

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS
Undergraduate Program Assessment Yearly Report
B.S. in Communication Disorders
December 1, 2007

I. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

A. Program Goals: Educate students and prepare them for graduate professional education in speech-language pathology

In keeping with university and college mission statements, the undergraduate program of the Department of Communication Disorders is committed to:

- a) Providing students with a broad knowledge base in the liberal arts and in normal and disordered human communication and the ability to begin to apply this knowledge in the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with communication disorders;
- b) Providing students with the clinical potential necessary for diagnosis, treatment, and referral of individuals with communication disorders;
- c) Providing students with a basic understanding of the range of professional issues and responsibilities which are needed to function competently and professionally as speech-language pathologists according to accepted ethical and professional standards;
- d) Providing students with the ethical responsibility for lifelong learning, the skills necessary to act as independent learners and the ability to develop a personal program of continuing education;
- e) Supporting faculty in their endeavors to transmit knowledge;
- f) Supporting faculty in their endeavors to advance knowledge;
- g) Supporting faculty in their endeavors to apply knowledge;
- h) Assuring the integrity of the curriculum through maintenance of rigorous standards;
- i) Assuring the integrity of the curriculum through maintenance of high expectations for student learning and performance;
- j) Providing a wide variety of services to the community;
- k) Achieving diversity in the student body and faculty.

The faculty of the Department of Communication Disorders completed in the Fall of 2004 its annual review of the program goals relative to students, faculty, and the program and determined that no revisions were warranted. These goals were included in the self-study the department submitted in February 2005 as part of its application for re-accreditation by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The appropriateness of the goals was affirmed by the CAA's again granting full accreditation status to the department in March 2006.

B & C. Learning Outcomes/Data Collection and Results:

For Learner outcomes, see Table A.

For Faculty Development and Curriculum Development outcomes, see Table B.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Internal measures (e.g. course exams, practicum assessments) indicate that the program is highly successful in achieving its stated outcomes. External measures (e.g. student scores on the national certification exam and students' employability) confirm the program's success in achieving the specified outcomes. While only graduate programs in Communication Disorders are accredited, undergraduate feeder programs are carefully assessed before accreditation is granted to the master's program. The graduate program was notified in March 2006, that it again received full accreditation by the Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association for the maximal eight years. The B.S. program was awarded by the Board of Governors its "Program of Excellence" designation in May 2005.

II. BOT INITIATIVE 3 COMPLIANCE:

Our B.S. program is a pre-professional program leading to entry into a master's program in communication disorders. A master's degree in communication disorders is required to obtain national certification and employment as a speech-language pathologist. Therefore, there is no national benchmark established for our baccalaureate students. The national standard for all speech-language pathologists is the National Examination in Speech Pathology and Audiology (NESPA), which is administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, NJ. The NESPA serves as the comprehensive examination for all master's degree candidates in our program.

Upon receipt of the baccalaureate degree, Communication Disorders graduates either: 1) attend graduate school to become a speech-language pathologist, 2) enter the work force on an emergency teaching permit to provide speech-language services in the public schools, or 3) leave the field.

- 1) To be considered for admission to our graduate program, applicants must, in addition to other requirements, receive a competitive score on the Graduate Record Examination, a national, standardized test.
- 2) To enter the work force on an emergency Communication Disorders teaching permit, graduates must receive a score of 600 or higher on the NESPA, a national, standardized test.
- 3) Those who leave the field comprise fewer than 5% of our graduates and there is no national benchmark available to assess them.

While specific data are not available on #2 and 3 above, the number of students in these categories is small enough not to be of concern. Most of our graduates continue in graduate school, in our master's program or at another institution.

The best benchmark of our graduates' preparation is their success in graduate school. Informal reports from other institutions, primarily West Virginia University, Ohio State University, and the University of Tennessee, indicate that our graduates are very highly regarded and in almost all cases rank near or at the top of their class.

Our graduates are also highly successful in our own graduate program, where we, of course, have more specific data. Last year, in fact, for the past ten consecutive graduation dates, all M.S. graduates from our own undergraduate program have passed the NESPA on their first attempt. Our national association, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and the State of West Virginia consider a score of 600 as a passing score. We require our students to receive a score of 620 or better.

Last year, the mean score for our 21 master's graduates, 15 of whom were products of our undergraduate program, was 681, significantly above the required 600 passing score. The mean for the 15 students from our undergraduate program was 687, twenty points higher than the mean of 667 for six students from other undergraduate institutions.

We believe that the high scores received by students from our undergraduate program on this national test is the best measure of our undergraduate program.

III. PLANS FOR THE CURRENT YEAR:

We plan to continue our weekly departmental meetings to discuss departmental concerns and to continue to review the academic and clinical programs.

We plan to maintain accreditation by the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) by maintaining standards and submitting our yearly report documenting compliance.

We plan to expand on the success of our two previous Assessment Day student-faculty activities. While we were pleased with the attendance, (100% faculty; over 90% student participation) and the format (student/faculty focus groups), we believe that we can achieve equally effective results by paring the sessions from both morning and afternoon to one session per focus group, as well as other "fine tuning."

We plan to maintain our on-going review of the academic and clinical curriculum to ensure compliance with the most recent (2005) ASHA standards.

We plan to review and modify our system for recording and maintaining student learning outcomes. As a result of a Hedrick Grant awarded to the department in 2005, we were able to develop specific learner outcomes for every course in our curriculum required for students to meet national (ASHA) certification standards. Each student is responsible for meeting the outcome requirements, and the graduate advisors monitor compliance. As we have just completed our second year of full implementation of this system, we plan to review it thoroughly and make modifications wherever appropriate.

We plan to maintain the number of WAC course offerings in the department.

Having offered courses with the Service-Learning designation for the first time this year, we plan to maintain or increase our course offerings with this designation.

We plan to maintain our emphasis on academic and clinical teaching. We are pleased with our students' satisfaction of our teaching as measured by their evaluation of us. As a department, we received last year mean scores of 1.6 and 1.65 (on a 5 point scale) for the Fall and Spring Semesters respectively on the university-wide evaluation instrument (see Table B), and we plan to maintain or exceed these levels during the coming year.

We plan to continue to support faculty development by: encouraging faculty travel to state and national conferences, by supporting faculty in research efforts and professional presentations, by supporting faculty in their efforts to obtain a terminal degree, and by encouraging faculty to engage in other professional activities. We also plan to fill our vacant tenure-track position with a qualified faculty member.

We plan to continue to expand the clinical services offered in the Marshall University Speech and Hearing Center, the clinical arm of the department. In doing so, we will increase the clinical learning opportunities for our students as well as provide speech and hearing services to the tri-state community. During the period since our last assessment report, our students and faculty have provided over \$150,000.00* worth of pro-bono services to communicatively-impaired individuals through the Marshall University Speech and Hearing Center. With the addition of planned new programs, we hope to exceed this amount next year.

Begun in November 2006, we plan to expand our new program for hearing-impaired children called: *Auditory Beginnings: The Listening, Language, Learning Lab at Marshall*. Funded by a \$240,000 West Virginia Department of Education grant, this program is the first of its kind in West Virginia and the Tri-state area. The mission of the program is to facilitate auditory and spoken language in children with cochlear implants or aided hearing loss and to provide training for our students in auditory-oral methodologies.

*This total does not include services provided in external sites.

We plan to continue and strengthen our partnership with the Huntington, WV chapter of the Scottish Rite Masons which currently provides the majority of the funding for a clinical staff position in the department.

We plan to expand the usage of our newly installed \$200,000.00 state-of-the-art clinical monitoring system which replaced the previous system which had become non-functional. The new system, using IRIS technology, allows us to supervise student clinicians according to American Speech-Language-Hearing Association standards as well as enable us to provide demonstration therapy and evaluation sessions in laboratory classes. More than 70% of the funding for the monitoring system has come from funds generated by the department.

We plan to use funds generated from student fees to purchase new equipment for the department.

As we take very seriously the designation granted to us by the Board of Governors as a "Program of Excellence," we plan to maintain high standards for ourselves, our students, and our program.

IV. ASSISTANCE NEEDED:

It would be helpful if we could be provided with current contact information, especially e-mail addresses, for our alumni.

V. WHAT ONE MOST IMPORTANT THING HAS THE DEPARTMENT/ PROGRAM LEARNED THROUGH THIS PROCESS?

The program recognized the value of on-going self-study when it first began to prepare for its initial accreditation review over ten years ago. The process of self-evaluation provides a dynamic perspective from which a program can more readily identify both areas of strength and those which could benefit from modification.

We have learned that our program, while currently successful, can continue to grow in quality and quantity by admitting quality students, retaining quality faculty, and expanding quality clinical programs.

Key – Table A

The competencies of a well-educated person from the undergraduate program of the department are to:

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of multicultural and international issues in the discipline.
2. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the scientific literature and knowledge base underlying normal and disordered human communication and related areas.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the process of evaluating and treating individuals with communication disorders.
4. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, in the discourse of the discipline, in both oral and written formats.
5. Demonstrate the ability to think critically, independently and in collaborative endeavors in the discipline.
6. Demonstrate the necessary skills, including computer and information literacy skills, to meet the professional and ethical responsibilities of lifelong learning in the discipline.

Since one method of assessment may address multiple outcomes, assessment measures are charted in Table A by Outcome number.

TABLE A
Learner Outcomes
Communication Disorders
Undergraduate Program

Outcomes	Method of Assessment	Benchmark	Evaluation	Conclusion/Action
1,2,3,4,5	WAC	-Successful completion of required CD WAC courses -Number of WAC courses	99% achieved (88/89) Five courses taught-	5% increase from previous year Maintain current practice Increase number of WAC courses
1,2	Admission to program	-Meets or exceeds admission requirements (GPA, recommendation of faculty)	93% admitted to program, (25/27)	13% increase from previous year Maintain current practice
1,2,3,4,5,6	Capstone Course	-Successful completion of CD 427L	100% achieved (16/16)	Maintain current practice
2,3,4,5	Professional Writing	-Successful completion of CD 468	95% achieved (18/19)	Equal to previous year Maintain current practice
2,4	Pre-professional practicum at off-campus sites	-Successful completion of CD 422L	100% achieved (18/18)	Maintain current practice
2,3,4,5,6	Practicum at Marshall University Speech and Hearing Center	-Written/oral evaluation from MU supervisor -Approved clinical eligibility status -Successful completion of CD 426L and 427L	100% achieved (32/32)	Maintain current practice
1,2,3,4,5,6	Essay exams	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed	this year
1,2,3,5,6	Objective exams	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed	this year
2,3,4	Quizzes	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed	this year

TABLE A – Learner Outcomes – continued

Outcomes	Method of Assessment	Benchmark	Evaluation	Conclusion/Action
2,3,4,5,6	Authentic assessments	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
1,5,6	COHP-CD General Education Requirements	-Successful completion of COHP-CD general education courses	Not assessed this year	
2,3,4,5,6	Portfolio assessments	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
1,2,3,4,5,6	Research projects/papers	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
1,2,3,4,5,6	Independent readings and analysis	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
2,3,4,5,6	Presentations	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
2,3,4,5,6	Class discussion	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
2,3,4,5,6	Journaling	-Successful completion in CD required academic courses	Not assessed this year	
2,3,4,5,6	Clinical eligibility review	-Receipt of clinical eligibility	100% achieved (32/32)	Maintain current practice
5,6	Professional development	-Participation in National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association	40 active participants	25% over previous year Maintain current practice

Key – Table B

Faculty development will be demonstrated by faculty:

1. Engaging in ongoing course development.
2. Participating in professional development activities.
3. Engaging in research, creative, scholarly and clinical activities.
4. Modeling professional and clinical behaviors and skills.

Curriculum development will be demonstrated by the program:

5. Engaging in ongoing self-study.
6. Engaging in curriculum modification and development.
7. Maintaining accreditation by the CAA of ASHA.
8. Providing clinical services both on and off-campus.
9. Providing public education activities both on and off-campus.
10. Following Marshall University non-discrimination policy and affirmative action guidelines.

Since one method of assessment may address multiple outcomes, assessment measures are charted in Table B by Outcome number.

TABLE B
Faculty and Curricular Outcomes Assessment
Communication Disorders
Undergraduate Program

Outcome	Method of Assessment	Benchmark	Evaluation	Conclusion/Action
5,6,7,8,9,10	External contracts	-Securing of contracts	Six current contracts maintained; New contract with Radical Rehab, executed New clinical position established to meet needs of contracts	Maintain current practice
1,2,3,4	Annual Review of faculty	-Endorsement by appropriate administrators	All faculty recommended for retention	Maintain current practice
1,2,3,4	Tenure and promotion Applications	-Awarding of tenure and/or promotion	One faculty member granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor	N/A
1,2,3,4	Appointment to Graduate Faculty	-Successful review by the Dean	100% eligibility (10/10) (full or assoc)	Maintain current practice
1,4	Student evaluations of faculty	-Quantitative and qualitative evidence	Spring 2007- x=3.58 (on a 4-point scale, 4 being the highest) (N-8803)	Maintain current practice

TABLE B – Faculty and Curricular Outcomes Assessment – continued

Outcome	Method of Assessment	Benchmark	Evaluation	Conclusion/Action
1,2,3,4	Professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continuing Education Credits -ASHA membership -Maintenance of Certificate of Clinical Competence -West Virginia Licensure -ACE Awards -Attendance at state & national conferences -Presentations -Professional activities 	<p>100% (10/10) maintained credits, membership, CCC and License</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Five faculty awards -Faculty attended seven national & eight state conferences -Faculty made five presentations at national conferences & six presentations at state conferences -Faculty served as textbook reviewers, grant reviewers, and conference planners 	Maintain current practice
3,4	Clinical supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participating in community based service programs -Engaging in effective supervisory practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased on and off-campus services -Provided 	Maintain current practice

TABLE B – Faculty and Curricular Outcomes Assessment – continued

Outcome	Method of Assessment	Benchmark	Evaluation	Conclusion/Action
1,2,3	Grant writing	-Obtaining support for research, creative, scholarly and/or clinical activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Received \$240,000 from the WV Dept of Ed to develop a pre-school program for hearing-impaired children -Received Writing Project technology grant and Scottish Rite grants 	Maintain current practice
1,2,3	Faculty Development Grant	-Receipt of grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Faculty received one Quinlan grant, one Graduate College grant, four Inco grants, eight Writing Project grants, and three additional travel grants 	Maintain current practice

TABLE B – Faculty and Curricular Outcomes Assessment – continued

Outcome	Method of Assessment	Benchmark	Evaluation	Conclusion/Action
5,6,7,8,9,10	Ongoing programmatic self-study	-Maintenance of accreditation -Recommendations from Program Advocacy Committee -Achievement of CCC by graduates -Employability of graduates	Maintained CAA re-accreditation 100% achieved 100% employable	Received full accreditation from CAA, March 2006 Maintain current practice Maintain current practice
1,2,3,4,5,6	Exit Survey of all graduates	-Qualitative measure – no benchmark available	100% response rate, (16/16)	Reviewed by faculty/ referred to appropriate faculty
1,2,3,4,5,6	Assessment Day Student/faculty focus groups	-Qualitative measure – no benchmark available	93% participation rate 100% faculty (10/10) 94% seniors (15/16) 89% juniors (17/19) Limited number of pre-CD students	Recommendations reviewed by faculty for appropriate action Continue focus groups annually