



Mission

The mission of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is to educate students to improve the quality of human communication. We will accomplish our mission through leadership, excellence, and innovation in;

1. delivering baccalaureate, master's, doctoral and continuing education;
2. providing and participating in professional and clinical service;
3. conducting basic, clinical and applied research in communication sciences and disorders;
4. entrepreneurship and economic development;

Our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan for CSDI is aligned with East Carolina University and the three University Commitments including:

Commitment 1: Maximize Student Success

We will foster a positive environment and culture that promotes the development of independence of thought, leadership skills, and an appreciation for service needs within the profession.

1. Expand outreach to the local community through students in the CSDI department.
2. Establish student organizational leadership principles within the department.
3. Encourage and promote student involvement in on-campus student associations in speech-language pathology and audiology and state and national organizations (e.g., membership, participation/attendance in conferences, etc.)
4. Explore options for the development of international partnerships or opportunities to expand study abroad or service-learning overseas activities for students in CSDI.

We will maintain our high retention (95% or higher) and graduation rates (95% or higher) across all four degree programs in CSDI.

1. Ensure a 90% first-time and 100% pass rate at the time of graduation for AuD and 100% pass rate within one year post-graduation for clinical MS students (to allow for completion of post-graduate CFY).
2. Ensure timely completion for students within the doctoral degree programs.
3. Maintain student mentorship programs within the CSDI department.
4. Maintain departmental leadership structure consisting of program directors and clinical coordinators so that students receive timely communications regarding student resources.

We will deliver a high-quality curriculum and excellent instruction that provides the knowledge, skills, and learning experiences appropriate to each program's goals, ensuring that all students are well prepared to succeed in their chosen academic, clinical, or professional paths.

1. Conduct regular curriculum reviews to ensure alignment with accreditation standards, institutional goals, and emerging trends, and revise the curriculum as needed.
2. Regularly evaluate instructional practices to ensure teaching reflects current evidence, best practices, and high-quality pedagogical approaches.
3. Monitor student achievement of key program competencies, using established benchmarks to ensure students demonstrate proficiency in required knowledge and skills.
4. Develop and implement evaluation tools that effectively measure excellence in instruction across classroom, laboratory, practicum, and other learning environments.
5. Ensure students engage in distinct learning experiences, including exposure to multiple practice, research, or experiential settings appropriate to their program.
6. Promote excellence in teaching across the curriculum using peer evaluations and both formal and informal student feedback.

Commitment 2: Serve the Public

We will inspire our students to be engaged in service to the community, region, and state through involvement in leadership activities and programs, pre-professional student organizations, and community service projects.

1. CSDI students will be involved in leadership through student organizations and other campus initiatives (department, college, and/or university level).
2. We will provide undergraduate students with opportunities for engagement and participation in state, national, and/or international conferences/conventions within the discipline. CSDI faculty will engage in service to their respective state, national, and international organizations, demonstrating the importance of professional involvement and leadership for students.

We will highlight issues related to rural healthcare needs to sustain access to quality trained professionals in communication sciences and disorders.

1. Many of our students will provide clinical services to residents of rural communities.
2. We will offer education (through seminars, electives, and/or courses) which specifically targets the needs of rural communities.

We will continue to offer and promote specialty clinical training programs that serve the needs of patients in Eastern North Carolina.

1. We will continue to pursue internal and external funding to support specialty programs offering free and/or reduced clinical services in speech pathology and audiology.

2. Our clinical providers will be leaders in the region by offering specialty services in speech pathology and audiology that are not otherwise available in the eastern NC region.

We will promote the development of skills and expertise in the areas of mentorship and supervision to our students and internship partners, and to speech-language pathologists and audiologists practicing in our region.

1. Through collaborative resource sharing, we will provide CE training on clinical supervision and mentorship to regional partners in clinical education, as needed.
2. We will facilitate resources and opportunities (e.g., adjunct status, trainings, etc.) to continue to engage our current clinical preceptors.

Commitment 3: Lead Regional Transformation

We will strengthen the quality, visibility, and real-world impact of faculty research

1. Increase peer-reviewed publications in high-impact, discipline-relevant journals.
2. Promote multi-method, interdisciplinary, and collaborative research that advances theory and practice.
3. Strengthen partnerships with clinics, schools, communities, other research institutions, and industry, and encourage commercialization, patents, or practice guidelines when appropriate.

We will enhance competitiveness and sustainability of externally funded research programs

1. Increase the number of faculty submitting federal grants (NIH, NSF, DoD, PCORI).
2. Apply for industry and foundation grants when appropriate.
3. Support resubmission and transition pathways (e.g., K → R, R21 → R01).
4. Develop multi-PI, programmatic, and center-level grant initiatives.

We will create conditions and infrastructure that enable research faculty productivity and success.

1. Protect research time through workload alignment and course releases
2. Invest in shared research infrastructure (equipment, lab space, databases, imaging cores, analytics support).
3. Maintain centralized support for IRB, data management, compliance, and post-award administration.

We will foster collaborative research cultures and strengthen research faculty development and leadership.

1. Encourage collaborations across departments, colleges, and institutions, and incentivize team science.
2. Ensure structured mentoring for assistant professors and new hires.

3. Support invited talks, keynote presentations, participation on NIH study sections, grant review panels, and editorial boards, and the development of signature research areas or centers of excellence.