general population
- Standard III-D pertaining to: laryngeal mechanism and voice production, voice, disorders, vocal fold changes, various types of voice disorders (including organic, psychogenic, and neurological), assessment procedures and treatment methods for voice disorders.

After successfully completing this course you will be able to:

- Describe the anatomic structures of the phonatory mechanism
- Explain the mechanics of normal voice production
- Analyze the psychological and social aspects of voice
- Describe major and secondary types of voice disorders across the lifespan
- Identify the various etiologies of voice disorders and explain age-related changes to vocal-fold tissue, frequency and intensity
- Describe diagnostic procedures, instrumentation and techniques for identifying voice and fluency disorders in children and adults
- Develop basic plans for treating voice and fluency disorders in children and adults
- Analyze voice and fluency assessment results and develop diagnostic impressions
- Critique and analyze current research on voice and fluency disorders and their diagnosis, and treatment in children and adults
- Assess the psychosocial effects of voice and fluency disorders on the daily functioning and academic/professional performance of children and adults

Required Textbooks and Readings

- **Primary Textbook for Voice portion of class:**
Watts, R. C., & Awan, S. N. (2019). *Laryngeal Function and Voice Disorders*. Thieme Publishing.

- **Primary Textbook for Fluency portion of class:**
Logan, Kenneth J. (2022). *Fluency Disorders: Stuttering, Cluttering, and Related Fluency Problems*, 2nd Edition. CA: Plural Publishing, Inc.
- **Additional Readings:** During the semester you may have other readings assigned and posted on Canvas.

Course Structure

Students are required to complete the assigned readings prior to classes. The content of this course will be presented in multiple modalities, including class presentations, case studies, literature reviews, student presentations, YouTube videos, online activities, and class discussions. You will have both individual work and the opportunity to work with each other during this class. Canvas will be an important part of this course. Additional readings, discussion topics, case studies, and assignments will be posted there.

Tips for Success in this Course

1. **Participate.** I encourage you to not just show up to class but to actively engage during class time. Meaningfully attend to the information presented, consider and answer questions posed by the professor, ask questions when needed, and engage your classmates in conversation about the course content. You can learn a great deal from discussing ideas and perspectives with your peers and professor. Participation can also help you articulate your thoughts and develop critical thinking skills.
2. **Manage your time.** I get it—students usually juggle a lot, and I know you've got commitments beyond this class. Still, doing your best often means carving out enough dedicated time for coursework. Try scheduling specific blocks of time and ensure you have enough room to finish assignments, allowing extra space for any tech issues that might pop up.
3. **Login regularly.** I recommend that you log in to Canvas at minimum a few times a week to view announcements, download notes available, participate in discussion posts, and see any assignment updates.
4. **Do not fall behind.** This class moves at a quick pace with a large amount of specialized content/knowledge, and each class builds on the previous class content. If you feel you are starting to fall behind, check in with the professor as soon as possible so we can troubleshoot together. It will be hard to keep up with the course content if you fall behind early on. Please do not wait until later in the semester to ask for help or to admit you need additional assistance.
5. **Use Canvas notification settings.** Pro tip! Canvas can ensure you receive timely notifications in your email or via text. Be sure to enable notifications to be sent instantly or daily. ([Canvas Notification Guide](#))
6. **Ask for help if needed.** If you are struggling with a course concept, reach out to me and your classmates for support.

Graded Course Requirements Information

Quizzes (four quizzes worth 40 points each for total of 160 points)

- Quizzes will be taken online during regular class time
- Quizzes will be spaced out to include ~2-3 weeks worth of class content
- Quizzes will include 10-20 questions of both multiple choice and true/false content.

Participation & Engagement (worth 90 points together)

- During live class
- During group discussion board activities
- Simply being present for class is not sufficient to earn points in this category

Team Case Study Reports (two reports worth 125 points each)

- Two case study reports (one for voice and one for fluency) will provide you the opportunity to synthesize the information you learn and start to apply the knowledge gained as developing young clinicians. You will have the option to work with a partner on these reports. The focus will be report writing and critical thinking in regards to differential diagnoses and developing treatment plans.
- Detailed information and rubric will be provided on CANVAS and reviewed in class.

Exams (two exams worth 250 points each)

- Exams will be taken in class with both an online portion and a pen-paper portion. Content includes multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer, application, and case studies.
- The midterm exam will cover only the Voice portion of the content
- The final Exam will cover only the Fluency portion of the content

Grading Structure

Assignment	Percentage %
Participation/Engagement	9%
Quizzes (4 total)	16%
Voice/Fluency Case Study Reports (2 total)	25%
Midterm Exam (Voice)	25%
Final Exam (Fluency)	25%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

- A - (90% or higher)
- B - (80 - 89%)
- C - (70 - 79%)
- D - (60 - 69%)
- F - (Below 60%)

Late Work and Make-Up Exams:

If you are absent for a quiz/exam or unable to turn in an assignment on time for an emergency reason, it is your responsibility to alert the professor on the day of the work missed. If a valid reason for missing the work is established, you will be given an opportunity to make-up the missed work. If an emergency reason is not established, work must be made up within two days with 30% of grade points sacrificed for lateness.

Course TENTATIVE schedule

Week	Topic	Text Reading	Assignment Due Dates
Week 1	Course Introduction Analytic of laryngeal anatomy and the mechanics of voice	Syllabus Watts & Awan Ch 1	Read syllabus before coming to class and bring any questions to class
Week 2	Overview of Voice Disorders Nature and Assessment of	Watts & Awan Ch 2 & 3	
Week 3	Nature and Assessment of Organic Voice Disorders	Watts & Awan Ch 4 & 5	Quiz 1
Week 4	Nature and Assessment of Neurogenic Voice Disorders	Watts & Awan Ch 6	
Week 5	Treatment of Disorders, with Case Studies	Watts & Awan Ch 7 & 8 & Assigned Articles	
Week 6	Treatment of Voice Disorders, Case Studies	Watts & Awan Ch 9 & Assigned Articles	Voice Case Study Report Due, Quiz 2
Week 7	Midterm Exam		
Week 8	Normal vs Abnormal Speech	Logan Ch 1, 2, 3 & 4	
Week 9	Onset and Development of Fluency Disorders	Logan Ch 5 & 6	
Week 10	Development of Fluency Disorders: Etiology	Logan Ch 7, 8 & 9 & assigned articles	Quiz 3
Week 11	Assessment of Fluency	Logan Ch 11, 12 & 13	
Week 12	Treatment of Fluency Disorders	Logan Ch 14, 15 & 16 & assigned articles	
Week 13	Treatment of Fluency Disorders	Logan Ch 17 & 18 & assigned articles	Fluency Case Study Report due, Quiz 4
Week 14	Considerations for special populations	Logan Ch 10 & Assigned Articles	
Week 15	Final (April 28 at 8am)		

Note: This is a tentative schedule, and subject to change as necessary – monitor the course page for current deadlines. In the unlikely event of a prolonged university closing, or an extended absence from the university, adjustments to the course schedule, deadlines, and assignments will be made based on the duration of the closing and the specific dates missed.

Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance in this course is mandatory and critical to your success in this course. Classes will begin on time and will utilize the full lecture class time. You are expected to be there on time and remain for the entire class time. If you plan to be out for any reason, please let the professor know ahead of time, and, if applicable, bring proof of written emergency (i.e, death in the family, car accident, illness, court appearance, etc.) to the next class you attend. Missing classes without an excused absence will lead to loss of class participation points. Habitually arriving late or leaving early will also lead to loss of class participation points at this is disruptive of class time and shows disrespect for fellow classmates and the professor. Ongoing issues with attendance will be reported to the registrar. If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to get with your classmates about the content you missed.

University Policies & Student Resources:

University policies and student resources are available on the University website and in Canvas under “Syllabus”.

- [University Policy](#)
- [Student Resources](#)