

Communication Disorders Program AY 2020-2021 through AY 2025-2026

Executive Summary

Now and looking forward, the core of our Program identity is patient-oriented clinical training and research. These emphases manifest throughout each degree offering:

Undergraduate	Pre-professional introduction to clinical science and practice
Masters	Evidence-based clinical practice
Doctoral	Producing patient-oriented clinical research that directly informs evidence-based practitioners

The vertical integration of the degree/curricula around a single defining axis maximizes efficiency and cohesion. It guides/informs choices/decisions from day-to-day matters to strategic planning.

The Program is medium sized; it does not attempt to be all things to all people. Areas of topical emphasis/leadership are defined by faculty expertise and their research/service career focus. That said, the Program will develop the emerging emphases in (a) Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and (b) inter-professional education and inter-professional practice (IPE/IPP).

The Program generates revenues through course enrollments, training/research/service grants, and clinical practice. The Program is actively engaged in the University community, school systems, and Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Our Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic is housed within the Sheila C. Johnson Center (SJC), a multi-disciplinary clinic that serves as a regional service resource to the Charlottesville community, surrounding counties, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Program faculty identify 5 priorities that are shared across all three degrees:

- Continue to provide high quality educational opportunities for students that focus on current and best practices in the disciplines of communication sciences and disorders, including culturally responsive practices.
- Continue, and expand, efforts to recruit and retain students from diverse backgrounds, and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the discipline.
- Continue to review and revise curricula to support the competitiveness of our graduates as they apply to graduate programs or enter the work force, becoming leaders within their chosen paths.
- Continue to assure and expand our program's fiscal standing.
- Continue to share and disperse responsibilities within the program, as well as documented procedures, to support transitions and viability of program operations beyond individual faculty members.

Three Degrees, Three Mission Statements

B.S.Ed.

The undergraduate program in communication disorders at the University of Virginia (a) introduces students to the fields of speech-language pathology and audiology and (b) provides pre-professional learning experiences to prepare students for graduate studies by emphasizing math, biological and behavioral sciences, basic human communication sciences, and critical thinking.

Integrated Character. This program seeks to provide educational experiences that develop the fundamental skill set for successful graduate education. The focus of the undergraduate program is primarily establishing fundamental knowledge and building skills in clinical observation. In addition, undergraduate experiences instill an appreciation of practice-oriented clinical research including understandings of its utility and value for improving the lives of individuals with communication disorders.

M.Ed.

The graduate program in speech-language pathology at the University of Virginia provides academic and clinical instruction for establishing the knowledge and skill base necessary for (a) completing the master's degree, (b) becoming a credentialed speech-language pathologist, and (c) practicing speech-language pathology in an entry level position. That knowledge and skill base conforms to the scope of practice as defined by the American Speech Language Hearing Association.

Integrated Character. The focus of the master's program is applying the products of practice-oriented clinical research in developing clinical expertise, as well as understandings of client values, for providing best clinical practices to individuals with communication disorders, their families, teachers, and caregivers with the ultimate goal of preparing graduates for successful entry into the professional marketplace.

Ph.D.

The Ph.D. program in speech-language pathology at the University of Virginia provides research, teaching, and professional-service experiences to establish the skill sets necessary for a successful career as a scientist, scholar, and teacher. The fundamental essence of the program is graduating independent researchers capable of producing original and important scholarly works through disciplinary and interdisciplinary practice-oriented clinical research.

Integrated Character. The focus of the doctoral program is producing original scholarship and scientific understandings through practice-oriented clinical research within a curriculum dedicated to preparing graduates for careers as independent scientists.