COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS, PH.D.

The department offers graduate programs leading to the M.S. and Ph.D. in communication sciences and disorders. An additional program in the department leads to the Au.D. in audiology. The graduate program provides the opportunity for study in the areas of audiology, speech–language pathology, hearing science, language science, and speech science. The purpose of the graduate program is to prepare clinicians, researchers, and teachers who possess a solid foundation in both the theoretical and applied aspects of the discipline of communication sciences and disorders.

The Ph.D. program provides relevant classroom and laboratory experiences for the scholar–researcher interested in communication processes and communicative disorders. A student’s academic program will consist of course work within the department and in related areas such as psychology, linguistics, statistics, computer science, and education. Students completing the program will be prepared for careers as university professors, laboratory researchers, and senior clinicians.

Individual programs can be designed for students who wish to pursue professional training/clinical certification (in either speech–language pathology or audiology) and the Ph.D. degree. Such students follow a modified sequence of course work, clinical training, and research experience in order to satisfy all academic and certification requirements in five to six years.

FUNDING

Financial assistance, sometimes available to graduate students in communication sciences and disorders, consists of scholarships, fellowships, traineeships, and project and research assistant positions. Financial assistance is very limited and varies from year to year. Students who are considering applying for financial aid should contact the department for further information.

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

DOCTORAL DEGREES

Ph.D.

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

54 credits, post–M.S.

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

54 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT

At least 75% of the minimum number of credits (54) must be taken in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

With program approval, students are allowed to count coursework from other institutions. In no case will coursework be considered that was earned ten or more years prior to admission to the Ph.D.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

With program approval, students are allowed to count up to 7 credits from coursework for a UW–Madison undergraduate degree. In no case will coursework be considered that was earned ten or more years prior to admission to the Ph.D.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

No prior coursework taken as a UW–Madison University Special student is allowed.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

13 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

Contact the program for information on any additional required courses.

DOCTORAL MINOR/BREADTH REQUIREMENTS

Doctoral students must complete a doctoral minor.

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

3.00

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.

PROBATION POLICY

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

ADVISOR

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies. An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor.
To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

**ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS**

Doctoral students are required to take a comprehensive preliminary/oral examination after they have cleared their record of all Incomplete and Progress grades (other than research and thesis). Deposit of the doctoral dissertation in the Graduate School is required.

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

Doctoral degree students who have been absent for ten or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within 5 years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

Contact the program for information on any language requirements.

**ADMISSIONS**

The program is open to individuals who have completed an undergraduate degree and who meet the minimum admission requirements of the Graduate School and the department. Entering students who do not have undergraduate majors in communicative disorders will typically be required to take prerequisite course work, which may lengthen the time required to earn a graduate degree.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

**FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH**

- Students will possess foundational knowledge about the particular subject area of the chosen area, and be fully conversant with the classic and contemporary literature.
- Students will master data collection techniques specific to their chosen area of research.
- Students will be fully conversant with the theoretical issues and tensions within their chosen area of research.
- Students will gain high-level knowledge and expertise in the statistical analysis of research data and graphical approaches to exploration of data sets.
- Students will communicate complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.

**DISSERTATION**

- Students will be able to design and execute an original experiment (or experiments) that clearly fills a gap in the existing literature and is worthy of publication(s) in peer-reviewed journals.
- Students will have the skill, experience, and knowledge base to defend the dissertation work to a committee of five faculty members.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

**SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES AND SKILLS**

- Students will design and conduct experiments.
- Students will formulate research questions that are based on sound analyses of existing literature, and that show evidence of logical argument.
- Students will understand how to examine data for patterns that are meaningful and patterns that reflect likely data collection errors.
- Students will write research proposals and learn to develop carefully argued proposals and explanations.
- Students will make presentations of their research at national and international conferences.
- Students will be able to pass a summary exam (6 hours written, 2 hours oral) that admits them to candidacy for the PhD degree.

**PEOPLE**

Faculty: Professors Weismer (chair), Connors, Edwards, Ellis-Weismer, Fourakis, Fowler, Hustad, Litovsky, Lutfi, Turkstra; Associate Professors Kaushanskaya; Assistant Professors Ciucci, Sterling