

The Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders (CDDS) at California State University, Fresno provides both educational opportunities for our students and low-cost treatment options for the community. We prepare our students to become effective professionals through the academic and practicum experiences that are required for graduation. We also provide speech, language, and hearing services to students, staff, faculty, and community residents with communicative disorders via our on-campus speech and hearing clinic. With such services, we improve individuals' communication, social development, academic performance, and emotional adjustment to life. We do this while helping them develop the communicative skills necessary to enhance their employability.

In California and beyond, our department is actively involved in the dissemination of knowledge within the field. We seek to provide students with the most advanced levels of knowledge and technology available while they gain community service experience, administering much-needed aid to communicatively challenged individuals both on campus and throughout the region. To provide a venue for student involvement within the community, CDDS has developed close partnerships with well over 50 different school districts, hospitals, public and private clinics, physicians' offices, Head start programs, and other agencies in the Central Valley. Statewide partnerships include such agencies as the California Schools for the Deaf (in Fremont and Riverside), the Porterville State Developmental Center, additional hospitals, and other public school districts.

Perhaps the most unique feature of the program is our speech and hearing clinic. Through the clinic and various internship programs, the department's student clinicians, interns, student teachers, and staff provide more than 40,000 client contacts per year. This includes speech and hearing testing, as well as therapy services. Our students and faculty also provide testing and

referral services at the on campus children's center, at health fairs in the community, and various preschools and parochial schools. The majority of these clients would not be able to afford these services otherwise. Students receive at least 400 hours of clinical and classroom practice with communicatively impaired children and adults while they are training in the speech and hearing clinic and in the hospitals, public and private clinics, or public school settings that work with the department. Students work closely with nationally and internationally known faculty members during their clinical practice.

Another strength of the program is the integration of clinical practicum with a diverse academic coursework. The speech-language pathology program provides a detailed academic background in normal speech and language development, and language, as well as disorders of voice, articulation, and fluency. Students in speech-language pathology have their first contact with clients during their senior year. In subsequent semesters, speech pathology graduate students are involved in on-campus practicum or off-campus medical internships and student teaching assignments while taking on-going graduate courses toward completion of their Masters degree. Audiology students are provided basic instruction on the normal function of the hearing system, as well as an introduction to hearing disorders. They are able to apply their academic learning in the department's audiology clinic, which is one of the most up-to-date audiology testing suites in the Central Valley. In summary, our speech-language pathology and audiology students have numerous opportunities to combine the academic and practicum components of the program into an effective education experience.