

A Field Guide to Speech-Language Pathology

Taylor Adams, Emma Bryant, Logan Hyde

November 26, 2021



Letter of Authorization

201 High Street
Farmville, VA, 23901

December 1, 2021

ELT Consulting
789 Oak Street
Farmville, VA, 23909

Dear ELT Consulting Firm:

Subject: The Hiring of ELT Consulting at Longwood University

Due to the qualifications and research backing your firm, Longwood University has decided to bring the ELT Consulting Firm into the Longwood University CSDS program. We feel as though your work within the community, as well as your client connections, can provide our department with the best representation.

We are asking that the ELT Consulting Firm holds a meeting with our students regarding the work that you do and what you expect from our students in their partnership. We are asking that this meeting be held before January 31st, 2022, so our students can be shown the importance of SLPs as a career.

We look forward to working with the ELT Consulting Firm to further our students' interest in the CSDS program here at Longwood University. It is incredibly important to the CSDS department that our university continues to work with companies that can provide the best display of this field.

We require our students to hold a certain level of professionalism when working in the field. We hope to stay in constant communication about how we will work together going on.

We are ecstatic to be adding ELT Consulting to our team as we prepare our students for success in the CSDS Field and beyond. Thank you for reaching out and we look forward to hearing back from you, if you have any questions, please email longwoodCSDS@longwood.edu.

Sincerely,



Letter of Transmittal

789 Oak Street
Farmville, VA, 23909

December 1, 2021

Longwood University
CSDS Department
201 High Street
Farmville, VA 23901

Dear Longwood University, CSDS Department:

Subject: ELT Consulting report completed

We are pleased to present the report evaluating the CSDS Program at Longwood University. The report analyzes the 3 different workplace settings for Speech-Language Pathologists and gives recommendations on how to become a successful Speech-Language Pathologist.

We chose 3 different workplace settings to discuss based on a survey of SLPs and their current workplace. The recommendations given when choosing a workplace includes the following:

- Keeping your options open
- Mentor with other speech-language pathologists and
- Work towards multiple different career paths in speech-language pathology.

We are confident that these recommendations will aid Longwood University CSDS students in choosing the best fit for their career.

We would like to give thanks to the Longwood CSDS Program for commissioning feedback on the report. If there are any questions, we can be reached by email at eltconsultingfirm@gmail.com or stop by our office on 789 Oak Street Farmville, VA 23909.

Sincerely,
ELT Consulting

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Executive Summary

According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), there continues to be a high demand for Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) as well as high value. With continued technology improvements and a demand for people working as an SLP, this job is providing plenty of work opportunities.

With new children seeking help in speech, language, and hearing, there are many opportunities to create new clientele as well as job opportunities within the field. Therefore, the CSDS program allows the possibility to enter a job where the average salary ranges from \$50,000 to \$70,000 a year and beyond.

The benefits of becoming an SLP according to asha.org include:

- Core competence in understanding the science of human communication and disorders.
- Opportunities to engage in high impact learning practices.
- Exposure to contemporary issues in health care and education.

SLPs can work in different environments, schools, private practices, and medical fields. With this being the case, it allows for diverse options that may fit the individual who is pursuing this career.

Longwood University has a program that sets students up for success in this field. By partnering with different firms to ensure field experience, Longwood University is providing its students with the skills required to be a successful SLP.

We are confident that ELT Consulting and Longwood University together will set students up for a successful career in Speech Language Pathology, while also challenging them to be the best they can be.

Introduction

Longwood University offers a Bachelor of Science in communication sciences and disorders as well as a Master of Science in communication sciences and disorders. Both programs prepare students for the workplace as a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathologist assistant, or educator.

Longwood University's Bachelor of Science in communication sciences and disorders provides training and education on assessment, prevention, and therapy for communication disorders across different populations. They provide education on regular and irregular communication, language, and hearing. To receive a BS in communication sciences and disorders, one must complete 120 credit hours and receive no less than a C in any communication sciences and disorders course.

The completion of this undergraduate program will equip students for graduate programs in speech-language pathology, special education, audiology, or human services.

Longwood's Master of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders program is a full-time graduate program. They provide many opportunities for hands-on engagement and clinical experience to ensure that students are prepared for the workplace as a speech-language pathologist.

In this program, students collaborate with faculty and clients for experiences and learning opportunities. This master's program is a competitive but constructive work environment where students can grow in the field of speech-language pathology.

Classes for both the undergraduate and graduate programs are held in the Speech, Hearing and Learning Services (SHLS) building located at 315 West 3rd St, in Farmville, Virginia.

SHLS offers classroom spaces, audiology clinics, feeding labs, workspaces, telepractice suite, and therapy observation classrooms.



Figure 1: SHLS

Three Workplace Settings

Medical

A medical Speech-Language Pathologist works in a health care setting, such as hospitals and medical offices, and diagnoses speech, cognitive, and swallowing disorders. SLPs in a medical setting work with patients who suffer from many neurological trials including stroke, cancer, or traumatic brain injury.

Speech Pathologists study patients and design treatment plans that fit their needs. Patients who see a medical SLP can have speech issues, cognitive language disorders, or quality of voice issues.

Speech therapists have a wide scope of practice and a variety of responsibilities including diagnosing and treating disorders in cognitive behavior, swallowing, and speech, assessing swallowing capability, and collaborating with medical professionals such as doctors, nurses, and audiologists. Another huge role a medical SLP has is performing research to create new treatment plans and methods of diagnoses.

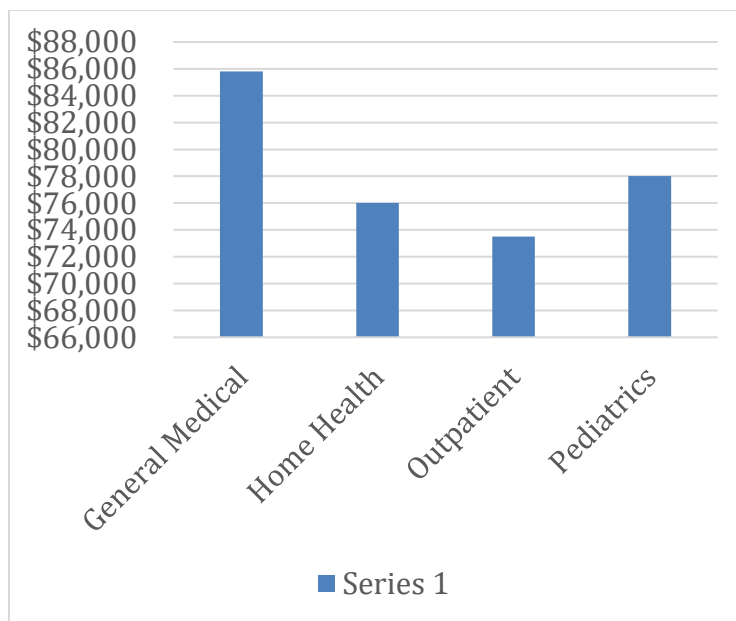


Figure 2: Average salaries based on medical location

As seen in figure 2, the average salary of a speech-language pathologist that works in general medical is \$85,798. A speech-language pathologist that works in home health make an average of \$76,000 a year. Out-patient speech-language pathologists make roughly \$73,500 and pediatric SLPs make on average \$78,000.

There is a big workload when becoming a Speech-Language Pathologist. In order to become an SLP, you must have a bachelor's degree in CSD, a graduate degree in Speech-Language Pathology, and a passing score on the national licensing exam under your belt.

A certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Council for Clinical Certification will land you the title of SLP after completion of a graduate degree and a passed Praxis exam. A medical SLP can earn a starting salary of \$71k per year.

Private Practice

Private practices allow for a more intimate and one on one focus for speech pathology. By working in a private practice, a speech pathologist has more of a chance to work with a wide variety of clientele.

SLP's that own or are involved in private practices have to get way more involved in the logistic side of actually owning a business. There are state and federal requirements that are necessary to operate this business. This allows standards by the HIPAA to be met throughout the business and ensure that the patients are getting the correct help that they need. These practices are important to building connections in not only the patient's life, but the family of the patient as well.

The benefits that come with owning a private practice for SLP is the ability to work with your patients' schedules in a more flexible way. This detaches what is going on within the schools and provides an opportunity for deeper connection with the SLP. Legal regulations are the biggest hold on a private practice to ensure that the clients and regulations are being met overall.

According to ASHA.org, "Nearly one-fifth (19%) of SLPs are employed full- or part-time in private practice. Owning a private practice allows SLPs to be entrepreneurial and make their own decisions about their schedules, caseloads, and target populations" (ASHA.org). This shows the impact and drive owning a private practice can have for SLPs.

Schools

The school system is a diverse and fast paced environment for speech-language pathologists. The American Speech-Language Association or ASHA says that school based SLPs are equipped to help students from kindergarten to twelfth grade, but they generally have a specific year of expertise. The school system exposes SLPs to students who have speech disorders, language disorders, social skill deficits, and reading disorders. In this settings speech-language pathologists collaborate with other educators to ensure quality care for the students they work with.

Speech-language pathologists have a wide range of responsibilities. According to ASHA these responsibilities include, prevention, assessment, intervention, data collection, and compliance. Compliance is a very large responsibility of a speech-language pathologist. SLPs must follow many federal and local mandates such as Individual Education Plans (IEP), 504 plans, Medicaid and insurance billing, treatment plans and treatment reports.

According to a recent study conducted of school-based speech-language pathologists in 2021, the average salary of this demographic was \$52,210 a year. The average salary range is generally between \$45,926 and \$62,122.

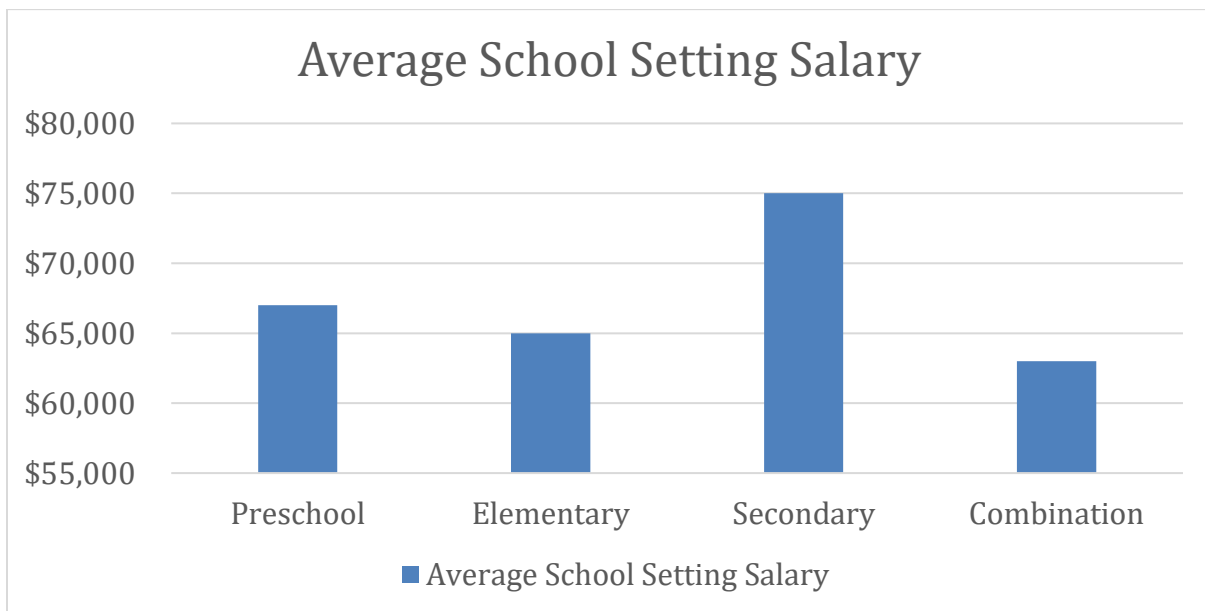


Figure 3: Average Salary of School Based SLP

The average salary of a speech-language pathologist who works in a preschool is \$67,000 a year. A speech-language pathologist in an elementary school makes an average of \$65,000 a year. A speech-language pathologist in a secondary school makes on average \$75,000 a year. Lastly, speech-language pathologists who work in multiple different school settings makes about \$63,000 a year.

ASHA has recently removed the recommended minimum caseload for school-based speech-language pathologists. They did this because the severity of a caseload is dependent on the needs of the children rather than just the number of students on the caseload.

Conclusion

When deciding what field to enter as a speech-language pathologist, it is important to keep in mind your personal strengths and weaknesses to find the career path that is right for you. This report analyzed three different career fields that a speech-language pathologist: School setting, private practice, and nursing facilities.

For further research we conducted a survey in which we asked Speech-Language pathologists in the state of Virginia, which facility they are currently working in now. We received 100 responses. Figure X shows the responses.

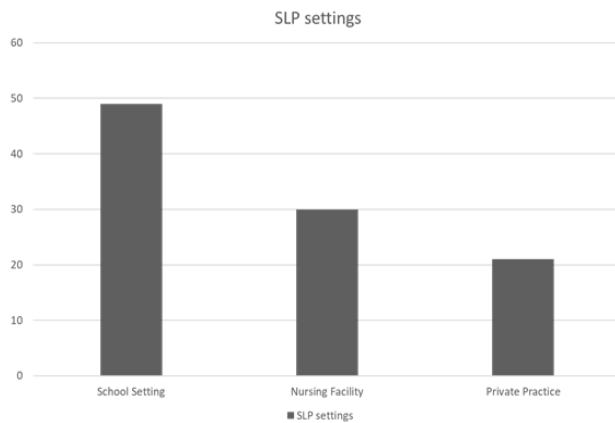


Figure 4: SLP settings

Our study found that 49 of our participants worked in a school setting, 30 worked in a nursing facility and lastly, 21 of our participants worked in private practice.

It is not uncommon for speech-language pathologists to switch career locations. We found that 85% of the participants in our study stated that they have not stayed on the same career path for their entire career. Many have even had the opportunity to work in all three locations.

We discovered that most speech-language pathologists first intended to work in one area, but later switched because of financial reasons, healthcare needs, or need for a location change.

Overall, the field of speech-language pathology is very diverse. Working for either a school, nursing facility, or private practice will be rewarding and fulfilling.

Longwood University strives to educate and prepare students for the field of speech-language pathology and other graduate programs.

Recommendations

The longwood communication sciences and disorders department recommends:

- Keeping your options open
- Mentor with other speech-language pathologists and
- Work towards multiple different career paths in speech-language pathology.

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