



**University of Central Florida  
Ph.D. Communication Sciences and Disorders  
CIP 51.0204**

**Proposal document included:**

Abbreviated Degree Proposal\*

**Documents available upon request:**

Course Descriptions  
Consultant's Report and Institutional Response  
Faculty Curriculum Vitae  
Highlighted Occupations and Job Listings  
Student Survey  
Duplication of Existing Programs  
Academic Unit Productivity  
Institutional Resources  
Letters of Support

\*Complete degree proposal is available in the resources section in Onboard



## Request to Offer a New Degree Program

In accordance with Board of Governors Regulation 8.011,  
Academic Degree Program Coordination and Approval

University of Central Florida

**Institution Submitting Proposal**

College of Health Professions and Sciences

**Name of College(s) or School(s)**

Communication Sciences and Disorders

**Academic Specialty or Field**

51.0204

**Proposed CIP Code (2020 CIP)**

Fall 2026

**Proposed Implementation Term**

School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

**Name of Department(s)/Division(s)**

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Sciences and Disorders

**Complete Name of Degree**

The submission of this proposal constitutes a commitment by the university that, if the proposal is approved, the necessary financial resources and the criteria for establishing new programs have been met before the program's initiation.

04/17/2025

**Date Approved by the University  
Board of Trustees**

*Greg Martin* 4.17.25  
**Board of Trustees Chair's  
Signature** **Date**

Alexander Cartwright  
Digitally signed by Alexander Cartwright  
Date: 2025.04.11 14:32:44 -04'00'

**President's Signature** **Date**

Michael D. Johnson  
Digitally signed by Michael D. Johnson  
Date: 2025.04.07 13:16:32 -04'00'

**Provost's Signature** **Date**

## I. Overview

---

A. Briefly describe the proposed program in the following table.

<b>Purpose</b>	To create a Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) specifically to meet the mission and goals of the College of Health Professions and Sciences (CHPS), University of Central Florida (UCF), and State University System (SUS), to be a leading enterprise in innovative research and the #1 provider of diverse talent, and to improve health through integrative and inclusive education, research, clinical practice, and service.
<b>Degree Level(s): B, M, D, M+D, P</b>	D
<b>Majors, Concentrations, Tracks, or Specializations</b>	Communication Sciences and Disorders
<b>Total Number of Credit Hours</b>	72
<b>Program Type</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>E&amp;G Program</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Market Tuition Rate Program*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Self-Supporting Program*</b>  *Refer to <u>Board Regulation 8.002</u> , Self Supporting and Market Tuition Rate Program and Course Offerings, for additional details.
<b>Possible Career Outcomes</b>	Speech Scientist, Language Scientist, Hearing Scientist, Voice Scientist, Medical Scientist, Data Scientist, Medical and Health Services Manager, Healthcare Administrator, Research Project Manager, Clinical Project Manager, Faculty in Communication Sciences and Disorders, Speech-Language Pathologist

B. Does the proposed program qualify as a Program of Strategic Emphasis, as described in the Florida Board of Governors 2025 System Strategic Plan? Programs of Strategic Emphasis List

- ☐ Yes, it does qualify as a Program of Strategic Emphasis.  
☒ No, it does not qualify as a Program of Strategic Emphasis.

- C. Does the program fall under one of the CIP codes listed below that qualifies for the Programs of Strategic Emphasis Waiver? *(for baccalaureate programs only)*

CIP CODE	CIP TITLE
11.0101	Computer and Information Sciences
11.0103	Information Technology
13.1001	Special Education and Teaching
13.1202	Elementary Education and Teaching
14.0801	Civil Engineering
14.0901	Computer Engineering
14.1001	Electrical and Electronics Engineering
14.1901	Mechanical Engineering
27.0101	Mathematics
52.0301	Accounting
52.0801	Finance
52.1201	Management Information Systems

☐ Yes. If yes, students in the program will be eligible for the Programs of Strategic Emphasis waiver. Refer to [Board Regulation 7.008](#) and the [Programs of Strategic Emphasis Waiver Guidance](#).

☒ No

☐ Not Applicable

## II. Institutional and State-Level Accountability

---

### A. Describe how the proposed program directly or indirectly supports the following.

Each element of the proposed Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) has been designed specifically to meet the mission and goals of the College of Health Professions and Sciences (CHPS), University of Central Florida (UCF), and State University System (SUS). The proposed Ph.D. in CSD is grounded in strategic goals of the SUS Strategic Plan and tailored to the unique role that UCF plays in the SUS system of universities. The proposed program also is deeply aligned with the mission of UCF - unleashing the potential within every individual through inclusion, discovery, and innovation – and the aspirations to be a leading enterprise in innovative research and the #1 provider of diverse talent. The new program is united with the goals of the College of Health Professions and Sciences (CHPS) to improve health through integrative and inclusive education, research, clinical practice, and service.

#### 1. The State University System's Strategic Plan goals.

Consistent with the SUS plan for strategic emphasis and growth, this program will increase the number of graduate degrees in health (CIP 51.0204). Consistent with UCF's legislative budget request for Universities of Distinction, the students in the CSD Ph.D. program will positively impact the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics Talent Pipeline and Research Excellence by integrating these content areas directly into the communication sciences and disorders Ph.D. curriculum. With graduate training in CSD that includes emerging science and technology-related content, we will expand the talent pipeline with CSD-focused specialization and opportunities for our Ph.D. students to teach and conduct research in broader areas of CSD. The underlined and *italicized* text below highlights the SUS and UCF strategic goals as articulated with surrounding text.

#### Teaching and Learning goals

*Strategic Priorities for a Knowledge Economy:* The proposed CSD Ph.D. program will support the SUS strategic priority of an increased number of degrees awarded within programs of strategic emphasis, which includes the B.S. and M.A. programs in CSD. By engaging CSD Ph.D. students as teaching assistants or instructors, they will contribute to graduating more CSD students in our B.S. and M.A. programs of strategic emphasis. The field of CSD is composed of multiple disciplines, featuring the healthcare disciplines of audiology and speech-language pathology, and encompassing a wide array of overlapping foci within psychology, engineering, technology, and math. The proposed Ph.D. curriculum is designed around a technology-forward set of core courses with direct application to healthcare and emerging technologies related to communication, cognition, development, aging, simulation, and virtualization. By year 5, we anticipate awarding an average of 5 or more Ph.D. degrees per year to highly skilled and well-educated graduates who will be competitive within industry, healthcare, and academic workforces to help meet the demand in Florida and globally for highly trained scientists, innovators, and leaders.

*Productivity:* The proposed curriculum has been designed strategically to meet the SUS goal to increase degree productivity & program efficiency. Four major program elements focus on productivity. First, the coursework itself is focused on workforce productivity. While the majority of existing Ph.D. programs in CSD feature core courses related to faculty specialty areas of expertise, the proposed curriculum focuses on emerging skill sets needed to excel in the future world of technology-driven teaching, learning, research, development, and healthcare practice. Specialty area content is woven into the fabric of the core courses through intentional course design and faculty co-teaching. Second, with a total of 72 credit hours, the curriculum is streamlined and practical to ensure efficient transition from

admission to graduation to employment. Third, graduation requirements include metrics of productivity such as the required production of outstanding scholarly works within the first year, and flexible qualifying examination formats that can be tailored to the desired career, workforce, and content area goals of the individual student. Fourth, to maximize both efficiency and accessibility, Ph.D. recruitment and admissions will feature a matching model that pairs admitted students with relevant and eager faculty based on student career goals and common student and faculty interests, expertise, and relevant skills. This model can enable a student to begin their productive career preparation in harmony with their major professor as soon as they matriculate into the program.

*Excellence:* The proposed Ph.D. in CSD has been designed with a clear focus on excellence that meets the SUS goals to strengthen quality & reputation of academic programs & universities. The program's excellence begins with the efficiency, access, productivity, and technology focus described above. In parallel, we will match incoming Ph.D. students with outstanding faculty mentors with a wide range of interests, expertise, and skills to support student training, productivity, and career development. CSD currently has 14 full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty, exceeding the national average of ~7 within CSD units.

#### **Scholarship, Research, and Innovation Goals**

*Strategic Priorities for a Knowledge Economy:* The proposed CSD Ph.D. program will directly support the SUS strategic priority to increase the number of patents, licenses, and start-up companies created as a result of university research. CSD program faculty have a track record of patented discoveries and licensed works. The research capacity in the School of CSD has more than doubled in the past four years and continues to expand with foci on translation of basic research to clinical practice, development of training of workforce personnel, development of novel treatment and rehabilitative strategies and tools, and integration of emerging technologies such as simulation, virtualization, visualization, and advanced data analytics. These faculty foci translate directly to the Ph.D. curriculum core courses and research foundational courses. With emerging technology and innovation permeating research, teaching, and engagement, the environment being curated for Ph.D. students is structured to promote development and protection of intellectual property. With the infusion of the core coursework with the business of communication sciences and technology, engagement of business partnerships, and opportunities for industry sponsored projects, the likelihood of university-based startups and program graduates working in Florida-based startups is dramatically increased over traditionally structured Ph.D. programs in CSD.

*Productivity:* The proposed curriculum has been designed strategically to meet the SUS goal to increase research activities that help foster entrepreneurial campus cultures and attract more research funding from external (federal and private) sources. The School of CSD faculty have a longstanding entrepreneurial culture that has led to current levels of external funding representing a broad portfolio of federal sources (e.g., NIH, NSF, Department of Defense, Department of Education), state agencies (e.g., Florida Department of Education), and business partnerships (e.g., Sonova AG; Brooks Rehabilitation; AARP). With the introduction of a Ph.D. program that focuses specifically on emerging technology, skill development, and a broad array of career opportunities within and outside of academia, the opportunities to expand our existing funding are manifold. The model of leveraging industry partnerships to garner increased federal funding through pilot programs, in-kind contributions, and federally sponsored university-industry partnerships is tied into the framework of the proposed Ph.D. program and will be strengthened by the engagement of Ph.D. students in those partnerships. This can be enhanced through industry-funded Ph.D. student programs. The UCF School of CSD currently has \$5,079,081 in extramural research funding (putting the program in the top quartile of CSD programs) from NIH, NSF, DOD,



DOE, the State of Florida, industry partners, and foundations. That research is carried out on campus in laboratories, research centers, and clinics as well as off campus in schools and healthcare facilities around the region. Prior to the launch of the new Ph.D. in CSD, we will have available a mobile healthcare center equipped with voice, hearing, language, and speech assessments, in collaboration with the UCF College of Medicine (COM), to extend our clinical and research reach deep into the community. In addition, we have close partnerships across the UCF COM, College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS), College of Community Innovation and Education (CCIE), and professional medical partnerships with Orlando Health, Advent Health, and private healthcare entities. These partnerships are growing rapidly and will experience accelerated growth in strength and scope with the addition of Ph.D. student training opportunities. The program focus on workforce readiness and expertise in emerging technologies directly responds to expectations by the SUS Board of Governors that SUS institutions produce the highest quality programs, research with a global impact, and local engagement with corporate partners and community organizations. The new Ph.D. in CSD will enhance the reputation of CSD, CHPS, UCF and our partners and help to solidify the national and international preeminence of the Florida State University System through teaching, learning, and innovation. Through impactful research, discovery, innovation, and intellectual property, we will improve the lives of people with communication disorders and those who use communication systems.

*Excellence:* The Ph.D. in CSD will support the SUS goal to strengthen the quality and impact of scholarship, research, and innovation and to increase undergraduate participation in research to strengthen the pipeline of researchers pursuing graduate degrees. A complete academic research enterprise consists of a healthy mixture of undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, research faculty and staff, and tenured and tenure-earning faculty. In CSD, this cadre is expanded to include clinical faculty service providers and research-focused clinicians. The proposed Ph.D. program will make the enterprise whole. Having grown into a national research powerhouse without a Ph.D. program, the role of undergraduate student research assistants has been elevated within the School of CSD at UCF. The addition of a Ph.D. program will expand and strengthen the undergraduate research experience by providing much greater supervision and research exposure, currently limited by the time faculty have for individual interactions with students. Expansion of the pipeline of undergraduate researchers pursuing Ph.D. degrees in CSD will expand with a UCF-based Ph.D. in CSD, as revealed by the survey of UCF students reported in Section III-C, 2 below. Filling the Ph.D. student void will increase the impact of our ongoing scholarship, research, and innovation through expanded programs and a greater ability to follow up on promising discoveries and innovation.

### **Community and Business Engagement Goals**

*Strategic Priorities for a Knowledge Economy:* The proposed CSD Ph.D. program will directly support the SUS strategic priority to increase community and business workforce and increase the percentage of graduates who continue their education or are employed full-time. The Ph.D. in CSD creates a pipeline for undergraduates and master's students to continue their education in a way that makes them more likely to pursue and succeed in the technology industry, in leadership roles in healthcare settings, in leadership roles in community-based non-profit organizations and school systems, and in academia. While most CSD Ph.D. programs focus on the training of future academics, the entrepreneurial spirit ingrained in the proposed Ph.D. program curriculum will support students who choose to pursue careers in industry and business by providing the advanced training, skills, and knowledge to contribute to a corporate innovation culture that endures the test of time. It is that same entrepreneurial focus that also will provide future academic researchers with the training and skillset needed to run the small businesses we call laboratories, research



centers, departments, schools, and colleges.

*Productivity:* The proposed curriculum has been designed strategically to meet the SUS goal to increase faculty and student involvement in community and business engagement activities. The Ph.D. in CSD core curriculum features coursework focused on the business of research and innovation, offers opportunities to participate in industry-sponsored research, including engagement with partner employees, and opportunities for industry internships. The ever-expanding array of CSD-business partnerships will immerse Ph.D. students in the business atmosphere and will serve as a window into opportunities within and outside of academia. The CSD research and clinical facilities and CHPS Rehabilitation Innovation Center host potential and existing partners from the business community each and every week, giving our students exposure to that culture from the ground up as we forge new partnerships and nurture existing partnerships. Examples of increased community engagement that can have substantial impact on all parties involved include partnerships with the Jonathan's Landing Foundation to integrate principles of speech, language, hearing, and augmented communication to the residents and business partners supporting the autism community; contributions to UCF Celebrates the Arts with programs focused on injury prevention, rehabilitation, and environmental enhancement; and CSD student and faculty support of the UCF Mobile Health Unit that is configured to deliver speech, language, voice, and hearing services directly to members of the community who most need access. The Ph.D. in CSD can be a major catalyst for healthcare awareness, education, and access through participation in student and faculty research. The Ph.D. in CSD will increase the success of our business partnerships in the arenas of healthcare, rehabilitation, and more. The opportunity for student externships as well as expanded research collaborations will grow and strengthen partnerships with established technology-based companies and emerging startup companies. These partnerships can streamline the conversion of research discoveries to the marketplace, which can improve the quality of life of community members while contributing to the economic engine of the region.

*Excellence:* The Ph.D. in CSD will strengthen the quality and recognition of commitment to community and business engagement, improve the quality and relevance of public service activities, and grow the number of institutions recognized for their commitment to community and business engagement. To ensure that the new Ph.D. in CSD program will contribute to high-quality community and business partnerships, the required proseminar course (SPA 7497) will include community and business engagement as a focal topic, reinforced by the encouragement of student and student-faculty research projects to engage the growing cadre of CSD community and business partners and the development of externship opportunities for students to directly interact in business-forward activities. The increased activities described above can leverage existing partnerships, such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Age-Tech Collaborative, as well as local, state, national, and international business partnerships to help translate research discoveries (and associated intellectual property) to practice and the marketplace. As we strengthen business and community engagement, UCF CSD can become the preferred test bed for locally developed enabling technologies supporting communication and engagement.



2. The institution's strategic plan and goals the program will directly advance.

The proposed Ph.D. in CSD is closely aligned with the strategic plan and goals of UCF.

**Student success and well-being.** The program will accelerate undergraduate progression and graduation through more inclusive undergraduate research experiences in partnership with Ph.D. students, enhanced instructional support via teaching assistants and graduate instructors, and expand student learning experience for development of career and cultural competencies through regular and repeated interactions between the students and their research mentors. These interactions can reveal to students the many different career pathways with CSD and related disciplines and job opportunities while providing rich interactions with community partners, business partners, and partners at other universities in Florida and beyond. The opportunity to pursue Ph.D. studies in a world-class CSD unit and to benefit from the career forward, technology focused, skill-oriented curriculum and vast array of faculty and resources without leaving the region or the state will provide financially accessible educational experiences.

**Discovery and exploration.** The Ph.D. in CSD will serve this UCF strategic goal by specifically increasing focus on research by supporting basic, applied, clinical, and translational research activities in one of UCF's designated Areas of Focus, Health and Human Performance. Grounded in basic science and technology as well as healthcare service delivery and medical discovery, the proposed Ph.D. in CSD is the ideal vehicle for advancing this goal. It will encourage distinctive and high-impact research; encourage collaboration between our Academic Health Sciences Center and healthcare providers; and integrate contributions from an eclectic set of disciplines, such as nursing, medicine, population health, biomedical and life sciences, psychology, simulation, engineering, counseling, education, communications, the arts, and humanities. The research faculty are themselves trained experts in carrying out such collaborative activities, and the unparalleled resources that have been provided by UCF and the SUS create the perfect test bed for basic and clinical activities and an ideal breeding ground for the translation of those activities to clinical practice. The key to such translation indeed is application and commercialization of knowledge. It is commercial success that allows widespread introduction and adoption of innovative clinical practices, novel treatments, new assessment methods, and technological developments and makes them available to clinicians and their patients. The environment needed to promote high levels of discovery and exploration necessarily includes Ph.D. students to have full impact. Ph.D. students, in turn, are necessary to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty, post-doctoral appointees, to increase academic outcomes. They are an essential gear in the well-oiled machine of university-based research and innovation.

**Community and culture.** The research, teaching, and service that surrounds a successful Ph.D. program creates the community and culture that will allow UCF to become an employer of choice. Recruiting, retaining, and developing the best talent in UCF students, faculty, and staff depends on the well-rounded offerings associated with Ph.D.-level education. These students contribute mightily to strengthening our culture of inclusion, collaboration, and engagement. A thriving Ph.D. program in CSD will bring an infusion of activity, excitement, and diversity that will allow the School of CSD to establish comprehensive partnerships that integrate education, research, the arts, service, workforce development, and philanthropic engagement. These activities are part and parcel of the Ph.D. student's experience. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of CSD, our Ph.D. students can help support and participate in each of these activities.

**Innovation and sustainability.** With increased research activity and a more diversified research and innovation portfolio, the Ph.D. in CSD will contribute to diversify the university's revenue and resource base to reduce financial vulnerability and provide flexible funds for strategic investment. This will be accomplished through new lines of research facilitated by greater student involvement and expanded research bandwidth, the expanded work product associated with Ph.D. student teaching assistantships, and additional external funding made possible with student involvement and their intellectual contributions to existing research endeavors. Ph.D. student involvement will markedly enhance UCF's brand and its national and international reputation, immediately through advertisement of the new program, continually through student attendance to local, regional, national, and international conferences and symposia, student engagement in grant writing, submission of scholarly works, dissemination of technical innovations, and participation in the peer-review process.

### **3. The university's mission.**

The UCF School of CSD is home to one of the nation's largest undergraduate programs, with 580 undergraduate majors, and the nation's largest master's degree program in speech-language pathology, with 171 students (as of 2023). UCF has contributed amazing resources to allow these degree programs to flourish. Those resources have attracted an outstanding faculty that will include 15 tenure-track faculty, 12 non-tenured Clinical instructor/lecturers, 6 non-tenured Academic instructor/lecturers, 10 non-tenured research-funded faculty and staff, and a host of other staff and student employees. With the full gamut of undergraduate, master's, and Ph.D. student cohorts, along with a rich post-doctoral fellow program and faculty eager to mentor and collaborate with them all, the expanded opportunities in CSD will unleash the potential within every individual. The new Ph.D. program will contribute substantially to enriching the human experience through discovery and innovation, and it is the Ph.D. cohort of students who will maximize the ability of the entire CSD enterprise to propel broad-based prosperity for the many communities we serve.

### **4. The benefit to the university, the local community, and the state.**

Through the Ph.D. in CSD, community outreach, community-based research, and local and state-level business partnerships can expand, mature, and flourish. The program will enhance the recognition garnered by UCF through increased outreach and exposure. With excellence, that exposure will enhance UCF's reputation in the local region and at the state, national and international levels. The benefits of increased productivity and excellence include increased extramural funding through federal grants, industry partnerships, and foundation awards. That dual focus ensures a diverse funding portfolio that provides financial stability and promotes research and development at the highest levels. With a forward focused and streamlined curriculum, program graduates will help UCF to create a stronger top-level workforce prepared for success now and well into the future. The rich academic environment associated with a Ph.D. program not only contributes to reputation and funding success, but circles back to increased engagement of undergraduate students that ensures a continual pipeline of students. The impacts of a Ph.D. program on undergraduate success, in terms of engagement, academic success and fulfillment, graduation rates, and progression to the workforce or graduate studies presents a comparable benefit to the university, community, and state.

- B. Provide the date the pre-proposal was presented to the Council of Academic Vice Presidents Academic Program Coordination (CAVP ACG). Specify any concerns raised and provide a narrative explaining how each has been addressed in this proposal or will be addressed before the proposed program is implemented.

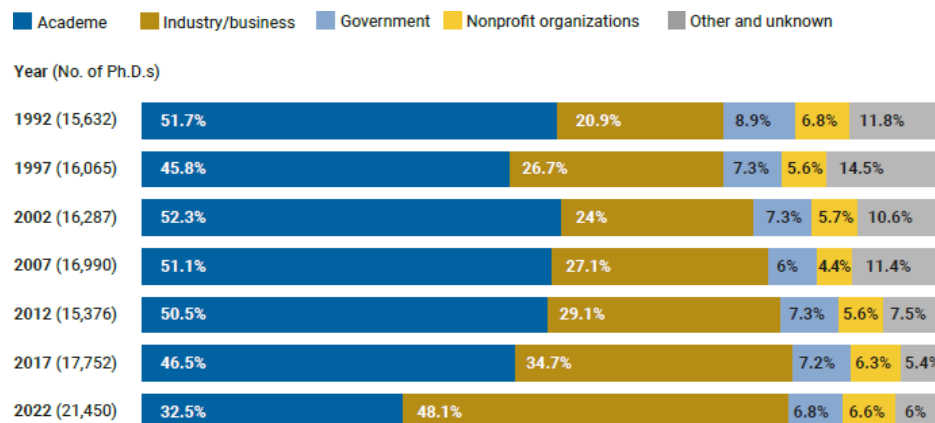
The pre-proposal was reviewed by CAVP in November 2024, and no concerns were raised with the proposal.

### III. Student and Workforce Demand

If the proposed program is a baccalaureate or master's degree on the Programs of Strategic Emphasis list, skip III-A.

- A. Describe the Florida and national workforce demand for the proposed program. The response should, at a minimum, include the current state workforce data from Florida's Department of Commerce and national workforce data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Additional documentation for workforce needs may include letters of program support by employers and job postings for program graduates, as well as a description of any specific needs for research and service that the program would fulfill.

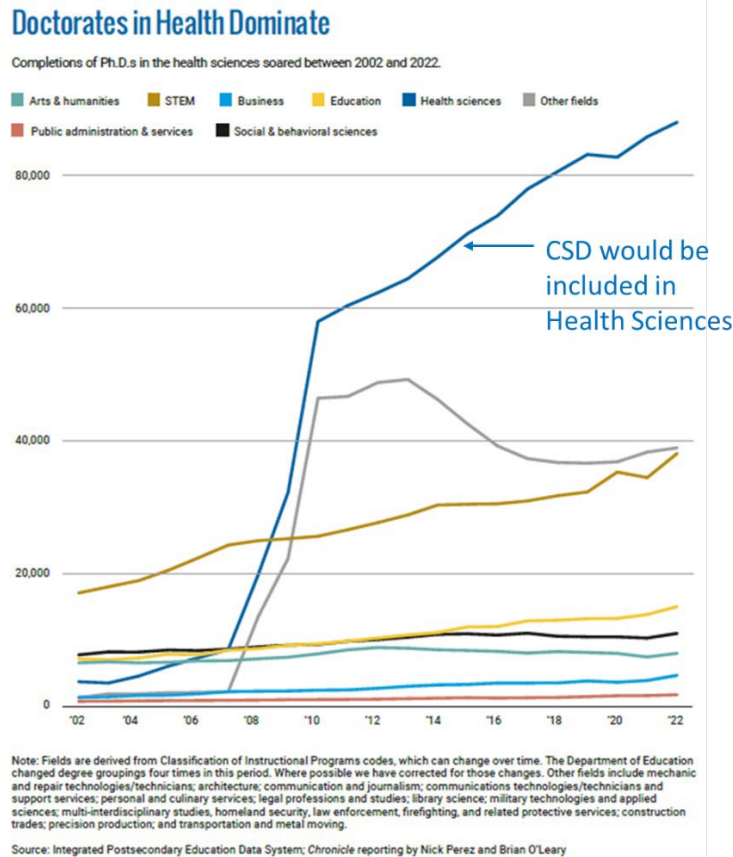
Rapid advances in healthcare technology and service delivery and their impacts on innovative solutions for improving health and wellness within our communities are critical considerations in training the next generation's healthcare workforce. The proposed Ph.D. program in CSD is designed to provide the advanced skills and knowledge in health-related research, education, and clinical service, preparing our students for future employment in academia, industry, and beyond. A recent report from the Chronicle of Higher Education (2024), entitled "The Future of Graduate Education – Navigating the Shifting Landscape" demonstrates the importance of training Ph.D. students for employment pathways not only in academia but in other avenues as well. Indeed, survey results of individuals with earned doctorates showed that the proportion of new Ph.D. recipients who pursued jobs in industry more than doubled between 1992 and 2022, while the proportion pursuing academia has declined (see Figure below). Thus, our proposed Ph.D. program will provide training that prepares students for a variety of employment opportunities.



Note: Industry/business also includes doctorate recipients who reported self-employment. Other is made up mainly of elementary and secondary schools. Data reflect Ph.D.s who accepted jobs in the United States.

Source: Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2022; Chronicle reporting by Audrey Williams June

Importantly, the same Chronicle report showed that the field seeing the greatest increase in Ph.D.s over the past two decades was by far **health sciences**, which includes CSD (see Figure below). These data further provide strong support for developing a Ph.D. program in the CHPS with a specific focus in CSD.



The proposed Ph.D. program in CSD is also supported by strong evidence of workforce demand in both national and state of Florida employment data (see Tables below). Two primary sources of data were used to compile the summary report below and included the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (<https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupation>) and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity - <http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center/statistical-programs/employment-projections>)

Importantly, however, the transformative design of our Ph.D. program will provide advanced training such that CSD courses will be embedded with content on emerging technologies, simulation and virtualization, computational analytics, and principles of project and business management, specifically as they are applied in CSD. This advanced content is aimed at making our graduates more highly skilled and competitive in non-traditional occupations and industries in which employers seek a broader skill set requiring both expertise in CSD subdisciplines as well as knowledge and experience in related disciplines (e.g., health sciences management, data analytics, linguistics, acoustics, engineering). Several such occupation categories and industries are highlighted below where demand and opportunities exist for graduates with a Ph.D. in CSD who also have training and experience in closely related disciplines.



Complete the table below using data from the Search by CIP or SOC Employment Projections Data Tool in the Academic Review Tracking System.

**Labor Market Demand, CIP Code 51.0204**

Occupations	Percent Change in Job Openings		Annual Average Job Openings		Total # of New Jobs		Education Level Needed for Entry
	FL 2023-2031	U.S. 2023-2033	FL 2023-2031	U.S. 2023-2033	FL 2023-2031	U.S. 2023-2033	
Speech-Language Pathologist	20%	18%	1690	13,700	6085	180,800	M.A./M.S.
Medical and Health Services Managers (not specific to 51.0204)	26%	29%	34,399	61,400	9,120	160,600	Master's or Ph.D.
Data Scientist (not specific to 51.0204)	34%	36%	1,871	20,800	5,538	73,100	Master's or Ph.D.
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	21%	19%	1,556	53,300	6,988	201,920	Ph.D.

Sources:

Date Retrieved: 09/11/2024

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - <https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj>

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity - <http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center/statistical-programs/employment-projections>

- B. If the occupations do not currently appear in the most recent version of the Search by CIP or SOC Employment Projections Data Tool provided by Board staff, provide occupational linkages or jobs graduates will be qualified to perform based on the training provided to students in the proposed program in the table below. Contact the institutional representative working with you on the degree proposal for more information about possible occupations.

### Occupational Linkages for the Proposed Program

SOC Code (XX-XXXX)	Occupation Title	Source / Reason for Inclusion
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologist	<a href="https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/speech-language-pathologists.htm">https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/speech-language-pathologists.htm</a> . Primary applicants to the Ph.D. program will be those holding an entry-level clinical degree (M.A.) in the discipline, such as Speech-Language Pathology. Upon graduation from the Ph.D. program, some of these individuals may choose to continue in this clinical role but with elevated or advanced responsibilities that better match their advanced knowledge and skillset, such as private practice or program management.
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	<a href="https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/medical-and-health-services-managers.htm">https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/medical-and-health-services-managers.htm</a> Medical and health services managers are those that plan, direct, and coordinate the activities for healthcare facilities or healthcare providers. They may manage an entire facility, such as a rehabilitation center, or a specific clinical area or department, such as speech-pathology or audiology, or medical practice for a group of physicians, such as ear, nose and throat specialists. Managers in these positions must adapt to changes in healthcare laws, regulations, and technology, thus the Ph.D. program in CSD will provide advanced knowledge and skills to serve in this role in CSD-related healthcare facilities or programs.
15-2051	Data Scientists	<a href="https://www.bls.gov/ooh/math/data-scientists.htm">https://www.bls.gov/ooh/math/data-scientists.htm</a> Data scientists with expertise in CSD will be prepared to use computational and analytical tools and techniques to extract meaningful insights from data on CSD and related projects, such as those requiring speech, acoustics, linguistic or neuroimaging analytics as applied within CSD disciplines. Graduates of our Ph.D. program will have CSD courses in scientific computing with specific applications to CSD topics where they will develop strong coding skills, machine learning and AI methods. Such skills, along with expertise in CSD, will help them compete for jobs in this fast-growing occupational category, whether it be in CSD-related research positions, product development, or other aspects of business strategy such as marketing, sales, and user engagement.



25-1071	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	<a href="https://www.bls.gov/oes/2019/may/oes251071.htm#(1)">https://www.bls.gov/oes/2019/may/oes251071.htm#(1)</a> This occupation represents the conventional path to academia with a focus on health specialties.
---------	--	---

C. Describe the student demand for the proposed program. The response should, at a minimum, include the following.

1. Projected headcount for Year 1 through Year 5.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
<b>Cohort 1</b>	4	4	4	2	0
<b>Cohort 2</b>		4	4	4	2
<b>Cohort 3</b>			4	4	4
<b>Cohort 4</b>				4	4
<b>Cohort 5</b>					5
<b>Number of Students in Program:</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>

The projections above reflect enrollment of both B.A./B.S. to Ph.D. students who will require four to five years to complete the degree as well as M.A./M.S./Au.D. to Ph.D. students who will be able to complete the degree in three years (see section V. Curriculum, B. Graduation Requirements below). All students are expected to be enrolled full-time. The focus of the program will be admission of post-licensure students, but well qualified bachelor's students will also be considered as outlined in the admissions section.

2. Data that supports student interest or demand for the proposed program. Include questions asked, results, and other communications with prospective students.

For the 2023-2024 academic year, UCF boasts a diverse student population of 69,320 students, solidifying its position as one of the largest universities in the country. This includes 59,548 undergraduate students and 9,294 graduate students, with representation from all 50 states and over 150 countries. UCF is particularly recognized for its commitment to diversity, with a significant portion of its student body identifying as Hispanic/Latino (29.2%) and Black (9.2%). In addition to its size, UCF is known for its dedication to accessibility and inclusivity, emphasizing affordable education. The university offers a broad range of programs across its 13 colleges, with approximately 93% of its students hailing from Florida (<https://www.ucf.edu/about-ucf/facts/>).

Within this expansive student body, the School of CSD plays a crucial role in preparing future professionals in speech-language pathology and audiology. The school serves approximately 537 students working towards their bachelor's degree and approximately 168 students working towards their master's degree in CSD, equipping them for careers in clinical and educational settings. Demand for a Ph.D. program in CSD at UCF is strongly supported, based on survey data collected from current students and recent alumni.

## IV. Curriculum

---

- A. If the program is a bachelor's degree, please identify if the university is seeking any of the following statuses for the program.

☒ Not Applicable

Status	Yes	No	If yes, complete the following
Common Prerequisites			Appendix C
Exception to 120 Credits			Appendix D
Specialized Admissions			Appendix E

- B. Describe the admissions criteria and graduation requirements for the program.

Admission to the Ph.D. program in CSD will conform to the UCF graduate admissions requirements for all prospective students (<https://graduate.ucf.edu/applying-to-ucf/>). Students will apply to and complete one of two curriculum tracks, depending on degrees earned prior to entering the program. The focus of the program will be admission of post-licensure students, but well qualified bachelor's students will also be considered as outlined below.

### Admissions Criteria:

- **Option 1:**
  - Earned bachelor's degree or equivalent from a regionally accredited U.S. institution of higher education or its equivalent from a foreign institution in a Communication Sciences and Disorders or related field (e.g., psychology, education, linguistics, engineering, computer science, mathematics).
  - AND
  - Earned 3.4 GPA (or equivalent) or better in all work attempted while registered as an undergraduate student working for a baccalaureate degree.
  - OR
- **Option 2:**
  - Earned graduate degree or professional degree or equivalent in communication sciences and disorders or a related field (e.g., psychology, education, linguistics, engineering, computer science, mathematics) from a U.S. institution of higher education accredited by a regionally accrediting body or its equivalent from a foreign institution.
  - Earned 3.4 GPA (or equivalent) or better in all work attempted as a graduate student.
  - Up to 15 credit hours of transfer work from the master's degree may be accepted to fulfill the PhD degree requirements.



Applicants must include the following items as part of their application:

- Statement of Purpose including career goals and probable advisor(s)
- Three letters of recommendation
- Resume/curriculum vitae
- Transcripts from all colleges/universities attended

Applicants will apply online (<https://applynow.graduate.ucf.edu/apply/>). All requested materials must be submitted by an established deadline.

### **Graduation Requirements:**

Graduation from the Ph.D. in CSD consists of the following categories (detailed in the next section):

- Coursework Requirements (72 credit hours minimum)
  - Required Core and Research Foundational courses
    - 12 hours Core Courses
    - 6 hours Research Foundations
  - Electives - (with approval of primary advisor)
    - 9 hours Research Electives
    - 21 hours Content Area Electives
      - Content area electives will be selected in consultation with the student's faculty advisor. Students entering the program with a bachelor's degree, or with a master's degree other than CSD, may select content electives from courses offered in the CSD master's degree at UCF. Students entering the program with a master's degree in CSD may select electives from inside or outside of CSD with approval of their advisor and the PhD Program Director. Up to 15 credit hours of coursework completed from a master's program in
- CSD may be transferred into the PhD program.
  - 9 hours of Directed Research
  - 15 hours of Dissertation
- Advancement to Candidacy
  - Pre-dissertation Project
  - Qualifying Examination
- Dissertation
- UCF Academic Standing Requirements
- Must adhere to UCF 7-year rule

### **Advancement to Candidacy:**

- Successful completion of **Pre-dissertation Project**
  - Requirements for preliminary projects will be established by the Ph.D. Advisory Committee for each student.
  - First-year research project
    - § Presentation in Proseminar
    - § Publication-worthy manuscript
- Successful completion of **Qualifying Examination**
  - Option 1: Preparation for written and oral comprehensive examination
    - § Written Examination - Ph.D. Advisory Committee (PAC) will develop a series of questions to be addressed by the student
    - § Students have 6-weeks to provide written answers to the questions



- § Oral examination of knowledge by committee
- Option 2: Grant proposal
  - § Write and submit a grant proposal (e.g., NIH F31)
  - § Oral examination of knowledge by the committee
- Option 3: Other scholarly project
  - § Based on pre-specified goals that support student's academic and professional goals.
  - § Requirements for the projects will be established by the PAC for each student.
  - § Example projects (deliverable defined by PAC):
    - Software development
    - Novel diagnostic test or research methodologies
    - Novel clinical intervention or pedagogical methodologies
    - Novel analysis methodology
    - Additional research resulting in publication-worthy manuscript
  - § Written description of activities, theoretical bases, methods, outcomes
  - § Oral examination of knowledge by the committee
- Successful defense of **Dissertation Proposal**
  - Written dissertation proposal
  - Oral examination by committee

#### **Dissertation**

- 15 credit hours of dissertation work
- Successful completion and oral defense of dissertation
  - Written dissertation
  - Oral examination by committee (public)

#### **Ph.D. Student Advising Structure**

- Ph.D. Advisory Committee
  - At least 4 members (including primary advisor)
  - Committee Chair or co-chair (if applicable) must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders.
  - At least 3 members must be tenured or tenure-track faculty in CSD at UCF
  - One committee member must be external to CSD
- Ph.D. Advisory Committee Roles
  - Serve as reviewers and approvers of plans of study, choice of preliminary project(s), qualifying exam options above, dissertation, and annual reports.

C. If the proposed program is an AS-to-BS capstone, provide evidence that it adheres to the guidelines for such programs, as outlined in State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.024. List any prerequisites and identify the specific AS degrees that may transfer into the proposed program.

☒ Not applicable to this program because it is not an AS-to-BS Capstone.

- D. Does an industry or employer advisory council exist to provide input regarding curriculum development, student assessment, and academic workforce alignment?

☒ Yes

☐ No. Describe any plans to develop one or other plans to ensure academic workforce alignment.

The School of CSD has just formed an Advisory Board that is composed of community members, industry partners, and CSD alumni who are engaged in educational activities related to clinical supervision, research, and continuing education. We anticipate that this board will also advise on the Ph.D. program on curriculum development, student assessment, and academic workforce alignment.

- E. Explain how employer-driven or industry-driven competencies were identified and incorporated into the curriculum. Has a strategy been established for assessing student learning and reviewing academic workforce alignment to modify the curriculum as needed?

As part of the accreditation process for the master's program in Speech-Language Pathology, the School of CSD works closely with community partners (e.g., Advent Health, Orlando Health, Brooks Rehabilitation Hospital, SLP private practice owners, Seminole and Orange County School districts) to ensure the master's graduate curriculum and clinical training provide competencies required for accreditation but are also aligned with industry-driven competencies. Likewise, we have engaged other community and industry partners across the CSD disciplines through industry-sponsored and community foundation sponsored research. Through these collaborations, we have identified key competencies in emerging advanced technologies and methodologies that have not traditionally been a focus of most Ph.D. programs. The proposed Ph.D. curriculum will leverage these ongoing industry and community partnerships to regularly assess and adapt the content by way of rotational seminars allowing us to address and incorporate industry-driven competencies as needed. We will evaluate student learning and academic workforce alignment on an annual basis to modify and adapt the focus areas within the curriculum as appropriate.

F. Does the proposed curriculum align with Section 1001.706 (5)(a), Florida Statutes?

☒ Yes

☐ No

G. For degree programs in medicine, nursing, and/or allied health sciences, identify the courses with the competencies necessary to meet the requirements in Section 1004.08, Florida Statutes.

For teacher preparation programs, identify the courses with the competencies required in Section 1004.04, Florida Statutes.

☒ Not applicable to this program because the program is not a medicine, nursing, allied health sciences, or teacher preparation program.

H. Select the anticipated mode of delivery for the proposed program.

☒ Face-to-Face

☐ Hybrid

☐ Distance Learning

If the method(s) of delivery will require specialized services or additional financial support, describe the projected costs below.

I. Describe any potential impact on related academic programs or departments, such as an increased need for general education or common prerequisite courses or an increased need for required or elective courses outside of the proposed academic program. If the proposed program is a collaborative effort with another academic department(s), college(s), or school(s) within the institution, provide a letter(s) of support or MOU(s) from each department, college, or school in Appendix B.

The curriculum will include 30 credit hours of electives that may be taken within or outside of CSD. Given the limited enrollment each year and the likelihood that students will have diverse areas of interest across CSD and related disciplines, we do not anticipate that courses they take outside of CSD will significantly impact course enrollments in related academic programs or departments. Letters of support (see Appendix B) have been received from faculty in the College of Community Innovation and Education, College of Sciences, College of Engineering and Computer Science, and the College of Health Professions and Sciences for students taking elective courses in their respective units.

The proposed program is not planned as a collaboration with other academic units, colleges or schools within the institution.

J. Describe any currently available sites for internship and/or practicum experiences and any plans to seek additional sites in the next five years.

☒ Not applicable to this program because students are not expected to seek internship or practicum opportunities as a required curriculum component.



- K. Identify any established or planned educational sites where the program will be offered or administered. Provide a rationale if the proposed program will only be offered or administered at a site(s) other than the main campus.

The proposed program will not be offered or administered at any sites other than the main campus.

- L. If the institution has conducted recent program reviews, received feedback from accreditation bodies, or received input from other entities that affect the proposed program, describe the institution's progress in implementing the recommendations.

If the proposed program is a doctoral-level program, include the external consultant's report and the institution's responses to the report as Appendix A.

The external consultant's report is included in Appendix A.

## V. Faculty

- A. Identify existing and anticipated full-time faculty who will participate in the proposed program through Year 5, excluding visiting or adjunct faculty in the table below. Additionally, provide the curriculum vitae (CV) for each identified faculty member in Appendix G.

Faculty Code*	Faculty Name or "New Hire" Highest Degree Held Academic Discipline	Rank	Contract Status	Initial Date for Participation in Program
A	Lauren Bislick Wilson, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Motor Speech, Aphasia	Associate Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	Deena Schwen Blackett, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Aphasia, Cognitive Communication Disorders	Assistant Professor	Tenure Earning	Fall 2026
A	Andrew Dykstra, Ph.D. Biomedical Engineering, Neuroscience	Assistant Professor	Tenure Earning	Fall 2026
A	Ann Eddins, Ph.D., M.B.A. Audiology, Neuroscience, Health Sciences Management	Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	David Eddins, Ph.D. Audiology, Hearing Science, Hearing Technologies, Voice Science	Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	Julie Feuerstein, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Childhood Language, Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Implementation Science	Assistant Professor	Tenure Earning	Fall 2026
A	Bari Hoffman, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Voice Science	Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	Jennifer Kent-Walsh, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026

A	Victoria McKenna, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Voice Science, Swallowing and Upper Airway		Assistant Professor	Tenure Earning	Fall 2026
A	Jacqueline Towson, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Early Childhood Special Education, Science of Teaching and Learning		Associate Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	Pavel Zahorik, Ph.D. Experimental Psychology, Hearing Science, Augmented/Virtual Reality		Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	Richard Zraick, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathology, Voice Science, Health Literacy		Professor	Tenure	Fall 2026
A	Hamzeh Ghasemzadeh, PhD, (starts July 1) Machine-Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Advanced Technologies		Assistant Professor	Tenure Earning	Fall 2026
B	New Hire, Ph.D. Childhood Language		Assistant Professor	Tenure Earning	Fall 2026
B	New Hire, Ph.D. Childhood Speech		Assistant/Ass ociate Professor	Tenure/ Tenure Earning	Fall 2026

*Faculty Code	Code Description	Source of Funding
A	Existing faculty on a regular line	Current Education & General Revenue
B	New faculty to be hired on a vacant line	Current Education & General Revenue
C	New faculty to be hired on a new line	New Education & General Revenue
D	Existing faculty hired on contracts/grants	Contracts/Grants
E	New faculty to be hired on contracts/grants	Contracts/Grants
F	Existing faculty on endowed lines	Philanthropy & Endowments
G	New faculty on endowed lines	Philanthropy & Endowments
H	Existing or new faculty teaching overload in addition to assigned course load	Enterprise Auxiliary Funds

## VI. Estimate of Investment

- A. Provide the tuition rate for the proposed program for resident and non-resident students.

Resident/Credit Hour	Non-Resident/Credit Hour
\$369.65	\$1276.48

If the proposed program will operate as self-supporting, market tuition rate, or establish differentiated graduate-level tuition, per Board of Governors Regulation 8.002, complete Appendix F, Self-Supporting & Market Rate Tuition.

- B. Complete the summary table below.

1. Provide projected costs and associated funding sources for Years 1 and 5 of program operation. Include all new costs that will be incurred as a direct result of the new program, such as new faculty and staff hires and graduate assistantships.
2. Provide headcount (HC) and full-time equivalent (FTE) estimates of student enrollment for Years 1 through 5.
3. Calculate an Educational and General (E&G) cost per FTE for Years 1 and 5 by dividing the total E&G by FTE. Undergraduate FTE must be calculated based on 30 credit hours per year. Graduate FTE must be calculated based on 24 credit hours per year.

Implementation Timeframe	HC	E&G Funds	Contract & Grants Funds	Auxiliary/ Philanthropy Funds	Total Cost
Year 1	4	263,600			263,600
Year 2	8				
Year 3	12				
Year 4	14				
Year 5	15	346,600			346,600

- C. Is the infrastructure in place to meet the new degree program requirements, such as hiring faculty and staff, curriculum development, facilities, and funding, before enrollment of students to the program?

☒ Yes