Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders  
Oklahoma State University  
Strategic Plan (2016-2019)  

Vision Statement  
The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Oklahoma State University will be a premier academic program in Oklahoma as well as in the country that would distinguish itself by providing exemplary undergraduate and graduate education, recruiting a diverse body of students and faculty, involving in state of the art clinical as well as basic research, and offering evidence-based clinical services to the community.

Mission Statement  
To fulfill our vision, and in line with the mission of the Oklahoma State University at large, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders will focus on: (1) strengthening undergraduate and graduate education by imparting evidence-based pedagogy that is well grounded in theoretical and clinical principles, (2) recruiting a diverse body of students as well as faculty with the assistance of Office of Institutional Diversity at Oklahoma State University (3) increasing student as well as faculty collaborative research within as well as across the department, (4) community engagement by offering evidence-based assessment and treatment services through the OSU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, and (5) maintaining the Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association standards through ongoing self-study.

Core Values of Oklahoma State University

Diversity – We respect other ethnic and cultural backgrounds and value diversity of opinion and freedom of expression for all.

Integrity – We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty, and we will be equitable, ethical, and professional.

Service – We believe that serving others is a noble and worthy endeavor.

Intellectual Freedom – We believe in ethical and scholarly questioning in an environment that respects the rights of all to freely pursue knowledge.

Excellence – We seek excellence in all our endeavors, and we are committed to continuous improvement.

Stewardship of Resources – We are dedicated to the efficient and effective use of resources. We accept the responsibility of the public’s trust and are accountable for our actions.
Background on developing the current strategic plan

The current 3-year strategic plan was developed after conducting a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis during fall 2016 involving the entire faculty of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. The results of SWOT analysis revealed six focus areas that were required to be addressed: (1) integration of academic and clinical training to enhance graduate education experience, (2) recruiting a diverse body of graduate students, (3) increasing the number of Ph.D. faculty, (4) increasing student as well as faculty research productivity, (5) regular and ongoing assessment of undergraduate and graduate curriculum and using the results for continuous improvement, and (6) continuing the ongoing efforts in community engagement. Appropriate baseline, outcome, indicators of success, and individuals responsible were designed for each of the five focus areas. The initial draft of the strategic plan was shared with stakeholders of the program (Faculty, Alumni, Current Students, Dean’s office) for feedback. Based on the feedback, relevant edits were made to the strategic plan and the plan was voted on for approval during the faculty meeting on 2 December 2016.

Focus area 1: Integration of academic and clinical training to enhance graduate education experience.

Baseline: Although in the past, academic faculty have assisted clinical supervisors in consulting patients and clinical supervisors have guest lectured for some of the graduate classes, an active environment of integration of academic coursework and clinical training is not visible in the department.

Outcome: Academic and clinical faculty will regularly consult with one another to train students in evidence-based assessment and treatment techniques. Additionally, clinical supervisors will collaborate with academic faculty to conduct clinically-driven research projects. Regular Professional Development Seminars for graduate students led by academic faculty and clinical supervisors will serve as a platform for mutual exchange of clinical research ideas.

Indicators of success: (1) clinical supervisors and academic faculty will collaborate on research projects to investigate the efficacy of evidence-based treatment of communication disorders in their area of expertise. The outcome of these projects will culminate either as conference presentations and/or publications in peer-reviewed journals; (2) the academic faculty in conjunction with the clinical supervisor(s) will expose students to assessment and treatment techniques at the OSU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic that are relevant to course content taught by the academic faculty; (3) Except for valid excuses to have 100% attendance of graduate students for Professional Development Seminars.

Individual(s) responsible: Academic faculty teaching graduate courses and clinical supervisors.
Focus area 2: Recruiting a diverse body of top graduate students.

**Baseline**: Among the cohort of graduate students that were admitted during 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, the percentage of diverse students were 15%, 1%, 27%, and 22%, respectively. This averages to 16% across the 4-year period.

**Outcome**: Increasing efforts to recruit diverse graduate students by modifying the admission criteria without compromising the quality of the student intake and offering assistantships/scholarships. Additionally, faculty members will participate in graduate school fair at the Annual Convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association to recruit diverse students.

**Indicators of success**: The diversity among graduate students will increase to about 25% on an average across the next 3-year period (i.e. by the end of 2019).

**Individuals responsible**: Program Director/Department Head, Graduate Program Coordinator, and Graduate Committee.

Focus area 3: Increasing the number of Ph.D. faculty.

**Baseline**: As of fall 2016, the department has three tenure-track faculty, one tenured faculty and a visiting professor.

**Outcome**: The department will aim to fill three more Ph.D. faculty lines by the end of 2019 who will be able to teach required courses as well as engage in active research in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

**Indicators of success**: By the end of 2019, there will be total of seven Ph.D. faculty engaged in active and collaborative research as well as impart evidence-based instruction to undergraduate and graduate students.

**Individual(s) Responsible**: Department Chair/Program Director.

Focus area 4: Increasing student as well as faculty research productivity

**Baseline**: Although the thesis option has not been actively considered by graduate students, in the last two years (2015 and 2016) there has been a gradual increase in the number of students opting for the completion of thesis. Among the 2015-2017 cohort of graduate students, two students are pursuing Master’s thesis, and among the 2016-2018 cohort, five students have opted to complete the thesis. Currently, there are five undergraduate students pursuing Seniors Honors thesis. One of the graduate students was a co-author on a paper that was published in 2016.

In 2016, our faculty have 14 combined publications (including book chapters) that were
either published or accepted for publication.

**Outcome**: Student involvement in research will continue to increase over the next 3 years. The research productivity of our faculty in communication sciences and disorders will continue to increase.

**Indicators of success**: Student research indicators – At least 10% of the incoming graduate students will be involved in Master's thesis and these students will either present their thesis findings in national/state conventions and/or publish their findings along with their advisor(s) in a peer-reviewed indexed journal. The Honors thesis students will also present their findings in a convention and/or publish their thesis findings along with their advisor in a peer-reviewed indexed journal.

Faculty research indicators – Over the next 3-year period, each faculty member (tenure-track/tenured) will have at least four papers published or accepted for publication in peer-reviewed indexed journals and present their research in at least one state/national convention every year. Faculty will also collaborate within the department as well as outside the department. Additionally, faculty will apply for internal funding every year and external funding at least once every two years.

**Individual(s) Responsible**: Ph.D. Faculty

**Focus area 5: Regular and ongoing assessment of undergraduate and graduate curriculum and using the results for continuous improvement.**

**Baseline**: Although we have had annual assessments of the undergraduate and graduate programs in the past, the assessment results have not been used dynamically to modify the curriculum.

**Outcome**: The current graduate and undergraduate education assessment plan will be revised and implemented on an annual basis. The results of the assessment plan will be communicated by the assessment coordinator with the rest of the faculty and based on that, changes to the undergraduate and graduate curriculum will be made.

**Indicators of success**: Graduate education indicators – 100% pass rate in Praxis examination, 100% program completion rate and 100% employment rate in profession or students pursuing higher education.
Undergraduate education indicators – student retention rate in excess of 80%, which will be in line with the retention rate of the College of Arts and Sciences and the University at large.

**Individual(s) Responsible**: Assessment Coordinator, Academic Faculty, and Clinical Supervisors.
Focus area 6: Continuing the ongoing efforts in community engagement

**Baseline:** The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Oklahoma State University has a rich history of serving the community through the Oklahoma State University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic. Some of the ongoing community engagement projects include the Cowboy Aphasia Camp, Hearing Screenings offered in partnership with ABLE Tech at Oklahoma State University, accent modification program offered to student trainee pilots at the College of Education, Oklahoma State University, to name a few. Additionally, the program has received community engagement grants from the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University each of the past three consecutive years.

**Outcome:** The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders will continue its efforts to serve the community by identifying appropriate community engagement partners.

**Indicators of success:** The program will continue the ongoing community engagement projects. The program’s community engagement scholarship will be enhanced by applying for internal/external community engagement grants and presenting/publishing outcomes from ongoing community engagement projects.

**Individual(s) Responsible:** Academic Faculty and Clinical Supervisors

**Assessment of the strategic plan**
The current strategic plan will be evaluated every year during the department faculty meeting during which the progress made in each focus area will be documented. If there is lack of progress for one or more focus areas, remedial measures will be discussed and implemented during the meeting.