

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS
STRATEGIC PLAN
2008-2012**

The Department of Communication Disorders provides undergraduate degrees (BA and BS) in Communication Disorders, the masters degree (MA) in speech-language pathology, and the doctoral degree (AuD) in audiology. The undergraduate program is a pre-professional blend of a strong liberal arts foundation and a general core curriculum in normal and disordered communication processes. The graduate programs are accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. The mission of the department is to prepare forward-thinking professionals in the discipline of speech, language, and hearing who promote the highest standards of professional conduct in a variety of clinical settings. Therefore, a primary goal of the department is to develop critical thinkers who are able to evaluate and apply existing and future information, methodologies, and technologies so as to meet the needs of individuals with communicative disorders in a rapidly changing world.

The Department of Communication Disorders Strategic Plan focuses on the five primary goals and strategic issues identified as priorities in the Strategic Plans of the College of Arts and Sciences and The University of South Dakota: Academic Excellence, Research and Creative Activity, Enrollment Management, Institutional Positioning, and Funding and Resource Development.

STRATEGIC ISSUE 1 – ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- **GOAL 1.1 – Gain recognition among the best liberal arts institutions in the country for undergraduate teaching and learning resulting in graduates who are well prepared to make a positive contribution to our world.**

Strategy 1.1c – Examine as necessary the undergraduate curriculum to ensure that learning outcomes are integrated and aligned with the goals and breadth of a liberal arts education.

Objective 1: To undertake a comprehensive undergraduate curriculum review and make revisions as needed that are consistent with principles of liberal education and national trends for undergraduate education in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

- **GOAL 1.2 - Strengthen graduate and professional programming to a breadth and rigor characteristic of Carnegie Doctoral/Research Extensive institutions.**

Strategy 1.2a - Enhance doctoral-level programming in a deliberate manner.

Objective 1: To implement fully the doctor of audiology (AuD) program via recruitment of an additional doctoral-level faculty member, implementation of

second-year clinical rotations that provide intermediate clinical opportunities for second-year AuD students, and increasing enrollment by 25%.

Strategy 1.2b – Add and strengthen other graduate and professional programming in response to the needs of students, the state, and region; Strategy 1.2c – Enhance student engagement at the graduate and professional level.

Objective 1: To increase the quality, quantity, and diversity of educational experiences to our graduate students and professionals in the state via revised assessment procedures for guiding program improvement efforts (e.g., alumni surveys, employer surveys, external site surveys, client/patient surveys); increased availability of enrichment workshops addressing topics of importance to the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology; expectations and opportunities for service learning; additional interdisciplinary clinical and field experiences; and ongoing curricular review.

Objective 2: To improve teaching excellence via implementation of performance improvement plans based on student evaluations of teaching effectiveness.

- **GOAL 1.3 - Increase significantly student learning, retention, and graduation through the creation of a culturally and intellectually diverse environment that supports and engages all students through the integration of rich academic and social experiences.**

Strategy 1.3a - Implement collaboration between academic and student affairs that results in a culturally and intellectually diverse environment that supports and engages all students through the integration of rich academic and social experiences, with particular attention to the first two years of undergraduate study.

Objective 1: To improve retention via identification of students at risk for speech, hearing, language, reading, or related disability with emphasis on first-year students via development and implementation of screening programs for students identified by the Early Alert system and spearheading of interdisciplinary assessment/intervention programs for students identified with speech, hearing, language, or related disorders that may impact learning and retention.

Strategy 1.3c - Embrace diversity in all aspects, with special recognition to the Native American heritage of our state and region.

Objective 1: To increase provision of clinical services to diverse populations with special attention to Native American populations.

Objective 2: To develop and implement a plan for increasing the infusion of topics related to multicultural issues throughout the curricula.

- **GOAL 1.4 – Develop deliberate, ambitious, and responsive approaches to distance education, recognizing the increasingly multi-campus nature of the university, and**

ensure that these approaches are consistent with the quality of a University of South Dakota education.

Strategy 1.4a – Finalize a five-year plan of programs to be offered at all distance locations, and develop and deliver those programs on schedule.

Objective 1: To implement fully the Distance MA Program in Speech-Language Pathology, including identifying distance delivery training opportunities for program faculty, ongoing assessment of program effectiveness, implementation of off-site clinical placements, and consistent advisement in response to the needs of students in the distance cohort.

STRATEGIC ISSUE 2 – RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

- **Goal 2.1 - Conduct competitive research and creative activity comparable to that at the smaller Carnegie Research/Doctoral Extensive institutions.**

Strategy 2.1a - Develop specific research and creative centers in a deliberate manner that is consistent with the financial and human resources of the University.

Objective 1: To establish and/or maintain our place as a leader in research and/or clinical service provision in those “niche” areas for which we already are uniquely positioned via specialized expertise of our faculty members, including Auditory Neuroscience and Central Auditory Processing Disorders, Augmentative/Alternative Communication, Dyslexia/Literacy, Fluency Disorders, Language (including 0-3 and adolescent language), and other areas.

Strategy 2.1c - Recruit and develop a faculty that reinforces the ideal of integrating competitive research/creative activity and student learning.

Objective 1: To increase student involvement in research by requiring some level of research activity of all graduate students, increasing the infusion of principles of evidence-based practice throughout the academic and clinical curriculum, and identifying mechanisms to facilitate and encourage increased undergraduate involvement in research endeavors.

Strategy 2.1d – Promote interdisciplinary research and creative activity.

Objective 1: To identify additional interdisciplinary research opportunities to include increased collaboration with internal and external parties in research, including other departments and colleges/schools at USD, external medical and school facilities, and other universities.

STRATEGIC ISSUE 3 – ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

- **Goal 3.1 - Create and implement a university-wide integrated enrollment management process to recruit and retain approximately 10,000-11,000 students - an enrollment consistent with our flagship status and our Carnegie Extensive peers, and which reflects both increased selectivity and broader diversity.**

Strategy 3.1b - Implement an enrollment management plan for graduate and professional programs to optimize enrollment.

Objective 1: To increase the quality and maintain or increase the quantity of graduate admissions by participation in the EdFind/HES national electronic database and development of recruitment/marketing materials commensurate with other programs.

STRATEGIC ISSUE 4 – INSTITUTIONAL POSITIONING

- **Goal 4.1 – Ensure the University is portrayed appropriately and consistently to all key constituencies.**

Strategy 4.1b – Enhance the University’s reputation and relationships by effectively communicating its distinguishing attributes, values, and benefits.

Objective 1: To continue improvements to the departmental website to include expanded information regarding clinical services available, areas of research and/or clinical distinction, faculty and student accomplishments, links to key resources in the areas of speech-language pathology and audiology, policies and procedures, and other information.

Objective 2: To participate in the HES graduate survey and demographic survey annually so that up-to-date information is accessible via EdFind to potential students and other members of the public.

GOAL 5 – FUNDING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- **Goal 5.1 – Ensure that adequate resources are in place to fund operations over the next five years.**

Strategy 5.1a – Identify the financial resources needed to implement strategic plan goals.

Objective 1: To identify equipment, materials, and other needs to ensure state-of-the-art clinical and research opportunities and procure prioritized items.

Objective 2: To examine collection/expenditure data on an ongoing basis to ensure that monies available are allocated appropriately to areas that will address strategic planning goals, strategies, and objectives.

- **Goal 5.2 – Provide an attractive, welcoming campus with facilities, libraries, equipment, and other infrastructure that support institutional goals.**

Strategy 5.2a – Maintain and operate the physical campus in support of strategic plan goals.

Objective 1: To ensure that the department and clinical facilities are welcoming and attractive; that state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic materials and equipment are available, calibrated, and in functional working order; that facilities are accessible; and that student study space, computer labs, and the departmental library are maintained and available to students at all times.