

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION UNIT QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE – YEAR TWELVE**  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2014**

**Members Present:**

Laura Aboyan, Office of Assessment  
Katie Barber, Richland School District 2  
Mary Ann Byrnes, Assistant Dean for Administration, College of Arts and Sciences  
Dennis Dotterer, SC Department of Education  
Wendee Evering, Richland School District 2  
Fred Greer, EDST representative and Chair  
Allison Jacques, Assistant Dean for External Partnerships and Accreditation  
Zach Kelehear, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
Lisa McAlpine, Richland School District 2  
Jim Mensch, PEAT representative

**Program Representatives:**

Kenn Apel, Department Chair, Communication Sciences and Disorders  
Hiram McDade, Graduate Director, Communication Sciences and Disorders

**I. Call Meeting to order**

Dr. Greer called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**II. Introductions, Overview of Meeting, and Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Aboyan informed the committee of membership changes for the 2014-15 academic year and introduced the new members. Dr. Mensch asked why the committee reviews programs outside the College of Education. Ms. Aboyan explained that because they are a part of the Professional Education Unit, the committee has a responsibility to ensure all unit programs meet the expected standard of assessment.

The minutes from the May 8, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

**III. Review of the MCD/MSP in Speech Language Pathology**

Dr. Apel provided an overview of the Speech Language Pathology (SLP) programs. There are two degrees offered for the major. The Master of Speech Pathology (MSP) is a full-time, on-campus program, and the Master of Communicative Disorders (MCD) is a part-time, online program.

There are 25 full-time faculty involved with the SLP program. Eleven are research faculty and 14 are clinical faculty. Faculty have received more than \$10 million in national, state, and university grants, and also have numerous publications.

The Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA), which is a part of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has accredited the SLP program for 30 years. Both degrees are designed to prepare students to become clinical speech pathologists. Graduates are eligible for national certification,

state licensure, and South Carolina educator licensure. The program bills itself as preparing students to become clinical scientists because of the rigorous combination of coursework and clinical practice. Program graduates are highly sought after, and faculty are recognized as both national and international experts in their fields. For those who pursue a position in speech pathology, there is a 100% employment rate at graduation.

The program has its own clinical research facility, the Speech and Hearing Research Center. Students are required to complete 400 hours of clinical experience, many of which are undertaken at the Center. The Center has been in existence since 1969, and houses only one of two cochlear implant/auditory-verbal programs in the state. The Center has approximately 6000 patient visits per year, and roughly 225 patient outreach hours per year. In addition to completing clinical hours at the Center, students also complete clinical experiences in the community through schools, school districts, and other medical settings. Both the Center and faculty researchers recently moved to the Keenan building on Sumter Street to better integrate the faculty with the research center.

There are different assessment mechanisms used to assess both students and faculty. The program has an electronic system, called Calypso, which monitors the nine skills required by CAA. Calypso illustrates how students are demonstrating competency of entry-level knowledge or skills. It shows where these skills are assessed in each course. Students must achieve a grade of "B" or better in order to receive a rating of "meets." Per CAA, remediation must be held for those who fail to meet any competency. Plans for remediation are uploaded to Calypso, and are used to help students achieve competency in the required area.

Dr. McDade noted that sometimes interventions need to be completed even though students have received the required course grade. In these instances, students have not demonstrated competency on the required skill. The program is extremely competitive. Approximately 300 applications are received annually for 35 places in the program. After two or three remediation sessions, students are not permitted to continue in the program. Dr. Jacques how often that happens. Dr. Apel said that the rule has only been in place for one year, so the program does not have data yet. Dr. Byrnes asked if the program conducts admission interviews. Dr. Apel said no, but Dr. McDade meets with many students before they apply to the program.

Dr. Apel discussed Praxis pass rates. Nearly 100% of students pass the exam on the first attempt. By the time of graduation, 100% of students have passed the exam. The program conducts exit interviews with all graduates to assess student satisfaction in areas of curriculum and technology, among others. Most graduates complete the program in August. Results of the exit interviews are shared with program faculty in department meetings at the start of the fall semester. Comments about specific faculty members are addressed individually.

The program also has a system in place to assess faculty, using peer teaching, clinical reviews, and faculty evaluations. Evaluations are conducted annually, and have different formats for clinical and research faculty. The assessments were designed with faculty input.

Annual goals for the program are set in January, and are periodically reflected on throughout the year. At the conclusion of each year, goals are re-assessed. A new strategic plan was approved for the program in August 2014. The program is also required to file yearly CAA reports.

Dr. McDade indicated that the program makes changes based on interviews and feedback from students, but they have not been very good about maintaining the documentation to show the reasons for the changes. He is working on a method to keep the paper trail to show why changes are occurring, beginning with recording them in faculty meeting minutes. Changes have been made to program procedures based on the student input.

Dr. Jacques asked about Calypso. Dr. Apel said that the program worked with a woman in Charleston, who designed Calypso specifically for SLP programs. The database keeps everything organized by competency. External supervisors are able to use Calypso to upload feedback directly. The system also shows the alignment of skills to coursework and clinical site. Dr. Jacques asked how the costs of the system were assessed. Dr. Apel said that the department pays for it, but students pay a one-time fee for access, which has proven to be a cost-effective method.

Dr. Barber asked about the plan to increase students from underrepresented groups to the 20% mentioned in the strategic plan. Dr. Apel said the program is currently primarily made up of white women. CAA has published some materials including strategies for recruiting underrepresented groups that the program plans to use. Sara Corwin, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Student Services in the School of Public Health has provided names of organizations on campus for minority groups to the program. The program plans to present to these groups in order to create awareness about what SLP does and what it is.

Dr. McDade said that program is unique because students are not required to have an undergraduate major in SLP. There are no preferred majors, though most come from education or psychology. Before entering the program, students must complete four pre-requisite courses dictated by ASHA: a human biological science, a social or behavioral science, chemistry or physics, and statistics.

Dr. Kelehear asked how the program ensures quality placements. Dr. Apel said there are two people who work solely on placements. The program has a long history of working with certain organizations, medical facilities, and school districts. Matches are made based on a good fit between students and supervisors. The program is also aided in placements because of its reputation. External supervisors at for-profit facilities said that it's harder to take students because they have to make money and meet productivity standards, but when they do take students, they prefer the program's students because of the breadth of their experiences and the quality of program. Students in the program typically demonstrate a high level of preparedness. Students are required to have one semester where they travel for their practicum because there aren't enough placements available in the Columbia area. The program accommodates this by structuring courses so Mondays and Fridays are free for travel days. The program uses over 400 practicum sites. Karen Mullis is responsible for ensuring that all practicum requirements, including TB checks, background checks, and valid CPR credentials, are met prior to students going into the field. These credentials must be renewed each year. Students are not permitted to complete their clinical experiences if these requirements are not met.

Dr. Byrnes asked if it was possible to see a blank Calypso template. She was interested to know if the templates could be tweaked for certain programs or used for any program in general. Dr. Apel suggested the committee follow up with Dr. Danielle Varnedoe, Director of the Speech Research Center, for specific information about Calypso.

Dr. Mensch asked how clinical experience time was structured. Dr. Apel said that students have experience at at least three different sites – one in school, one in a medical center, and one in the Research Center. The final summer semester is a full day internship, which Dr. Apel equated to having a full-time job. It counts for 12 credit hours, and there is no additional coursework required. The other semesters are a combination of coursework and practicum. Students complete a practicum every semester.

Mr. Dotterer asked about the Praxis pass rates for the MCD, specifically if there was a trend across the years as to which section is the most difficult for students. Dr. McDade said he hasn't analyzed the data yet, but his initial thought is that it is because distance education students have other factors that influence their test taking ability.

Dr. McDade spoke briefly about the evolution of the distance education program. It is now more competitive and attracts students nationwide. It began as a way to fill SLP positions in rural areas in South Carolina, and has grown. Distance education students are required to complete their first summer practicum in South Carolina. The program works with distance education students to set up suitable placements in their location for other required practica. There is a difference in time to completion between the on campus and online programs. The on campus program is usually completed in two years, which the online program takes 3-4 years, depending on the student's background.

Dr. Kelehear asked the gender breakdown of faculty. Dr. Apel said that it is roughly 33% male.

#### **IV. Committee Consensus on Program**

The committee discussed the assessment materials for the MCD/MSP program and came to the consensus that the program is performing at the “**Exemplary**” level.

#### **Strengths of the program were noted and include:**

- Number of different placements nationally
- Success rate with graduates including the Praxis pass rate and 100% job placement rate
- Support system in place for those not initially successful, whether academic or skill related
- 5 year strategic plan
- Continuous accreditation for more than 30 years
- Competitiveness of program and attraction of high quality students
- Leadership commitment to student-centered approach
- Integrated assessment plan – student learning, program evaluation, creation of strategic plan
- Distance education students must come to South Carolina for a practicum for monitoring prior to completing placements elsewhere
- Faculty evaluations including input from faculty for questions

**Areas for Improvement were noted and include:**

- Diversity of enrollment
- Maintaining documentation for systematic changes

**The Committee Further Encourages:**

- Develop an undergraduate presence in terms of pre-program career-exploration
- Exploring data trends
- Follow up on diversity and awareness components of strategic plan

**V. Schedule for Future Meetings**

*Programs to Review 2014-15*

- Music Education (BM/MAT) and Art Education (BFA/MAT) – October 2014
- School Media (MLIS) and Teaching (MEd) – November 2014
- School Psychology (PhD) and Curriculum & Instruction (EdD) – January 2015
- Museum of Education & Educational Foundations of Inquiry (PhD) – February 2015
- Athletic Training (BS/MS) and Physical Education (BS/MAT/PhD) – March 2015
- Educational Administration (MEd/EdS/PhD) – April 2015
- Special Education (MAT/MEd/PhD) – May 2015

**VI. Other Business**

Dr. Greer adjourned the meeting at 3:16 p.m.