

**Doctoral Fellowship Program
Department of Communication Disorders
Truman State University**

Program Overview

The recruitment and development of a well-qualified communication disorders faculty in higher education is increasingly a cause for concern for the maintenance of an exemplary academic program. The MA program in Communication Disorders is nationally accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). Accreditation for the CMDS MA program requires a sufficient number of faculty to allow students to acquire the scientific and research fundamentals of the field. Further, CAA requires that greater than 50% of the graduate academic coursework in the CMDS MA program be taught by faculty who hold a research doctorate. (The CAA considers both the Ph.D. and the EdD in Communication Sciences and Disorders and “related fields” to be acceptable.) At present, we have three of eight faculty members on tenure track, and only two of those meet the CAA’s current criteria. Our MA program mission and goals state that we will “...validate the concept of the clinician-researcher and encourage the possibility of doctoral study by providing research experience for all graduate students” and “provide opportunities for students to form mentor relationships with faculty,... through... independent study, and/or selection of the thesis option.” These goals are easily placed at risk without increasing the number of Ph.D.- and EdD-level faculty in our program. In addition, we believe we could recruit a greater variety of MA students when we have the research interests of more Ph.D.- and EdD-level faculty to highlight.

Based on previous searches as well as data provided by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), positions in the area of CMDS are hard to fill. In our department’s past four searches, we have gotten one, three, one, and two qualified applicants. Only one of the searches was successful. According to ASHA (Communication Sciences and Disorders Education Survey: National Aggregate Data Report, 2021-2022 Academic Year), there were 251 faculty openings across all CMDS programs in the year of note. Only 156 of those positions were filled. Of those, only 136 were filled with a person who had earned a research doctorate. For the same year, research doctorate programs in CMDS reported 151 degrees granted. Of those, only 39.2% chose an academic position as their first job. This data certainly helps explain the difficulty hiring Ph.D.- and EdD-level faculty to the CMDS program at Truman. When combined with lower starting salaries, especially compared to R-I universities, this makes a compelling case for creating a program where we offer financial support to former Master’s-level students and/or current Master’s-level faculty in exchange for them giving back years of service to our program.

The Doctoral Fellowship Program in the Department of Communication Disorders (CMDS) is designed to provide assistance to qualified candidates for attainment of their terminal degrees. The monetary award to fellowship appointees is in the form of forgivable loan stipends and is made to eligible outstanding graduates of Truman State University and/or current CMDS Master’s-level faculty for pursuit of doctoral-level (hereafter defined as Ph.D. or EdD) education in the field of CMDS or a related field. The purpose of the forgivable loan stipends is to enable alumni and/or current CMDS Master’s-level faculty to return to/stay at Truman State University as full-time, tenure-track faculty in CMDS.

While this program is not intended to provide benefits on a broad scale, those who are approved to participate in the program would receive a stipend, which would defray a considerable portion of student-

incurred expenses for approved doctoral education. An obligation-for-service agreement is part of the mutually agreeable terms of the program and involves a shared financial risk between the University and the recipient of a fellowship. This procedural requirement compels a positive, continuously functional relationship between participating parties.

This program is not intended to provide an easily accessible loan program for the furtherance of a self-focused personal agenda or development plan.

Potential candidates are advised to consider carefully the scope of participation obligations prior to making application and, most particularly, before accepting its terms of appointment when a stipend is awarded.

Eligibility for Acceptance into the Program

To be eligible for and receive forgivable loan assistance, an applicant must:

- Be a graduate of Truman State University, be a presently enrolled student at the University who expects to graduate during the current academic year, or be a current non-tenure-track (Master's level) faculty member in CMDS
- Have a proven track record in graduate study, as noted by at least a 3.25 GPA in the Master's degree
- Be accepted for or be enrolled in doctoral study at an accredited institution in CMDS or a related field (e.g., Literacy, Health Professions).
- Once accepted, make satisfactory progress in the doctoral program in which one is enrolled as determined by that program
- Sign a Statement of Commitment to teach on a full-time basis in CMDS at Truman State University for a minimum period of obligation, agreeing to:
 - Begin service fulfillment of the fellowship obligation in the first full semester immediately following doctoral graduation or sooner as circumstances might permit.
 - Repay with accrued interest to the University any funds already received from the fellowship program if the participant:
 - Fails for any reason to complete the requirements of the predesignated doctoral degree program; or
 - Fails to earn/receive favorable reports during doctoral program matriculation; or
 - Fails for any reason to teach full-time for the department of CMDS at Truman State University upon completion of the degree.
 - Repay with accrued interest to the University any funds already received from the fellowship program, reduced according to a straight-line prorated formula, in the event that only a portion of the total service obligation is completed.
 - Any exemptions or changes to the above listed Commitment criteria must be made by the president of the university.

The Application and Selection Process

Application materials may be submitted at any time during the academic year. Applications from qualified candidates will be reviewed as they are received. Deadline for application is April 15 each year, although late submissions will be considered according to department needs and as funding is available.

Candidates must:

- Submit an application for the Doctoral Fellowship Program with the Department of Communication Disorders;
- Submit a current curriculum vita;
- Submit an essay of intent (not to exceed three pages);
- Submit the **Statement of Commitment** form;
- Submit official undergraduate and graduate transcripts, as applicable;
- Submit **Doctoral Fellowship Program List of References** form. References should be readily accessible and willing to provide a letter of reference. The candidate should briefly describe how they are associated with the reference. References from the CMDS department faculty are acceptable as long as the CMDS faculty member does not also serve on the CMDS Doctoral Fellowship Program Selection Committee.
- Participate in an interview.

Minimum candidate qualifications:

- Be a graduate of Truman State University; be a presently enrolled student at the University who expects to graduate during the current academic year; or be employed as a Master's-level non-tenure-track instructor in the department of CMDS;
- Graduate-level GPA of 3.25 or higher;
- Evidence of strong oral and written communication skills.

Preferred candidate qualifications:

- Prior engagement in undergraduate or graduate research, employment as a graduate assistant, or other professional experience which demonstrates research effectiveness or potential for research effectiveness;
- Graduate teaching experience, experience as a clinical supervisor, experience as an academic tutor, or other professional experience which demonstrates teaching effectiveness or potential for teaching effectiveness;
- Professional experience in CMDS.

Candidates who already have been accepted into or are currently completing a doctoral program may receive priority consideration.

The profile of successful candidates will include high academic achievements, strong references (preferably from academic sources) which highlight a candidate's research and teaching potential, and a high desire and commitment to pursue teaching and research at the university level.

Selection of candidates will be on a case-by-case basis according to department needs and fund availability. Candidates who meet the fellowship criteria will have their application reviewed by a committee from the CMDS department. If there is only a single applicant in an application cycle, funds

will be awarded if the application review is favorable and funds are available. In the event of multiple applicants in a cycle, either a) the applicant rated highest by the committee will be awarded funds as funds are available or b) more than one applicant may be funded depending upon a review of department needs and fund availability. (See "Recommendation Summary Evaluation" on p. 7.)

Doctoral Fellowship Program List of References

Applicant's name: _____

Reference 1:

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Reference 2:

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Reference 3:

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

I hereby _____ (waive) _____ (do not waive) my right of access to all recommendation documents that are being provided in connection with my application for the Doctoral Fellowship Program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Doctoral Fellowship Program Recommendation Request

Dear _____,

_____ has listed you as a reference for his/her application for our doctoral fellowship program in the Department of Communication Disorders at Truman State University. We ask that you answer the following prompt as part of your recommendation:

Please assess the applicant's scholarship, personality, character, and professional promise. Please include an assessment of the applicant's strengths and weaknesses.

In addition, please complete the attached Recommendation Summary Evaluation by comparing the applicant to other individuals with similar experience.

Recommendation Summary Evaluation

Applicant's promise as a graduate student, in comparison with others of similar experience.

	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Outstanding	Exceptional	No opportunity to observe
	Lowest 40%	Middle 20%	Next 20%	Next 10%	Top 10%	
Research Aptitude						
Intellectual Potential						
Ability to work with others						
Creativity						
Maturity						
Self-confidence						
Communication skills: oral						
Communication skills: written						
Critical thinking						
Motivation for proposed program of study						
Potential as a teacher						
Potential for career advancement						
Overall endorsement of the candidate						

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Position/Employer: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

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PART C – EDUCATION/TRAINING

INSTITUTION/LOCATION	DEGREE	YEAR(s)	FIELD OF STUDY

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CHECKLIST FOR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION

- ☐ This application form
- ☐ Current curriculum vita
- ☐ Essay of intent (not to exceed three pages)
- ☐ Statement of Commitment form
- ☐ Official undergraduate and graduate transcripts, as applicable
- ☐ Doctoral Fellowship Program List of References form

Complete all items on this checklist. Send together in a single email transmission to:

ateten@truman.edu

Subject line should read, APPLICATION FOR DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

Doctoral Fellowship Program – Department of Communication Disorders
Truman State University
Statement of Commitment

Please indicate your intention to comply with the requirements of the Doctoral Fellowship Program in the Department of Communication Disorders by initialing each statement and supplying your signature at the bottom. Your signature certifies also that you have read and understand the Procedural Points of the application and selection process.

Initials	Statement of Commitment
	I am a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident legally eligible for employment in the United States.
	I intend to pursue a doctoral degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders or a related field (as approved through written communication with the chair of the Communication Disorders department) at an accredited institution as identified by Truman State University.
	I agree to make satisfactory progress as determined by the doctoral program in which I am enrolled throughout the conduct of the program.
	I agree to complete requirements of my doctoral study program (including courses, exams, and possible assigned graduate teaching) at a rate acceptable to the doctoral fellowship program advisory committee.
	I agree to work cooperatively and closely with the advisory committee and mentor from the Department of Communication Disorders during my participation in the fellowship program.
	I agree to submit transcripts to the Department of Communications Disorders after each semester/term during my doctoral studies.
	I agree to teach full-time in the Department of Communication Disorders, preferably in a tenure-track position once my degree is completed. The service obligation is one year of service to the University per semester of financial support awarded.
	<p>I agree to repay the stipend with accrued interest if I fail to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the requirements of the pre-designated doctoral degree program for any reason, or • Earn/receive favorable reports during doctoral program matriculation, or • Be available for any reason to teach full-time for the Department of Communication Disorders during the period of service obligation, or • Perform in offered or approved alternative service capacity which is available for the period of service obligation. • (Any exceptions to the above criteria must be approved by the university president.
	In the event that I fulfill only a portion of the total service obligation to be completed, I agree to repay with accrued interest to Truman State University any funds already received, reduced according to a straight-line prorated formula based on service obligation already performed. (Any exceptions to this portion of the agreement must be approved by the university president.)

The Terms of Agreement – Appointment to Fellowship are controlling in all aspects.

I understand and agree to these requirements. If awarded a stipend through the Doctoral Fellowship Program in the Department of Communication Disorders, I commit fully to the obligations.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Doctoral Fellowship Program – Department of Communication Disorders
Truman State University
Essay of Intent

Instructions: Please write an essay, no more than three pages in length, which summarizes your intention and desire to study under the Doctoral Fellowship Program in the Department of Communication Disorders. Please discuss:

- Your reasons for attendance at graduate school;
- Your greatest strengths as a prospective Ph.D. or EdD candidate;
- Any weaknesses in your qualifications that the application committee should know about;
- The name of the accredited institution where you have applied (or where you intend to apply); consultation with the CMDS department chair to select appropriate institutions/degrees may be requested prior to the application process;
- The area of study which you intend to pursue and the resulting degree (Ph.D. or EdD);
- What you hope to accomplish through your desired course of study;
- Your desire for employment at Truman State University.

You should prepare this essay in MSWord or .pdf format and bundle with your other application materials for electronic transmission. Please include your name, date, and signature on your essay.

**Doctoral Fellowship Program – Department of Communication Disorders
Truman State University**

Program Procedures

Application Process

1. The Chair of the Department of Communication Disorders, in consultation with the department's corresponding Dean as well as the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, will identify "subject areas of need" for faculty recruitment and program funding and the number of available stipends.
2. Application forms will be made available in the Department of Communication Disorders office as well as on the department website.
3. Program information will be sent to recent MA graduates of the Communication Disorders program (i.e., graduates from the last 5-10 years) at any point in time where a tenure-track faculty search fails. Otherwise, program information will be shared with current non-tenure-track faculty in CMDS who have expressed an interest in obtaining a doctoral degree.
4. In the event of an upcoming known CMDS faculty retirement or resignation, program information will be shared with all current CMDS MA students who will graduate in the current academic year.
5. Candidates must provide by April 15**:
 - a. Current curriculum vita;
 - b. Essay of intent (not to exceed three pages);
 - c. Statement of Commitment form
 - d. Official undergraduate and graduate transcripts, as applicable;
 - e. Doctoral Fellowship Program List of References form

**In the case of an immediate, known faculty vacancy, applications may be reviewed before April 15.
6. An appointed advisory committee will review the applications and make recommendation(s) to the Dean. The dean will make the final selection(s), in consultation with the department.

Post Application Process

1. Accepted candidate(s) will enter the pre-designated doctoral program of study.
2. The Department will work closely with the accepted candidate to assign an appropriate mentor.
3. A stipend of \$10,000 per calendar year for up to three years will be provided for pursuit of doctoral studies.
4. The accepted candidate must make satisfactory progress as determined by the doctoral program in which the student is enrolled in order to receive renewal of funding for the ensuing semester/year.
5. Degree progress will be determined at the end of each regular and summer semester, as applicable. Candidates must submit doctoral program transcripts at the end of each term of study.

6. Candidates who wish to appeal the decision made relating to acceptance status or funding continuation may file an appeal with the dean who oversees the CMDS department. Appeals must be submitted within fifteen (15) working days after receipt of admissions or funding denial. Grounds for an appeal of a decision shall be limited to (1) unit procedural errors, or (2) evidence that the information used in the decision was wrong or incomplete. Failure by the candidate to provide accurate and complete information in accordance with the fellowship application and performance reporting policy is not grounds for appeal.
7. Upon acceptance of the fellowship, the candidate is obligated to return to Truman State University immediately following the period of study to provide one academic year of service for each semester of stipend received (or 2 years of obligation per academic year of stipend received if the doctoral program operates on a schedule other than semesters and/or includes/requires summer enrollment). Ideally, appointment will be a tenure-track position at the rank of assistant professor.
8. After successful completion of qualifying examinations and defense of the dissertation proposal, the candidate may begin the employment aspect of the agreement with Truman State University, simultaneously making progress toward the completion of the remaining doctoral requirements.
9. Upon employment, the candidate is subject to normal policies and procedures which govern the University and the Department of Communication Disorders.
10. Starting salary will be commensurate with the salary structure of the Department of Communication Disorders.
11. Department teaching load is 4 courses per semester (12 credit hours per semester). Faculty members in the Department of Communication Disorders typically spend a portion of these credits in the classroom, with the remaining credits spent providing clinical supervision in the Truman State University Speech and Hearing Clinic. The Department typically protects new faculty from service and advising obligations during the first year of employment to facilitate adjustment to the university and its students. Truman faculty members are expected to be teacher-scholars and citizens not merely of their home disciplines, but of the larger liberal arts and sciences university.
12. If the University is unable to provide employment as a faculty member (even if not in the pre-determined area) to the participant within the applicable period of obligation after commencement of full-time availability, the candidate will be absolved of the requirement for repayment of the received stipend.
13. The candidate must repay with accrued interest to Truman State University any funds already received if s/he: fails for any reason to complete the requirements of the pre-designated doctoral degree program; or fails to earn/receive favorable reports during doctoral program matriculation; or fails for any reason to be available to teach full-time for the Department of Communication Disorders; or fails to perform in any offered or approved alternative capacity which is available for the period of service obligation. (Any exemptions or changes to this clause must be approved by the university president.

The Terms of Agreement – Appointment to Fellowship are controlling in all aspects.