



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
School of Allied Health Professions

Speech Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) Preparation Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Please thoroughly review each of the questions listed below to learn more about our SLPA Fieldwork course. Information has been updated and is effective Fall 2023.

1. When is this course offered?

This course is offered quarterly during the academic year. The terms offered are:

- **Fall** (late September – mid December)
- **Winter** (early January – mid March)
- **Spring** (late March – early June)

The specific *term* dates will correspond with the SAHP Standard Term in the [University's academic calendar](#).

2. I am interested in enrolling, what do I do next?

There are 2 steps that you will need to take:

- a) Find a placement with an SLP who has a current CA license or credential.
 - An exception to this rule is if you choose to work within the school districts of **Redlands Unified School District**. Do not contact them directly. You must notify the SLPA Coordinator at LLU, via the Approval Request Form.
 - Due to limited availability, students are not placed within the **Los Angeles Unified School District** to complete their SLPA Fieldwork Experience Hours. Do not contact them to request placement.
 - b) Submit an Approval Request Form (ARF), found on the webpage, which will submit your request directly to the SLPA Coordinator. The ARF form is available during specific times throughout the year for each quarter. Please see webpage for the submission dates of the Approval Request Forms.
 - Required information, such as your educational background and the names of your secured site and supervisor along with his/her contact email address must be listed on the form for it to be reviewed; without that information, your request form will not be reviewed.
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3. How should I approach an SLP to request Supervision for this course?

When contacting a potential supervisor, introduce yourself and let them know of the reason for your phone call or email. Include the following information:

- You currently have a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders (or the appropriate title) and you are looking to gain fieldwork experience under the supervision of a California-licensed SLP -or- an SLP who holds a credential from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to meet the criteria to become a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant.
- A minimum of 80 hours of direct client care (i.e., treatment), 15 hours of observation, and 20 hours of indirect client care (e.g., assisting with administrative tasks, treatment preparation) are required to be attained during the quarter. This must be completed over a 9-week period within the enrolled quarter.
- You are looking to complete this course during the quarter that you are applying for (include the dates) as a non-degree student at Loma Linda University. *However, you have not yet been accepted into the course, therefore, the dates are contingent on your approval of the course.*
- You will follow up with the Speech Language Pathologist to notify him/her of your status when it is known to you.
 - If an SLP agrees to supervise you, it is highly advised to keep the communication lines open. If you are not approved for the quarter you applied for or change your mind, contact the SLP to update them.

Be prepared to answer any questions they may have and/or prepare yourself for an interview if they ask.

4. When may I apply?

Approval Request Forms will be available for a one-week period beginning on Monday at 12:00am PST and will close on that following Sunday at 11:59pm PST. All Approval Request Forms require information regarding your personal identification, educational background, requested site(s) placement, and supervisor(s). All forms must be completed in their entirety. Incomplete forms will be discarded and will not be reviewed. Please see the SLPA webpage for the actual dates of submission.

5. How many students are accepted each quarter?

Each quarter's cohort is **45 students**.

6. Do I need to apply to Loma Linda University before I submit an Approval Request Form?

No. This course is offered to Non-Degree Students. The SLPA Coordinator must complete specific actions before students register for this course. The Approval Request Form is

submitted several weeks before registration to allow those actions to occur. Approval from the SLPA Coordinator is REQUIRED to register. Submitting an Approval Request Form does not guarantee that you will be accepted into the course. You will receive an email notifying you of your status in the approval process about 2 weeks after the closing date of form submissions.

7. What is a Non-Degree Student?

A Non-Degree student is one who has not been admitted to a degree or certificate program but who is registered for selected courses in one of the schools of the University. The SLPA Preparation Program is not a certificate program. It requires the completion of two courses that will allow you to complete the necessary requirements to apply for the SLPA license. A certificate is not provided at completion.

8. Is there a minimum GPA for the SLPA program?

No, there is not a GPA requirement; however, you must have **completed** your Bachelor’s Degree in Speech Language Pathology within the last 5 years of your approval request form submission to be eligible to take the course. Students that have not completed their Bachelor’s Degree program at the time of the application period are not eligible.

9. When should I expect a response from the SLPA Coordinator regarding the status of my Approval Request Form?

You will receive an email from the SLPA coordinator’s office with your submitted Approval Request Form status and any further steps or concerns about 2 weeks after the application period’s closing date.

***To gain final approval to register for this course, a university agreement (contract) must be in place between your desired site and LLU. If a contract is not in place with the site, you will be notified and the process to establish the contract will be initiated; however, understand that this may take several weeks to complete. You will receive notification via email once the contract has been finalized. The contract between LLU and your site must be in place by the 1st official registration date of the desired quarter, as determined by the University’s Academic Calendar (there is a link to the University Academic Calendar on the webpage). Please note, if the contract is not completed by the 1st official date of registration for the desired quarter, you will not be approved to register.

10. What shall I do if LLU does not have a contract with the site where I would like to complete my fieldwork hours?

If you are approved to register for this course, and we do not have a contract for your requested site, you will be notified via email that you have Conditional Approval to register for this course. Your supervisor will be contacted, and a contract will be established. Once the contract has been signed and completed, you will be notified that the contract is complete, and you are eligible to register. You are not eligible to register until you have received notification that the contract has been completed. All correspondence regarding the contract is handled between the SLPA coordinator's office and the site. Students are not permitted to be involved with the process of the contract completion. The contract **MUST** be in place by the 1st official date of registration for the desired quarter.

******If the contract process is in progress, and it is not completed by the 1st official date of registration, then you will go on the list for the following quarter, with priority placement once the signed contract is received. You must submit a new Approval Request Form to notify LLU of your continued interest in the course.

11. What type of setting may I complete my fieldwork hours in?

There are a variety of settings that you may complete your fieldwork hours in. This includes school districts, private practice, in-home settings, and hospitals/medical centers. When choosing your placement, you should consider that this course requires a minimum of 80 hours of direct client contact or treatment; therefore, be sure to discuss this with the supervising SLP prior to choosing your site to ensure that the minimum requirements will be met. Placements within the hospital settings are limited, may be difficult to place in, and may present more limitations with the number of treatment hours due to the type of patients that SLPAs are able to treat. Also, be aware that placements within an in-home setting may present difficulty with accumulating the required hours to complete the course.

12. Do you have a list of supervisors or sites that are already approved by LLU that I can choose from?

No. Although we have a database that we use to confirm the presence of a contract, we do not have a list that is generated for potential students to look through.

13. How do I find a Speech Language Pathologist to supervise me?

It is recommended that you consider the area that you would like to work in and contact the facility or school district to see if there is an SLP that is available and willing to supervise you for that quarter. If you are looking for a private clinical office, you may go to ASHA.org and click on "Find A Professional" for options in the desired area, or you may even do an internet search for private clinical offices in your desired area of work. If you are interested in a school district, you may consider contacting the school's SLP (if you have a specific school in mind) or the district's Special Education department to find a potential supervisor.

If you are interested in working specifically at Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) or Redlands Unified School District, do not contact them. You must notify the SLPA Coordinator's office at LLU since both of those districts require communication with us directly.

14. The school district that I contacted informed me that a Memorandum of Understanding (or contract) is required prior to me completing my hours at their site. What must I do to get one?

Since you are not currently enrolled in the course, an active contract is not required to submit the Approval Request Form; however, you must receive a verbal or written agreement from a site that will provide you with a supervising SLP. You will want to notify the district of the following information:

- You have not registered for the course yet but are applying for a future date. Once you are approved to register for the course, the SLPA Coordinator's office will contact the district to establish the contract. You are looking to secure a verbal agreement so that if you are approved for the course, and a contract is established, then there will be an SLP assigned to supervise you.

If the district personnel provide a verbal agreement to future placement but does not provide a name of a SLP (supervisor), then provide the name of the district personnel that you spoke with on the Approval Request Form.

** Contracts will not be initiated prior to a student being approved to register for the course.

15. How many supervisors or sites may I have?

You may have up to 2 approved sites and/or 2 approved supervisors. Both the site and the supervisor must be approved by the SLPA Coordinator.

16. I have been approved to register for the quarter, what do I do next?

Once you are approved to register for the quarter, which means all registration requirements have been met, your name will be placed on the list of approved students for that quarter. You will need to submit any requested documentation and follow all instructions regarding registration.

To prepare for registration, you will need to gather the following (please do not submit until they are requested).

- Official transcripts (electronic is preferred)

- Proof of TB Test within one year
- Proof COVID Vaccinations (Full vaccination includes ONE booster shot)
 - If you require a medical exemption or religious exception, you will notify the SLPA's coordinator upon request.
 - See [LLU's Covid Guidelines](#) for more information

The orientation is provided online via Zoom/pre-recorded video on the first official day of the quarter.

17. I have been approved for the SLPA Preparation Program, may I begin at my site?

No. Although you have been approved to register for the course, you are not allowed to begin at your site until the following has occurred:

- a. Complete your registration through the Office of Admissions
- b. Obtain Financial Clearance
- c. First official day of the quarter.
- d. Complete the online orientation

You may not begin at your site until each of the above criteria has been met.

The university agreement between your site and LLU is covered for students only. You are considered a student during the specific dates of the quarter you have been registered for. Any dates outside of that time will not be covered/protected under the University Agreement set between your site and LLU and will not count towards your fieldwork hours.

18. Do I need to register for the class once I have received an approval to register?

No. Once you have submitted your complete Approval Request Form, you must wait for a response from the SLPA Coordinator. Once you receive an approval email response, you will be placed on the list of approved students for the desired quarter. This is not a waiting list. However, you will not be able to register immediately. You will need to follow the instructions from the SLPA Coordinator's office to complete your registration.

19. Do you offer online or distant registration services? How often will I need to come to LLU?

Yes. Online registration is available. Your non-degree registration form will be completed online, then you will be issued a student email address and access to the student portal. After that, everything may be handled either online via the course website program, email, or US Mail. You are not required to come to campus.

20. I have a B.A or B.S degree in something other than Speech-Language Pathology (or comparable title), am I eligible to take this course?

No. This course is available to individuals that successfully completed a bachelor's degree in Speech-Language Pathology (or equivalent title) in the last 5 years only. **Post-baccalaureate**

students that have completed the bachelor's degree equivalent coursework are not eligible to register for this course. You may contact the CA state Speech & Hearing Board for their SLPA License education requirements: www.speechandhearing.ca.gov

21. What type of payment is accepted for the course? May I set up a payment plan?

The Communication Sciences and Disorders (CMSD) department does not handle any of the financial matters. For questions or to set up a payment plan, please contact Student Finance at 909-558-4520 or stfin@llu.edu.

22. Does Financial Aid cover the cost of this course?

No. This course does not meet the guidelines for receiving Financial Aid. For additional questions/clarification, please contact a Financial Aid Service Representative (909) 558-4509 / finaid@llu.edu). The Communication Sciences and Disorders (CMSD) department does not handle any of the financial matters.

23. If I apply for the SLPA program, will I have a student visa granted by Loma Linda University?

The SLPA Preparation Program is not a certificated program. It requires the completion of two courses over one academic quarter. One course, CMSD 368 – SLPA Scope of Practice is an online didactic course that focuses on the duties of the SLPA. The other course, CMSD 369 – SLPA Fieldwork Experience involves completing at least 100 clinical hours at a site outside of LLU with an approved supervising SLP. Therefore, a student visa is not required or granted for the course completion.

24. If I complete my hours in less than 9 weeks, may I stop the fieldwork experience?

No. It is the desire of our program to not only meet the SLPA licensing board's requirements, but to also have students complete the experience with an appropriate level of skill set that will have them prepared to work at the minimum level of required supervision once they are hired. Since many undergraduate programs do not offer clinical experience, this course is typically the SLPA student's first experience providing direct clinical treatment. You should be available for at least 9 weeks and about 12-13 hours per week to meet the minimum hours required to complete the quarter.

25. May I have a copy of the contract between the site and LLU?

The contract that is sent between LLU and the site is focused on the legal agreement between Loma Linda and that specific site. This information is confidential and is not released to students.

26. When I complete the course, will I receive Certification or Licensure as an SLPA?

No. Completing this course meets only one of the requirements of the SLPAHADB. At the completion of this preparation program, you will be directed to submit your application online for your SLPA license. The application will be emailed to the SLPA Coordinator for signature by the licensing board. The licensing process takes several weeks to complete by the SLPAHADB. See [here](#) for an estimate.

27. I am also interested in ASHA's C-SLPA (certification), does this course meet its requirements?

YES! The online didactic course (CMSD 368) satisfies *Standard II: Education* of ASHA's requirements. Additionally, our fieldwork experience course (CMSD 369) satisfies *Standard III: Clinical Supervised Experience* when using a supervisor who meets the criteria as an ASHA-certified SLP. There are some additional differences between state licensure and ASHA certification; however, these will be elucidated during the course.

For additional questions, please contact:

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