

# MULTICULTURAL/MULTILINGUAL EMPHASIS

## Elmhurst University Graduate Program Communication Sciences and Disorders

This emphasis is designed for students who wish to pursue **specialized** academic, research, and clinical experiences to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse populations in a variety of settings. This emphasis is well-aligned with Elmhurst University's mission to prepare students intellectually and personally for meaningful and ethical work in a multicultural, global society and to foster learning and enrich culture through pedagogical innovation.

### OBJECTIVES

The emphasis will advance knowledge and skills in critical areas:

- **Cultural sensitivity and responsivity:** the ability to recognize and respond to cultural factors that inform the delivery of support services to students and families from a variety of cultural and linguistic communities.
- **Normative Processes:** the ability to describe the process of normal speech and language acquisition for bilingual/multilingual individuals and how those processes are manifested in oral and written language.
- **Assessment:** the ability to select, administer, and interpret valid formal and informal assessment measures to appropriately assess the skills of and differentiate typical versus atypical skills in individuals from a variety of cultural and linguistic communities.
- **Intervention:** the ability to develop and implement appropriate plans and select, modify, and utilize relevant materials to meet the needs of clients and their families.

### COMPONENTS

#### Coursework

- **Infusion**  
Multicultural/multilingual content is infused in program coursework for all students (e.g., CSD 509 Language and Literacy in Young Children; CSD 510 Advanced Studies in Speech Sound Disorders, CSD 516 Language and Academic Literacies in K-12 Classrooms: Assessment and Intervention; CSD 515 Adult Language Disorders; CSD 525 Public School Methods in a Diverse Society).
- **Dedicated**  
**Fall, Year 1**  
***CSD 586 Multicultural and Multilingual Topics in CSD: Research and Best Practices.***  
Students will extend knowledge and skill about cultural and linguistic diversity as acquired in the regular graduate curriculum to cultivate advanced-level knowledge and

skill in ethical and evidence-based research, assessment and intervention with multicultural and multilingual populations.

### **January Term, Year 1**

***CSD 518 Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Services in Communication Sciences and Disorders.*** Students will gain awareness of diverse cultural and linguistic contexts, experiences, and identities and how they influence the delivery and outcomes of speech-language services. Students will understand how clients from various backgrounds are impacted by systems of oppression and the need for advocacy and empowerment. Students will learn strategies to approach service delivery collaboratively and with an asset-based mindset to deliver assessment, intervention, and counseling services that affirm the values, priorities, modes of communication, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds of individual clients and their families.

### **Summer, Year 1**

***CSD 587 Bilingual Assessment in Public School Settings.*** This course meets a course requirement to earn *Bilingual Special Education Approval* from the Illinois State Board of Education. An ESL and/or Bilingual Special Education Approval is required for speech-language pathologists to conduct an ESL or bilingual evaluation as a ***Qualified Bilingual Specialist*** per ISBE Administrative Code Section 226.800 f) 5). This course focuses on principles and current approaches to assessment of bilingual students in PK-12 educational settings, including the policies, procedures, and issues that inform the assessment of bilingual students. Students will learn about the different purposes of process and product assessment tools, authentic and curriculum-based forms of assessment, issues in the assessment of bilingual students, and assessment of academic content knowledge. Students will have opportunities to examine critically and practice administering assessment tools used in current educational contexts. Students will learn to identify language needs and how to differentiate them from developmental needs. This course requires field experience hours with bilingual students.

### **Master's Research**

- Completion of a Master's Thesis or Report is required for all graduate students in CSD. Students pursuing the M&M emphasis will complete their research with a multicultural/multilingual focus under the guidance of a research mentor with expertise in M&M issues.

### **Language Proficiency**

- Proficiency in another language is an asset but is not required to participate in the M&M Emphasis.
- Students pursuing a placement in which they assess and/or provide direct treatment in another language(s) must participate in the M&M Emphasis and demonstrate proficiency

sufficient for the placement by the first summer term of the program. There are numerous options for demonstrating proficiency as needed for determining clinical placements: Seal of Biliteracy documented on a high school transcript, formal proficiency testing (e.g., [Illinois Target Language Proficiency Test](#), [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#)), letter from a university world language instructor, and/or evaluation from an Elmhurst University instructor. Options will be discussed during orientation.

### Clinical Practicum

- One or more clinical assignments serving multicultural/multilingual clients and families in the Elmhurst University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic and in external placements. We have a wide variety of external placement opportunities where students can serve clients of various language backgrounds (e.g., Spanish, Polish, Russian, Arabic).

## ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

### Study abroad opportunities in CSD

- The China Experience: Transcultural view of Rehabilitation Medicine
- Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Services: Ecuador Experience

## MULTICULTURAL/MULTILINGUAL EXPERT FACULTY

[Brenda K. Gorman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP](#). Dr. Gorman has an extensive background in working with dual-language learners and training graduate students to become successful bilingual SLPs. She completed her master's and doctoral degrees with a multicultural/bilingual specialization in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Texas at Austin. Prior to entering academia, Dr. Gorman worked as a bilingual (Spanish-English) speech-language pathologist serving diverse caseloads for public school districts, early intervention agencies, private clinics, and Bilinguistics, a company which she co-founded in Austin, Texas. She has taught courses in numerous topic areas ranging from assessment and intervention in bilingual populations, child language and literacy disorders, speech sound disorders, fluency, to adult language disorders and AAC. Dr. Gorman investigates language and literacy assessment and intervention in bilinguals.

[Susanna Vargas, Ph.D., CCC-SLP](#). Dr. Vargas is a Spanish bilingual speech-language pathologist with extensive clinical experience in urban public-school settings and in home-based services through the Illinois Early Intervention Program. Her primary clinical areas of interest include assessment and intervention of language disorders in children and adolescents; the relationship between oral language skills and development of literacy skills; bilingual language acquisition with emphasis on morpho-syntactic development; and differential diagnosis in diverse linguistic and cultural populations. She has completed training in *The SOS Approach to Feeding* and the It Takes Two to Talk Hanen Program® for

parents of children with language delays. Dr. Vargas has worked as a clinical educator/supervisor for graduate students, as well as taught undergraduate and graduate courses in phonetics, child language development, school-age language and literacy development and disorders, and Spanish-language acquisition and disorders. Her research has examined morphosyntactic development in Spanish-speaking children and the use narrative language sampling analysis for cross-linguistic comparisons in Spanish-speaking bilingual children.

[Annice Coughlan, SLPD, CCC-SLP](#). Dr. Coughlan is a Spanish bilingual speech-language pathologist with experience serving children of various ages and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Her experience includes serving students in early childhood through the elementary level in public schools and students in elementary through high school level in private practice. Dr. Coughlan has had the opportunity to guide future SLPs as a supervisor for graduate students in the campus clinic, working with graduate students completing their internships, and serving as a clinical fellow (CF) supervisor and mentor to those seeking to obtain their CCCs. Before entering academia, she completed bilingual evaluations for children leaving early intervention (EI) services and entering the school setting. She worked with bilingual students with complex communication needs (CCN) and assisted with obtaining various bilingual augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems for students with significant needs. She completed her bachelor's degree at Elmhurst, her master's degree at Marquette University, and her clinical doctorate at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. Her research has focused on coaching Spanish-speaking families of bilingual preschool-aged children with complex communication needs who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

[Ruiying Ding, Ph.D., CCC-SLP](#). Dr. Ding completed her master's and doctoral degrees at Northwestern University. She is a bilingual (Mandarin-English) speech-language pathologist who has worked in hospital, rehabilitation, outpatient, and long-term care settings. Dr. Ding's research interests include swallow physiology changes in elderly populations and speech and language practices in multicultural and multilingual populations. She has served as an adjunct professor in two renowned universities in Shanghai, China, and she has led several study abroad trips to China. She and Dr. Gorman led the most recent study abroad trips to China and Costa Rica.

[Sarah Valverde, PhD, CCC-SLP](#). Dr. Valverde completed her master's degree at Saint Xavier University and her doctoral degree at Clemson University. She is a multilingual speech-language pathologist (Spanish, Hindi/Urdu, some Arabic, and English) and has worked with language and culturally diverse populations across the world. Dr. Valverde has experience working with children and adults, in schools and medical settings. She started her career in an educational setting, working first for Chicago Public Schools as a bilingual (Spanish/English) SLP followed by medical experience in acute and long-term care with adults and children in rural southern USA. She then worked at military bases in

the USA and South Korea with the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), supporting military-connected families and adapting to different cultural contexts. Her journey continued in pediatric acute care in Qatar, where she immersed herself in Arabic and other language-speaking local and expat communities, enhancing her therapeutic approach and fostering a deep appreciation for global diversity. Dr. Valverde is dedicated to providing inclusive care across varied cultural settings.

## ADMISSIONS

See Admission Requirements for the graduate program on the department website. All applicants must complete the standard application via CSDCAS. Applicants who are pursuing the Multicultural/Multilingual Emphasis should include an additional paragraph to their personal statement titled “**Multicultural/Multilingual Emphasis: Statement of Intent**” to describe their interest, relevant experience, and language experience in the personal essay of their CSDCAS application. Applicants will be notified of a program admission decision, and separately of a decision on their acceptance into the Multicultural/Multilingual Emphasis.

For questions, please contact: Brenda K. Gorman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP,  
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