

**SPECIAL REPORT
OF THE
GRADUATE COUNCIL**

concerning

**REVISION TO THE DEGREE PROGRAM:
COMMUNICATION DISORDERS AUDIOLOGY (AuD)
(#5069)**

**Presented at the
782nd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
December 6, 2018**

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

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The Graduate Council recommends approval of this proposal.

Briefly describe the Proposal

Following careful thought and discussion, the audiology faculty propose a number of changes to the Au.D. program's curriculum, each of which is detailed within this application. While the changes include both elimination and addition of courses, the net number of required courses (and credits) remains unchanged. Specific changes include elimination of three 3-credit courses (COMM-DIS 520, 530, 691G), addition of three new 3-credit courses (COMM-DIS 690N, COMM-DIS 690P, and COMM-DIS 693I), the substitution of one course for another (COMM-DIS 520 for an outside-the-department research design course), and a major revision and retitling of one course (COMM-DIS 646). Also accomplished through this curriculum update is a reduction of duplicate content coverage.

Please describe the existing program requirements, listing all required courses and available electives, as well as any additional requirements, and continuation or admissions policies.

All of the following major-area (COMM-DIS) courses are required. Each course carries 3 credits unless otherwise specified.

COMM-DIS 520: Counseling in Communication Disorders
COMM-DIS 530: Neurological Substrates and Neuropathologies of Speech, Language, and Hearing
COMM-DIS 640: Advanced Diagnostic Audiology
COMM-DIS 641: Advanced Hearing Rehabilitation
COMM-DIS 642: Hearing Aids and Amplification Systems for the Hearing Impaired
COMM-DIS 643: Hearing Conservation and Industrial Audiology
COMM-DIS 645: Theories of Hearing
COMM-DIS 646: Assessment and Management of Balance Disorders and Tinnitus
COMM-DIS 647: Implantable Auditory Prostheses
COMM-DIS 691G: Seminar - Auditory Processing Disorders
COMM-DIS 650: Pediatric Audiology
COMM-DIS 651: Electrophysiological Procedures in Audiology
COMM-DIS 697A: Instrumentation in Communication Disorders
COMM-DIS 691I: Seminar in Clinical Audiology I
COMM-DIS 692A: Medical Audiology
COMM-DIS 692I: Seminar in Clinical Audiology II
COMM-DIS 696: Independent Study (variable credits) – Capstone Credits (6 required)
COMM-DIS 698A: Practicum (variable credits)
COMM-DIS 698B: Practicum (variable credits)

Students must also complete one departmental elective course in the area of adult or child language, two graduate courses in statistics/research design from outside of the department, six credits of elective graduate coursework from outside of the department. Course selections are approved by the student's advisor.

Please describe the requirements that you are proposing, listing course requirements, elective options, as well as any additional requirements, and continuation or admissions policies.

1. Elimination of the currently required COMM-DIS 520 Counseling in Communication Disorders course.
2. Elimination of the currently required COMM-DIS 530 Neurological Substrates and Neuropathologies of Speech, Language, and Hearing course.
3. Elimination of the currently required COMM-DIS 691G Seminar – Auditory Processing Disorders course.
4. Addition of a new, required course COMM-DIS 690N/648 Auditory Neuroscience.
5. Addition of a new, required course COMM-DIS 690P/649 Audiology Practice Management.
6. Addition of a new, required course COMM-DIS 693I Seminar in Clinical Audiology III.
7. Substitution of Comm-Dis 570 Research in Communication Disorders for the currently required research design course that students are taking outside of our department.
8. Major revision and renaming of "COMM-Dis 646 Assessment and Management of Balance Disorders and Tinnitus" to "Vestibular Disorders"

Please provide the rationale for these revisions.

- 1. Elimination of COMM-DIS 520 - Counseling in Communication Disorders.** Historically, Au.D. students have been required to take this 3-credit counseling course. However, they also receive instruction in counseling in multiple clinical courses when they learn to counsel patients in specific practice areas (e.g., advanced hearing rehabilitation, advanced diagnostic audiology, pediatric audiology, hearing aids). Additionally, the Counseling in Communication Disorders class has a significant speech-language pathology focus, which is not the best learning opportunity for Au.D. students. For both of these reasons, we propose elimination of this requirement to make room in the curriculum for a new course (see #2 below).
- 2. Addition of COMM-DIS 690P/649 - Audiology Practice Management.** This new 3-credit course will fill an existing gap in our curriculum. Coverage of practice management/business principles is a significant weakness of our current Au.D. program. In a recent national survey, it was shown that more than a quarter of all audiologists in the United States own or work in private practice and the data also suggested an upward trend in this employment status. Our students need better preparation in this area. This new, 3-credit course will introduce students to principles and practices that support successful business ownership and operation as well as inform them of best practices in supervision of staff audiologists, audiology assistants, and students. An experimental course proposal is being submitted by the course instructor (Gooler).
- 3. Elimination of COMM-DIS 530 - Neurological Substrates and Neuropathologies of Speech, Language, and Hearing.** Rational/Plan: this course has recently been revised due to a change in our undergraduate curriculum (i.e., undergraduate students are no longer required to take this class). The revised course has a much greater focus on differential diagnosis of speech and language disorders, which is not within the scope of practice of audiologists. Therefore, we propose the elimination of this required course to make room in the curriculum for a new course that will focus exclusively on the neurology of the auditory system (see #4 below).
- 4. Addition of COMM-DIS 690N/648 - Auditory Neuroscience.** This new 3-credit course will provide Au.D. students with an introduction to neurology with a specific focus on the central auditory system and application to clinical correlates. This course will be required and will replace the current COMM-DIS 530 requirement (see #3 above). An experimental course proposal is being submitted by the course instructor (Gooler).
- 5. Elimination of COMM-DIS 691G: Seminar – Auditory Processing Disorders.** This seminar is another area where we feel there is unnecessary redundancy. The three main topic areas - behavioral assessment, electrophysiological assessment, and treatment - are covered in COMM-DIS 640: Advanced Diagnostic Audiology, COMM-DIS 651: Electrophysiological Procedures in Audiology, and COMM-DIS 641: Advanced Hearing Rehabilitation, respectively. While the seminar course allowed for advanced discussions of auditory processing disorders, the proportion of the work our students perform in the area of auditory processing disorders does not absolutely require this level of advanced training. Elimination of this seminar as a requirement will provide room in the curriculum for a new special topics seminar that will better meet the needs of contemporary Au.D. students (see #6 below).
- 6. Addition of COMM-DIS 693I: Seminar in Clinical Audiology III.** This special topics seminar focuses on Public Health Audiology and has been approved by our departmental curriculum committee (the only required level of review for a special topics seminar). This seminar will broadly introduce the field of Public Health, will address issues related

to ear and hearing health care in developing countries, and the majority of the offerings will draw on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's 2016 report titled *Hearing Health Care for Adults: Priorities for Improving Access and Affordability*. This text lays the groundwork for many of the pressing changes facing the field of audiology in the United States; changes that our students are going to have to navigate and perhaps lead.

7. **Substitution of COMM-DIS 570 Research in Communication Disorders for Outside Research Design Course.** In our most recently approved Au.D. curriculum plan, we eliminated the requirement for Au.D. student to take Research in Communication Disorders, but stipulated that the two required outside-the-department courses in this area must include one statistics course and one research design course. This decision was made based upon the facts our Au.D. curriculum was considered too research heavy and the Research in ComDis class was not a perfect fit for Au.D. students given that at the time most of the students in that class were speech-language pathology master's students. However, it has become clear that our current approach is not sustainable given the uncertain availability of appropriate outside research design courses for our Au.D. students. Because of this, we propose to once again require Research in ComDis for our Au.D. students, in place of the current outside-the-department research design course requirement. The appropriateness of the proposal is further supported by the fact that SLP students are no longer required to take Research in ComDis, which means most of the students who will enrolled in that class will be Au.D. students, along with a few senior undergraduate students who elect to take the class.
8. **Major revision and renaming of COMM-DIS 646 Assessment and Management of Balance Disorders and Tinnitus.** The currently-approved COMM-DIS 646 course currently includes the two broad and relatively unrelated topics of tinnitus and vestibular disorders. It has become apparent that the vestibular portion of this course requires additional course coverage time and that instruction regarding tinnitus is adequately covered in our advanced diagnostic audiology and advanced hearing rehabilitation courses. Therefore, we propose a major revision/renaming of COMM-DIS 646 to "Vestibular Disorders." A major course revision proposal is being submitted by the current course instructor (Whitmal).

Resources

If this proposal requires no additional resources, say so and briefly explain why. If this proposal requires additional resources, explain how they will be paid for. For proposals involving instruction, indicate how many new enrollments are expected and whether the courses have room to accommodate them.

This proposal requires no additional resources as all courses proposed in this plan, including new courses, will be taught by existing faculty members/lecturers as part of their standard teaching loads. We do not expect enrollment numbers to change as a result of the changes proposed and will be able to continue to accommodate all Au.D. students within our required courses.

MOTION: That the Faculty Senate approve the Revision to the Degree Program: Communication Disorders Audiology (AuD), as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 19-028.