

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES & DISORDERS**  
**ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012-13**

**STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL REPORT**

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## STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

### VISION AND MISSION

The vision of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is to be a nationally competitive program in communication sciences and disorders that advances knowledge through its research, offers challenging programs for undergraduates, masters students preparing for professional careers as speech-language pathologists, and PhD students preparing to become faculty members. Achieving these goals should be acknowledged in our *US News and World Reports* ranking rising to be one of the top 25 programs of speech-language-pathology in the nation. The mission of the department is the generation, dissemination, and application of knowledge in the areas of normal and disordered communication.

### GOALS

- **Discovery:** Conduct research advancing knowledge of theory, assessment and intervention of communication disorders.
- **Learning:** Increase undergraduate students' critical thinking and research reading/writing skills in the areas of normal and disordered communication as they relate to a diverse set of career options in health and education. Prepare masters students to provide evidence-based assessment and treatment of communication disorders utilizing state-of-the-art methodology and technology in a variety of job settings through academic coursework and clinical experience. Develop PhD students who collaborate in research, disseminate research findings through publication and presentations, and develop skills to meet the immediate and future needs of the profession.
- **Diversity:** Strengthen the intellectual environment by broadening the cultural diversity of the LSU community.
- **Engagement:** Contribute to the solution of social challenges of people with communication disorders through provision of state-of-the art, research-based clinical services

## GOALS WITH INDICATORS

### DISCOVERY

**Goal:** Conduct research advancing knowledge of theory, assessment and intervention of communication disorders.

#### Performance Indicators

- *US News and World Report* Ranking of Speech-Language-Pathology Graduate Programs
- Publications and presentations of faculty
- External grants and contracts
- Faculty Editorships

#### Strategies

- Increase student involvement in research to support faculty research
  - Increasing research methods classes
  - Increasing exposure to research methods in all classes
  - Increase undergraduate seminars
  - Increase undergraduate participation as research assistants and participants
  - Web emphasis on research
  - Increase number of MA students in thesis option
- Increase research conducted within on-campus clinics
- Increase funding for faculty participation in national meetings
- Increase research collaborations with top 25 program faculty
- Increase research partnerships with local professionals

## Discovery Outcomes

Table 1 Faculty Resources and Research Productivity

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Tenure Track Faculty	8	8	8	7	7
Instructor Faculty (paid by LSU)	7	6	5	4	6
US News & World Reports Ranking	46			52	
Editorships		1	1	1	
National Awards		1			
Federal Grants		286,000	351,000	378,000	478,000
State Grants	31,000	29,000	171,000	162,000	162,000
Private Grants	18,000	18,000	51,000	41,000	20,000
Book Chapters	3	1	5	1	
Journal Articles	9	3	17	6	6
Confr. Presentations	20	29	18	24	24

Table 1 shows the discovery outcomes for the past five years. The masters program's *US News and World Report* ranking remained within the upper 20% of all programs, moving from 46 in 2008 to 52 in 2012 out of 262 programs. The department's ranking is determined by national perception of faculty member visibility and reputation. Our strategies to increase the number of tenure-track faculty and promote research efforts are intended to increase the overall visibility of the department to the faculty of other institutions. Our current ranking ties our peer, University of Georgia, is ahead of peer University of Arkansas (106) and is behind peers Purdue (5), Illinois (11), Nebraska (17) and Tennessee (45). One of our faculty is the editor of the national association's most prestigious journal and is conducting a five year NIH grant. A second faculty member is starting an NIH research grant this spring, increasing federal funding by \$100,000. State research grants remained stable.

During the past year, the current number of graduate faculty increased its level of federal research funding and maintained its publication rate of 6 research articles and 24 international and national presentations. Searches for two new assistant professors were successful. Two new faculty members will arrive for the fall semester, boosting the number of tenure track faculty from 7 to 9. We anticipate that the increase in tenure-track faculty will increase the department's research productivity.

The department has had approved a new undergraduate research course that will be taught for the first time in the fall semester of 2013. Students and program graduates participated in one journal article and 11 presentations. One presentation included collaboration with a faculty member from a highly ranked university speech-language pathology program.

## LEARNING

**Goal:** Increase undergraduate students' critical thinking and research reading/writing skills in the areas of normal and disordered communication as they relate to a diverse set of career options in health and education.

### Performance Indicators

- Number of declared majors
- Number of Degrees awarded
- Number of students completing service learning experiences
- Number of courses using CxC
- Number of undergraduate seminar classes

### Strategies

- Recruiting HS students
  - Departmental Open House in April
  - Faculty participation in science fairs
- Recruiting UG students
  - Departmental Open House in October
  - Table at HSS UG recruitment event

### Outcomes

Table 2 Undergraduate Learning Measures

BA	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Majors	212	236	272	304	305
Freshmen-Sophomores	84	103	116	139	130
Juniors-Seniors	128	133	156	165	175
Two year Retention	50%	47%	75%	83%	65%
Graduates	65	53	74	80	64(spring)
Seminars(students)				1(28)	3(46)
CxC sections (students)				1(81)	4(222)
Service Learning Sections (students)				1(84)	1(98)

Table 2 reports learning measures for the undergraduate program. Departmental recruitment efforts at high schools and LSU appear to be resulting in an increase in freshmen and sophomores from 84 in fall 2008 to 130 in 2012-13. Two

year retention rates that had been rising from 2009-10 through 2-11-12 appear to have leveled off at 65%. However, this statistic is based upon the relatively small number of students who declare COMD majors as freshmen. Retention appears to be better considering that there is still an increase in the number of majors into the junior-senior years with the majority of students still being upper class students. The number of graduates of the program continues to rise from 65 in 2008-09 to 80 in 2011-12, the last year for which complete data are available.

The department increased the number of undergraduate seminar and CxC sections. The faculty expects that these increases in quality of undergraduate education will carry over into increased quality of students applying to the masters program and an increased orientation towards research among students applying to the masters program. With the arrival of two new tenure-track faculty in the fall, the faculty will consider options to increase the number of smaller class sections either through offering multiple sections of required 4000 level classes or starting to offer more seminar classes.

**Goal:** Prepare masters students to provide evidence-based assessment and treatment of communication disorders utilizing state-of-the-art methodology and technology in a variety of job settings through academic coursework and clinical experience

### Performance Indicators

- Number of declared majors
- Number of degrees awarded
- Percentage of theses
- Percentage of student authorships
- Percentage passing PRAXIS examination
- Percentage employed in field

### Strategies

- Recruiting
  - Booth at 2009 ASHA meeting
  - Annual Louisiana university major recruiting event
- Student research announcements
  - Departmental bulletin boards
  - Departmental web site

### Outcomes

Table 3 Masters Program Learning Measures

MA	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Majors	41	41	36	42	49
2 Year Retention	100	83	95	96	88
Graduates	22	16	16	19	25
Percentage Theses	14%	13%	19%	16%	40%
Authors	10%	3%	19%	13%	
Passing Praxis	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%*
Professional Employment	100%	100%	100%	100%	**

- incomplete because only half of graduates have taken the test

- **\*\*incomplete because few**  
have started working

The department's decision to increase the number of masters students it accepts has resulted in an increased number of enrolled students from 36 in 2010-11 to 49 in 2012-13. The number of graduates also increased from 16 to 19 during that time period. This increase in masters student enrollment has been enabled by the maintenance of the number of instructors by the college paying for the instructors who are no longer supported by outside contracts. This effort was also supported by the college's hiring two new assistant professors who enable the departmental tenure-track faculty to teach the 4000-level classes currently being taught by the instructors, thus freeing the instructors to do more clinical supervision. Most of the workload of the instructors is devoted to running the LSU Speech and Hearing Clinic. The clinic and its off campus programs provide the masters students with the 400 hours of supervised clinical practicum that are required of each student over their two year programs. To maintain an enrollment of 50 masters students demands that the department's instructors supervise 10,000 client contact hours each year.

The percentage of students conducting theses more than doubled to 40% in 2013. The faculty is committed to continuing to encourage the thesis option. With two new faculty members joining the faculty in the fall, there will be a renewed discussion on how to encourage theses, perhaps through creating some smaller class sections through offering multiple class sections.

**Goal:** Develop PhD students who collaborate in research, disseminate research findings through publication and presentations, and develop skills to meet the immediate and future needs of the profession.

### **Performance Indicators**

- Number of declared majors
- Number of degrees awarded
- Number of student presentations
- Number of student publications
- Number of awards
- Number employed in academic positions

### **Strategies**

- Recruiting
  - From students in MA program
  - Booth at 2009 ASHA convention
- Student research advertising
  - Departmental bulletin boards
  - Departmental web site

## Outcomes

Table 4 PhD Program Learning Measures

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Number of Majors	20	21	19	20	13
Number of Graduates	2	5	2	5	3
Percentage Authors		60%	65%	60%	62%
University Employment	100%	60%	100%	60%	66%

The number of PhD students has fallen from 19 in 2010-11 to 13 in 2012-13 in response to an increase in the number of students graduating in 2011-12. There appears to be a two year pattern in which 2 or 3 students graduate in one year followed by 5 graduates in the next year. In part, enrollment fluctuates with grant support. Five students are supported each year by university teaching assistant funds. For the past four years another 6-7 were supported by grants. The faculty will continue to submit grants to both support their research and the enrollment in the doctoral program. While a large NIH grant is ending, another is starting and the new faculty will be submitting Board of Regents grants this fall. Sixty to 65 percent of the students participated in convention presentations or journal article submission over the five year period. This 60% of the students are typically those who have been in the program for two years and therefore have had a chance to be involved in a faculty research project. Over the past five years 70% of the graduates took faculty positions in academia.

## DIVERSITY

**Goal:** Strengthen the intellectual environment by broadening the cultural diversity of the LSU community.

### Performance Indicators

- Diversity among faculty, staff and students.
- The number of students who work with or live in diverse communities.

### Strategies

- Search for diverse faculty in hiring
- Supply professional career and program information to local high schools
- Apply for minority scholarships
- Continue clinical practica in minority population clinics
  - Midcity Hospital
  - Public Schools

## Outcomes

Table 5 Percentage of Minority Students by Degree in Fall Semester

	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
BA (Freshmen,Sophomores)	11	9	14	15	11
BA (Juniors, Seniors)	5	6	9	10	11
MA	8	0	0	12	15
PhD	29	32	36	43	42

The department's strategy to encourage minority student enrollment through high school recruiting in southern Louisiana appears to be having an effect. There has been both an increase in the overall number of undergraduates from 212 to 305, a stable number of freshman-sophomore minority students and a doubling of the percentage of minority students from 5 percent to 11 percent among juniors and seniors. This increase was paralleled at the masters level where the minority student enrollment has increased from 0 in 2009 to 15 percent in 2012. Our two new faculty are both male, which is a minority in the field. Our doctoral program continues to have a relatively high minority student population. One of the new faculty specializes in research related to development of language by bilingual Spanish speakers. He will be recruiting Spanish speaking undergraduates to work in his laboratory which may further increase the department's diversity.

## ENGAGEMENT

Goal: Promote engagement of faculty, staff, and students in the transformation of communities.

### Performance indicators

- Number of faculty serving as editors or on editorial boards for journals
- Number of faculty serving on executive committees for professional associations/societies
- Number of faculty serving in elected offices for professional associations/societies
- Number of faculty serving on community agency boards (related to discipline)
- Number of individuals served by practica students
- Number of individuals served by service learning students

### Strategies

- Reward service to journals, professional associations, community agency boards
- Maintain clinical practica sites
- Reward service learning classes

## Outcomes

Three of the faculty served as editors or on editorial boards for journals in 2011-12. One served in an elected office for a professional association. All of the instructors provide speech and hearing services to the Baton Rouge community which reached 1200 children through screening activities, 600 individuals through one time diagnostic services, and 200 individual through ongoing intervention services. Eighty children were served in a designated low-achievement school through a service learning class.

## **Chair Review of Year**

### **Accomplishments**

The Department was successful in hiring two new assistant professors for the Fall 2013 semester, raising the total tenure-track faculty from seven to nine. The college supplied funding to maintain the number of instructors despite the loss of contract support for instructors in local, state-run hospitals and a retirement.

Departmental faculty increased their federal and state research support, continuing to support doctoral students. They published the same number of journal articles and research presentations as last year.

Five Ph.D. students graduated, making the average for the past five years 3.4 per year, more than 50% above the required two per year. Seventy percent of the Ph.D. graduates took assistant professor positions. The number of MA students and graduates continues to rise, with a doubling of the number of thesis option graduates this year. All of the program graduates continue to pass the professional licensing exam and obtain professional employment. The number of BA students and graduates continues to increase. The rise in minority undergraduate students has kept pace with this growth including an increase in the percentage of minority students who continue to succeed in the program through junior and senior years.

### **Challenges**

State cut backs in hospital funding resulted in cuts to contracts with local hospitals, resulting in a loss of funding for instructors. Hiring of new instructors is hampered by the college instructor salary cap of \$29,000 being well below the local market for our current MA graduates. Department salaries for professor level faculty are well below peer averages.

An increasing number of masters students is choosing the thesis option. This development presents a challenge of reducing the masters students' need for seminar classes. Exchanging seminar students for thesis students places an increasing burden on the faculty because seminars are counted as part of their teaching load while thesis direction is not.

PhD graduates increased in the past year as part of a developing two year cycle in which a relatively low rate of two graduates is followed by a higher graduation rate. The number of PhD students fluctuated with graduations. Years with relatively small numbers of Ph.D. students reduce the number of seminars that can be offered, an effect that interacts with the needs of masters students for seminars.

### **Priority Planning for 2013-14**

This year's expansion of the faculty should enable the department to increase its research productivity and enhance its educational programs. The department's faculty will be meeting in the fall to consider how to enhance the educational opportunities of the students in the BA and MA programs while fostering research opportunities.

### **Planned Changes to Strategic Plan**

This fall's faculty discussions may result in new strategies and changes in emphasis in departmental objectives.