UVA Communication Disorders Program

2015-2020 Strategic Planning

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Communication Disorders Program
Planning for AY 2014-2015 Through AY 2019-2020

Executive Summary

Now and looking forward, the core, or axis, of our Program identity is patient-oriented clinical research. This emphasis in clinical research manifests throughout each degree offering:

Undergraduate	Pre-professional introduction to clinical science and clinical practice
Masters	Evidence-based clinical practice
Doctoral	Producing patient-oriented clinical research that directly informs evidence-based practitioners

The vertical integration of the degree/curricula around a single defining axis maximizes efficiency and cohesion. It guides/informs choices/decisions from day-to-day matters to strategic planning.

The Program is medium sized; it does not attempt to be all things to all people. Areas of topical emphasis/leadership are defined by faculty expertise and their research/service career focus. That said, the Program will (a) develop the emerging emphasis in ASD, and (b) add an emphasis in bilingual SLP (primarily Spanish).

Looking forward, the Program generates revenues through course enrollments, research grants, service/teaching grants, and clinical practice. The Program is actively engaged in the University community, school systems, and VDOE. SCJC is a regional resource.

Three Degrees, Three Mission Statements

This Five Year Plan is integrated with our (a) existing strategic plan, and (b) our plan for increasing undergraduate enrollments. Rather than re-hash those plans within the context of this planning document, those planning documents accompany and support this document.

For context, we begin with a reminder for Curry planners regarding our three mission statements – as background context, and the basis, for what follows. We are a mission focused and mission compliant organization. The following statements were selected strategically.

B.S.Ed.

The undergraduate program in communication disorders at the University of Virginia (a) introduces students to the fields of speech-language pathology and audiology and (b) provides pre-professional learning experiences to prepare students for graduate studies by emphasizing math, biological and behavioral sciences, basic human communication sciences, and critical thinking.

Integrated Character. The focus of the undergraduate program is instilling an appreciation of practice-oriented clinical research as well as fundamental understandings of its utility and value for improving the lives of individuals with communication disorders through educational experiences that develop the fundamental skill set for successful graduate education.

M.Ed.

The graduate program in speech-language pathology at the University of Virginia provides academic and clinical instruction for establishing the knowledge and skill base necessary for (a) completing the Masters degree, (b) becoming a credentialed speech-language pathologist, and (c) practicing speech-language pathology in an entry level position. That knowledge and skill base conforms to the scope of practice as defined by the American Speech Language Hearing Association.

Integrated Character. The focus of the masters program is applying the products of practice-oriented clinical research in developing clinical expertise, as well as understandings of client values, for providing best clinical practices to individuals with communication disorders, their families, teachers, and caregivers with the ultimate goal of preparing graduates for successful entry into the professional marketplace.

Ph.D.

The Ph.D. program in speech-language pathology at the University of Virginia provides research, teaching, and professional-service experiences to establish the skill sets necessary for a successful career as a scientist, scholar, and teacher. The fundamental essence of the program is graduating independent researchers capable of producing original and important scholarly works through disciplinary and interdisciplinary practice-oriented clinical research.

Integrated Character. The focus of the doctoral program is producing original scholarship and scientific understandings through practice-oriented clinical research within a curriculum dedicated to preparing graduates for careers as independent scientists.

Overview of Development Priorities

B.S.Ed.

Projected Character

The undergraduate program admits cohorts of 50 or more students each year. Our pre-professional courses are recognized as fulfilling General Studies (GS) requirements throughout the University. As a result, class sizes exceed 50 (admitted students plus the students taking courses for GS credits).

In addition, two large capacity courses (each satisfying GS requirements) constitute a prominent profile in the undergraduate community across Grounds.

1.   Sign Language

2.   Survey of Communication Disorders

A third course, moderately sized, will also be added to the undergraduate curriculum: Psycholinguistics. This course could also fulfill a GS requirement (to open a larger market).

Required and elective courses in the undergraduate curriculum emphasize critical-thinking/decision-analysis, science, and clinical observations. Students recognize the degree as a successful means leading to clinical degrees as well as a solid marketable degree in other areas. Classes emphasize hands-on experiential learning and participation in research processes.

The student body continues, and develops, as a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse community.

Priorities

The Bachelor degree is a high priority for development.

Goals

1.   Faculty members have established a comprehensive plan for increasing enrollments and FTE numbers. Rather than reiterate the detailed plan here, it accompanies this document. In summary terms, the Program is growing the undergrad program in a staged fashion with goals of (a) enhancing the curriculum, (b) increasing enrollments, and (c) increasing overall FTE numbers accruing directly to the Program and Curry. Within the planning window, the undergraduate program evolves to a direct-admit option – while retaining the two year admit option – admitting cohorts of 50 or more.

2.   Lighten present teaching and service loads to increase creative capacity for expanding the undergrad curriculum.

M.Ed.

Projected Character

The masters program continues to graduate clinical professionals fully prepared for the workplace. The masters program is enhanced through building an additional identity as a leader in bilingual (primarily Spanish/English) clinical services as well as the academic and clinical preparation of those students seeking a career as a bilingual SLP.

The degree completion rate remains at 99%, the job-placement rate remains at 100%, the Praxis pass rate remains at 100%. The student body continues, and develops, as a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse community.

Priorities

Enhancing the uniqueness of our clinical degree (clinical education) and expanding the SCJC clientele (clinical services) through an emphasis in bilingual (primarily Spanish-English) SLP is a focused initiative. A bilingual Clinical Instructor has high priority,

Otherwise, the Masters degree program is well developed. Enhancements, active management, and compliance with accreditation standards will occur as a matter of course. However, fundamental and pronounced growth is not assigned high priority.

In response to the new teaching load policy, faculty have eliminated a course and reduced others from 3 to 2 credit hours. As a result, large curricular changes are not anticipated.

Goals

Three initiatives are planned.

1.   From a pedagogy perspective, courses will emphasize hands-on learning experiences and practical demonstrations reflecting current clinical practices in a modern workplace, by all faculty members.

2.   The Program will develop a bilingual Speech-Language Pathology (primarily Spanish-English) identity. Increasingly, Spanish speaking students are coming into the program and looking for instruction in leveraging their skills in the market place. Also, a substantial Spanish speaking clientele in the SCJC is a real prospect.

3. The third initiative is well underway. Through Loncke, the Program will continue to develop (a) our international teaching, research, faculty and student exchanges, in Ghent and Nijmegan; and (b) distance education offerings at the pre-professional level.

Ph.D.

Projected Character

The Ph.D. program emphasizes patient-oriented clinical research. That is, faculty and doctoral students produce research that directly informs evidence-based practitioners. Researching faculty carry 1-2 doctoral students.

Priorities

Faculty members have assigned high priority to the development of the doctoral program. The organizational structure for governance policies and practices is in place.

Goals

1. Within two years, researching faculty will each mentor 1 full-time doctoral student.

2. Within five years, researching faculty will each mentor 1-2 full-time doctoral students. Initially, funding for these students will come from Curry and University sources. Eventually, the funding source will include extramural support.

3. Establish external funding through research grants

4. Increase the number of doctoral students with competitive funding

5. In addition to their research apprenticeship, doctoral students will play a key role as teaching assistants supporting the bachelors and masters curricula.

6. The Program will broaden a mutually beneficial relationship with Dr. McGuinty.

7. Establish better connections with school systems for conducting research [underway]

8. Work closely with the Foundation seeking funds for planned development. [underway]

Distance Education

Projected Character

The Program is selective in a developing only two distance-education initiatives. Within this planning window, the Program will continue and expand Loncke's COFU initiative to move our pre-professional to DE platforms and format. Once that stage is completed, we may capitalize on the products and open the enrollments (that is, move beyond a system open only to the COFU principles). The practicality/desirability of that decision is yet to be made. No decision necessitating a CAA Change of Status application is anticipated.

The second initiative is serving the continuing-education professional-development market. That is, not offering degree related courses, but market driven distanced professional-development products. We are not yet committed to this project as, frankly, it hinges on personnel and staffing. We contemplate nonetheless.

Priorities and Goals

1. Design a carefully selected presence/offerings in the distance education market.

2. Advance the current COFU supported DE project with a view to PD course offerings.

3. Perhaps enter the CE marketplace

International Collaboration

Projected Character

The Program will continue to develop Loncke's COFU supported initiative with our university partners: University College Ghent, Université Lille 3, and Radboud University. The exchange of faculty members will continue as well as participation of UVA undergrads in collaborative research projects through the Study Abroad Program.

Priorities and Goals

1. Secure external funding sources.

SCJC

Projected Character

Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology services in the SCJC continue to expand, both within the building and through contracts with Off-Grounds sites. In particular, the pediatric clientele continues as a prominent aspect of our SCJC services, and services

for adult clients increase. The object continues to be providing masters students with many and varied clinical experiences.

Clinical services for clients-with-English-as-a-second-language increase for all ages. Integrated services with SCJC colleagues remains an important feature of SCJC services.

SLP and the SCJC become much more broadly recognized through the University and regional communities. As a non-billable lost leader, SCJC offers a series of community-outreach community-service consumer-oriented evening information sessions. SCJC personnel partner with service providers elsewhere in the university and in Charlottesville to host regular informational sessions, e.g., parents who want to now if their child is stuttering, spouses who want to support their dementing partner, free hearing testing and what you need to know about you suspected hearing loss, managing an autistic child, come talk to a _____ expert and ask questions, come talk to a panel of experts (doctor, nurse practitioner, PT, OT, SLP, AUD, reading specialist) to ask questions, and so forth. Investing in promotion would be key to success as would partnerships with other providers (e.g., Alzheimer's Association, Kluge personnel, and so forth), with the expectation of increased referrals for services over the longer run.

Priorities

Developing SCJC traffic and opening new markets for SCJC services is assigned high priority.

Obtaining a service grant to support new (possibly outreach) services supported through financial aid has high priority.

Goals

1. Obtain at least one service/teaching grant

2. Increase all clinical populations, but especially, adult populations.

3. Work closely with the Foundation seeking funds for planned development. [underway]

Curry Foundation

Projected Character

The Program continues to work closely with the Foundation. Our relationship has been developing and deepening. In particular, Jay Jackson has been proactive in our developing relationship. For instance, we've provided the Foundation a listing of gift priorities ranging from $5 to $2M and greater; that list has been passed on to development officers. Recently, an 'ask' e-mail went out to our newsletter mailing list.

Our intent is to work closely supporting the Foundation in their efforts to support us.

Priorities and Goals

1. Updating and further developing our need/wants list, for the Foundation to reflect Program goals and aspirations.

2. Further develop our relationship with the Foundation all the while integrating our relationship with the Communications Office.

3. Developing and deepening our relationships with alums

4. Developing and broadening relationships between present and prospective students (recruiting). The key resource here is our award winning NSSLHA chapter. The strategy here is to approach, and relate to, prospective students through our current students. The object is to build dynamically integrated linkages between prospective students and current students and alums.

Internet Presence

Projected Character

The media establishing the profile and identity of the Program in an electronic sense will be Facebook and our webpages. Our Facebook purpose, identity, presentation was fashion after M. Golden's 2010 book titled *Social Media Strategies for Professionals and Their Firms*. Robey is the FB administrator and final arbiter of content. That said, the presentation of self is a page for undergrad and masters students, by students. Our page, *Speech-Language Pathology at UVA*, has been in existence roughly 6 weeks and has over 6,500 views, and more than 150 active users.

The primary purpose of the FB page is …

1. Connect with undergrads and get them to meet-and-greet events with current students and faculty

2. Lead students to curry.virginia.edu/spa/major (see next)

   The lesson learned here is that students don't look for information through search engines, they primarily explore/discover through FB. For now, we see costs and not much added value by expanding to other social media applications.

The Program developed an undergraduate recruitment page: curry.virginia.edu/spa/major . The page describes what Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists do, where they work, what the job market looks like, and salary expectations. It also contains video testimonials of working SLPs, Audiologists, and UVA 4th-year students. It is link-rich and includes links to the Curry application site.

So, finally, all of that to say that our projected character, at least for now, will be an extrapolation of our current course. We will monitor, assess, and revise in an ongoing fashion.

Although we systematically monitor the currency and validity of all of our pages, we need to upgrade and develop all of our pages moving forward.

Priorities and Goals

1. Maintain and develop a purpose-driven and customer-driven internet presence.

2. Maintain, assess, develop, adapt, and expand our media participation as circumstances indicate.

University Presence

Projected Character

The Program, and therefore Curry, is part of the fabric of the undergraduate community. The Program is broadly recognized among students as offering challenging, practical, and enjoyable courses. In an institutional sense, the Program partners with many offices throughout the University. Already, we have working relationships with …

> Athletic academic dean/advisors
> Deans in the College
> Office of African American Affairs
> Indian Student Association
> Asian/Asian Pacific American Students
> Madison House
> All Advisors in the College
> Dining
> Transportation (bus advertisements)
> Residence Advisors
> Newcomb Hall media outlets
> PVCC

Priorities and Goals

Expand and deepen inter-office relationships across Grounds.

Enhance the undergraduate curriculum

Expand undergraduate enrollments.