

Louisiana State University Health–Shreveport  
School of Allied Health Professions  
Department of Rehabilitation Sciences  
Program in Speech-Language Pathology

# Long-term Strategic Plan

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*prepared & revised by*

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## **1. Background Information**

The Program in Speech-Language Pathology is one of three programs comprising the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences within the School of Allied Health Professions of LSU Health-Shreveport. The program is housed in the Mollie E. Webb Speech and Hearing Center, which is located at 3735 Blair Drive in Shreveport, LA. The center includes classroom facilities, a computer laboratory, an augmentative and alternative communication laboratory, a speech measurement laboratory, a reading room, a student study area, and departmental offices. The clinical facilities include six rooms for speech-language assessment and treatment, an audiologic test suite, a hearing aid fitting room, a classroom for young children with communication disorders, a wide range of testing and treatment materials, and clinical office spaces.

### **1.1. Mission**

#### **1.1.1. Mission Statement of the School of Allied Health Professions**

It is the mission of the Louisiana State University Health-Shreveport, School of Allied Health Professions in Shreveport to advance health professions through excellence in education, research, and service. Revised 2/20

#### **1.1.2. Vision Statement of the School of Allied Health Professions**

LSUH-S strives to be a recognized leader in health care and innovation in quest of a healthier Louisiana and world through education, research, and clinical practice.

#### **1.1.3. Mission Statement of the Program in Speech-Language Pathology**

The Shreveport LSUH-S Program in Speech-Language Pathology has the following missions:

- to provide academic and clinical education to students pursuing a Masters of Communication Disorders (MCD) degree in speech-language pathology and to encourage life-long learning through continuing education offerings;
- to provide clinical services in audiology and speech-language pathology to children and adults with disorders of communication, swallowing, and related areas; and
- to conduct and disseminate research in the areas of audiology, speech-language pathology, and related communication sciences.

## **1.2. Objectives of the Long-Term Strategic Plan**

This long-term strategic plan for the LSUH-S Program in Speech-Language Pathology was developed by the faculty to address the following general objectives:

- to ensure consistency in the execution of the program's mission;
- to anticipate emerging needs of the program and to address these needs proactively; and
- to establish accountability for identifying priorities, developing and implementing plans, and documenting outcomes.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Analysis**

As an ongoing process, the speech-language pathology program faculty members analyze and identify the program's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities (Figure); the faculty attempt to address weaknesses and threats through the use of the strengths and opportunities. From the weaknesses, four (4) focus areas are targeted in the strategic plan; these focus areas are in line with the SAHP strategic plan but on a smaller scale.

### 3. Results

Speech-Language Pathology program's analysis (see figure).

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• our graduates are in great demand</li> <li>• our PRAXIS pass rate is 100% for ones reported</li> <li>• our clinic services are in demand</li> <li>• our clinic serves a diverse clientele</li> <li>• our clinic provides comprehensive service for preschoolers (e.g., Language Center program)</li> <li>• our curriculum addresses often-overlooked areas (e.g., professional issues, summative assessment, ethics)</li> <li>• our faculty members are capable and unified</li> <li>• our faculty members support evidence-based practice</li> <li>• our faculty members are productive</li> <li>• our faculty members areas of expertise are complementary</li> <li>• our faculty members are professionally involved</li> <li>• our faculty members provide high levels of clinical supervision</li> <li>• faculty members seeking doctoral education (e.g., PhD in Rehab Sciences)</li> <li>• our office staff is capable and supportive</li> <li>• our building is modern and well equipped</li> <li>• our building has adequate and convenient parking</li> <li>• our program is well established and stable</li> <li>• our program is well organized (tracking/filing systems)</li> <li>• our program has a large variety of clinical materials</li> <li>• our program has community support (e.g. Scottish Rite, Quota)</li> <li>• our program has received support from administration for various reasons/events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• our state funding is limited</li> <li>• our program has limited access to electronic medical records</li> <li>• our materials and equipment (instrumentation) are aging</li> <li>• our incoming students are often poorly prepared</li> <li>• our students vary widely in technological competence</li> <li>• our access to research support is limited</li> <li>• our students have difficulty balancing clinical/academic loads</li> <li>• our students, as a group, have very poor writing skills</li> <li>• our relationship with Ochsner-LSU hospital providers is limited</li> <li>• our recruitment of outstanding students is limited</li> <li>• our attrition rate fluctuates from semester to semester</li> <li>• our program has limited success with external funding</li> <li>• our communication is not always efficient</li> <li>• IRB process is not perceived as user friendly by faculty</li> </ul>

- our external practicum sites are high quality and diverse
- our program has diverse financial aid opportunities
- our program is supported by other professions
- our program has excellent library support
- our program welcomes students with diverse backgrounds
- our program has a successful 3:2 program with Centenary
- our program provides high value at a relatively low cost
- our program provides continuing education courses (e.g., journal club; Alumni Event)
- our program participates in multidisciplinary activities (e.g., AAC, Children's Ctr, NICU, Cleft Palate Clinic)
- IRB process modified to be social sciences friendly

#### Opportunities

- health care careers show potential for growth
- agencies are eager to hire our graduates
- expanding access to new external practicum sites
- external funding opportunities exist (e.g., BOR grants)
- research opportunities exist (including cross-disciplinary)
- potential 'feeder' programs exist in the region
- faculty members have potential for national prominence
- there is more emphasis on pedagogy in the profession
- emphasis on prevention expands research potential
- physician education may increase understanding, referrals
- new billing system being considered
- Increasing number of patients are on Medicaid
- Records are being converted electronically

#### Threats

- there are many competing SLP programs in Louisiana
- the profession requires increasing breadth of study
- the profession is not well known or understood
- graduate education is not viable for many LA residents
- recruitment of new faculty may be difficult
- few males are entering the profession
- reduced insurance coverage for outpatient SLP services
- many strong & diverse students are attracted to other fields
- our referral sources vary in appropriateness

Figure Analysis

#### **4. Strategic Plan: Focus Areas**

On the basis of analysis and faculty discussions, four focus areas were identified to address in the strategic plan. These areas included:

- Technological knowledge and skills
- Clinical knowledge and skills
- Writing across the curriculum
- Evidence-based practice

For each area, a long-term objective (LTO) and short-term objective(s) (STO) were developed.



## 4.1 Focus Area 1: Technological Knowledge and Skills

### 4.1.1. Rationale

Increasingly, speech-language pathologists are expected to be technologically proficient in a number of areas, including:

- Information management (e.g., literature identification, Internet searches, retrieval)
- Case management (e.g., word processing, spreadsheets, database management)
- Patient and professional education (e.g., presentation graphics)
- Assessment (e.g., compuscore, speech capture and analysis, language sample analysis, videofluoroscopy, otoacoustic emission screening, hearing screening)
- Treatment (e.g., instrumental biofeedback, communication-enhancement software)
- Simulation (e.g., lab, websites, software)

For each didactic course, faculty identified activities and/or assignments designed to enhance students' knowledge and/or skills in the area of technology.

### 4.1.2. Long-Term Plan (LTO/STO)

LTO: To increase students' technology proficiency through exposure to technology in multiple areas throughout the two year program.

STO: Utilize technology to complete at least 7-9 of the tasks listed for the following categories:

Categories	Tasks
Information management	literature identification, Internet searches, retrieval
Case management	word processing, spreadsheets, database management
Patient and professional education	presentation graphics
Assessment	speech capture and analysis, language sample analysis, videofluoroscopy, OAE screener, tympanometry, portable audiometer
Treatment	instrumental biofeedback, communication-enhancement software
Simulation	lab, websites, software

### 4.1.3. Follow up procedures

To ensure utilization, faculty are encouraged to participate in inservice training sessions with new equipment. These sessions should cover operation, troubleshooting, calibration, and maintenance as applicable.

As new equipment is acquired, the faculty discuss how the technology can best be incorporated into the curriculum. Courses that are technology-intensive include:

- SPATH 5100 – Introduction to Graduate Study
- SPATH 5134 – Clinical Linguistics & Psycholinguistics
- SPATH 5132 – Applied Speech Measurement
- SPATH 6224 – Augmentative Communication
- SPATH 5205 – Hearing Screening Lab
- SPATH 6204 - Motor Speech Disorders and 6544 – Dysphagia

Application of technology has been expanded in other courses (e.g., articulation and phonological disorders, voice and related disorders, cultural and linguistic diversity).

To ensure acquisition of associated skills, course and clinical competencies are updated periodically to reflect integration of new equipment and methodologies. Assessment procedures include proficiency assignments, as well as student self evaluations. Additionally, the strategic plan will be assessed annually by the faculty members.

### Progress

*Tasks are identified in bold*

**Speech measurement labs (N=26)** - SPATH 5132 – Applied Speech Measurement

**Literature Internet searches** - SPATH 5100 – Introduction to Graduate Study, SPATH 6201 – Anatomy and Physiology of Speech and Hearing; add 5200 (Phonetics), 6212 (Voice), and 6224 (AAC)

**Concept mapping software** - SPATH 5100 – Introduction to Graduate Study

**Treatment apps** – SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses; add 6224 (AAC)

**Duffy's pre and post-test (PowerPoint including video and audio samples) and add on-line Duffy lab** – SPATH 6204 Motor Speech Disorders

**OAE screener, tympanometry, portable audiometer** – SPATH 6702-6705 Clinical Practicum courses, SPATH 5205 Hearing Screening Lab

**Language sample analysis** – SPATH 5134 Clinical Linguistics & Psycholinguistics, SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses

**Word processing** – SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses and all academic courses

**Presentation graphics** - SPATH 6201 – Anatomy and Physiology of Speech and Hearing, SPATH 6300 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity; add 5100 (Intro) and 6100 (Research)

**Edmodo website for handbooks/forms** - SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses

**AAC devices/software (Boardmaker)** - SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses; SPATH 6224 Augmentative Communication (labs/projects and interaction with various devices; trip to LATAN to gain knowledge of additional devices)

**Excel spreadsheet for clinic clock hours** - SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses

**CSL, including Nasometer** – SPATH 6212 Voice and Related Disorders

**Videofluoroscopy and perceptual assessment of voice and speech** added to simulation section for SPATH 6204 (Motor Speech), 6544 (Dysphagia), and 6212 (Voice).

As of August 2020

## **4.2. Focus Area II: Clinical Benchmarks**

### **4.2.1. Rationale**

The goal of clinical education is to provide students with a series of diverse experiences to establish and develop requisite professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Although specific clinical assignments necessarily vary among students, there are predictable and ordered stages of professional growth. Clinical benchmarks represent a time-ordered set of target skills and behaviors to ensure progression and attainment of specified levels of proficiency and competence.

### **4.2.2. Long-Term Plan (LTO/STO)**

LTO: Provide students with a systematic set of clinical benchmarks designed to progress a student through 4-5 semesters of clinical experience.

STO 1: Faculty will review benchmarks at least twice a year to determine necessary changes.

STO 2: Students will demonstrate competency of clinical benchmarks as evidence by a composite grade of 'B' or higher.

#### **4.2.2.1. Identification of Clinical Benchmarks**

Clinical faculty of the LSUH-S Speech-Language Pathology Program met over several months to identify and operationalize clinical benchmarks for the following areas: assessment, treatment, writing, and professionalism.

Clinical practicum courses provide specific levels of performance in order to assign a grade in that area. Some benchmarks are designed on a continuum to show the expectation of growth from a 1st semester clinical practicum to a 4-5th semester practicum, while others require consistent performance across all semesters. At mid-term, students are provided with feedback and a mid-term grade to determine strengths and needs which should be addressed.

In sections 4.2.2.2.-4.4.2.5, see 4 areas: Assessment, Treatment, Writing, and Professional Development, subareas, and a brief description.

#### **4.2.2.2. Clinical Benchmarks: Assessment**

##### **4.2.2.2.1. Pre-assessment procedures**

- Meets with supervisor prior to evaluation and presents following information: chronological age, pertinent information from case history, clinical questions, evaluation plan
- Complete protocols and have all test and manual protocols in the evaluation room
- Set up room prior to evaluation
- Call to remind family of appointment and log phone call

#### **4.2.2.2.2. Assessment procedures**

##### *Formal/Informal evaluation*

- Demonstrates overall familiarity with formal and informal assessment procedures
- Independently transcribes all productions/responses and follows test procedures to obtain basal/ceiling
- Make test/procedural/behavioral adaptations as needed

##### *Interviewing*

- Conducts/participates, as directed, interview, modifying/adding questions as needed
- Summarize/explains results/recommendations and presents information to client/family

#### **4.2.2.2.3. Post-assessment procedures**

- Identify mean, standard deviation, and identifies how score(s) compares to mean
- Demonstrates understanding of how results from informal/nonstandardized procedures compare to norms/typical functioning levels
- Judges severity level for each area based on assessment data

#### **4.2.2.3. Clinical Benchmarks: Treatment**

##### **4.2.2.3.1. Preparation, Planning & Follow-Up**

##### *Completion of:*

- Treatment plan following two hours of treatment
- Lesson plans that reflect logical progression, correct terminology, and measurable objectives
- Log in client file all pertinent information (e.g., phone calls, initiation of therapy, disposition)
- Daily Therapy Source notes
- Progress report

*Suggest materials/activities appropriate to elicit target behaviors*

##### **4.2.2.3.2. Efficacy**

- Accurately records quantitative and qualitative data
- Develops measurable and congruent goals for treatment plans and lesson plans
- Develops appropriate probes
- Uses variety of therapy approaches/techniques appropriate to client
- Appropriately expand and/or extend client's responses

##### **4.2.2.3.3. Management**

##### *Session Management*

- Effectively manages multiple material items
- Smooth transition between activities

#### *Client management*

- Relates comfortably with multiple clients
- Recognizes and implements reinforcement system
- Provides homework/carryover activities, if applicable

#### **4.2.2.4. Clinical Benchmarks: Writing (diagnostic and treatment)**

All written work is expected to follow correct formatting and include appropriate content, organization, mechanics (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation), and pertinent information for the following:

- Individual Treatment Plan
- Progress reports
- Therapy Source notes
- Diagnostic reports

#### **4.4.2.5. Clinical Benchmarks: Professional Development and Demeanor**

- Adheres to all clinic policy deadlines/timelines, including but not limited to client confidentiality, professional appearances, infection control, returning clinic materials, and end of semester procedures
- Interacts/communicates with client, family, other students, faculty, and other professionals in a professional and timely manner
- Completes self-assessment to critique strengths/weaknesses
- Maintains clinic documentation

#### **4.4.2.6. Clock Hours – ASHA Requirements**

Recommend accumulation a minimum of 40% (150) of total required clock hours by the end of the second semester.

#### 4.4.3. Implementation

Initial implementation of clinical benchmarks was spring semester, 2008. However, recent revisions were made to the benchmarks and were implemented in the summer semester, 2016 on a trial basis.

#### 4.4.4. Follow up procedures

As part of the clinical evaluation process, student progression relative to the benchmarks is assessed. These data are used to provide feedback to students regarding their professional growth. In addition, these data are used to evaluate and to fine-tune the benchmarks themselves.

Student competency relative to clinical benchmarks is monitored on a semester-to-semester basis and documented as part of the clinical evaluation process. Successful achievement of the benchmarks is documented on the KASA form.

At least twice a year, clinical faculty will monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of the benchmarks to ensure their validity. These benchmarks are and will be reviewed and modified to reflect emerging trends.

#### Progress

Benchmarks were implemented summer 2016. Selective revisions have been made following the summer and fall 2016 semesters.  
Additional changes were made by the end of summer 2017 semester and then spring 2018.  
No revisions required since Spring 2018

As of August 2020

### **4.3. Focus Area III: Writing Across the Curriculum**

#### **4.3.1. Rationale**

The third focus of this strategic plan is written communication. These skills have been evaluated using portfolio assessment at the conclusion of the first year of study. Multiple courses include significant writing components.

Among the courses with significant writing components are:

- SPATH 6201 – Anatomy and Physiology of Speech and Hearing (outline, synthesis paper)
- SPATH 5100 – Introduction to Graduate Studies (APA style, paraphrasing, Summary/Critique, annotated bibliography)

#### **Phonetics**

- SPATH 5493 – Evidence-based Practice for SLP (systematic review)
- SPATH 5208 – Aphasia and Related Disorders (article summary/critiques, reports)
- SPATH 5134 – Clinical Linguistics and Psycholinguistics (analysis report)
- SPATH 5342 – Articulation and Phonological Disorders (clinical writing)
- SPATH 6100 – Research in Communication Disorders (evid. table, narrative review of lit)
- SPATH 6212 – Voice Disorders (written case study)
- SPATH 6300 – Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (language profile, report)
- SPATH 6214 – Diagnosis and Evaluation in SLP (clinical writing)
- SPATH 6900 – Summative Assessment (essay writing)
- SPATH 5200 & 6200 – Clinical and Advanced Phonetics
- SPATH 6214 – Diagnosis and Evaluation in SLP (psychometric, reports)
- Writing lab for incoming students (summer)

However, faculty members continue to express concern that students struggle with written language, especially higher-order writing tasks and clinical writing.

#### **4.3.2. Long-Term Plan (LTO/STO)**

LTO: Continue to provide multiple opportunities to develop writing skills in academic and clinical courses.

STO: Increase writing assignments/projects (academic or clinic) by a minimum of 1 per fiscal year.

#### **4.3.3. Follow up Procedures**

Faculty members will identify didactic/clinical activities and/or assignments involving writing, in order to implement into the coursework. Students are provided feedback on their writing, both in terms of content and style. Grading rubrics are typically used to operationalize content and form features. Successful completion of the writing requirements is reflected in the student's course grade, which is documented on each student's KASA form.

**Progress**

*Added writing tasks in bold*

**Students write on an instructor provided topic in a 5 minute period at beginning of class** - SPATH 5100 – Introduction to Graduate Studies (1<sup>st</sup> year students) and SPATH 5493 Evidence-based practice for SLP (2<sup>nd</sup> year students)

**Implementation of mini-comps at end of 1<sup>st</sup> year** – 2016 to present

**Written lab assignments (specific to vocabulary) and add case study project which also has a formative assessment process** – SPATH 6204 Motor Speech Disorders

**Lab/project assignment (case write up with choice and rationale for choosing client and device; requires technical/specific vocabulary use)** – SPATH 6224 Augmentative Communication

**Writing lab for first semester students** – APA, grammar/technical issues

As of August 2020



#### 4.4. Focus Area IV: Evidence-Based Practice

##### 4.4.1. Rationale

The fourth focus of this strategic plan is evidence-based practice (EBP). In the last several years, EBP has emerged as the primary framework translating clinical research into the practice of speech-language pathology. The faculty have a strong commitment to EBP as indicated by having the EBP course (SPATH 5493). Nevertheless, the students continue to have difficulty demonstrating knowledge of EBP in written form.

##### 4.4.2. Long-Term Plan (LTO/STO)

LTO: Improve pass rate on written comprehensive examination.

STO: Increase an additional formative assessment task prior to student's taking Summative Assessment course (SPATH 6900).

##### 4.4.3. Follow up Procedures

In addition to Focus Area III, to address writing skills, faculty have implemented a mini version of the comprehensive examination to be taken at the end of the students' first year. Similar procedures for completing written comprehensives will be followed for this new component of formative assessment. Students will receive a pass/fail rate along with his/her responses in order to self evaluate and better prepare for SPATH 6900 and written comprehensives.

Performance of this assessment is documented and maintained in the student academic file. A student's completion of written comprehensives is documented on the student KASA forms.

#### Progress

##### **Implementation of mini-comps at end of 1<sup>st</sup> year – began 2016 to present**

*Additional EBP tasks*

**Journal article readings from supervisors to student clinicians** – SPATH 6701-6705 Clinical Practicum courses.

**Written case study based on evidence specific to topic and/or treatment choice** – SPATH 6212 Voice and Related Disorders, 6204 Motor speech, 6224 AAC, 5208 Aphasia, 5204 Pediatric language, 5342 Phonological & Articulation Disorders, 6210 Fluency Disorders

**Synthesis paper** – SPATH 5200 Clinical Phonetics, 6201 A&P

**Psychometric project** – SPATH 6214 Diagnosis and Evaluation in SLP

## **5. Implementation Plan**

### **5.1. Summary**

Following an analysis, the program developed a strategic plan to address four focus areas:

- Technology
- Clinical benchmarks
- Writing across the curriculum
- Evidence-based practice

For each focus area, goals were identified and a follow-up process to monitor the goals, meeting of the goals, and determining needed changes.

### **5.2. Implementation, Review, and Future**

Implementation of this strategic plan was initiated during 2016. On the basis of this plan, modifications will be made to academic courses, as well as to clinical practicum. As faculty update and revise their courses, they will identify additional opportunities to enhance student competence in the areas of technology, clinical practicum, written communication, and evidence-based practice. Further, the faculty will review the strategic plan at least annually (fiscal) to monitor achievement of the goals. The success of these goals will be monitored for several years to determine outcomes and future goals will be developed as deemed necessary by faculty review of the strategic plan.