The University of Alabama

Department of Communicative Disorders

Strategic Plan

Fall 2017-Summer 2022

**Research**

***I. Enhance Cross-disciplinary and Community-based Research***

*A. Foster new cross-disciplinary relationships*

Faculty will identify potential cross-disciplinary aspects of their research and develop relationships with potential collaborators across campus. Projects will be developed in an effort to increase funded faculty research and collaborative extramural research. These efforts will increase recognition of the research program at a regional, state, national, and international level.

Goals

*Two-Year Goals*:

1. Develop an open forum for researchers across campus to visit our research laboratories and present our research.

Goal met CD continues to work with researchers across campus with whom we share our research initiatives; most notably there is an open and active relationship with ALRI (Dr. Hay-McCutcheon) and the College of Engineering (Drs. Gosa & Malaia)

1. Discover and explore interdisciplinary research resources across campus.

Goal met: Seven different faculty members collaborated with faculty across disciplines and colleges during this strategic plan timeframe.

*Five-Year Goals:*

1. Establish at least five inter-disciplinary projects

Goal met: August 2022 continue work on existing projects

Areas of collaboration include Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics, Kinesiology, Modern Languages, Psychology, Education.

1. Generate at least six interdisciplinary publications

Goal met: As of August 2022, there are 17 unique interdisciplinary

Publications from the above-mentioned areas of collaboration

1. Develop and submit at least eight interdisciplinary grants

Goal met: As of August 2022, 22 different interdisciplinary grants have been

submitted by our faculty

*B. Cultivate community-engaged research*

We will develop community-based research within the next five years. We will foster relationships with community services, commercial partners, and advocacy organizations. Through our community engagement, UA will increase its potential to become a Carnegie designated community-engaged institution.

Goals

*Two-Year Goals:*

1. Develop a departmental summer camp for children with fluency disorders.

Goal suspended due to pandemic

1. Foster relationships with at least 5 community partners.

Goal suspended due to pandemic

*Five-Year Goals:*

1. Develop at least 3 projects

Goal met: August 2022 – Six new projects developed & implemented with community organizations during strategic plan period

1. Develop at least 6 publications

Goal met: August 2021 – Six scholarly publications produced through community engaged partnerships

1. Develop and submit 5 grants

Goal met: August 2022 – Seven grant submissions completed that emphasized relationships with community services, commercial partners, and advocacy organizations

***II. Enhance Departmental Research***

*A. Enhance understanding and knowledge of faculty research within the department*

 During the upcoming 5-year period faculty will provide regular research updates to the department. This increased communication will create a climate of understanding of the scholarship activities that are taking place in the department and ultimately enhance our productivity.

Two-year goals:

1. Introduce five-minute research updates at the end of each Department meeting

Goal met: AY 2019 - 2020 prior to the pandemic, faculty gave brief research

updates as part of each faculty meeting

1. Explore implications of increasing Professional Seminar presentations to twice a month

Goal met: Explored increasing Professional Seminar presentations to twice a

Month and determined it was not feasible with the clinic schedule

1. Create meeting before ASHA to review presentations

Goal met in 2019 prior to pandemic. Will use one EBP seminar time for

reviewing ASHA presentations during Fall 2022

1. Provide summaries of departmental research in the annual newsletter

Goal met departmental research published in Hear Say newsletter beginning

Sept. 1st 2022

Five-year goals:

1. Explore funding sources to help offset costs associated with bringing off-campus research collaborators for Professional Seminar presentations.

Goal met: introduction of web based platforms for meetings and conferences

allows department to bring guest faculty for professional seminar

presentations.

1. Continue to provide research opportunities for clinical faculty.

Goal met clinical faculty participating in research through the following UA

SHC programs: Bama Perks, Play Pals, and Pediatric Feeding Disorder

Evaluation.

*B. Address barriers to research*

 To enhance departmental research, we will address barriers that impede faculty and staff from developing their research programs.

Two-year goals:

1. Explore feasibility of hiring a part-time professional to assist with grant-writing

Goal met: Explored all available options and funding opportunities for hiring a part-time professional to assist with grant writing and were not able to secure funding or support from college for this position.

1. Develop a list of equipment needs within the department

Goal met incorporated equipment needs into 2019-2020 budget for ROH funds and continually update each budget year

1. Explore possibility to increase research dedicated space within the department

Goal met: Department obtained new research dedicated space for three new

faculty members

Five-year goals:

1. Increase GRAs from 1 to 3 students

Goal met: We have 2 GRA positions, one from the College and one from an

ongoing grant

1. Explore funding resources for graduate students working on thesis projects

Goal met: Funding mechanisms identified through graduate school and

college of A&S. Initial funding obtained for one thesis student, but it was not

used due to the pandemic

**Instruction**

1. Respond to the challenge ofserving larger numbers of students while enhancing a learner-centered approach to clinical education. As UA class size continues to grow, we will explore options for teaching large-enrollment courses in ways that are as interactive and individualized as possible, particularly for courses that target clinical education.

Goals

 *Two-Year Goals:*

1. Request PTTIs to offer dual sections of larger clinical courses (i.e. 420, 422)

Goal met: AY 21-22, most UG courses now have 2 sections to facilitate smaller

class size; facilitated by hire of PTTI/FTTI, Dr. Laura Moss, & new faculty

member, Dr. Luca Campanelli

1. Offer CD 309(420) in FA and SP semesters so that all courses are offered in both Fall and Spring semesters.

Goal met: As of AY 21-22, all UG CD core courses are offered in the Fall &

Spring

*Five-Year Goals*:

1. Monitor SOIs and faculty assessment data to determine whether students and faculty are more satisfied with learning outcomes with smaller class sizes.

Goal met: As of AY 21-22, SOIs indicated satisfaction with smaller class sizes

(specifically, SOIs from the courses with the smallest enrollment sizes)

1. Monitor types of experiential learning offered in courses relative to SLOs.

Goal met: The CD 350 Independent study is the class associated with this

outcome. Monitoring of the syllabi for the different sections of this class, the

department notes multiple experiential learning opportunities offered that include:

directed readings, lab research with data collection, data analysis, IRB

preparation, preparing manuscripts and/or conference presentations under the

guidance of one of the faculty members.

1. Improve undergraduate retention in upper-level courses.

Goals

Two-Year Goals:

1. Students will be informed about NSSLHA membership and activities, including the graduate school information panel, during 200-level courses

Goal met: NSSLHA information is provided to all 200-level courses presented by

either the course instructor and/or a NSSLHA officer. NSSLHA and/or the CD

Ambassadors Program present a graduate school informational panel. NSSLHA

has also developed a strong social media presence on Instagram that announces

information about meetings and activities.

1. Each semester, a Qualtrics survey will be distributed to ask about student needs including advising and coursework.

Goal met: A Qualtrics survey is distributed to undergraduate students each

semester to inquire about what services they need from an advising appointment.

1. Develop Student Affairs Committee whose focus will be to monitor student concerns, support and inform students of departmental activities, track student performance and retention at UG level, and manage CD Ambassadors Program.

Goal met: Faculty and staff monitor undergraduate student concerns as reported

through NSSLHA and we monitor undergraduate student performance during

individual and group advising with UG students in the Fall and Spring semester

each year. A stand-alone student affairs committee was not feasible with the

onset of the COVID pandemic, but the goal to monitor student concerns, support

and inform students of departmental activities, and track student

performance/retention at the undergraduate level was accomplished.

Five-Year Goals:

1. Monitor retention rates at UG level. Maintain 70% retention.

Goal met: The average retention rate for students who continue in the major for

the 2nd year is 76.3%. Further exploration reveals- the average retention rate for

students who continue in the major for the 3rd year is 68.0%. The average

retention rate for students who continue in the major for the 4th year is 57.9%.

Plan to explore reasons for major change in third and fourth years.

1. Track reasons students transfer out of department.

Goal met: Reasons for transferring out of the program are tracked informally through advising. Reasons identified include transferring from UA and changing major due to desire to not have to pursue a graduate program (financial concern) and/or greater interest in other major after taking exploratory coursework.

1. Demonstrate integration of research literature, writing practice, and evidence-based practice into curriculum.

Goals

 Two-Year Goals:

1. Collect data on the number and type of research activities completed across undergraduate and graduate courses.

Goal met: AY 21-22: Literature review (3); Annotated bibliography (1); research

summary (1); research review assignment (1); Packback Responses (1); Additional research focused writing elective was added to the UG and Graduate curriculum during this strategic plan cycle to meet this goal as well.

1. Collect data and performance criteria and outcomes on writing assessments completed in undergraduate and graduate courses.

Goal met: AY 21-22: Writing activities reported: 8; Types of activities: Literature

summary (mean = 100%); reflection paper (93%); literature reviews with

summary and flow charts (90.5%); intervention summary (89%); dialect

comparison (93%)

1. Develop mechanism to measure how EBP is integrated into curriculum and how the knowledge of EBP maps onto clinical experiences for students

Goal met: Informal mechanism for measuring EBP integration in the curriculum

in place through yearly syllabus review reveals EBP is discussed in every

disorder-focused class (200-400 level) in relation to the subject matter. EBP is

also discussed at the graduate level in every course. In house clinical experiences

include planning and debriefing where the evidence to support assessments and

interventions are reviewed and discussed during the evaluation and treatment

planning stage.

Five-Year Goals:

1. Monitor student perceptions of confidence in reading research literature, technical writing, and engaging in EBP.

Goal met: Feedback is collected from students through assignments, course SOIs,

and exit interviews on how confident they are in reading research literature,

technical writing, and EBP.

**Clinic**

*I. Develop and foster the clinical education of the students by enhancing the clinical service delivery to the local and surrounding community*

1. *Enhance student educational experience*

To provide the best educational experience for our students, we need to continue to develop our clinical program as our student population grows. The goals outlined below address the needs of our growing student and clinical population.

Goals:

*Two-Year Goals:*

1. Provide an annual clinical training on resonance (cleft palate, VPI, etc.).

Goal met: Covered in CD555 Voice and Voice Disorders; briefly discussed at

2022 Cooper Lecture Series and speaker Edie Hapner provided resources;

Simucase is now available for additional instruction/training via clinical

simulations.

1. Appoint a clinical supervisor to attend specialty training in resonance.

Goal Met: multiple clinical educators attended AY 17-18

1. Integrate audiological services for graduate and undergraduate students within speech pathology services (auditory processing skills, aural rehabilitation, etc.) in the SHC.

Goal Met: CD 350/360, CD445. CD546 continue to be offered. CD545

Audiology Lab taught to 2nd sem. Grad students. Multiple screening opportunities

on-going. HA tool kit supplied to all CEs for students to use w/ clients with HL.

Audiology clinical videos added to video library for CD277 observation.

*Five-Year Goals:*

1. Hire an additional clinical supervisor to enable more individualized interaction with students and their clinical supervisors and to improve the services provided to the local Hispanic community.

Goal met with hire of Claire January (CJ); CJ resigned in Fall 2021; additional

clinical educator hired (Kayce Hinton) to replace CJ in Spring 2022

1. Hire a part-time OT to support various therapies such as feeding and sensory integration needs.

Goal not met: College unable to provide funding and department budget

insufficient for OT hire

1. *Incorporate new technological equipment and software programs into our clinical program*

When our students graduate from our program, they will need to be familiar with technological advances that have occurred within the profession of SLP. The goals outlined below will help our students become familiar with electronic medical records and video-capturing programs.

Goals:

*Two-Year Goals:*

1. Explore electronic medical records for the SHC.

Goal met: Point-n-Click (PNC) installed and fully operational AY 19-20

1. Install at least 4 additional video recording cameras into separate therapy rooms.

Goal met: AY 18-19, Total of 21 cameras now installed in the clinic.

1. Consider therapy software programs for clinic and home program use.

Goal met: AY 21 – 22 New technology/software programs: Teletherapy, iPads/apps in

therapy, Digital Assessments, SimuCase, & LSVT Companion all in place at UA SHC

1. Develop a pediatric iPad loaner library to be utilized with therapy and explore AAC software applications.

Goal met: AY 21 – 22 New technology/software programs: Teletherapy, iPads/apps in

therapy (give recommendations to clients to download to their own devices- no loaner

equipment available)

*Five-Year Goals:*

1. Incorporate electronic medical records in our clinical program.

Goal met: PNC installed and fully operational AY 19-20

1. Implement the use of software programs to enhance home carryover.

Goal met: AY 21 – 22 New technology/software programs: Teletherapy, iPads/apps in

therapy AAC loaner devices available AY 18-19 to present. Replaced old computers in

student workrooms and Literacy Lab.

1. *Needs of the facility*

Our program is housed in an aging building which requires continual monitoring and upkeep. Additionally, because of our growing student population, our physical needs are changing. The goals outlined below address the needs of the physical space of our clinical program.

Goals:

*Two-Year Goals:*

1. Establish a Facility Assessment Committee to evaluate the physical space including flooring, paint, and furniture in the SHC.

Goal met: AY 17-18 established facility assessment committee, chaired by Mary Price, includes Budget Committee and adjunct members as necessary

1. Explore the possibility of a Sensory Integration Room.

Goal met: space limitations in current facility prevent having a dedicated sensory integration room. To address sensory needs of clients the following upgrades were made to treatment areas: dimmer switches installed in several treatment rooms; sensory swing installed on the outdoor playground; small sensory area created in Preschool room.

*Five-Year Goals:*

1. Obtain funds for a Sensory Integration Room to promote a multidisciplinary approach to therapy.

Goal not met as feasibility study referenced above determined that space limitations in current facility prevent the creation of a dedicated sensory integration room

**Service**

*I. Enhance service to department, university, and community*

*A. Speech, Language and Hearing Services*

 We currently provide speech, language and hearing services to students, faculty, and community members who independently make appointments for these services. We would like to increase the number of services we provide to our university and local community by proactively providing screenings to both on-campus and community populations.

Goals

*Two-Year Goals*:

1. Contact the UA faculty, staff, student groups, and community groups to determine interest in providing speech, language, and hearing screenings for these individuals.

Goal met: Provided screenings to UA faculty, staff, student groups, and

community groups in AY 17-18, 18-19, 19-20, 20-21, and 21-22 including many

new collaborations

1. Continue to provide hearing screenings to groups and organizations with which the department has an ongoing collaboration.

Goal met: Continue to provide screenings in AY 17-18, 18-19, 19-20, 20-21, and

21-22 with previously established community partners.

*Five-Year Goal*:

1. Provide an in-house speech, language and hearing screening service for faculty, staff and students.

Goal met: Faculty met goal by providing in-house speech, language, and

hearing screenings for faculty, staff, students, and community groups, including OLLI

Health fair, Capstone Village, RISE Center, CDRC, and UA Health and Wellness Expo,

as well as individual services through the Hear Here bus. Continue goal to provide

services to UA and community. Department has provided 6 or more presentations to UA

groups. Continue goal to promote awareness of SHC services

*B. Increase awareness of our department in the university and local communities*

 We can improve the awareness of our department by increasing the number of presentations we provide to the university and to the surrounding community. The purpose of the following goals is to increase awareness of our services to the university and local communities.

Goals

*Two-Year Goals:*

1. Provide at least 3 educational presentations to university-based groups (e.g., voice therapy, hearing protection, autism, etc.)

Goal Met. The department averaged more than four presentations annually to groups

including ALRI, CDRC, Million Dollar Band, and UA School of Music. Mailers also

sent to all UA staff re: hearing services and general SHC information.

1. Consult with eTech/OIT to enhance our website by providing website links to speech, language, and hearing educational resources.

Goal met. Updated accessibility, information, links, and ease of navigation for both

departmental and Speech & Hearing Center website during AY 2021-2022. Also offering

virtual open house annually.

*Five-Year Goals:*

1. Offer at least 6 educational presentations to on- and off-campus groups (e.g., rotary, optimist club, etc.)

Goal met: Faculty met 5-year goal #2 by providing increased number of

presentations to UA groups. Continue goal to promote awareness of SHC services

during the 5-year plan

1. Consult with an eTech/OIT consultant each year to ensure departmental website is current and utilizing most effective technology resources available.

Goal met: Lacey Watts maintains ongoing communication with OIT/eTech for

website and updates each semester. Website was completely renovated in AY 21-

*C. Enhance Service Learning*

 One of the goals outlined in UA’s strategic plan is to “increase the recognition of the University’s service priorities that enhance the quality of life for all Alabamians.” The goals outlined below address UA’s larger interest in fostering service to the community.

Goals

*Two-Year Goals:*

1. The nature of our profession is to engage in service learning. Within the first two years of this strategic plan we will contact other departments and community partners to establish interdepartmental and community partner collaborations to enhance experiential service learning.

Goal met: Faculty collaborate with campus and community partners to provide

experiential service learning through organizations and events such as Caring

Days of Tuscaloosa, AL Head Injury Foundation’s Bright Ideas TBI Camp, and

the REU collaboration with UA Engineering program. Goal met during first two

years of this strategic plan and partnerships are ongoing.

1. Ensure that all Communicative Disorders courses that have a service-learning component are identified through Service-Learning Pro, a web-based database through which all parties involved in service learning (i.e., community partners, students, faculty, staff) can organize these service-learning relationships.

Goal met, but UA no longer utilizes this program to track service-learning

experiences.

*Five-Year Goal:*

1. Continue to collaborate with campus and community partners to provide experiential service learning for students and faculty.

Goal met: Faculty continue to collaborate with campus and community partners to

provide experiential service learning through organizations and events such as

Caring Days of Tuscaloosa, AL Head Injury Foundation’s Bright Ideas TBI

Camp, and the REU collaboration with UA Engineering program.