

PhD Enrollment Pathway Options

When considering a PhD degree program to pursue a career as a faculty-researcher in communication sciences and disorders, many students wonder if they need to have a clinical degree and ASHA certification. The answer is: it depends on your long-term career goals! The following table presents the different pathways for integrating clinical training into research training—and the pros/cons of each.

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
 Enrollment Pathway	Bachelor's Degree to Research Doctoral Degree	Bachelor's Degree to Combined Clinical and Research Doctoral Degree Program	Bachelor's Degree to Clinical Degree to Research Doctoral Degree
 Complete Your Clinical Hours for Certification	Not Applicable	Complete your clinical hours during the combined program	Complete your clinical hours before or during the research doctoral degree
 Degree(s) Earned	PhD	MA or AuD and PhD	MA or AuD and PhD
 Pros	• Takes less time to complete • Allows you to focus exclusively on research doctoral program	• Allows you to obtain both research and clinical training in one program • Generally takes less time than doing the programs sequentially • Expands potential job opportunities that require clinical experience	• Allows you to obtain clinical experience you can apply to teaching and research • Allows you to earn money as a clinician before and during the program • Expands potential job opportunities that require clinical experience
 Cons	• Many master's- and bachelor's-level colleges or universities prefer to hire individuals with CCCs who can provide clinical supervision • Without clinical experience, • you may have less insight into the clinical process and • you may not be qualified to teach clinical coursework.	• Requires intense time and effort commitment	• Takes more time to complete • Can be difficult to return to a student lifestyle after working for several years