



## COURSE OUTLINE: OPA228 - COMM. DISORDERS

Prepared: Joanna MacDougall/Diane Charron Bishop

Approved: Rebecca Keown - Dean

<b>Course Code: Title</b>	OPA228: COMMUNICATION DISORDERS- REHABILITATION
<b>Program Number: Name</b>	3022: OCCUP/PHYSIO/ASSIST
<b>Department:</b>	OTA/PTA ASSISTANT
<b>Academic Year:</b>	2025-2026
<b>Course Description:</b>	This course will provide the student with an understanding of the role of the Speech Language Pathologist and Communication Disorder Assistant and how they may work collaboratively with these professions as an OTA or PTA. The topics of communication, speech, language and swallowing will be discussed. Students will learn strategies that will assist them in their role as an OTA or PTA managing individuals with feeding and swallowing disorders. Students will explore language and communication disorders across the lifespan and strategies to improve communication . Augmentative/assistive communication devices commonly used will be explored.
<b>Total Credits:</b>	2
<b>Hours/Week:</b>	2
<b>Total Hours:</b>	28
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	OPA110, OPA115, OPA117, OPA118, OPA130
<b>Corequisites:</b>	There are no co-requisites for this course.
<b>Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLO's) addressed in this course:</b>	<b>3022 - OCCUP/PHYSIO/ASSIST</b>
<b>Please refer to program web page for a complete listing of program outcomes where applicable.</b>	<p>VLO 1 Communicate appropriately and effectively, through verbal, nonverbal, written and electronic means, with clients, their significant others, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and members of the interdisciplinary health care team and others.</p> <p>VLO 2 Participate in the effective functioning of interdisciplinary health care teams to optimize client physical and occupational functions.</p> <p>VLO 3 Establish, develop, maintain, and conclude client-centred, therapeutic relationships.</p> <p>VLO 4 Promote a safe environment that prevents or minimizes potential physical or mental harm to the client, therapist assistant and others.</p> <p>VLO 5 Practice in a legal, ethical, and professional manner within the role of a therapist assistant.</p> <p>VLO 7 Engage in reflective practice and ongoing professional development activities to maintain and enhance competence.</p> <p>VLO 8 Perform the roles and responsibilities of the therapist assistant effectively through the application of relevant knowledge of health sciences, psychosocial sciences, health conditions, resource management, and clinical procedures.</p> <p>VLO 9 Contribute to the occupational therapist's or physiotherapist's assessment of the client and the development, implementation and modification of intervention/treatment plans.</p>



**Essential Employability Skills (EES) addressed in this course:**

- EES 1 Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.
- EES 2 Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
- EES 4 Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.
- EES 5 Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.
- EES 6 Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.
- EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.
- EES 8 Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.
- EES 9 Interact with others in groups or teams that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
- EES 10 Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.
- EES 11 Take responsibility for ones own actions, decisions, and consequences.

**Course Evaluation:**

**Books and Required Resources:**

No materials required

**Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives:**

<b>Course Outcome 1</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1</b>
1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic neuroscience as it relates to communication, speech, language and swallowing.	1.1 Review and identify anatomy and physiology of the brain, speech mechanism and swallowing
<b>Course Outcome 2</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 2</b>
2. Demonstrate an understanding of typical speech and language development through the lifespan.	2.1 Identify general communicative stages/milestones from infancy through to adulthood
<b>Course Outcome 3</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 3</b>
3. Demonstrate an understanding of communication disorders across the lifespan commonly encountered in the field of rehabilitation.	3.1 Describe how language disorders are classified according to etiology, for example, developmental vs acquired 3.2 Describe how language disorders are classified according to manifestation, for example, expressive vs receptive, form/structure of language, content/meaning 3.3 Describe basic pathology of common communication disorders encountered in the field of rehabilitation (Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Brain Injury, CVA, Dementia) 3.4 Recognize cognitive based dysfunction and differentiate between expressive and receptive aphasia 3.5 Recognize motor speech disorders and the defining characteristics of apraxia and dysarthria



<b>Course Outcome 4</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 4</b>
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the assessment and treatment procedures carried out by the Speech Language Pathologist.	4.1 Demonstrate familiarity with some intervention approaches used by the Speech Language Pathologist (parent training, monitor/parent consultation, rehabilitation and compensatory strategies)
<b>Course Outcome 5</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 5</b>
5. Demonstrate an understanding of feeding and swallowing disorders.	5.1 Define dysphagia 5.2 Recognize characteristics of pediatric and adult feeding and swallowing disorders 5.3 Demonstrate familiarity with how to interact with patients with dysphagia 5.4 Identify the complications associated with dysphagia 5.5 Recognize the acute and long term issues related to dysphagia
<b>Course Outcome 6</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 6</b>
6. Demonstrate knowledge and skills required of an OTA/PTA when working with a client with a communication and/or swallowing disorder	6.1 Through case examples, describe specific actions and skills an OTA/PTA can employ when working with a client with a specific communication disorder (for example, recognizing when to use pictures versus text) 6.2 Through case examples, describe supportive actions an OTA/PTA can employ when working with a client with dysphagia (for example, positioning, seating, diet etc.)
<b>Course Outcome 7</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 7</b>
7. Demonstrate familiarity with augmentative and alternative communication.	7.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the treatment approach using augmentative and alternative communication 7.2 Recognize common assistive communication devices and tools (speech generation devices, American Sign Language, picture symbol communication, etc.)

**Evaluation Process and Grading System:**

<b>Evaluation Type</b>	<b>Evaluation Weight</b>
1. Self Reflections	5%
2. Case Studies	20%
3. Learning Activities (Class Activities, Quizzes)	55%
4. Final Exam	20%

**Date:**

December 15, 2025

**Addendum:**

Please refer to the course outline addendum on the Learning Management System for further information.

