**SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Spring 2023**

The Speech-Language Pathology Strategic Plan encompasses four overarching Focus Areas with concomitant goals that align with the mission of both the College of Health Sciences and the University. The four Focus Areas and related goals are:

High Quality Training: Goal: *To provide high quality educational and training opportunities for students to acquire speech-language pathology knowledge and skills and to meet entry-level qualifications to practice as a speech-language pathologist to a diverse population.*

Students obtain 400 Clinical Clock hours during their graduate education which are verified by a nationally certified and Louisiana licensed Clinical Instructor and the Clinic Director with the same credentials.

Integration of Coursework in Clinical Education: Goal: *To integrate didactic academic coursework with on- and off-campus clinical education experiences.*

Students apply didactic course content to clinical service provision throughout their graduate program to demonstrate acquisition of knowledge and skills required for entry into professional practice.

Research: Goal: *To provide the opportunity for students to collaborate with faculty on research of mutual interest.*

Students conduct research that is presented at University Symposia and potentially at the state and national levels.

Diversity: Goal: *Increase program focus on diversity in areas of recruitment and retention, faculty development, and throughout the curriculum.*

Students increase their awareness and become better clinicians and citizens when exposed to information, points of view, and cultures different from their own.

The plan is reviewed each fall by the Speech-Language Pathology faculty and adjustments are made as indicated.

**University of Louisiana Monroe**

**College of Health Sciences**

**School of Allied Health**

**Speech-Language Pathology Program**

**Master of Science**

**Mission and Strategic Plan**

**May 2023-May 2028**

This Strategic Plan was developed throughout academic year 2022-2023. It was approved by the Speech-Language Pathology faculty and the Dean of the College of Health Sciences at the end of the Spring 2023 semester.

The SPLP Program is an integral part of the School of Allied Health in the College of Health Sciences at the University of Louisiana Monroe. This Strategic Plan includes long-term goals for Speech-Language Pathology and their alignment with the Strategic Plans of both the College of Health Sciences [*College of Health Sciences Strategic Plan*](https://www.ulm.edu/chs/documents/cohs-strategic-plan.pdf)  and the University  [*ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027*](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)

The first section of the Strategic Plan is a narrative that delineates four focus areas with the applicable specific goal and how each aligns with the Strategic Plans of both the College of Health Sciences and the University.

The second section of the Strategic Plan is a chart that represents the Goals and Objectives of the Focus areas with applicable strategies and timelines.

The third section is a chart that reflects the assessment schedule for the Strategic Plan as related to the Focus Goals: High Quality Training, Integration of Coursework in Clinical Education, Research, and Diversity.

**Mission:**

The Speech-Language Pathology program is committed to educating and training students to apply speech-language pathology knowledge and skills with diverse populations across a broad range of settings and the life span. The M.S. program strives to integrate didactic academic coursework with on- and off-campus clinical education experiences to prepare students for the workforce in a wide variety of settings to serve an everchanging society.

**Strategic Plan:**

***Focus: High Quality Training***

***Goal 1:*** *To provide high quality educational and training opportunities for students to acquire speech-language pathology knowledge and skills and to meet entry-level qualifications to practice as a speech-language pathologist to a diverse population.*

Graduate Speech-Language Pathology students acquire knowledge and skills through didactic and clinical courses which are documented in CALIPSO. Each semester, the student and their major advisor, a member of the Graduate Faculty, review the student’s individualized degree plan during formal advising.

Alignment with the COHS mission. This goal aligns with the COHS Mission *“to prepare students as health practitioners to improve the health, health care, and well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Northeast Louisiana and beyond through education, service, and research,”.* [*College of Health Sciences Strategic Plan*](https://www.ulm.edu/chs/documents/cohs-strategic-plan.pdf)  (p.1)

Alignment with ULM Mission: This goal aligns with the ULM Mission as it *“prepares individuals from northeast Louisiana and beyond to compete, succeed, and contribute in an ever-changing global society through a transformative education while positively impacting society through research and service”.*  [*ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027*](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)(p. 2)

***Focus: Integration of course work in clinical education***

***Goal 2:*** *To integrate didactic academic coursework with on- and off-campus clinical education experiences.*

Prior to being placed for internship, students receive clinical experiences at the Kitty Degree Speech and Hearing Center, Early Head Start, Federally Qualified Health Care facilities, elementary schools, skilled nursing facilities, and health fairs. During off-campus internship experiences, students are placed in one pediatric setting and one adult setting for 10 weeks per site to continue integration of didactic academic instruction with clinical application.

Alignment with School of Allied Health Mission: This goal aligns with the SOAH Mission *“to educate practitioners to meet the diverse healthcare needs of the citizens of Louisiana and beyond”.* <https://www.ulm.edu/chs/mission.html>

Alignment with ULM Vision: This goal aligns with the ULM Vision that *“ULM will change lives by bringing true equality, inclusiveness and opportunity for all individuals in our region and beyond”*.  *[ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)* (p. 2)

Alignment with ULM Mission: This goal aligns with the ULM Mission as “*ULM prepares individuals from northeast Louisiana and beyond to compete, succeed, and contribute in an ever-changing global society through a transformative education while positively impacting society through research and service”.*  [*ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027*](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)(p. 2)

***Focus: Research***

***Goal 3:*** *To provide the opportunity for students to collaborate with faculty on research of mutual interest.*

All master’s degree students must successfully complete SPLP 5005: Research in Speech-Language Pathology and SPLP 5091 Directed Study-Research. Speech-Language Pathology faculty mentor the master’s degree students as they complete and present their research project at the ULM Student Research Symposium and potentially at the Louisiana Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention.

Alignment with COHS Strategic Plan: This goal aligns with the COHS Strategic Pillar 3.1 to “*develop additional research support infrastructure within the College…*” [*College of Health Sciences Strategic Plan*](https://www.ulm.edu/chs/documents/cohs-strategic-plan.pdf)  (p. 9)

Alignment with ULM Mission: This goal aligns with Goal 3 in the ULM Mission to *“Maintain and support the level of intellectual activity necessary by our scholars to support innovation, preparation of students for successful careers and citizenship, and the creation and application of new knowledge”*.  [*ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027*](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)(p. 8).

Initiative 3.2: It also aligns with ULM Initiative 3.2 to *“Create and maintain a sufficient research infrastructure that supports the research and creative scholarly works of faculty, staff, and students”*.  [*[ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)*](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)[(p. 8)](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)

F**ocus: Diversity**

**Goal 4**: Increase program focus on diversity in areas of recruitment and retention, faculty development, and throughout the curriculum.

This is accomplished through identification and coordination of program resources to support student success throughout their application process experience, enrollment in the program, and professional experiences. Also, focused efforts will be applied to develop an equity-minded recruitment and retention strategy for the M.S. program to identify existing barriers to ports of entry for underinvested or underrepresented students.

Alignment with College of Health Sciences Mission This goal aligns with the COHS Mission “*to prepare students as health practitioners to improve the health, health care, and well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Northeast Louisiana and beyond through education, service, and research.”*  [*College of Health Sciences Strategic Plan*](https://www.ulm.edu/chs/documents/cohs-strategic-plan.pdf)  (p. 1)

Alignment with College of Health Sciences Vision: This goal aligns with the COHS Strategic Plan Initiative 1:3: Quality and Diversity of Students: *“The quality of students graduating from College programs is determined, largely, by the quality of students entering these programs”.* [*College of Health Sciences Strategic Plan*](https://www.ulm.edu/chs/documents/cohs-strategic-plan.pdf)  (p. 7)

(a)*“Work with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to reorganize the admissions and advising process to be student-centered, efficient, and effective in its tasks for the College; and to facilitate the recruitment and retention of an academically prepared and diverse cadre of students across all College programs”.*

(e) *“Continue to increase the diversity of the student body to better represent the communities served by the College”*.

Alignment with ULM Vision: This goal aligns with the ULM Vision that *“ULM will change lives by bringing true equality, inclusiveness, and opportunity to our region and beyond.”*  [*ULM Strategic Plan 2022-2027*](https://www.ulm.edu/president/progress/ulm_sp.pdf)(p. 2)

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| Objectives and Strategies | | | | | |
| Focus/Goal | Objectives | | Strategies/Timeline | | |
| High Quality Training  ***Goal 1:*** *To provide high quality educational and training opportunities for students to speech-language pathology knowledge and skills and to meet entry-level qualifications to practice as a speech-language pathologist to a diverse population.* | All Graduate Students will obtain a minimum of 140 clinical clock hours (including 25 observation hours) on the following schedule prior to initiating internship:   * + Fall: 15-20 hours   + Spring: 30-40 hours   + Summer: 30-40 hours   + Fall: 50-60 hours   All Graduate Students will obtain a minimum of 400 Clinical Clock Hours (25 observation, 140 on campus, 235 Internship | | | During fall semester 1 through fall semester 2, the Clinic Director will assign clients to clinicians based on graduate course enrolled/completed, client type, setting, diversity  Students will enter clinical clock hours into ClinicNote and Clinical Instructor will verify information.  At the end of each semester, Clinic Director will review and verify clinical clock hours while documenting students’ clinical needs (e.g., type, setting, diversity)  Clinic Director and student will communicate regarding clinical needs of student.  Prior to assigning the two 10-week long internship experiences, the Internship Coordinator will review the student’s clinical experiences (types/setting) to determine the best placement ~~t~~o meet knowledge and skills required for entry-level professional practice. | |
| Integration of coursework in clinical education  ***Goal 2:*** *To integrate didactic academic coursework with on- and off-campus clinical education experiences.* | Students will demonstrate the ability to apply course content to simulated and real-world experiences both on and off campus as evidenced by grades on course assignments  Students will demonstrate the ability to apply content in their internship as evidenced by positive reviews at midterm and final grading by internship supervisors | | | Faculty teaching in the graduate curriculum will incorporate case studies, clinical projects, and simulated experiences etc. to provide hands-on activities in assessment and treatment of communicative and/or swallowing disorders.  The specialty clinics operating within the clinic (e.g., adult neurogenic group, fluency group, memory care group) will be maintained to provide support in real-world environments prior to internship placement.  During the 2023-2024 Academic Year, the SPLP Program will develop an initiative wherein students will have the opportunity to participate in specialty clinics as Clinical Collaborators. | |
| Research  ***Goal 3:*** *To provide the opportunity for students to collaborate with faculty on research of mutual interest.* | Students will demonstrate improved clinical practices based upon clinical research conducted in authentic communicative/  clinical settings.  Students will demonstrate acquisition of clinical research skills through an increase in clinical research presented and/or published in professional outlets.  Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate the quality of evidence appearing in any source or format prior to incorporating such evidence into clinical decision making; and will obtain, interpret, and incorporate new and high-quality research evidence having implications for clinical practice. | | | Academic faculty will develop and direct clinical research projects giving students first-hand knowledge of how research and practice work hand-in-hand.  SPLP 5005 will increase focus on application of research in clinical decision making.  Research projects from SPLP 5005 and 5091 will be presented at university, state and/or national conferences.  SPLP 5005 and 5091 will continue to integrate faculty mentored student research. | |
| Diversity  ***Goal 4****: Increase program focus on diversity in areas of recruitment and retention, faculty development, and throughout the curriculum.* | To certify #9, Cultural/Linguistic as ‘Met’, students will demonstrate increased awareness of the influence of cultural and linguistic factors on interactions and service provision.  Students will have increased exposure to information and theory on diversity issues as evidenced by increased focus on diversity in course syllabi.  Students will gain increased exposure to clinical procedures and practices oriented to meeting the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds during the clinical activities, as evidenced by clinical evaluations tools.  90% of graduates will respond with a rating of 3 or higher on a 5-point scale of satisfaction when asked how well their experiences with diversity issues in coursework and clinical activities prepared them for service delivery with diverse populations.  The program will strive to increase the number of applicants from under-represented groups for the M.S. program as well as increased acceptance rate and retention of these students. | | | At the beginning of each semester, students will complete the ASHA Cultural Competence questionnaires: Self-Reflection; Culturally Responsive Practice; and Gender Inclusivity.  By mid-term, students will write a reflection paper for each client discussing the influence of diversity and client-clinician interactions.  Faculty will include specific narrative within syllabi to demonstrate increased focus on diversity.  Clinicians will have the opportunity to provide services across the life span in the Kitty DeGree Speech and Hearing Center, Early Head Start, Gardens of Somerset, CommuniHealth, internship experiences, and other entities.  The Program purposefully schedules screenings at Community Health Fairs and at schools with diverse socioeconomic and ethnic background populations.  At the end of their graduate program, students will complete an anonymous written Exit Survey.  The program will continue to refine the holistic admissions rubric to encourage applications from under-represented groups. | |
| **Assessment Schedule for Strategic Plan**  **The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually each fall by the SPLP Faculty during Faculty Meetings.** | | | | | |
| Goal | | Action | | | Timeline |
| High Quality Training | | CAA Annual Report  Curriculum Review  Student Outcomes: Praxis Pass Rates, Degree Completion Rate Employment Rates  Course Evaluation and Course Assessments | | | July 31 annually  Every three years or earlier as indicated  Summer  Fall/Spring |
| Integration of coursework in clinical education | | Course Evaluation  Stakeholder Surveys:  Clinic/Client Survey  Internship Survey  Graduate Exit Survey  Curriculum Review | | | Fall/Spring  Each semester  Fall/Spring  Fall/Spring  Every three years or more often as indicated |
| Research | | Graduate Student Exit Surveys  Student Outcomes:  Praxis Pass Rates  Degree Completion Rate  Employment Rates | | | Fall/Spring  End of the Academic Year  End of the Academic Year  End of the Academic Year |