



The Tower at STAR
100 Discovery Blvd. – 7th Floor
Newark, DE 19713
Phone: 302-831-8370

October 16, 2019

Dr. Aquiles Iglesias
Program Director
UD Communication Sciences & Disorders Program
The Tower at STAR
Newark, DE 19713

Dear Dr. Iglesias,

As Dean of the College of Health Sciences, I am very excited to support the proposal to make the current Communication Sciences & Disorders (CSCD) Program the **Department** of Communication Sciences & Disorders. Since its inception, the program has been strategic about its mission to educate the next generation of clinicians and researchers, and successful in how that mission has been implemented.

In response to a massive shortage of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) in the First State, the master of arts in speech-language pathology was developed in 2013 to serve the needs of Delaware. With the inaugural cohort of 26 students starting in Fall 2016, and graduating in May of 2018, the program is the first CSCD Master's program in the State of Delaware and trains top-level SLPs to serve throughout the state. In total, the four masters level cohorts have included 101 students, with two of those cohorts graduating a total of 48 SLPs. The program has been successful in its ability to attract, train and engage students and has grown to offer a PhD in Communication Sciences and Disorders, with a current cohort of 9 doctoral students.

In addition to teaching the next generation of SLPs, this program has attracted 11 stellar core faculty members and researchers to its STAR Campus home. Research impact ranges in everything from neural underpinning of language learning to effective treatments approaches for individuals with aphasia or Parkinson's disease, and students have the opportunity to engage in these critical activities.

Graduate students have the opportunity to work with clients in the Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, which has gained tremendous popularity since opening in October 2015. The state-of-the-art clinic—one of the many programs that has been catapulted to success through UD Health—proudly serves people of all ages, helping children and adults diagnosed with speech, language or hearing impairments with individual or small group treatment services. All clinic therapy rooms are equipped with video production/viewing capability. These enhancements greatly impact not only our potential to address the need for pathologists, but also allow the clinic to continue to serve as a bastion of innovative practices for the entire region. The clinic employs approximately 30 master clinicians with a variety of expertise, on a part-time basis, in order to best respond to the referrals from the community. In addition to on-site services, the Speech Language Hearing Clinic provides services in the community throughout the state, including bilingual (English/Spanish) screenings and assessments.

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The CSCD program has flourished I am impressed with how faculty provide experiential learning opportunities for students to set them up to be successful after graduation, how researchers enhance a meaningful and robust research portfolio, and how clinicians partner with students and researchers to improve the quality of life for clinic patients and other individuals across the region. I fully support making shifting this very successful program to the **Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders**.

If I can provide additional information that would be helpful as you finalize this process, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen S. Matt". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Kathleen S. Matt, PhD
Dean, College of Health Sciences
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