



CSDS Career Guide

Created for: Longwood University

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CSD Information Inc.

Longwood University CSDS Advising Department

September 23rd, 2021

Lucas Blightson
President
CSD Information Inc.
201 Rocky Street,
Dallas, TX 75001

Dear Mr. Blightson:

Subject: Review of Careers in the Communications Sciences and Disorders Field

Recently there has been an overall 31.5% increase in the rate of students enrolling into the Communications Sciences and Disorders, or CSDS, undergraduate programs. There has also been an increase in male and minority students, 5.1% and 24.5% respectively, enrolling into the program. In response, the CSDS advising department here at Longwood University is conducting a survey on different career paths students can take when they graduate from the CSDS undergraduate program.

As we discussed earlier on September 1st, we would like to commission your firm to evaluate and provide a guide and recommendations for three popular careers that CSDS students can pursue. These findings will appear in a presentation that the Career Services Department can use to better help guide students in finding the right path to pursue one's chosen career. We would like a basic outlook for each job, criteria for each job, and a brief description so that the Career Services department can help give more detailed advice.

We would like this analysis in the form of a report finalized by December 2nd., one month before spring semester begins.

We appreciate your work and look forward to receiving your report. Please let us know if you require further information or assistance by contacting our department assistant, Ash Esson at 929-546-1121 or emailing a.c.esson@live.longwood.edu.

Yours Sincerely,

Joanne Smith

Joanne Smith
CSDS Department Chair- Longwood University

JS/lb

CSD Information Inc.

201 Rocky Street
Dallas, TX 75001

October 23,2021

Joanne Smith
CSDS Department Chair
201 High Street
Farmville, VA 23909

Dear Mrs. Smith

We are pleased to present to you a guide to the careers in the field of Communication Sciences and Disorders that you requested on September 23, 2021. The guide provides information regarding the three top careers in the CSD field, Audiologist, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), and Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA) and recommendations for students to choose a career best suited for their future.

We chose to analyze the three careers based upon a description, career outlook, and pathway to career. Based on our analysis and research, we have recommended that students do the following to decide which career is best for them:

- Shadow an Audiologist or Speech Language Pathologist
- Research Higher Education Programs near you
- Pick a route and take necessary tests
- Volunteer to help individuals with a speech or hearing impairment

We are confident that these recommendations will help students decide for a career that best fits their wants and needs.

We would like to thank you for reaching out to our corporation and allowing my team to create this guide for your students at Longwood University. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by phone or email at 856-934-0356 or LBlightson@CSD.net

Yours Sincerely,

Lucus Blightson

President

LB/js

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Executive Summary

Based on the demand of careers in the communication sciences and disorders field, Longwood University has decided to provide information to their students about career opportunities after graduation.

Over the next ten years, careers in the communication sciences and disorders field are projected to grow 13%-25%, much faster than the average 3% for all other occupations. Therefore, creating a great career path for students interested in working in health care or education.

CSD Information Inc. was asked to analyze three of the top careers people chose with a degree in communication sciences and disorders. Because of the demand for Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, and Speech Language Pathology Assistant, they were chosen to be researched and analyzed for the report. This report includes all the information a student would need to decide which career path is best for them.

The three careers were analyzed using the following criteria:

- **Career Outlook:** Salary, job growth, career demand
- **Pathway to Career:** Years of education, required exams, certifications and,
- **Job Description:** Daily tasks, places of work.

Based on our analysis, we found that each career has varying responsibilities, education, salaries, and places of work. These results supported our analysis, leading us to recommend that students follow the following procedures to decide what career is best for them:

- Shadow a speech language pathologist or audiologist
- Research higher education programs near you
- Pick a route and take the necessary tests
- Volunteer to help people with disabilities in speech or hearing

We are confident that our recommendations will help your students find the best career path for them upon graduating from Longwood U

Introduction

Over the next ten years, speech language pathologists are expected to grow 25% while audiologists are expected to grow 13%. Making their growth rate higher than other occupations. Specifically, in the state of Virginia, growth rates have shown to be as high as 28% for the field of speech language pathology and 16% for audiology.

There are many reasons for this growth. First, there is an increase in older populations that are prone to speech, language, hearing, and swallowing disorders. Second, there is an expected increase in retirements. Third, medical advances are making it possible for stroke victims and premature infants to survive, who might need services. Lastly, there is an increase in employment in elementary school settings due to federal law guaranteeing special education and related services to all eligible children with disabilities.

Therefore, providing information for students relating to future careers in the CSDS field is vital.

CSD Information Inc. was asked to analyze three of the top careers in the communication sciences and disorders field. The resulting report would recommend the most important preliminary steps for students to choose a career path.



CSD Information Inc. specializes in research and career services. Based out of Texas, we have been in business for 10 years. Our corporation has commissioned reports and guides for a variety of universities across the United States,

Figure 1: The John Hopkins Hospital CSD Information Inc. assisted with research.

including John Hopkins and the University of Los Angeles. Our corporation analyzed, researched, and created a report based on cochlear implants for the John Hopkins Hospital shown in Figure 1.

For this report, we chose to analyze audiology, speech language pathology, and speech language pathology assistant. Each career was analyzed based on three criteria: career outlook, pathway to career, and job description.

The order of the report was organized based on the highest salary and most education needed, first, to the lowest salary and least education needed, last. The order of the report was created so that it is easily understood and read by all students and individuals in the CSDS field.

Analysis of Audiology Career Field

Audiology is the second largest field with a degree in communication sciences and disorders field. Their salaries are higher than any other in the field and they must have a doctorate to be certified. Audiologists are health care professionals who identify, assess, and manage disorders of hearing, balance, and other neural systems.

Career Outlook

Audiology career is expected to grow by 20 percent in the upcoming years. From now up until 2026 it is projected to grow by 3,000 new employment per year, despite such a large percentile growth. This is because the field is considered small. However, healthcare is considered much more important nowadays than ever before, so that means not only are the elderly taken care of when it comes to ear health, but babies are now looked at for diseases that could affect balance and hearing at birth and at later stages in life.

Pathway to Career

Unlike being an SLP, it is a job where a doctorate is absolutely needed since a master's does not give one the adequate training needed to perform his or her job properly when starting out. This was because of a change in 2006 that took away master's degree level training programs. To become an Audiologist, it is important to obtain a bachelors and a masters in audiology, biology, or speech pathology. It is a must to obtain an Audiology Doctorate, from a properly accredited program. An Audiologist must also pass the Praxis Exam in Audiology to receive a license to practice in their state of choice. An Audiologist would then have to choose what state (or states he), or she would like to go through the process of getting their license from after passing the Praxis exam. During this time, they also must pick exactly what part of the field they want to work and get licensing to work.



Figure 2: A hearing test being administered.

Job Description

Audiologists study hearing, balance, and any diseases related to either function of the human body. Figures 2 and 3 represent two of the many tasks audiologists do. Figure 2 is a patient is performing a hearing test so that the audiology can create a plan of action based on the client's needs. Figure 3 represents a child with a cochlear implant. Many audiologists install cochlear implants on young deaf children, so they can regain their hearing and develop language effectively. Audiology is considered one of the many different paths that one works in the Communications Science and Disorders field. Most audiologists work in long term care facilities, with 29% working out of private practice, 25% working in hospitals, and the remaining 16% work in fields involving helping kids.

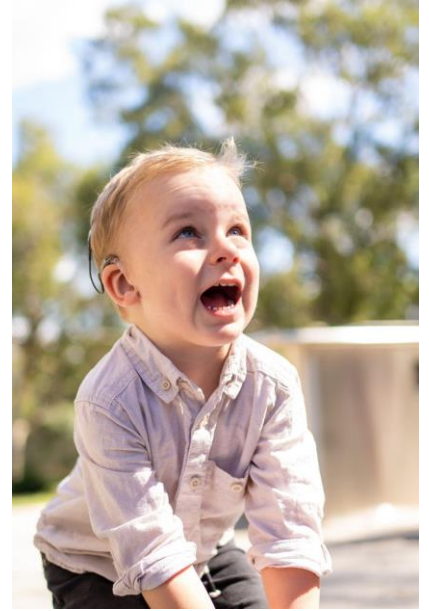


Figure 3: A child with a cochlear implant.

Analysis of Speech Language Pathology Career Field

Speech Language pathologists are paid slightly less than audiologists but only required to obtain a master's degree to be certified. Speech language pathologists, also known as SLPs, assess, diagnose, treat, and help to prevent communication and swallowing disorders in children and adults.

Career Outlook

Speech language pathology is expected to grow 25% from 2019-2029 (see Figure 4). Due to the growth, there will be an estimated 40,000 jobs available over the next ten years. A few reasons for growth include increase in older populations, increase in retirees, greater awareness for early identification and diagnosis, increase in survival rates, and bilingualism.

A career in speech language pathology provides a competitive salary across various work settings. In school settings, SLPs make an average of \$60,000-\$72,000 per year. In health care settings, SLPs make an average of \$70,000-\$93,000 per year. Depending on a contract or location of work, about 5% of SLPs make over six figures.

Overall, the field of speech language pathology has a great career outlook and can provide many opportunities for people in many areas across the United States.

Pathway to Career

To become a speech language pathologist, a person must obtain a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders or take prerequisites required by a graduate school in speech language pathology. Then, a person must be accepted into an accredited graduate program in speech language pathology. Graduate school is usually a two-three-year program with hands-on and classroom work. Once a master's degree is obtained, the Praxis exam is passed, and the student completes a Clinical Fellowship Year (CFY). The CFY is the first year after completing graduate school where a student is shadowed by a mentor. Once the CFY year is completed, the student submits all paperwork to the American Speech and Hearing Association and is sent license and certification.

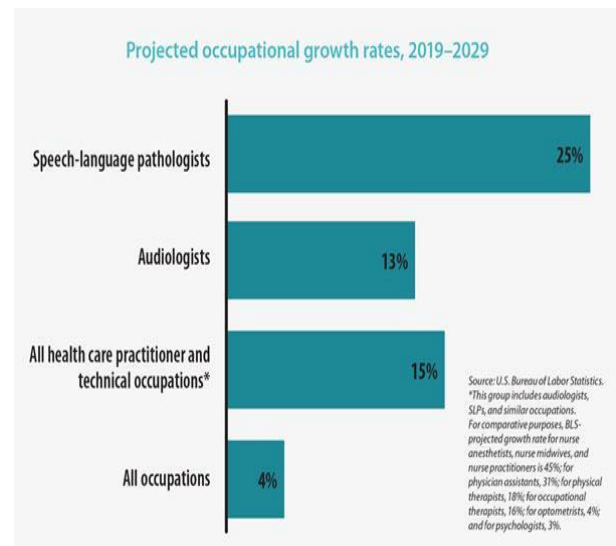


Figure 4: A bar graph from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That represents the growth of speech-language pathologist and audiologist compared to other occupations over the next ten years.

Job Description

Speech language pathology is a great career path for people who work well with others. Speech Language Pathologists work collaboratively with professionals from many different disciplines which may include teachers, physicians, audiologists, psychologists, social workers, and occupational therapists.

SLPs evaluate, treat, assess, and diagnose communication and swallowing disorders in children and adults. They also are involved in researching new assessments and treatments, educating caregivers and families, training future professionals, and preparing paperwork for therapy and billing.

There is a variety of work environments for speech language pathologists. 56% of speech language pathologists are employed in educational settings such as early intervention centers, pre-schools, K-12 schools, and colleges and universities. Even though more than half of SLPs work in education settings, many jobs are available for speech language pathologists in the healthcare field including hospitals, residential and nonresidential health care facilities, and private practices.

Overall, there is a large scope of practices performed by speech language pathologists and a variety of work environments. The career can become overwhelming, especially in graduate school, but the hard work is worth the reward of helping children and adults find their voices.



Figure 5: A speech language pathologist and a child during therapy.

Analysis of Speech Language Pathologist Assistant

Speech language pathology assistants also known as SLPAs work for certified speech language pathologists. They are paid less than speech language pathologists and a bachelor's degree is needed to be certified. SLPAs work under the supervision of speech-language pathologists to help people with speech problems.

Career Outlook

There are many jobs a student can go into while in the Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSDS) major. The easiest one being a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA). According to ASHA, and Speech Language Pathologist Assistants are "Individuals who, following academic coursework, clinical practicum, and credentialing can perform tasks prescribed, directed, and supervised by ASHA-certified SLPs." A SLPA, helps the Speech Pathologist with Clients, working directly under them. To become an SLP there are many qualifications you need to meet. In terms of salary an Assistant makes roughly twenty an hour which averages around forty-one thousand a year. Salary can vary between state and experience. For example, someone with the highest level of certifications or experience can make around twenty-nine dollars an hour or an average salary of sixty-one thousand a year.

Pathway to a Career

First, you will need to obtain a degree either through an SLPA associate degree program or obtain a bachelor's degree in Speech Pathology or Communication Sciences and Disorders. There are even online programs where an Assistant degree can be obtained. Through ASHA, you can obtain your certification by completing their modules. However, one hundred hours of supervised work in the field will need to be obtained, then can typically be done through a clinical. After completing the 100 hours of supervised field work, demonstration of the skills of an SLPA needs to be completed. Lastly, the Assistants Certification Exam. This exam is from ASHA and is a one hundred question test created by fellow educators in the field of Communication Sciences and Disorders. The certification cost around \$250 and the annual renewal around \$125. Almost all states require this certification. This also allows you to have state credentials as a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant.

Job Description

Many responsibilities come with being an SLPA. It is important to remember that SLPAs can only do tasks assigned by the SLP. The use of an SLPA is optional and depends on the SLP. Typically, SLPAs help with the assistants with speech, language or hearing screenings without clinical interpretation, assessment of patients, bilingual translation, following treatment plans, documenting performance of the patient, client, or student, instruction for alternative forms of communication. Figure 6 represents a SLPA assessing a child for articulation. After the assessment, the SLPA will send the assessment to the licensed SLP so they can create a plan of action to treat the child. Assistants can also help with administrative tasks such as, preparing, and scheduling activities created by the SLP, check maintenance and equipment, and assist with operations such as scheduling, recordkeeping, and maintenance. Although there are a lot of tasks and responsibilities and SLPA can have there are some that and SLPA should not do including; presenting as an SLP, performing diagnostic tests, evaluations, or swallowing screenings, perform procedures requiring more advanced skill, interpreting results of an observation of feeding or swallowing evaluations, participating in parent, case or interdisciplinary team conferences without the SLP being present, select students for service, make referrals, or discharge a patient. An SLPA may have more than one SLP supervising them, but a SLP will never supervise more than two SLPAs.



Figure 6: A speech-language pathologist assistant assessing a child on articulation.

Conclusion

Based on the large demand for individuals in the Communication Sciences and Disorders field, universities across Virginia have decided to add csds as a major. There is a large shortage in audiologists, speech language pathologists, and speech language pathologist assistants across the country and not many people know about the great job opportunities that come from this major. As a result, Longwood University's CSDS advising department has asked CSD Information Inc. to create a guide into the career opportunities for individuals who wish to pursue a career in CSDS.

For our report, we have analyzed three different job opportunities with a csds degree. Audiology speech language pathology, speech language pathology assistant, and audiology have great career prospects, making them the basis for our analysis.

The three jobs were analyzed based on three criteria: career outlook, pathway to career, and job description.

Through research we found that all three jobs require intensive certifications, observation hours, and education. We also found that all three jobs have a great employment outlook for the next ten years and great pay.

We found that speech language pathologists have the highest projected growth out of the other two careers. Speech language pathologists get paid slightly less than audiologists. However, SLPs are only required to go to school for a minimum of six years. There is also a variety of workplace settings for speech language pathologists that are not available for speech language pathologist assistants and audiologists.

On the other hand, audiologists have slightly less demand than SLPs and SLPAs. Audiologists must obtain a doctorate degree and have a total of eight years of education. However, they get paid more than SLPs and SLPAs. Unlike speech language pathologists, audiologists do not work in school settings. They are mostly found in hospitals, nursing facilities, or private practices.

Lastly, we found that speech language pathologist assistants are not needed as much as SLPs or audiologists but are still important to health care. SLPAs only need a bachelor's degree and certifications. They also must work under the supervision of a SLP. SLPAs are paid less than the other two careers however, it is less stressful and less responsibilities.

Overall, we found that a major in CSDS can provide a wide variety of careers depending on the type of education, workplace, and job growth a student desires for their future.

Recommendations

For the prospective students interested in pursuing a degree in CSDS, CSD Information Inc. recommends you do the following:

- Shadow SLP or audiologist
- Research graduate programs/ doctorate programs near you
- Pick a route and take the necessary tests
- Volunteer to help people with disabilities in speech or hearing

References

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