

International Admissions

International students should visit the [International Student Resources](#) for information regarding procedures for international graduate admissions.

Guidelines and Procedures for Supporting the Clinical Education of Students who are Non-native Speakers of English

The faculty of the ACU Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders are committed to the academic and professional excellence of its students. As an integral part of that excellence, the department values diversity in its student body. We are particularly aware that linguistic diversity in the field of CSD results in a greater capacity to serve an ever-growing culturally and linguistically diverse population in the United States. The department also values and practices Christian hospitality in welcoming students from all backgrounds to our community of learners.

We acknowledge that with diversity comes challenges. One particular area of challenge for students who are non-native speakers of English, and who demonstrate dialectal variations in accent and grammar, is concern that may be encountered regarding their ability to provide clinical services to English-speaking clients. The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders utilizes the following procedures to work toward ensuring that future professionals possess the ability to provide effective clinical services, including students who utilize dialectal variations of English. These procedures are based in their entirety on the 2011 ASHA Professional Issues Statement: The clinical education of students with accents.

NOTE: All graduate students applying from countries where English is not the principal language spoken must meet the university's minimum English proficiency requirements to be considered for admission, as referenced here. All students in the department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, regardless of their language background, are held to the same standard of written English proficiency.

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Procedures:

1. Students will be identified during the graduate admissions process and/or during the first weeks of the first semester. The focus of both the department and the student will be on client perception of accent, and the client's ability to learn from the clinician.
2. Students will have early and frequent opportunities to meet with academic faculty and clinical educators to discuss students' communicative strengths and needs, including but not limited to formative conferences. Student self-awareness will be the center of all meetings, recommendations, and plans/strategies for enhancing intelligibility. This awareness **MUST INCLUDE** awareness of the value of a multi-cultural/multilingual clinician in this field and in this society. The student will be responsible for demonstrating an understanding of how the ASHA Code of Ethics must influence the decisions that they will make regarding personal scope of practice, and developing and maintaining intelligibility for treatment.
3. Students who are identified as being non-native speakers and their faculty mentors/advisors will together develop an accent modification/enhanced intelligibility plan.
 - a. A variety of resources will be made available for students who, in agreement with faculty mentors, decide to pursue accent modification or other strategies designed to increase the effectiveness of their English communication.
 - b. A written agreement between the department and the student will detail the steps to be taken to address the needs identified and the resources/supports to be utilized.
 - c. Assessment of the effectiveness of the intelligibility plan will be made at regular intervals, during formative conferences, and at the end of the plan.

The ASHA Professional Issues Statement (2011) notes the following, which summarizes the department's approach in supporting and guiding the CSD student who is a non-native speaker of English: "the question is not whether a student has acquired a "native-enough" accent in English. Rather, the question is whether they have enhanced their intelligibility (as substantially as needed), acquired self-awareness of their accent and its clinical impact, and have developed resources to rely upon in various situations." Our procedures are intended to point the students toward these outcomes.

