



Communication Sciences and Disorders Graduate Program Strategic Plan: AY23-AY28

Introduction

The Department of Speech, Hearing and Rehabilitation Services (SHRS) in the College of Allied Health and Nursing offers the following programs:

- Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Master of Science (M.S.), Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders
- American Sign Language Certificate
- Post-Baccalaureate, Communication Sciences and Disorders

This strategic plan for the **Communication Sciences and Disorders Graduate Program (M.S.)** outlines our vision, mission, and objectives for the next six years, aligning with the broader university goals of transformational learning, diversity, and innovative practices.

Executive Summary

In this strategic plan, CSD faculty sets key priorities for 2023-2028, focusing on enhancing professional practice training, integrating evidence-based practices with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and improving assessment and evaluation systems. These goals align with Minnesota State University, Mankato's commitment to educational excellence, community care, and student success.

Mission Statement

We aim to provide a comprehensive foundation in Communication Sciences and Disorders, empowering students to achieve their professional goals in speech-language pathology while fostering lifelong learning and leadership.

Vision Statement

We seek to prepare students for successful real-world collaborative work, leadership, and lifelong learning, equipping them with the skills to thrive as Speech-Language Pathologists.

Strategic Objectives, Actions, and Key Performance Indicators

The objectives and actions outlined in this plan are essential for achieving the mission and vision of the *Speech, Hearing, and Rehabilitation Department*. Each objective is aligned with Minnesota State University Mankato's broader goals and focuses on key areas such as professional training, curriculum development, and program assessment. The action steps offer a clear roadmap for implementing these objectives, while the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will help measure success and ensure continuous improvement.

CSD Program Goal #1: Provide diverse, high-quality professional practice experiences and provide foundation of SLP curriculum that prepares students for entry-level practice in speech-language pathology. *Aligns with University Direction: Leader in Transformational Learning generating inspiring action & Lifelong Provider of Access to An Equitable Education*

Objective: Enhance Professional Practice Training.

Action Steps:

1. **Facilitate Partnerships:** Develop or strengthen partnerships with university programs and departments, local schools, hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and simulation centers, including the Maverick Family Nursing Simulation Center and Mayo Clinic.
2. **Implement Clinical Rotations:** Establish diverse clinical rotations covering all aspects of speech-language pathology and hearing practice, including child, adult, and specialty areas.
3. **Integrate Simulation:** Develop clinical simulations for the ASHA "Big 9" diagnostic categories, including counseling, family education, and interprofessional practice (IPP).
4. **Evaluate Skills:** Implement competency-based assessments for professional practice competencies.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- 80% students will achieve at least a grade B or better in professional practice competence expectations in clinical practice
- Increase external partnerships as needed to accommodate clinical education needs
- An average favorability of 3 or better on a five-point rating scale from community partners and clinical supervisors from Program Assessment Survey

CSD Program Goal #2: Ensure students have the knowledge and skills to apply evidence-based practices while delivering culturally responsive care. *Aligns with University Direction: Community of Care built upon diversity, inclusion and belonging & Nimble and Innovative Steward of Resources*

Objective: Integrate Evidence-Based Practices and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Curriculum

Action Steps:

1. **Curriculum Development:** Review and update the curriculum regularly to reflect evidence-based practices and emerging trends in the field. Ensure faculty members embed DEI principles in each course.
2. **Holistic Admissions:** Implement holistic admissions processes to diversify student recruitment, focusing on underrepresented populations.
3. **Faculty Development:** Provide ongoing professional development for all faculty on evidence-based practices, cultural responsiveness, and DEI.
4. **Inclusive Learning Opportunities:** Incorporate DEI-related case studies, simulations, and community engagement projects into coursework and clinical training.

KPIs:

- 80% of students will rate the program's efforts on DEI with an average of 3 or better on a five-point rating scale in the program assessment surveys.
- Seek to maintain a diverse student body (15-20%) and support them to develop skills
- Annually review evidence-based practices and culturally responsive content in the curriculum and update content as needed

CSD Program Goal #3: Establish a comprehensive and efficient program assessment and evaluation system to monitor student progress and effectiveness. *Aligns with University Direction: Nimble and Innovative Steward of Resources*

Objective: Utilize Program Assessment and Evaluation Systems

Action Steps:

1. **Conduct Program Assessment Surveys:** We will conduct annual surveys of current and former students, clinical supervisors, and employers to evaluate program strengths and areas for improvement.
2. **Perform Exxat Data Analysis:** We will use Exxat data to track student outcomes and clinical competencies and identify areas needing curriculum enhancements.
3. **Use Course Outcome Metrics:** We will regularly assess course outcomes to ensure that at least 85% of students meet Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) requirements.
4. **Implement Continuous Improvement Cycle:** We will implement a continuous quality improvement process, including feedback loops where survey results inform programmatic changes.

KPIs:

- We will strive to have a 60% or better completion rate from all stakeholders in completing the program assessment surveys.
- 80% of students will meet course-specific KASA outcomes
- We will formulate yearly action plans based on the survey data at our program assessment meeting.

Implementation Timeline

Year	Key Milestones	Actions
AY23	Establish baseline metrics	Analyze initial data on program assessments
AY24	Facilitate partnerships and clinical rotation sites	Modify program assessment surveys to meet the revised mission/vision. Integrate and highlight new DEI modules and programming. Develop agreements with programs, local schools, facilities and organizations.
AY25	Update curriculum to reflect evolving best practices	Analyze program assessment results and create a list of actions for graduate curriculum including evidence-based practice, DEI and professional practice competency. Engage external partners in advancing and providing high impact experiences.
AY26	Increase diversity and collaboration	Incorporate DEI modules for professional practice competency. Innovative collaboration in targeted courses. Invest scholarly work among faculty and students. Establish clinical rotations and simulations addressing diversity and ASHA Big 9 categories. Explore new clinical services for serving the community and enhancing student learning experiences.
AY27	Review progress on KPIs	Conduct an evaluation and make necessary adjustments.
AY28	Develop a new strategic plan based on evaluation outcomes.	Engage in strategic planning for the next five-year cycle.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

We will monitor the success of this strategic plan by conducting program assessments, gathering stakeholder feedback, and regularly reviewing progress against KPIs. We will update goals and actions through a continuous improvement process as needed.

Conclusion

This strategic plan provides a clear path to excellence in clinical practice, diversity, and program assessment. By following this structured approach, the SHRS department will remain aligned with Minnesota State University, Mankato's broader goals and continue to enhance student success, faculty development, and program sustainability.