

*The Au.D. degree:*  
WHY IT IS NEEDED NOW...



**AFA** AUDIOLOGY  
FOUNDATION  
OF AMERICA

*Au.D. means professional hearing care*

## THE AU.D. IS NEEDED NOW...

**for the good of the profession,  
and the hearing-impaired public we all serve.**

### WHAT THE AU.D. IS...

The Au.D. is intended to become the first professional degree for the practice of audiology, replacing the Master's degree. The program's four-year post-baccalaureate curriculum expands audiologists' biological knowledge base as well as their theoretical and clinical education commensurate with audiology's expanded scope of practice.

Doctors of Audiology will graduate possessing the diagnostic and remedial skills necessary to compete in today's hearing care marketplace. Programs that offer the Au.D. will be better positioned to attract the best and brightest of students seeking the challenges and rewards that a doctoral-level profession can offer.

Professional doctorate (Au.D.) programs exceed the academic and training experience provided by Master's level programs.

Academic course work includes:

- biological/physical and behavioral/social sciences;
- humanities;
- anatomic, physiologic, physical and psycho-acoustic bases of human communication processes;
- and linguistic and psycholinguistic aspects

Professional course work in audiology includes hearing and balance disorders, evaluation, and rehabilitation; related audiology courses and intensive clinical experiences. Graduate Doctors of Audiology should be eligible for licensure in any state.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE (AU.D)

1949	The Doctor of Audiology degree is first called for.	1994	AFA awards \$25,000 to first Au.D. program at Baylor College of Medicine.
1978	Task Force on Science (ASHA) discusses the need for a professional doctorate to free Ph.D. programs from becoming corrupted for this purpose.	1995	AFA sponsors Au.D. Standards and Equivalency Conference. Participants call for "entitlement" to Au.D. designator for practitioners with experience and CEU's.
1983	ASHA underwrites a study that concludes that the Master's degree does not provide adequate professional preparation.	1996	AFA begins Professional Recredentialing Program to enable practitioners who meet psychometrically developed requirements, which measure their practice capabilities, to earn the Au.D. credential.
1984	Professional doctorate recommended by ASHA task force.	1997	ASHA postpones transition to doctoral degree as entry requirement to 2012.
1986	ASHA Audiology Task Force recommends Au.D. to become entry level degree by 1998.	1998	Six residential Au.D. programs available.
1988	ADA Education Conference calls for audiology training to move to doctoral level.	1999	Several distance education programs available for practicing audiologists.
1989	AFA created with the charge to "transform audiology to a doctoral profession with the Au.D. as its distinctive designator."	2000	The first distance education classes graduate over 200 Doctors of Audiology.
1990-2	Six independent surveys report majority support for the Au.D. degree.	2001	AFA commissions a feasibility study in the continued efforts to develop an independent Au.D. accrediting body resulting in the formation of the Accreditation Commission on Audiology Education (ACAE).
1992	Au.D. papers published in ASHA magazine draw a record response in peer review process with 72% of respondents in favor of mandating the Au.D. as the preferred degree.	2002	Twenty-four Au.D. programs available. More than 1000 Au.D. degree holders and more than 1500 enrolled in Au.D. Programs.
1992	Members of audiology-related professional organizations (RPO's) unanimously call for ASHA to facilitate Au.D. degree development and implementation.	2003	AAA, ADA & AFA work together to develop Model Licensure Statute for Audiology.
1993-2001	Alliance Funds provide 162 full-time students with scholarships totaling more than \$430,000.		

## **8 REASONS WHY AUDIOLOGY NEEDS THE AU.D....**

1. The Au.D. curriculum covers the full spectrum of basic and clinical science education required by audiology's expanded scope of practice.
2. Ph.D. programs will be freed from having to serve two masters; graduate school research training requirements and the needs of practitioners.
3. The Au.D. will attract the best and brightest students to the audiology profession.
4. As more students enter audiology, the number of practitioners serving the public will increase, enabling more hearing-impaired individuals to receive help.
5. A single degree designation for practitioners will unite a profession that operates in a multitude of settings.
6. A single degree designation will strengthen audiology's petition to be designated as Limited License Practitioners (LLP).
7. LLP status will lead to direct access to third party reimbursement, thereby improving accessibility to audiology services and products for consumers.
8. A professional doctorate will ultimately be accompanied by the prestige, opportunity and financial rewards enjoyed by professionals in comparable health care professions.

## **AUDIOLOGY WEBSITES:**

AUDIOLOGY FOUNDATION OF AMERICA  
[www.AuDfound.org](http://www.AuDfound.org)

ACADEMY OF DISPENSING AUDIOLOGISTS  
[www.audiologist.org](http://www.audiologist.org)

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY  
[www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org)

NATIONAL ASSOC. OF FUTURE DOCTORS OF AUDIOLOGY  
[www.nafda.org](http://www.nafda.org)



This brochure was prepared by the Audiology Foundation of America. The AFA is charged with transforming audiology to a doctoring profession with the Au.D. as its distinctive designator.

For more information about the Au.D. degree, contact:

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