

**College of Health and Human Development
Faculty Research Themes**

Communications Disabilities: Alternative Communication

Kathryn Drager

Research Interests

Assistant Professor

Communication Sciences & Disorders

Email Address: **KDD5@PSU.EDU**

Augmentative and alternative communication for individuals with severe expressive communication disorders, autism, listeners' comprehension of synthetic speech, and assessment and intervention for individuals with severe disabilities with challenging behaviors.

Thomas Frank

Research Interests

Professor

Communication Sciences & Disorders

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Classroom acoustics, noise-induced and hearing loss due to aging, understanding speech in noise, psychoacoustics, and objective methods of hearing testing.

Janice Light

Research Interests

Distinguished Professor

Communication Sciences & Disorders

Email Address: **JCL4@PSU.EDU**

Improving communication outcomes and enhancing quality of life for individuals who have significant speech and language impairments and require augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) (e.g., signs, communication boards, voice output assistive technologies).

Elina Mainela-Arnold

Research Interests

Assistant Professor

Communication Sciences & Disorders

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Cognitive mechanisms involved in language acquisition, the way in which these mechanisms interact with environmental input, and how this interaction might help explain individual differences with language ability, especially in individuals with low language abilities, such as children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI). Relationship between working memory and lexical frequency distributions, children's ability to extract and store regularities in verbal and nonverbal input, children's problem solving strategies revealed in speech and gesture.

Robert Prosek

Research Interests

Professor

Communication Sciences & Disorders

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Perception of voice disorders, intelligibility of speech in noise, interactions between speech production and speech perception.