Speech and Hearing Science, Ph.D.

Learning Outcomes
Graduating Ph.D. students in speech pathology and audiology will demonstrate:

- critical thinking through reading, discussing, and writing about relevant scientific literature;
- independence in designing and conducting quality research, from concept to methodology, and through to data analysis and interpretation;
- competence in scientific writing;
- competence in independently developing and delivering quality oral research presentations; and
- competence in developing and delivering course material to undergraduate and graduate classes.

Requirements
The Doctor of Philosophy program in speech and hearing science requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit. The program provides flexible, comprehensive training for scholar-researchers interested in communication processes and their disorders. Students with diverse backgrounds in the natural and behavioral sciences are encouraged to apply and develop their skills in an atmosphere of interdisciplinary research.

The Ph.D. program reflects the broad interests of its multidisciplinary faculty, whose members have diverse backgrounds in speech, language, hearing, engineering, physiology, physics, psychology, linguistics, and bioengineering. Faculty members are committed to an interdisciplinary approach to questions at every level of the speech and language production/perception system.

The purpose of the doctoral program is to provide the integrated knowledge necessary for a productive career in speech-language pathology and audiology, communication science, and related areas.

The department encourages candidates with special interests, goals, or backgrounds to develop individualized programs of study. There is no standard curriculum for the Ph.D.; rather, a program of study is developed by each student in consultation with a faculty committee. The course of study is developed from courses offered by the department, courses in other areas (e.g., physics, engineering, psychology, mathematics, statistics, physiology, neurology, anatomy, and others), and special reading and research experiences.

Students in the Ph.D. program usually are expected to register for research credit (CSD:7590 Research) during each semester of residence and to register for and participate in CSD:6515 Professional Seminar.

Knowledge in each of the areas of hearing, speech, language, mathematics, statistics, computer science, and instrumentation is required of all students. Decisions regarding the extent of this knowledge and how it is obtained (e.g., course work or independent study) are made jointly by each student and the student’s faculty committee.

Doctoral students who have not written a master’s thesis must complete the equivalent of a master’s thesis project as well as the comprehensive examination. They also must successfully complete and submit a dissertation based on original research.

Combined Programs

Au.D./Ph.D. in Speech and Hearing Science
The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders offers the joint Doctor of Audiology/Doctor of Philosophy in speech and hearing science. The combined Au.D./Ph.D. program is especially appropriate for students who would like to practice audiology and hold a faculty position at a university. The program requires 137 s.h., permitting students to count 30 s.h. of the 95 s.h. required for the Au.D. degree toward the 72 s.h. required for the Ph.D. degree. Students complete all of the clinical practicum experience and course work required for the Au.D.; the course of study for the Ph.D. is developed by each student in consultation with a faculty committee. For more information, see the Au.D. in this section of the Catalog. Consult the department chair to learn more about the combined degree program.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College.

The department requires that applicants take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test before they apply for admission.

Admission to the program is based on a student’s aptitudes and interests in specific research areas as well as the availability of faculty to serve as a mentor. Students should have a g.p.a. of at least 3.00 and should have GRE scores no lower than the 40th percentile in any area (verbal, quantitative, and analytic) to be considered.

Students interested in admission to the combined Au.D./Ph.D. program should apply to the Au.D. program. At the end of their second year in the Au.D. program, they should request admission to the Ph.D. program, and if approved they will be allowed to change degree objectives.

Applications should be received by January 1. All applications to the Ph.D. program must be submitted through the Office of Graduate Admissions.

For detailed information regarding evaluation of applicants, applications materials and requirements, and other matters, see Graduate Programs on the department’s website.

Financial Support

Financial support is merit-based and dependent on availability of funds. For more detailed information, contact the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders director of graduate studies.

Career Advancement

The speech and hearing science program provides excellent preparation for a career as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist. There continues to be a strong demand for professionals in these fields, and both speech pathology and audiology are consistently ranked highly in “best job” surveys.
Advanced degree holders may work as teachers, clinicians, and/or researchers in the field of communication sciences and disorders.