

# **Communication Science & Disorders**

## **21-21 Unit Plan Executive Summary**

### **Unit Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Department of Communication Science and Disorders is to establish and provide distinctive academic programs for students in Speech-Language Pathology, collaborations with community partners, and service to individuals with communication, voice, and swallowing disorders across the life span.

The department is committed to preparing students to become dedicated, competent clinical leaders in the field of Speech Language Pathology. The Curriculum cultivates global and professional awareness and emphasizes the problem solving and critical thinking skills necessary to become strong professionals capable of serving a clinically, racially and culturally diverse client population.

### **Unit Descriptive Analysis:**

The CSD department offers B.S and M.S. degrees in Speech-Language Pathology. The graduate program is accredited by the Council of Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA).

We have 5 full time faculty, 1 Clinic Director, and 2 Clinical Supervisors. The department operates a Speech and Language Center that serves over 100 clients each year. Graduate students provide assessment and intervention to individuals across the lifespan under the supervision of the faculty and staff. All services are provided free of charge. The department strives to prepare strong undergraduate students who are ready for graduate study and graduate students who will go forward to represent the program as outstanding professionals in the community.

The department typically has 45-50 full time graduate students (approximately 25 per cohort) and about 75 undergraduate students. Our most pressing challenge is to continuously revise our courses and improve our own technical skills to meet the accreditation requirements as the profession grows and changes. Another challenge is maintaining a strong undergraduate program to feed into our graduate program. There are now 7 MS SLP programs in the state, resulting in fewer applications each year.

The program typically develops a 3-5 year strategic plan to assist us with yearly planning. We developed a new plan in the fall of 2021.

Goal 1 of the current unit plan relates to our graduate admission process. In an effort to admit students by more than just grades and test scores, we would like to investigate using the interview scores in more than a pass/fail capacity. We plan to use the last two years of data to determine if we are scoring interviews in a valid and reliable manner and determine the extent to which using scores as part of our formula would change our student rankings.

Goals 2 and 3 will focus on reviewing policies and procedures toward current best practice. Goal 4 will allow us to update clinic syllabi and SLOs and review them for alignment with accreditation requirements and best practices.

Goal 5 is an aspirational effort to increase undergraduate research within our department and Goal 6 supports the UM QEP.

This unit plan supports UM strategic plan and goals as follows:

UM Focus 1, Pandemic: CSD goal 3 Telepractice

UM Focus 2, Diversity and Social Justice: CSD goal 1, admissions practices, Goal 6 supporting the job search/ graduate school application process

Theme 3, innovations for teaching and learning: CSD Goal 2, thesis procedures; Goal 4, learning outcomes and competencies related to accreditation; Goal 5 undergraduate research

**Goal 1: Examine Graduate Admissions Interview Process**

**Intended Outcome: Determine if interview scores can be used reliably to modify student applicant rankings. Supports CSD Strategic Plan goal A:1**

**Goal 2: Review and Revise MS SLP Thesis Procedures**

**Intended Outcome: Develop procedure guidelines that are current and transparent. Supports CSD Strategic Plan Focus Area 2.**

**Goal 3: Develop Telepractice Training Program**

**Intended Outcome: The department will create a telepractice student training program based on current best practices. Supports CSD Strategic Plan Focus Area 2.**

**Goal 4: Clinical syllabi and learning outcomes**

**Intended Outcome: Clinical staff will examine current CFCC competencies on clinic syllabi and process for evaluating and remediating competencies. Supports CSD Strategic Plan Focus Area 2.**

**Goal 5: Improve pathway toward undergraduate research**

**Intended Outcome: Academic faculty will identify and outline the policies and procedures necessary to implement an undergraduate research program within the department. Supports CSD Strategic Plan goal B:1**

**Goal 6: Seniors in CSD will create artifacts for their job search/graduate application process.**

**Intended Outcome: Ninety percent of Level 3 students in each program will create at least 3 acceptable artifacts in their portfolio by earning a score of 80% or greater on the provided QEP Rubric. The artifacts for CSD are as follows: Research and create an employment list, Create materials that showcase attributes, Research the graduate school application process. Supports CSD Strategic Plan Focus Area 2.**