

COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS (PHD)

Degree Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) offers students specialization in speech-language pathology, communication sciences, or audiology. This individualized, mentored, and interdisciplinary program is designed to provide a formal course of academic instruction and advanced research training in CSD aimed at developing leaders in research, teaching, and professional service. The mission of the PhD program is to prepare students for responsible and successful careers as scholars by enabling them to gain the necessary knowledge and skills in the CSD discipline. Graduates will be prepared for research, scientific writing, teaching and supervision/mentorship through pedagogy, mentorship, and internship activities. The student's ability to engage in original research and scholarship is enhanced by coursework in experimental research design and statistics, as well as various out-of-department opportunities.

Completion of the PhD degree in CSD requires the following:

1. Admission to PhD CSD program
2. Admission to doctoral candidacy
3. Successful completion of a dissertation project
4. Completion of additional program requirements (e.g., training in human subjects research)

Regular Admission

To be considered for admission, applicants must:

1. Have earned or be in the process of completing a graduate degree from an accredited college or university.
2. Demonstrate a preferred minimum 3.0 (A=4.0) overall undergraduate GPA.
3. Complete the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), including analytical writing section, within the last five years and submit according to application instructions.
4. International applicants must submit documentary evidence of English proficiency through submission of English proficiency exam results, including TOEFL or IELTS, or have earned a bachelor's or graduate degree from an accredited United States institution of higher education.
5. Provide three references from faculty at the graduate institution. At least two of these references should be provided by Ph.D. faculty within the applicant's graduate department.
6. Include a Personal Essay stating the applicant's reasons for pursuing the degree, experience that has prepared the applicant for the PhD program, potential research areas of interest, professional goals following degree completion.

Because the number of applicants is greater than the number of vacancies in the program, admission is competitive, and applicants are evaluated based on the criteria stated above. Students are admitted at the start of Fall, Spring, or Summer term. Details regarding the admissions process and deadline are available on the Department of Speech-Pathology and Audiology website.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are available annually on a competitive basis.

Transfer Credit

Transfer of credits toward the PhD requires approval of the PhD Admissions Committee, Department Chair, Director of Graduate Studies for the Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Comprehensive Examination

The student must pass a comprehensive examination following successful completion of academic coursework. The comprehensive examination is comprised of written and oral portions encompassing major and minor content areas, and research design and statistical procedures. Examination questions are designed by the faculty on the Comprehensive Exam Committee to assess overall knowledge, integration, and understanding acquired during the program of study.

Candidacy

The student's admission to doctoral degree candidacy is based upon successful completion of academic coursework, predissertation research project, and written and oral components of the comprehensive examination. A GPA of 3.0 must be maintained throughout academic coursework.

Typically, students who enter the program with a Master's degree complete these requirements by the end of their 2nd year and no later than the end of their 3rd year of program enrollment.

Dissertation/Dissertation Defense

After admission to candidacy, the student and his/her Major Advisor determine the dissertation topic and develop the Dissertation Committee. After determining the topic and Committee, the student prepares a Dissertation Prospectus, which is submitted in written form and orally defended. Once the Prospectus is approved by the Dissertation Committee, the student may move forward with completion of the Dissertation project.

The Dissertation is submitted in written form and orally defended. The committee's acceptance of the dissertation is the final component needed at the departmental level before granting the PhD degree. All students must abide by the deadlines for final oral examination and final dissertation submission set by the Graduate School. The deadlines for submission to the Dean of the Graduate School are provided in the latest edition of the Graduate School Bulletin.

While only 21 semester hours of dissertation research may count towards the degree, a student must continually enroll in CSD 799 (Dissertation Research) until the final dissertation document has been approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Time Limit

Students are expected to complete all requirements for the PhD degree within seven calendar years from admission to the PhD program. After reaching candidacy, students must complete the dissertation requirement within three years. Extensions may be requested and granted under appropriate circumstances.