

Guidelines for Writing a Graduate Candidacy Petition Letter

Dear student:

The Graduate Candidacy Petition Letter is a document that each graduate student generates in order to present a coherent and cogent case for continued participation in and progression through the MHS program in Communication Disorders. The letter should contain at a minimum the following elements:

1. Date and salutation to the Academic Advisor;
2. Provide a clear statement that the graduate student is applying for candidacy and a sentence summarizing the criteria that the candidate has met to be eligible for application (e.g., courses taken, S/L screening completed & passed, etc.);
3. In one paragraph, provide a statement of candidate strengths in the completed portion of his/her/their program. Areas addressed should include academic and interpersonal. Use both Course Self-Assessments and The Essential Functions document to help identify strengths that you have either developed during your current graduate program or strengths that you possess that have helped you be successful thus far in the program;
4. In another paragraph, provide a statement of candidate areas of need (or relative weaknesses) in the completed portion of his/her/their program. Address both academic and interpersonal areas. As with the areas of strength, use both Course Self-Assessments and The Essential Functions document to guide you. The request for areas of need is designed for you to clearly delineate skills, knowledge, and abilities that require attention as you progress through the remaining portion of the academic and clinical training program. This section should also contain strategies that you will use to aid in your own self-development. These should be beyond just going to class. Think instead of university resources, departmental resources, or support systems that you could create or tap into to assist your growth as a student and future professional;
5. Summary sentence/paragraph that asks your advisor to review the petition in light of this letter and the associated documentation (and perhaps, thank the committee for their consideration).
6. Your letter should include 3 – 4 paragraphs of thoughtful reflection of your areas of strength and need.