



Why get a PhD in Audiology or Speech-Language Pathology?

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Whenever I mention doctoral studies to practitioners and students, most don't realize that Canadian doctoral programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology exist and are thriving. For example, did you know that six of the nine Canadian programs offer doctoral studies in AUD and/or SLP?

Many Canadian students enrol in American doctoral programs and end up working in the U.S. after graduation. This brain drain of Canadian students is taking place at a time when, historically, the need for PhD graduates is at its highest peak in years, and about to get more acute. Within the next decade, between 40 - 50% of the faculty in Canadian and US universities will retire. This will create an unprecedented need for doctoral candidates in all fields, including our disciplines.

ASHA has thoroughly documented the situation south of the border (Scott & Wilcox, 2002). American programs are facing a critical shortage of faculty, as positions remain unfilled yearly, placing the education of future

professionals at risk. The Council of Academic Programs in CSD recently reported that of 157 open faculty positions in 2001, only 54 were filled, hence the potential to fill only one third of the open positions (www.capcsd.org). In face of this shortage, many PhD candidates in American programs are accepting faculty positions before they complete their dissertations.

The impact on our Canadian programs is clear. We need to train our own future faculty in Canada because there will be more competition to hire new graduates into existing positions in the US. The good news is that Canadian universities are well positioned to produce their own doctoral candidates.

There are currently 52 students enrolled in Canadian PhD programs. The PhD in Audiology or Speech-Language Pathology will appeal to individuals who are independent thinkers and find the pursuit of research an exciting and rewarding enterprise. These individuals welcome the opportunity to teach young professionals and are open to adventure (i.e., job skills are transportable, sabbaticals provide excellent opportunities for travel,

opportunities abound for participation in research teams, university governance). University faculty positions are the only jobs where tenure assures a job for life and for which the ceiling for salary is unlimited! Finally, "Even one unfilled position creates a strain for students and existing faculty. Also, if there are not enough researchers in AUD and SLP applying for limited federal funding, other disciplines are capable of taking up the slack" (Scott & Wilcox, 2002, p. 4).

The table reflects information on PhD programs, requirements, funding and how to apply. It's intended to inform prospective students about doctoral studies in our disciplines. The key to successful graduate studies is to find the right supervisor in a matching area of interest. Faculty members are always willing to correspond with prospective students and arrange for face-to-face meetings to discuss personal, academic and financial plans.

Reference

Scott, C. & Wilcox, K. 2002. The PhD in CSD. *The Asha Leader*, 7 (21), 4-5, 16.

Canadian PhD Programs	
<p>Dalhousie University Faculty of Health Professions School of Human Communication Disorders</p>	<p>Planning is underway for an interdisciplinary PhD program that will be offered within the Faculty of Health Professions.</p>
<p>McGill University Faculty of Medicine School of Communication Sciences and Disorders www.mcgill.ca/scsd</p> <p>Currently has 14 PhD students, three MSc students, and three postdoctoral fellows. Offers research MSc and PhD degrees; students with nonthesis degrees may fast-track into the PhD program.</p>	<p>Applicants must identify a supervisor prior to applying; See Web site for details.</p> <p>Requirements: One full statistics course, two semesters of advanced research seminars, elective courses at discretion of supervisory committee, comprehensive requirement (i.e., literature review from a unique perspective plus presentation), dissertation.</p> <p>Application packages are online at www.mcgill.ca/scsd. Specific inquiries may be sent to scsd@mcgill.ca.</p>
<p>University of Alberta Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine Dept. of Speech Pathology and Audiology www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/rehabmed angela.libutti@ualberta.ca</p> <p>Currently there are 16 students in Rehab Sciences; three S-LP and one AUD. The PhD program is located within the Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences. Coursework is offered by faculty in OT, PT and SLP.</p>	<p>Applicants must identify a supervisor prior to applying; Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research assists in matching applicants to supervisors.</p> <p>Requirements: four mandatory courses plus two to four electives determined by committee; preliminary exam, candidacy exam, dissertation. Assistantships are available (valued at \$2,500 per term, for 12 hrs. of work per week). Applicants must obtain independent research support from federal or provincial funding agencies.</p> <p>Application forms: www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/rehabmed</p>

Canadian PhD Programs (cont.)

<p>University of British Columbia Faculty of Medicine School of Audiology and Speech Sciences www.audiospeech.ubc.ca info@audiospeech.ubc.ca</p> <p>Currently has four PhD students, one AUD and three S-LP. Offers a PhD with specialization in either Audiology or Speech-Language Pathology.</p>	<p>Applicants must declare an area of research interest in their application; details on the Web site. Application includes a statement of research interest and demonstration of research ability.</p> <p>Requirements include coursework, comprehensive exam and a dissertation.</p> <p>Applicants must apply for independent research support from federal or provincial funding agencies. Application forms: www.grad.ubc.ca.</p>
<p>Université Laval Maitrise en orthophonie</p>	<p>No doctoral program at present.</p>
<p>Université de Montreal Faculté de Médecine École d'orthophonie et d'audiologie www.eoa.umontreal.ca bernadette.ska@umontreal.ca</p> <p>Currently has seven PhD students in S-LP and one in AUD. Offers a MSc or PhD in Biomedical Sciences, with an option in S-LP or Audiology. Applications are processed by the School of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (<i>École d'orthophonie et d'audiologie</i>).</p>	<p>Students must identify a supervisor prior to applying. Core faculty and research interests are listed on the website. Applicants must contact faculty with similar research interests before applying.</p> <p>Requirements: a comprehensive exam, dissertation. Support grants are available to students enrolled in the doctoral programs. Foreign students can apply for grants to cover a part of their tuition fees. Research funds are available from some professors, allowing them to support their students financially. Applications packages are available online: www.umontreal.ca; guichet étudiant; formulaires d'admission.</p>
<p>Université d'Ottawa Faculté des sciences de la santé Programme d'audiologie et d'orthophonie www.grad.uottawa.ca/programs (select doctorates, Population Health) wsmlyth@mail.health.uottawa.ca</p> <p>Currently, two faculty members in the Audiology program may supervise students in the Population Health PhD.</p>	<p>No doctoral program at present.</p> <p>Applicants may enrol in a transdisciplinary PhD in Population Health. Students should identify a supervisor prior to applying; details of faculty labs and research are on the Population Health website.</p> <p>Requirements: 18 graduate credits of coursework, a comprehensive exam, dissertation. Students are encouraged to apply for funding from federal and provincial agencies. Information can be obtained from www.grad.uottawa.ca/awards.</p>
<p>University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine Graduate Department of Speech-Language Pathology www.slp.utoronto.ca speech.path@utoronto.ca</p> <p>Currently has 12 PhD and two MSc students. Offers research MSc and PhD degrees within the Graduate Department of Speech-Language Pathology; fast-tracking option from MSc to PhD program is available.</p>	<p>Students must identify a supervisor prior to applying; details on the Web site. Applicants are encouraged to contact faculty directly.</p> <p>Requirements: Six half courses (two core courses are offered by the department), a comprehensive requirement (proposal, conceptual paper and presentation), dissertation. The University of Toronto guarantees minimum funding of \$17,889.78 (i.e., \$12,000 plus tuition) for five years of study; additional funding available from bursaries, research assistantships and teaching assistantships. Students are also encouraged to apply for funding from federal and provincial agencies. Application forms are on line at www.sgs.utoronto.ca.</p>
<p>University of Western Ontario Faculty of Health Sciences School of Communication Sciences and Disorders www.uwo.ca/fhsphd info@uwo.ca</p> <p>Sixteen PhD students in Rehabilitation Sciences, nine in AUD or S-LP. Offers a PhD program in Rehabilitation Sciences, an interdisciplinary program that is organized along the WHO concept of disablement. Students develop their particular interest in communication disorders within this framework.</p>	<p>Students must obtain a supervisor prior to applying. Core faculty and research interests are listed on the website. Applicants can write (see below) to find faculty with similar research interests.</p> <p>Requirements: three mandatory courses, a comprehensive paper integrating the WHO concept of disablement, dissertation. The University offers a minimal funding package of \$17,000.00 per year that comes from multiple sources. Students are strongly encouraged to apply for federal and provincial funds.</p> <p>Application material is online at www.uwo.ca/fhs (click on Rehabilitation Science, PhD).</p>