



COLLEGE OF HEALTH & PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

Speech-Language Pathology Grows

The Speech-Language Pathology Master's program at ULM has nearly doubled its size over the past three years. Currently the program consists of approximately fifty students, up from approximately 25 three years ago. Over thirty-five of those are on campus and the remainder are in their final semester of off-campus internships in both a school and a hospital setting.

The ULM Kitty Degree Speech and Hearing Center, located in Sugar Hall on the ULM campus, allows Master's students to provide evaluations and therapy services to those that have communication and swallowing problems. The services include, but are not limited to stuttering, articulation, and accent modification. The facility houses nine therapy rooms that are specific to the needs of clients and has several specialty clinics including a child language literacy clinic and an accent modification clinic. Audiological services are also provided as needed for clients before beginning treatment.

In addition to the Kitty Degree Speech and Hearing Center, Master's students provide clinical services through both the Louisiana Scottish Rite Foundation, and several local Early Head Start programs. Faculty supervise students in obtaining the clinical clock hours needed for certification through the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) while helping community members improve their communication.

Currently, the program serves sixty-seven patients who range in age from the toddlers to senior citizens. In the summer and fall of 2013, the Speech-Language Pathology program provided 925 people with speech language screenings and 475 people with hearing screenings.

In addition to clinical experiences Master's students complete a rigorous, 37 hour course load including a hands-on research experience. Eighteen Master's students completed research projects on topics of linguistic diversity and their relevance to clinical practice and submitted them for review as poster presentation at the 2014 ASHA Convention, which will be held this November in Orlando.

The Council on Academic Accreditation has recently accredited the program for another eight years so that the program is accredited through the year 2020. ULM SLP also has an undergraduate BS program of approximately 115 students from which most graduates continue on to the Master's.

The Speech-Language Pathology Program at ULM is on the rise, and has great things in store for the near future.