

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, completed plan
CSD Strategic Plan Summer 2018-Summer 2021

Vision

We want a reputation for being the strongest and most well-rounded undergraduate and graduate CSD program in the state of Alabama.

Mission

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 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 emphasizes the problem solving and critical thinking skills necessary to become strong clinical professionals capable of serving a diverse client population.

Envisioned Future

We envision a future with updated clinical technology, supervisors trained in the latest practices and offered opportunities for career development. Our undergraduate students will find success in applying to graduate programs and establishing careers. Our academic and clinic curriculums will meet and exceed the standards of The Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) and the Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC) of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association. Our graduate students will be prepared to collaborate and engage in interprofessional practice and to meet the increasing need in our country for SLPs who are highly prepared to work with adults with communication disorders. Our students, faculty and staff will have opportunities for self-care and appropriate work-life balance.

Focus Areas: Clinical, Technology, Student Success, Faculty-Staff Development

Issue 1: Clinical

1. Implement Electronic Medical Records (EMR). In order to train graduate students to work in professional clinical environments, we need to bring our speech and language clinic up to modern day standards and practices. The use of paper medical records is outdated. Outcome: This goal was discontinued. EMR was piloted and we chose to pursue a database instead.
2. Increase the number of adult clients being served in our clinic. Most graduate students now choose to work in adult settings and the number of jobs in this area is expected to grow.

There has been a shift away from interest in working in schools over the last decade, yet our clinic continues to be predominantly pediatric. In order to meet the needs of our graduate students, we need to increase the on-campus clinical training opportunities with adults.

Outcome: Goal Met

Issue 2: Technology

1. Create a technology Plan for upgrading clinical technology. The clinic technology in our department has been neglected and due to budgetary limitations, we have not been able to upgrade devices in many years. Our iPads are over 6 years old and do not have the memory to work the newer clinical applications. We need to create a plan for upgrades that can be funded and prioritized.

Outcome: Goal met. The technology plan was finalized in April of 2020. We funded 4 new cameras during 19-20 and 2 during 20-21. During the summer of 2019 through the fall of 2020, the department developed the SAVI voice and swallowing lab.

2. Implement E-Coaching technology in clinical supervision

Outcome: Goal met- 4 supervisors have used it and it has been used consistently across 4 clinical terms. The department has 4 e-coaching devices.

Issue 3: Student Success

1. Implement mental health programming for all students

Outcome: Goal Met

2. Create more off-campus observation opportunities tied to classes

Outcome: Goal partially met due to restrictions on student observers during and after COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Complete a comprehensive review of the graduate program in CSD.

Outcome: Goal met

4. Implement procedures to support career success for our undergraduates.

Outcome: Goal met

Issue 4: Faculty/Staff Development

1. One advanced training will be conducted each year.

Outcome: Goal met; three trainings we completed across three years.

2. Compose a plan for creating a 3-tiered Clinical Instructor Positions to replace the clinical staff positions. Job descriptions and justifications will be written and proposed to administration.

Outcome: Goal discontinued at request of clinical staff.

*update, clinical staff were successfully changed to instructional faculty in the fall of 2023 using a two-tiered promotion system and the titles Clinical Instructor/Senior Clinical Instructor