PURDUE UNIVERSITY FORT WAYNE | Faculty Senate

Senate Reference No. 26-6

MEMORANDUM

TO: 2025-2026 Senate Executive Committee
FROM: Steven Alan Carr
Convenor, Curriculum Subcommittee
DATE: 09/18/2026
SUBJECT: New Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

The Curriculum Subcommittee reviewed a proposal from the College of Science for a new minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. We voted via email to approve the proposal and find it requires no Senate review.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal.

Approve	**Oppose**	**Abstain**	**Absent**	**Present Non-Voting**
Terri Swim			Abe Schwab	Jenna Rupp / Tara Lewis
Cigdem Gurgur			Carl Drummond	
Steve Carr			Alan Legg (on leave)	
Luna Maldonado-Velez				
Jon Rusert				

Neff Hall, Room 360C | 2101 E. Coliseum Blvd. | Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499
o: 260-481-6019 | | EA/EOU

Degree/Certificate/Major/Minor/Concentration Cover Sheet

Date: 5/4/2026

Institution: Purdue

Campus: Fort Wayne

School or College: College of Science

Department: Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Location: On Campus 80% or more online: Yes ○ No ◉

County: Allen

Type: Minors: New

Program name:

Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Graduate/Undergraduate: Undergraduate

Degree Code: Other Minor

Brief Description:

The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders will provide students with a foundation in the science of human communication and communication disorders. Completion of the minor provides most of the required coursework needed to apply to graduate programs in speech-language pathology or audiology. The minor requires a minimum of 19 credit hours or 6 courses with a grade of C or better in each. Students must complete 9 resident credits at the 30000+ level.

Rationale for new or terminated program:

The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) is designed to increase undergraduate student exposure to and interest in the field while providing a structured, accessible pathway to graduate school in speech-language pathology for students outside the major. Communication is central to human interaction, learning, health, and social participation, yet many undergraduates remain unaware of communication sciences as a discipline or of speech-language pathology as a career option until late in their academic careers. A CSD minor allows students from a wide variety of majors to explore the scientific, social, and applied dimensions of human communication early enough to make informed academic and professional decisions. The minor serves as an intentional recruitment and pipeline mechanism for our graduate program in speech-language pathology. By offering foundational coursework aligned with graduate-level expectations, without requiring an undergraduate major, this minor enables students from fields such as psychology, education, linguistics, health sciences, human services, and related disciplines to obtain the academic preparation necessary for competitive graduate school applications. The minor also strengthens the graduate program by cultivating a well-prepared, internal applicant pool. Over time, this pipeline can improve graduate enrollment stability, academic readiness, and program continuity while supporting institutional goals related to recruitment, student success, and workforce development in high-need communication and health professions.

CIP Code: 51.0201

Name of Person who Submitted Proposal:

Chris Grindrod

Contact Information (phone or email): cgrindro@pfw.edu

Docusign Envelope ID: FF4646E2-AD1D-8955-8297-F9EA0D7300AF

Undergraduate Academic Program Memo

Date: 5/4/26

From: Dr. Chris Grindrod, Graduate Program Director, Communication Sciences & Disorders

To: Dr. Terri Swim, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs

Re: Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Brief description of the program:

The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders will provide students with a foundation in the science of human communication and communication disorders. Completion of the minor provides most of the required coursework needed to apply to graduate programs in speech-language pathology or audiology. The minor requires a minimum of 19 credit hours or 6 courses with a 2.00 grade point average. The program consists of six (6) required courses. No more than 3 resident credits can be below the 30000+ level.

Brief rationale for program request:

The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) is designed to increase undergraduate student exposure to and interest in the field while providing a structured, accessible pathway to graduate school in speech-language pathology for students outside the major. As of 2025, Fort Wayne shows a 1.8% increase in Health and Education Services employment over a 12-month period. Based on this data, career opportunities in CSD are growing locally.

CIP Code: n/a

For completion by Office of Academic Affairs

Signed by:
069E0DFB3A7247E...
9/1/2026

Department Chair Signature *Date*

DocuSigned by:
Ronald Friedman
4017A582972D4AC...
9/1/2026

School Dean Signature *Date*

DocuSigned by:
Carl Drummond
27109142004745C...
9/1/2026

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Signature *Date*

PLEASE NOTE: The Office of Academic Affairs will collect electronic signatures from the Chair, Dean, and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs after the form has been filled out and submitted to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs with the rest of the program proposal.

Approved 4/3/26 by the Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders
Approved 4/28/26 by the College of Science

Purdue University Fort Wayne
Request for a New UG Minor

Proposed Title of Minor:
Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

College/School and Department Offering the Minor:
College of Science, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Projected Date of Implementation:
Spring 2027

I. Brief Description of Minor: ***This may be published in the Catalog. A brief explanation of what the student will experience and/or learn; no more than 2-3 sentences.***

The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders will provide students with a foundation in the science of human communication and communication disorders. Completion of the minor provides most of the required coursework needed to apply to graduate programs in speech-language pathology or audiology. Students interested in the minor who intend to pursue graduate school to become a speech-language pathologist or audiologist should consult with the Graduate Program Director in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders to learn more about the recommended undergraduate prerequisite courses that most graduate programs require.

II. Why is this minor needed? ***Rationale, including market research and/or survey results*****.**

Rationale
The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) is designed to increase undergraduate student exposure to and interest in the field while providing a structured, accessible pathway to graduate school in speech-language pathology for students outside the major. Communication is central to human interaction, learning, health, and social participation, yet many undergraduates remain unaware of communication sciences as a discipline or of speech-language pathology as a career option until late in their academic careers. A CSD minor allows students from a wide variety of majors to explore the scientific, social, and applied dimensions of human communication early enough to make informed academic and professional decisions.

The minor serves as an intentional recruitment and pipeline mechanism for our graduate program in speech-language pathology. Each year, we receive numerous inquiries about prerequisite coursework from prospective students at PFW and other Indiana universities. Without a minor, there is no structured path for PFW students to complete the required undergraduate coursework. By offering a minor that includes foundational coursework aligned with graduate-level expectations, this minor enables students from majors such as psychology, education, linguistics, health sciences, human services, and related disciplines

to obtain the academic preparation necessary for competitive graduate school applications. For students who discover an interest in speech-language pathology after selecting another major, the minor provides a feasible and transparent pathway into the profession without extending time to degree. It is important to note that the proposed minor includes all but two of the required courses for students to be eligible to apply to our graduate program. Rather than proposing a 25-credit minor (8 courses in total), which may prove challenging for students to complete along with their major and general education requirements, we have selected the most essential coursework. Importantly, our current admissions policies allow students to take the remaining 40000-level courses during the graduate program while still completing the degree in two years.

The minor also strengthens the graduate program by cultivating a well-prepared, internal applicant pool. Students who complete the minor will have established relationships with faculty, familiarity with disciplinary expectations, and foundational knowledge that supports success in graduate coursework. Over time, this pipeline can improve graduate enrollment stability, academic readiness, and program continuity while supporting institutional goals related to recruitment, student success, and workforce development in high-need communication and health professions.

Evidence of Labor Market Need

The minor is particularly relevant for careers that involve assisting, educating, advocating for, or collaborating with people in various settings such as speech-language clinics, schools, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities.

According to the Big Future Career Directory (see Career Directory: Healthcare and Human Services: Speech-Language Pathology Assistants), Speech-language pathology assistant (SLPA) positions are projected to grow 6% over the next five years, increasing from 112,326 jobs currently to 118,914. Schools continue to be the largest employer of SLPAs. Early intervention and pediatric outpatient clinics are expanding SLPA roles to address SLP shortages. Healthcare settings use SLPAs more selectively due to state scope of practice rules, but shortages of SLPs are increasing interest in SLPA-level support.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (see Occupational Outlook Handbook: Field of Degree: Behavioral Disorder Counselors), employment of behavioral disorder counselors (aka behavior analysts or technicians) is projected to grow 17% from 2024 to 2034, much faster than the average for all occupations. About 48,300 openings for counselors are projected each year, on average, over the decade. A behavior analyst or technician is a healthcare paraprofessional who works directly with clients to implement treatment and behavior intervention plans. They work primarily with individuals diagnosed with autism or other developmental disabilities, helping them build essential communication, social, and daily living skills.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (see Occupational Outlook Handbook: Field of Degree: Health Education Specialists), employment of health education specialists is projected to grow 4% from 2024 to 2034, about as fast as the average for all occupations. About 7,900 openings for health education specialists are projected each year, on average, over the decade. A health education specialist is a healthcare professional who develops

educational programs, and advocates for policies that promote well-being. They equip individuals with the knowledge and tools to prevent disease, manage chronic conditions, and navigate healthcare systems. They provide one-on-one guidance to patients regarding diagnoses, treatment options, and healthy lifestyle adjustments.

More locally, as of 2025, the job outlook for Speech-Language Pathology Assistants in Fort Wayne is highly favorable, mirroring the national trend of 15% to 21% employment growth. Local public and private schools are the largest employers of SLPAs in the Fort Wayne area. Outpatient rehabilitation clinics and home health agencies in Allen County frequently hire SLPAs to support licensed Speech-Language Pathologists with therapy plans and clinical documentation. The job outlook for Behavior Technicians in Fort Wayne is highly favorable. Driven by strong demand for autism care and behavioral health services, projected industry growth is currently between 12% and 22% over the next 10 years. The Fort Wayne job outlook for Health Education Specialists is stable, with regional growth mirroring the national projection of 4% over the next 10 years.

III. Prospective Curriculum: *Please create a plan of study for the degree. If new courses are being created, all course proposals must be completed in order to add to this block.*

A. Required Course: Credits 3

CSD 11500 Introduction To Communicative Disorders

B. Required Foundational Science Courses: Credits 16

CSD 30200 Acoustic Bases Of Speech And Hearing
CSD 30400 Anatomy And Physiology Of The Speech And Hearing Mechanism (4 cr.)
CSD 30600 Introduction To Phonetics
CSD 30900 Language Development
CSD 46000 Introduction To Assessment Audiology

IV. Credits required

The proposed minor requires completion of 19 credits (6 courses in total).

V. List all specific program completion requirements, including courses, minimum course GPA, minimum overall GPA, number of credits completed in residence, maximum time allowed from the completion of the first course, how many courses can be applied to another certificate or program of study.

The minor should be declared within the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. The minor requires the completion of 6 courses (19 total credits) with a grade of

C or higher for all courses required in the minor. At least 9 credits must be earned as resident credits at the 30000-level or above.

VI. Describe student population to be served and summarize the benefits to them, including focus and/or career relevance.

The minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders will be available to students who are enrolled in any baccalaureate program across campus. It will provide students with a foundation in the science of human communication and communication disorders. Completion of the minor will also provide most of the required coursework needed to apply to graduate programs in speech-language pathology or audiology.

A minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders builds transferable communication, analysis, and interpersonal skills that are valued across many professional fields, not just clinical practice. Students gain an evidence-based understanding of how communication works, how it can break down, and how environments, culture, and disability shape interaction. This knowledge is highly applicable in education, health-related services, human services, business, and public-facing professions. Employers consistently value strong communicators who can listen actively, explain complex information clearly, and work effectively with various populations, all of which are central competencies in communication sciences coursework.

The minor is particularly relevant for careers that involve assisting, educating, advocating for, or collaborating with people, such as special education support, disability services, and community outreach. It also complements fields like human resources, healthcare administration, and counseling-related roles, where understanding communication differences improves service quality, accessibility, and equity.

Additionally, the minor prepares students for future experiential and work-based learning by providing a clear academic lens that students can apply to internships, employment, research, and service learning, even in non-clinical roles. For students considering graduate study in speech-language pathology, audiology, education, or related fields, the minor offers relevant foundational knowledge. For others, it enhances employability by signaling strong communication skills and analytical thinking.

VII. How does this minor complement the institution, college, or departmental missions?

The minor emphasizes the developmental, biological, neurological, and physiological foundations of human communication**,** which aligns well with the college's commitment to fostering awareness of how science contributes to the understanding of human behavior, and to providing students with the analytical skills that will serve them broadly in their future careers and lives. By giving students the opportunity to apply this foundational knowledge to human communication disorders, the minor also supports the college mission of promoting scientific learning, discovery, and innovation to advance knowledge and address real-world problems. The minor supports pathways into clinical professions**,** research, and healthcare**,** reinforcing the department and college's role in training future

scientists and practitioners. Finally, it offers students a pathway into a high-demand profession, aligning with the department and college missions focused on professional preparation**.**

VIII. Describe any relationship to existing programs within the university.

The proposed minor includes several courses from the existing major in Communication Sciences and Disorders. While PFW currently offers minors in Communication Studies, Linguistics, and Psychology, the CSD minor is unique in that it focuses specifically on foundational knowledge of speech-language pathology and hearing sciences. This knowledge is not currently covered in other minors. In addition, it is designed to provide most of the prerequisite background coursework needed for graduate programs in speech-language pathology and audiology, which existing minors do not include.

IX. List and indicate the resources required to implement the proposed minor. Indicate sources (e.g., reallocations or any new resources such as personnel, library holdings, equipment, etc.).

The proposed minor will be offered by the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders in the College of Science. The department currently consists of three tenured/tenure-track faculty members, five clinical faculty members, and an administrative assistant. In addition, there is an academic advisor shared equally with the Department of Criminal Justice. The department also benefits from the assistance of four regular limited term lecturers. The proposed minor can be administered with the resources currently available in the department.

X. Describe any innovative features of the program (e.g., involvement with local or regional agencies, or offices, cooperative efforts with other institutions).

The minor is innovative in that it is designed to provide the majority of the prerequisite background knowledge needed for graduate programs in speech-language pathology and audiology, providing a path for non-CSD majors to apply to our graduate program. It is also innovative in that it offers opportunities for students from majors such as psychology, education, linguistics, health sciences, and human services to obtain knowledge that is beneficial for future employment in healthcare fields.

Liaison Librarian Memo

Date: 3/16/26

From: Shannon Johnson, Director of Helmke Library

To: Dr. Terri Swim, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs

Re: Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Describe availability of library resources to support proposed new program:

We have access to CINAHL and Pubmed as well the ASHA journals to support this program.

Comments:

I do not anticipate a significant need for new materials for the program at this time but will monitor requests for future evaluation. The only major concern I have is related to staffing. If this increases the number of students significantly it will put additional strain on the science librarian position and document delivery.

Liaison Librarian Signature

9/10/26

Date

Please email academic_program@pfw.edu with questions.