

Opportunity for doctoral or postdoctoral study  
at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Please contact Dr. Cynthia J. Johnson  
or Dr. David M. Richman for more information

Project FOCAL: Focusing on Causality and Assessment to Train Leaders in Children's  
Communication Disabilities (Preparation of Leadership Personnel)

Project FOCAL was designed to prepare doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows in the areas of assessment and the etiology of communication disorders in children with disabilities. The project brings together faculty and scholars from the departments of Speech and Hearing Science and Special Education, with cooperation from the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services, for the purpose of preparing knowledgeable, influential, and visionary leaders. Individuals will be trained to conduct research and teach through a collaborative, cross-disciplinary training model. Graduates of the program will be prepared to join Speech and Hearing or Special Education faculties at colleges and universities, where they will conduct research, teach, and provide service.

#### DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Eight competency areas are emphasized in Project FOCAL, highlighting the expertise of our key faculty:

1. Children's communication disabilities, including research methodology and personnel preparation
2. Causal influences on children's communication disabilities
3. Current and innovative cross-disciplinary assessment methods related to best practices in intervention
4. Integrated and collaborative training and practice
5. Cultural and linguistic diversity
6. Achievement in general education curricula and natural learning environments for children with disabilities
7. Law, public or social policy/advocacy, and professional practice in disability
8. Use of technology in university student training and assessment of communication disabilities in children

#### Doctoral Program Opportunities

- Paid tuition
- A yearly stipend for full-time, 12-month participation
- A biweekly Transdisciplinary Seminar, with mentoring by 6 key faculty from two disciplines: Speech and Hearing Science, and Special Education
- Research, Teaching, and Clinical Internships at the university and in the community, to promote networking with scientists and professionals in related fields
- Designing and conducting original research

- Annual stipend for conference travel

### Doctoral Program Requirements

A doctoral program in Speech and Hearing Science or Special Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign requires 64 credit hours beyond the master's degree. In addition, Project FOCAL requires:

- A biweekly Transdisciplinary Seminar, taken each semester in the program
- 2 classes in communication development, assessment, education, or intervention
- 3 research methods classes
- 1 class that in diversity in communication and learning
- 1 class in interdisciplinary teaming
- 1 seminar in disability law and public policy
- An Advisor/Mentor Research Internship each semester
- 1 Key Faculty Research Internship
- 1 Campus/Community Internship
- 1 Teaching Internship
- An early research project
- The dissertation

### Research, Teaching, and Clinical Internships.

During the project, a student will participate in three types of research or clinical internship: an *Advisor/Mentor Research Internship*, led by the doctoral student's advisor each semester of the program. In addition, the student will participate in three other kinds of internships. The first is a *Key Faculty Research Internship*, where the student will conduct research with another of the six key faculty on the grant. The second is a *Campus/Community (CC) Internship*. The purpose of CC Internships is to give the student an opportunity to learn research or service paradigms outside of his or her major discipline. CC Internships may include participation in cooperating campus labs in related fields, to learn new paradigms for studying (i.e., to assessing or determining causes of) children's communication abilities or disabilities. CC Internships may also include clinics where the student will learn to assess, educate, or treat children with communication disabilities, as at the University of Illinois Speech-Language Clinic, or in local early childhood programs or reading tutoring programs. The third internship is a *Teaching Internship* in Speech and Hearing Science or Special Education, supervised by the key faculty of the grant. The Teaching Internship allows the student to learn to teach a class related to assessment or causality of communication disabilities.

### Doctoral Program Eligibility:

Doctoral students should:

- Hold a Master's degree in Speech and Hearing Science, Special Education, or a related field
- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent U.S. resident

## Doctoral Program Application Process

Interested applicants should submit:

- An application to the doctoral program in either Speech and Hearing Science or Special Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, by going to the Graduate College web page at <http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/admissions/apply/>
- GRE Scores
- Undergraduate and graduate college transcripts
- 3 letters of recommendation
- Resume

For more information on the doctoral degree in Speech and Hearing Science, please go to <http://www.shs.uiuc.edu/programs/doctorate.html>.

For more information on the doctoral degree in Special Education, please go to <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/saao/grad/handbook/phd.html>.

## POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH SPECIALIST POSITION

A 1-year postdoctoral Research Specialist position is available each year for 3 years, from 2008-2010.

- Guaranteed half-time position plus possible supplemental funding in the Departments of Speech and Hearing Science or Special Education

The half-time Research Specialists will be assisted in securing supplemental funds from other departmental sources, such as teaching or supervisory assistantships, project coordinator positions, or research assistantships.

### Research Specialist Program Opportunities

In conjunction with the key faculty, research specialists will select mentors who most closely match their interests. Together they will design a plan outlining intended outcomes for the fellowship year.

- Conference travel stipend
- Writing grants
- Writing for publication
- Auditing classes
- Participating in *Advisor/Mentor Research Internships*, *Key Faculty Research Internships*, or *Campus/Community Internships*
- Conducting independent research

### Postdoctoral Research Specialist Program Requirements

- Attendance and input in planning project seminars, including the biweekly Transdisciplinary Seminar
- Regular meetings with the fellow's chosen mentor(s)
- Monthly updates to the co-directors regarding progress toward outcomes
- Mentoring of funded Project FOCAL doctoral students (as needed)
- Immersion in the University of Illinois scholarly community, as appropriate (e.g., attending research colloquia, meeting faculty who share similar interests, etc.)

Postdoctoral Research Specialist Applicants should:

- Hold a doctoral degree in Speech and Hearing Science, Special Education, or a related field
- Have an interest and scholarly record in assessment and causes of children's communication disorders

Application Process for the Postdoctoral Research Specialist Program

To apply, please send:

- A letter of interest
- Curriculum vitae
- Up to three scholarly publications or conference papers
- Three letters of recommendation

To Cynthia J. Johnson, Ph.D., Director  
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or

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(Dr. Richman also may be contacted by e-mail at "David M. Richman"<driehman@uiuc.edu> or by phone at (217) 333-0260.)

Review of applications will begin Feb 15, 2008 and continue until the positions are filled.

Project FOCAL Support and Key Faculty

Project FOCAL is supported by a Preparation of Leadership Personnel Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

Project FOCAL Key Faculty

Program Director:

Cynthia J. Johnson, Ph.D., Dept. of Speech and Hearing Science (SHS) – child language/phonological disability, emergent literacy

Program Co-Directors:

Laura DeThorne, Ph.D. (SHS) – child language disability, causal factors

James Halle, Ph.D., Dept. of Special Education (SPED)

Michaelene Ostrosky, Ph.D., (SPED) - social emotional competence, challenging behavior

David M. Richman, Ph.D., (SPED)

Ruth Watkins, Ph.D., (SHS) –child language disability

Women, minorities and individuals with disabilities are particularly encouraged to apply. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.