Opportunities for

GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders
at the University of Iowa
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Thank you for considering the Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders at the University of Iowa for graduate study. As one of the oldest, largest, and most highly respected programs of its kind, it has been training students and serving clients with speech, language, and hearing disorders for more than 60 years. Our tenure-track faculty are highly active in cutting-edge research, and our clinic faculty are experts in their fields of practice. The Department has consistently been ranked among the elite programs by US News and World Report.

Iowa’s Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders offers the following graduate degrees:

- Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology (MA-SLP)
- Doctor of Audiology (AuD)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Combined AuD / PhD

ABOUT US

The Department is housed in the Wendell Johnson Speech & Hearing Center on Iowa’s medical campus in Iowa City, Iowa, a community of approximately 75,000 people.

In addition to classrooms, offices, and computing facilities, the building houses research laboratories and a fully-staffed training clinic that serves about 750 clients each year. More than 11,000 square feet of laboratory space allows students interested in research careers to deepen their knowledge in such fields as auditory physiology, auditory rehabilitation, clinical experimental and medical audiology, language disorders and intervention, neurology of speech, voice and language, psychoacoustics, psycholinguistics, speech physiology, fluency, and voice acoustics and biomechanics.

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The University also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to University facilities. For additional information on nondiscrimination policies, contact the Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, the University of Iowa, 202 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, IA, 52242-1316, 319-335-0705 (voice), 319-335-0697 (TDD), or diversity@uiowa.edu (Email).
ADMISSION & FINANCIAL AID

A student’s graduate program of study can be planned to emphasize certain aspects of the discipline depending on individual interests and career goals. However, it is also the Department’s philosophy that the field is unified and encompasses all areas of speech, hearing, and language and involves teaching, clinical, and research activities. Thus, the graduate program of each student will include a basic understanding in all areas of the field along with varied experiences.

Admission to graduate programs is the responsibility of the Departmental Committees on Admissions. Committee members independently evaluate each application and assign a rating based on a judgment of the applicant’s overall potential for successful graduate study. This judgment is based on: past academic performance; the nature of previous coursework and the institution at which it was taken; scores on the Graduate Record Examination; letters of recommendation; and a personal statement, essay (MA-SLP) or personal interview (AuD).

All applications should be submitted on-line.

Applicants interested in the Speech-Language Pathology (MA-SLP) or the Audiology (AuD) programs should apply on-line through the CSDCAS centralized application system. Applications are accepted once per year, with a deadline of January 1: https://portal.csdcas.org.

Applicants interested in a PhD in either Speech or Hearing Science should submit materials through the Graduate Admissions website: https://grad.admissions.uiowa.edu/apply.

Various types of assistantships and traineeships are available. Appointments are determined on a competitive basis by the Department Chair, in consultation with members of the Executive Committee.

The job market for new professionals in the field of communication sciences and disorders is bright. In speech-language pathology, jobs are expected to rise by 18% between 2016 and 2026. Job growth for audiology in the same time period is expected to grow by 21% —much faster than the average for other occupations.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
The mission of the University of Iowa MA program in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) is to produce professionals who have the theoretical foundation and the advanced clinical skills needed for the delivery of clinical services in speech-language pathology. To accomplish this mission, the Department provides superior and diverse education opportunities which allow graduates to work as SLPs in any clinical environment. All graduates of the MA program will have met the academic and practicum requirements necessary to obtain clinical certification through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Each fall, approximately 24 students enter the program. A set of core courses is required for completion of the MA degree, along with a minimum of 12 semester hours of elective courses that provide opportunities to specialize. Students rotate through different clinical teams each semester to ensure that they receive a well-rounded clinical education. Each team is directed by a clinical faculty member who is a specialist in that area. Clinical team rotations include:

- Augmentative and alternative communication
- Aural rehabilitation
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Speech and language diagnostics
- Fluency disorders
- Neurogenic speech and language disorders
- Developmental speech and language disorders
- Voice disorders

Opportunities to work with clients with other disorders, such as swallowing difficulties or traumatic brain injury, may be arranged at nearby sites, such as the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics or the Center for Disabilities and Development. Additional programs ensure a well-rounded clinical experience and may include experiences in our summer stuttering camps, social skill groups for individuals with autism, a summer preschool for children with hearing loss, and support groups for those with aphasia.

For fifteen consecutive years, the University of Iowa has been designated a “Best Buy” in the Fiske Guide to Colleges.
The AuD program at the University of Iowa is ranked #2 in the nation by US News and World Reports. It requires 4 years to complete and is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation. Graduates from this program meet all of the requirements for clinical certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and for licensure, allowing them to work as an audiologist in the State of Iowa.

The AuD program at the University of Iowa requires 95 semester hours of coursework as well as structured clinical training. Typically, 8-10 students are admitted annually.

Clinical training begins in the Wendell Johnson Speech & Hearing Clinic. This full-service clinic provides experience in a range of different diagnostic procedures and offers structured supervision in remediation of hearing loss using hearing aids, cochlear implants or other assistive devices in both children and adults. Clinical faculty review each student's progress and, as their skills develop, arrange for varied practicum experiences at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, the Veterans Administration Medical Center, and local schools and private practices.

All AuD students must pass a qualifying examination at the end of each of the first three years of study. This exam ensures that students are not only meeting required competencies but also retaining their knowledge and skills as they progress through the program. AuD students are also required to complete and successfully defend a Capstone Project prior to graduation. This is often a mentored research project but can also be a project that addresses a specific clinical need or issue. AuD students take the National Examination for Professional Practice in Audiology prior to completion of their fourth year in the AuD program. The pass rate on this national test is 100% for graduates from the University of Iowa AuD program.
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The PhD program at the University of Iowa provides flexible, comprehensive training for the scholar-researcher interested in communication processes and 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 Iowa PhD program in Communication Sciences and Disorders is widely recognized as one of the premier programs of its kind in the country. Graduates from this PhD program work at many of the major CSD programs in the country. Many assume leadership positions at their institutions, professional organizations or in industry.

The number of individuals admitted to the Iowa PhD program is not limited; rather, each applicant’s potential for doctoral work is judged by the faculty based on prior coursework, GRE test scores, letters of recommendation, as well as a personal statement outlining their aptitudes and interests in research. Although the program may include more intensive specialization in particular clinical problems, the PhD is not designed as an advanced clinical degree.

There is no set curriculum for the PhD. The program of study is developed by the student and his/her mentor in consultation with a faculty advisory committee. Iowa’s program reflects the broad interest of its multidisciplinary faculty: speech, language, voice, hearing, engineering, physiology, physics, linguistics, and bioengineering. The purpose of the doctoral program is to provide the integrated knowledge necessary for a productive career in academia.

The time to completion of the PhD varies but typically ranges from four to five years. All PhD students are required to pass a comprehensive examination at the end of their second year in the program. Students are given two weeks to research and answer a set of questions formulated by their committee members. At the end of the two week period, they meet with their committee and orally defend their work.

The next step is to begin working on a doctoral dissertation. This requires that the student work with their mentor and a committee of at least four other faculty members to design a research project that will add significantly to the scientific literature in their area of interest. The student works with his/her mentor to develop and defend a proposal at a prospectus meeting with his/her committee and then to complete and defend the project in a final, public, oral examination in defense of the dissertation. The PhD is only awarded after favorable recommendation of the final examination committee and completion of all requirements specified for the degree by the Graduate College.

“I worked on the Cochlear Implant team in Otolaryngology at UIHC while completing my PhD. Thus, I witnessed the number of resources available and high level of collaboration across the departments. I was able to seek out kind, smart, nurturing, and well-connected mentors in both organizations, who were instrumental in developing my clinical and research skills as well as expanding my professional network. I continue to be amazed and inspired by the intellectual atmosphere, which no doubt influenced my decision to remain on as faculty in Otolaryngology.”

– Viral Tejani (PhD 2018)
COMBINED AuD/PhD

Some graduate students interested in Audiology combine work toward an AuD with PhD studies. These students begin their graduate work by enrolling in the AuD program. They formally apply to change their degree objective to the combined AuD/PhD after two years of study. If accepted, they form a committee that will work with them to help them merge requirements of both graduate programs efficiently. Decisions about approving the request to change degree objectives are made on a case-by-case basis and are dependent on the availability of funding as well as availability of an appropriate mentor for their research.

FACULTY

Tenure-Track Faculty
Ishan Bhatt, PhD, Auditory Genomics
Carolyn J. Brown, PhD, Cochlear Implants
Inyong Choi, PhD, Hearing Neuroscience
Eileen Finnegan, PhD, Laryngeal Neurophysiology
Kate Gfeller, PhD, Music Therapy
Shawn Goodman, PhD, Otoacoustic Emissions, Hearing Aids
Jean K. Gordon, PhD, Neurogenic Language Disorders
Kristi Hendrickson, PhD, Psycholinguistics
Stewart McCauley, PhD, Language Learning & Memory
Bob McMurray, PhD, Speech Perception
Richard Tyler, PhD, Tinnitus
Elizabeth Walker, PhD, Pediatric Audiology & Aural Rehabilitation
Yu-Hsiang Wu, PhD, Hearing Aids & Aging
Si On Yoon, PhD, Neural and Cognitive Mechanisms

Clinical Faculty
Karen Bryant, PhD, Neurogenic Disorders, Swallowing
Krista Davidson, MS, Augmentative & Alternative Communication
Jenny DiVita, MA, Autism Spectrum, Speech & Language Disorders
Stephanie Fleckenstein, AuD, Adult, Pediatric Amplification
Julie Jeon, PhD, Clinical Electrophysiology
Danielle Kelsay, MA, Audiology, Aural (Re)habilitation
Anu Subramanian, PhD, Early Intervention, Fluency
Anne Wallace, MA, Aural Rehabilitation, Diagnostics

Instructors
Douglas Blake, PhD, Voice and Speech Science
Kelly Schmidt Clay, PhD, Audiology
Contacts

Carolyn J. Brown
Department Chair
carolyn-brown@uiowa.edu

Eileen Finnegan
Director of MA-SLP Studies
eileen-finnegan@uiowa.edu

Kelly Schmidt Clay
Director of AuD Studies
kelly-m-schmidt@uiowa.edu

Jean K. Gordon
Director of PhD Studies
jean-k-gordon@uiowa.edu

Mary Jo Yotty
Admissions Secretary
mary-yotty@uiowa.edu

www.clas.uiowa.edu/comsci