

COMD 7870 –Clinical Research Project (CRP) Syllabus

Course Instructors (Graduate Faculty Mentors)

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Course Description

Under the direction of his or her advisory committee, the student engages in clinically-related research (i.e., the clinical research project—CRP). This research is creative work at a doctoral level and worthy of publication or presentation. The CRP requirement is designed to provide each audiology doctoral student with an opportunity to engage in a high-quality research project with a faculty mentor to: (1) foster their appreciation for evidence-based practice, (2) enhance their capacity to be a critical consumer of research, and (3) increase their experience and knowledge about the process involved in contributing to the foundations of audiology, hearing science, and related fields.

Enrollment

Students complete the clinical research project during the first two years of the AuD program and must successfully complete all CRP requirements by the last day of final exams in the spring semester of their second year in the program. Completion of all requirements is required to apply for a fourth-year clinical externship placement. Students will enroll in 1 credit of COMD 7870 for each of the following semesters: Fall and Spring of Years 1 and 2 for a total of 4 credits during the first two years of study.

COMD 7870 is a pass/fail course. Students must achieve a *pass*, “P”, grade for each semester enrolled in COMD 7870. Passing the clinical research project is a [graduation requirement](#).

Course Activities

Course activities associated with a successful CRP will be planned and determined via collaborative efforts of each AuD student and their mentor. Course activities will vary from student to student, faculty to faculty, and research project to research project. CRP activities may include (but are not limited to) research experiences such as writing a literature review,

data collection, sound editing, piloting software, helping design and conduct a study, developing a series of educational infographics, and more. The AuD student and their mentor will document their plan for the research activities and their associated expectations in the CRP mentoring agreement (see page 4 of this syllabus for more details).

Learning Objectives

This course will enable graduate-level audiology students to develop and foster their consumption of research materials, analytical thinking, multimodal communication skills, critical thinking, and creative problem solving within the field of audiology. These skills should allow for students to implement evidence-based diagnostic and intervention procedures for individuals seeking hearing and balance healthcare. Furthermore, these skills should bolster students' abilities to collectively determine the needs of people diagnosed with hearing loss and/or balance difficulties thus allowing them to ultimately employ appropriate family- and person- centered care.

Over the four semesters AuD students are enrolled in the CRP, they will demonstrate their understanding of or skill sets in the following topic areas (in accordance with the learning objectives listed below). Each student's progress toward success and mastery will be determined collaboratively by the student and their mentor at the beginning of each semester. The methods of assessment and final outcomes measures will be clearly and explicitly documented in the CRP Planning Form.

1. Research Methodology and Techniques:

- 1.1. Describe and justify the research methodology/ies employed in the CRP

2. Literature Review and Synthesis:

- 2.1. Synthesize relevant literature in the topic area of interest in order to understand current issues and gaps in the research.
- 2.2. Develop critical analysis skills to evaluate the quality and relevance of academic sources.

3. Data Collection and Management:

- 3.1. Understand the importance of data accuracy, validity, and reliability.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

- 4.1. Describe the analytic approach for the CRP.
- 4.2. Learn to accurately represent data using tables and figures.
- 4.3. Learn to identify significant patterns, trends, and relationships within the data.

5. *Scientific Communication:*

- 5.1. Learn to present research findings clearly and concisely.
- 5.2. Develop effective oral communication skills for presenting research at conferences, seminars, and meetings.

6. *Project Management and Organization:*

- 6.1. Learn to prioritize tasks and manage time effectively to meet CRP deadlines.
- 6.2. Develop organizational skills necessary to manage references, data, participant scheduling, and other activities required for your CRP.

7. *Ethical and Professional Conduct:*

- 7.1. Understand and apply ethical principles and standards in research.
- 7.2. Learn the process of obtaining necessary approvals (e.g., Institutional Review Board) and ensure compliance with ethical guidelines.
- 7.3. Maintain professionalism, integrity, and confidentiality throughout the research process.

8. *Collaboration and Teamwork:*

- 8.1. Develop skills to work effectively within a research team, contributing to collaborative projects.
- 8.2. Learn to communicate and coordinate with supervisors, peers, and other stakeholders.
- 8.3. Incorporate feedback and work towards common research goals.

9. *Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:*

- 9.1. Develop critical thinking skills to identify and address problems and challenges.
- 9.2. Enhance the ability to reflect on research findings and processes, identifying areas for improvement.
- 9.3. Describe future research needs for the area of study.

10. *Clinical Application:*

- 10.1. Understand the impact of research on clinical practice.
- 10.2. Understand the pathway from research to practice.
- 10.3. Identify how knowledge gained from the CRP will influence personal practice.

Professional Use of Self

The audiology doctoral program results in a clinical doctorate degree (i.e., AuD) which means that our graduate program is designed to prepare students for professional practice upon graduation. Because of the nature of professional clinical practice, our AuD program has different expectations of students than do nonprofessional programs. All AuD students are expected to abide by the standards set by ASHA's Code of Ethics (<https://www.asha.org/Code-of-Ethics/>). Students must demonstrate characteristics consistent with professional use of self as they complete their CRPs; these characteristics are based on the following ethical and professional behaviors: presence, cognitive and psycho-emotional readiness, proactive and

responsive communication, ability to receive and utilize feedback, self-awareness, demonstration of audiology core values, and accountability.

Course Management

Organization of the course

In this course each student will have their own, independent CRP experience based on factors such as the faculty mentor's program of research, the needs of any ongoing laboratory projects, the student's prior experience in research, and the student's academic goals.

Regardless of each individual experience, all CRPs will adhere to the following timeline and general experience format.

CRP Timeline

Year 1 Fall Semester

1. Faculty mentor assigned to each student prior to Y1 Fall Semester
2. Student completes the Clinical Research Project Plan with their faculty mentor. The CRP Plan can be found in *Box/AUD Division/AuD Student Resources/CRP Forms & Documentation* and includes:
 - a. An overarching plan for the completion of the CRP
 - b. A Semester Plan that describes the faculty mentor's goals for the student and the student's personal goals for the semester
 - c. The Mentoring Agreement is a contract of appropriate conduct and expectations for all faculty mentors and AuD students
 - d. The Final Approval Form that marks the completion of all CRP requirementsEach student and their faculty mentor will meet within the first 2 weeks of the Fall semester to discuss and agree upon the research project (and its accompanying activities), complete and sign these forms.
 - The student will upload the CRP Plan their personal CRP folder located in *Box/AUD Division/AuD Student Graduation Requirements*
3. Student follows Semester Plan

Year 1 Spring Semester

1. The student and faculty mentor re-evaluate the CRP Plan within the first two weeks of the semester. Necessary changes can be made at this time and the document is signed again.
 - Signed, revised form uploaded to *Box* by the student
2. Student follows Semester Plan

Year 2 Fall Semester

1. The student and faculty mentor re-evaluate the CRP Plan within the first two weeks of the semester. Necessary changes can be made at this time and the document is signed again.
 - Signed, revised form uploaded to *Box* by the student
2. Student follows Semester Plan
3. Active work on the project (e.g., data collection, literature search, analysis) is completed by the conclusion of the Y2 Fall Semester

Year 2 Spring Semester

1. The student and faculty mentor re-evaluate the CRP Plan within the first two weeks of the semester. Necessary changes can be made at this time and the document is signed again.
 - Signed, revised form uploaded to *Box* by the student
2. Student creates poster and podium presentations for upcoming conferences
3. Student completes defense in Implementation Science
4. Student presents at the USU Student Research Symposium
5. Student presents at the Regional Audiology Student Symposium
6. Final Approval Form is completed, signed, and uploaded to *Box* by the student

Expectations

The CRP is a substantive evidence-based experience that requires students to demonstrate critical thinking as well as synthesis of and communication about audiological information. The knowledge and skills gained from this project will culminate in a research poster presented to two different audiences at regional conferences (at minimum), and a formal defense in the form of a presentation given to the Audiology division followed by questions from peers and faculty. While the CRP may take many forms (e.g., quantitative study, qualitative study, comprehensive literature review, etc.), all students are expected to:

1. Adhere to the Mentoring Agreement
2. Follow their CRP Plan
 - Attend their faculty mentor's lab meetings
 - Actively engage in the research experience
 - Spend at least 48 hours per semester (~ 4 hours/week x 12) on CRP tasks and assignments (examples of these tasks include but are not limited to lab meetings, data collection, reading relevant literature, data entry, data analysis, report-writing, creation of presentations, etc.)
 - Meet the deadlines determined in conjunction with their mentor
 - Demonstrate competency in each learning objective

3. By the end of the Y2 Spring Semester, the student will have presented their research at the following conferences:
 - USU Student Research Symposium (<http://srs.usu.edu/>); held each Fall and Spring semester (*required*)
 - Regional Audiology Student Symposium (USU, U of U, and ISU); held each Spring semester (*required*)
 - *Optional presentations*: Students are also encouraged to present at approved national or regional conference such as ASHA, AAA, AAS, IHCON, ARO, etc. Students must obtain permission from their project advisor prior to the abstract submission dates to these conferences. Funding for these optional conferences must be discussed and decided upon with the faculty mentor prior to abstract submission.
 - Presentations can be in the form of a research poster or podium talk
4. By the end of Y2 Spring Semester, students will have defended their project to the Audiology division. The defense allows the student to formally present their research project to their peers and faculty members and is an opportunity for the student to professionally communicate about audiology, demonstrate their knowledge of the topic, critical thinking skills, ability to synthesize information, and ability to draw relevant conclusions from their work. The defense will consist of a ~25-30-minute presentation including:
 - a summary of the relevant literature
 - description of the project including purpose, research question, and methods
 - description of the student's role and activities on the project
 - results or findings (if available)
 - conclusions and clinical implications

The presentation will be followed by questions from their peers and audiology faculty members. All faculty members present for the defense will provide student feedback to the mentor. The faculty feedback will be aggregated and later shared by the mentor with the student in a private meeting.

Grading

Y1 and Fall Y2: The student will receive a Pass/Fail grade each semester they are enrolled in CRP. The grade is determined based on *Expectations 1 & 2: Following the Mentoring Agreement and CRP Plan*.

In Y2 Spring Semester, the Pass/Fail grade will be based on *Expectations 3 & 4: The two conference presentations and the defense*. Once completed, the student and mentor will meet to discuss faculty feedback and sign the Final Approval Form. The student is responsible for

uploading the signed Final Approval Form into their personal CRP *Box* folder located in *Box/AUD Division/AuD Student Graduation Requirements*.

If the student does not meet competency in the evaluated learning objectives for a given semester, a remediation plan may be created by the faculty mentor and approved by the Division Chair. The remediation plan will be signed by the faculty member, Chair, and student then uploaded into *Box*.

In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of COMD 7870's coursework because of extenuating circumstances. The term "extenuating" circumstances and the incomplete grade policy can be found here: <https://www.usu.edu/teach/help-topics/online-teaching-orientation/incomplete-grades> . If a student's circumstances qualify as extenuating, the student may petition their faculty mentor for time beyond the end of the semester to finish the work. The faculty mentor will then petition the audiology division faculty on behalf of the student. If the faculty agrees, an "I" will be given for the course grade for that semester. An incomplete grade may be granted only if the student has completed the majority of the course and is passing the class at the time. In the case of an "I" the student is required to complete the work by the time agreed upon (which may not be longer than 12 months).

Failure to meet expectations, unsuccessful remediation, or unsuccessful completion of work after an "I" will result in a failing grade for COMD 7870. As the CRP is a graduation requirement, students cannot apply for 4th year externships or graduate from the program without a passing grade in all COMD 7870 semesters.

Knowledge + Skills Assessment 2020 (KASA)

ASHA standards for AuD programs require competency in all KASA areas (below). Our AuD accreditation board also has competencies (CAA). Each course and clinic placement in the AuD program fulfills some number of KASA and CAA competencies. The competencies covered by this course are variable depending on the lab, research project, and student tasks. All CRPs will at least meet the following standards:

A13. Principles of research and the application of evidence-based practice (i.e., scientific evidence, clinical expertise, and client/patient perspectives) for accurate and effective clinical decision making

A23. Principles and practices of effective clinical education and mentoring of students, other professionals, and support personnel

University + Course Policies

Appropriate Use of Canvas and Other IT Resources

Canvas and all other course technologies are information technology services provided as tools to further the mission of the university. By using these services, users agree to comply with [USU Policy 550: Appropriate Use of Computing, Networking, and Information Resources](#) and the accompanying [Terms of use for USU IT](#) resources, as well as [Article V-3.B.25.c](#) of the USU Student Code. Using course technologies in ways that are inconsistent with the university's mission or are disruptive will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior includes any activity that interferes with either the faculty member's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program.

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. [USU Policy 403](#) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity - "The Honor System"

The University expects that students and faculty alike maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University ([Student Conduct](#)) addresses academic integrity and honesty and notes the following:

Academic Integrity: Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the University by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty and by reporting all violations or suspected violations of the Academic Integrity Standard to their instructors.

The Honor Pledge: To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity". Violations of the Academic Integrity Standard (academic violations) include, but are not limited to cheating, falsification, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes knowingly "representing by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, and denial or revocation of degrees.

Course Fees

Instructors that utilize course fees should identify the amount and explain the purpose of the course fee on the top half of the first page of the syllabus. Course fees are listed in the catalog.

Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

USU strives to provide an environment for students and employees that is free from [discrimination](#) and [sexual misconduct](#). If you experience sexual misconduct or discrimination at any point during the semester inside or outside of class, you are encouraged to contact the [USU Title IX Coordinator](#) via Old Main room 161 in Logan, 435-797-1266, titleix@usu.edu, or at equity.usu.edu/report. You can learn more about the USU resources available for individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct at sexualrespect.usu.edu. Resources for individuals who have experienced discrimination are listed at equity.usu.edu.

Required Reporting of Sexual Misconduct

USU cares about our students and provides a number of resources and supportive measures to students who may be experiencing thoughts of self-harm or who have experienced sexual misconduct. To ensure students are informed about resources and services available to them, including available grievance or criminal processes for incidents of sexual misconduct, USU has implemented [reporting policies and practices](#) that require designated employees to report any information they receive about incidents of sexual misconduct. This reporting policy also assists USU with its efforts to prevent sexual misconduct and keep our campus community safe.

Under USU's sexual misconduct reporting policy, I am designated as a "[reporting employee](#)." This means that if you share information with me about incidents of [sexual misconduct](#) (sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, or sex-based stalking), including within a course assignment, , I *will report* that information to the [USU Title IX Coordinator](#). I will also share with you information about [designated confidential resources](#), [supportive measures](#), and [how you can file a report](#) with the USU Title IX Coordinator.

Self-disclosures about sexual misconduct that you experienced are not required for your course work.

Similarly, if you disclose thoughts of harm to self or a threat to others to me, including within a course assignment, I will report the information to the appropriate campus administrators. I will also share with you information about the [mental health and wellness resources](#) available to you.

Students with Disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, 435-797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Withdrawal Policy, "I" Grade Policy and Dropping Courses

If a student does not attend a class during the first week of the term or by the second class meeting, whichever comes first, the instructor may submit a request to have the student dropped from the course. (This does not remove responsibility from the student to drop courses which they do not plan to attend.) Students who are dropped from courses will be notified by the Registrar's Office through their preferred e-mail account.

Students may drop courses without notation on the permanent record through the first 20 percent of the class. If a student drops a course following the first 20 percent of the class, a W will be permanently affixed to the student's record (check [General Catalog](#) for exact dates). Students with extenuating circumstances should refer to the policy regarding Complete Withdrawal from the University and the Incomplete (I) Grade policy in the General Catalog.

No-Test Days Policy

For classes that meet for a full semester, a five-day period designated as "no-test" days precedes final examinations. During this time, no major examinations, including final examinations will be given in order that students may concentrate on classwork, the completion of special assignments, writing projects, and other preparation for duly scheduled final examinations. Approved exceptions include final papers, weekly chapter quizzes, quizzes, projects, and examinations associated with a lab that does not meet during final examinations. This policy does not apply to classes that meet only during the second 7-week session of the semester or to classes offered during the summer term. Complete information related to [Final Examination Policies](#) can be reviewed in the General Catalog.

Assumption of Risk

All classes, programs, and extracurricular activities within the University involve some risk, and some involve travel. The University provides opportunities to participate in these programs on a voluntary basis. Therefore, students should not participate in them if they do not care to assume the risks. Students can ask the respective program leaders/sponsors about the possible risks a program may generate, and if students are not willing to assume the risks, they should not select that program. By voluntarily participating in classes, programs, and extracurricular activities, students do so at their own risk. General information about University Risk Management policies, insurance coverage, vehicle use policies, and risk management forms can be found at <http://www.usu.edu/riskmgmt/>.

Food Security

The Student Nutrition Access Center (SNAC) offers free food assistance to all students. Students are welcome to visit the pantry once per calendar week. There are no questions or qualifications required to access this service; you simply need to present your student ID card or A#.

The pantry is committed to supporting student well-being by ensuring access to nutritious food options. For more information, including pantry hours and location, please visit SNAC Food Pantry.

Utilizing the SNAC Food Pantry is a smart way to manage your food needs and stay focused on your academic success.

Mental Health

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#).

Students are also encouraged to download the "[SafeUT App](#)" to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.

Students Who are Pregnant or Have a Pregnancy-Related Condition

If you need academic accommodations related to pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, recovery, or other pregnancy related conditions, please contact the Office of Equity as early as possible. All accommodations related to pregnancy must be approved by the Office of Equity. The Office of Equity will then coordinate with instructors to provide accommodations. The University will not exclude a student from participating in any part of an educational program based on the student's pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions.

Office of Equity: Distance Education, Room 400, Logan Campus, 435-797-1266, [Office of Equity: Pregnancy and Pregnancy Related Conditions](#).

General Health Protocols

The cold, flu, COVID-19, and other illnesses can have an impact on the health of our university community. USU welcomes the wearing of masks in all university buildings and encourages taking measures to mitigate risk as recommended by federal and state public health officials: getting vaccinated, staying home if you are sick, and frequent hand washing.

Academic Civility

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section for more information.

Building Rapport

If the student finds that they have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure to let me know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective student. The student should make sure that they are proactive in informing me when difficulties arise during the semester so that she can help the student find a solution.

Grievance Process

If you have a complaint or concern regarding this course, please speak with your faculty mentor first. If your complaint cannot be handled by your faculty mentor, please speak with the Audiology Division Head, Dr. Brittan Barker. Dr. Barker can be easily reached via email at brittan.barker@usu.edu. [Academic Grievances section of the Course Catalog](#).

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated [in matters other than discipline, admission, residency, employment, traffic, and parking—which are addressed by procedures separate and independent from the Student Code] may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII Grievances

Religious Holidays

The AuD faculty understand that everyone observes different religious holidays that may not align with the holidays observed by the state of Utah or the university. Please let your faculty mentor know if any meeting dates or assignment due dates fall on your observed holidays. We can make accommodations based on your needs.

Disability Resources

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course (or your graduate schooling experience in general), please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, 435-797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Disability related resources for current students:

- [DRC Student Handbook \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Disability Related Scholarships \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Campus Resources \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Documentation Guidelines \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Online Resources for Students with Disabilities \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

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Preferred Name & Preferred Gender Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e. in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.