





It is now common knowledge that the population of the United States, including New Jersey is diversifying. According to the most recent [United States Census data](#), population characteristics for New Jersey are as summarized below:

Table Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NJ?> . The symbol before the numerals in the right-hand column indicates estimated data.

The racial, ethnic, and gender demographics of students in undergraduate programs in Health Sciences do not align with the population demographics of New Jersey.

Cultural and linguistic barriers between clients and healthcare providers can result in reduced quality of care. As summarized by Bijoyaa and Mohanb (2021)

A diverse CSD workforce can improve access to services and reduce health care disparities for diverse populations. The increasing diversity of the workforce begins with recruiting and training a diverse student body in CSD academic programs. (p.755)

(The acronym CSD in the above quote refers to Communication Sciences and Disorders, a term commonly used to describe educational programs in speech-language pathology, audiology, and speech and hearing sciences.) Supports can be built into undergraduate programs to help students identify their diversity assets in preparing for careers and graduate study (Guiberson & Vigil, 2021).

[the Pre-CD Concentration requires](#) 80 credits in the major area and 48 credits in the General Studies area. These credits include seven core courses (28 credits) for the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences major, in addition to lab science courses in Biology and Chemistry (10-15 credits). For the pre-CD concentration, the students complete ten courses specific to the Pre-CD concentration (including PSYC 3323-Developmental Psychology: Childhood and Adolescence). The tightly prescriptive nature of the Pre-CD concentration in the BSHS major has not allowed students to complete optional upper and lower-level cognate courses, which would typically allow for student choice within the curriculum of the major. To elaborate, the Bachelor of Science degree requires 80 credits in the major area. For Pre-CD students in the BSHS, the 80 credits consist of 28 credits in the BSHS core curriculum, lab science courses, plus 40 credits in required coursework for the Pre-Communication Disorders track. Students in the General track of the BSHS complete the 28 credit core along with required lab science courses and are able to select cognate courses to complete the credit requirement for the BS degree.

Currently, to be admitted as a student to the BSHS program, students must meet specific [mathematics requirements](#). As stated on the program website:

Students who do not meet the mathematics requirement may request to the Admissions Office a Conditional Admission to the BSHS program General Concentration.

In summary, the current requirements of the BSHS Pre-CD Concentration restrict access to students who do not meet the admission criteria to the BSHS. The current concentration also does not allow for student choice of cognates toward their BSHS degree. The current structure also makes it challenging for students from other majors to access the Pre-CD courses as electives as content is often tailored to students who have declared a Pre-Communication Disorders concentration within the BSHS and HLTH courses have been restricted to BSHS majors.

Offering a minor in Communication Disorders instead of the current Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences /Pre-Communication Disorders track has the potential to increase student diversity for the following reasons:

1. Increasing student choice by offering students the opportunity to broaden their knowledgebase about human communication while completing varied fields of study.
2. Enabling students from diverse fields of study the opportunity to complete prerequisites courses that permit students to pursue graduate programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders.
3. Admission barriers to accessing pre-CD specific courses in the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences would be removed for students completing a minor.
4. The minor could also be used in marketing areas of study to potential undergraduate students, [including those not interested in a Health Science major](#), but who are interested in communication disorders. This opportunity could potentially increase both overall student enrollment as well as increase diversity of students within the minor.
5. Collaboration among faculty teaching in the proposed minor, the Minor Coordinator, Academic Advising, and precepting faculty across the University would promote the

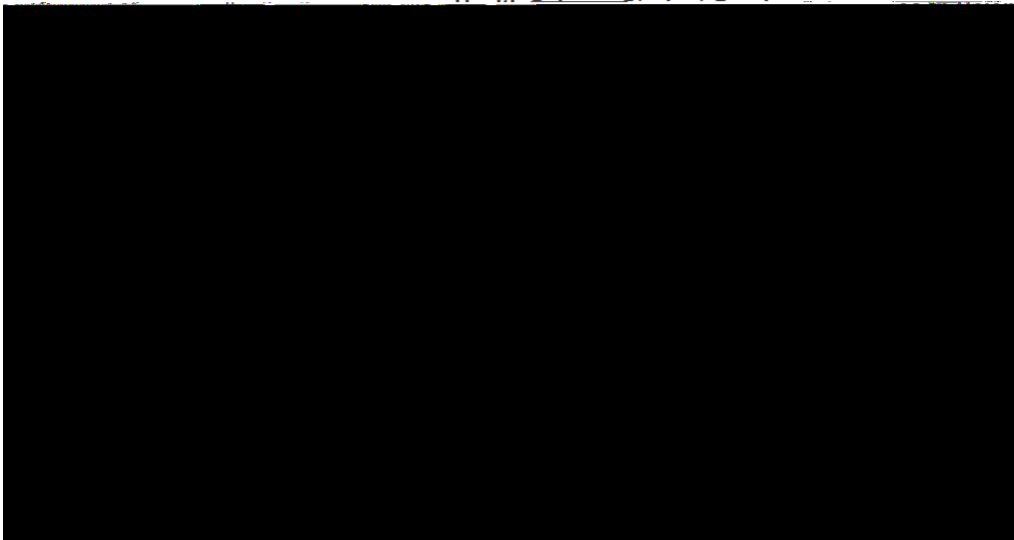
minor as a complement to their liberal arts education as well as a potential career gateway for students in a variety of programs/majors. Students could also “sample” courses in the minor to see if the content aligns with their interests.

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The planning committee members emphasize that adoption of this minor aligns with the following University Focus Areas:

According to data provided by Stockton’s Office of Institutional Research for Academic Year 2021-2022, there was an average (across semesters) of 1,128 students enrolled in undergraduate programs in the School of Health Sciences. Among these were 140 Pre-CD students.

Data on student gender within the School of Health Sciences provided by the Office of Institutional Research (which is limited to binary gender indication) is summarized below:



Review of the above data indicates that the majority of students in Health Sciences programs are white females.

2.

The proposed minor also aligns with the University's \_\_\_\_\_ particularly,

Stockton has a long history of offering undergraduate students'

B. \_\_\_\_\_  
The learning outcomes for the minor includes the following.

1.

Learning objective 1 is derived from the current

Language-Pathology and Audiology.

Assessment: This learning outcome will be assessed formatively through course assessments (exams, projects, student presentations, reflections, etc.) that correspond with the curricular component of the objective (e.g., child language development; anatomy and physiology of speech and hearing.)

2.

All courses within the minor will have at least one learning objective that relates to the contemporary professional issues of cultural humility, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Assessment: This learning outcome will be assessed formatively through course assessments (exams, projects, student presentations, reflections, case studies, etc.) that correspond with the curricular component of the objective.

3.

number will increase



- Along with faculty teaching in the Minor, conduct assessment.
- Engage in three-year program review.

There is currently an Associate Chair for the Pre-Communication Disorders track within BSHS. Thus, there would be no significant budget change in moving from the Pre-CD track to the Communication Disorders minor.

The minor would consist of the following courses. These courses, selected from the current Pre-CD track, are those which would provide the most complete overview of the principles of typical human communication as well as disorders of human communication. These are also the coursework areas most commonly required as prerequisites for Communication Science and Disorders graduate programs. As many graduate programs require a course in Biology as well as one in either Physics or Chemistry, students in the mino

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Guiberson, M. & Vigil, D. (2021). Speech-language pathology graduate admissions: Implications to diversify the workforce. 3. 145-155.

Mohapatra, B. & Mohan, R. (2021). A proposed framework for increasing racial and ethnic diversity in communication sciences and disorders programs: The REAP Model. 755-767.

O'Neil, B. (2023, September). Bridging the gap: SLU Speech pathologist advocates for underrepresented minorities in rising career field. Retrieved September 28, 2023 from <https://www.slu.edu/news/2023/september/speech-language-pathology.php>

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