

**Abilene Christian University
Communication Sciences and Disorders**

Strategic Plan 2015-2020

VISION

We believe that communication connects us to God and one another. Consequently, we are committed to passing on knowledge and skills as well as a love for the profession and the people to whom we minister. We are determined to continue the legacy of forming students' beliefs about God, themselves, others, and the world. We do this through a commitment to knowing students individually, meeting students where they are, and guiding them in the developmental process.

MISSION

To equip students with the knowledge and skills in speech-language pathology for ministry to individuals with communication disorders through a Christian world view.

CORE VALUES

Excellence, Relational, Passion, Integrity

FOCUS AREA 1: PROGRAM

Issue 1. Expansion of the graduate program beyond Abilene aligns with university goals and allows for increased admission of qualified graduate applicants to the graduate program in speech-language pathology

Outcome: Complete program expansion in Dallas

Strategies:

1. Complete and submit transition plan to administration (Responsible: Terry and Brenda; mid-October 2015)
 - a. Action: Completed in Fall 2015
2. Coordinate with ACU Dallas administration regarding specific facility and materials needs (Responsible: Terry and Brenda; late fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Completed Spring 2016
3. Submit substantive change plan prior to deadlines to CAA (Responsible: Terry; March 2016 and July 2016)

- a. Action: Completed Notice of Intent February 2016
- b. Action: Completed Substantive Change Plan and submitted to CAA (July 2016); Approved by CAA April 2017
4. Identify and recruit personnel for Dallas and ABI (Responsible: all faculty; late spring 2016)
 - a. Action: Hired one master's level faculty member for ABI and one master's level faculty member for Dallas (Summer 2016)
 - b. Action: Recruiting one master's level and one doctoral faculty member for Dallas and one master's/doctoral faculty member for ABI (Spring 2017)
 - c. Action: Hired doctoral level faculty member for Dallas and continued search for master's level faculty member for Dallas (Spring and Summer 2017)
 - d. Action: Hired master's level faculty member for ABI (Summer 2017)
 - e. Action: Hired master's level faculty member for Dallas (Summer 2017)
 - f. Action: Hired half time doctoral level faculty for Dallas (Summer 2018)
5. Redesign graduate courses to allow for course alignment between residential and hybrid cohorts (Responsible: all faculty; as scheduled)
 - a. Action: Coursework redesigns necessary for program have been completed (Spring 2017)
6. Identify clinical placements and obtain affiliation agreements for Dallas (Responsible: new faculty and Brenda; summer 2016)
 - a. Action: Began clinical affiliations for cohort for Dallas (Fall 2016)
7. Coordinate with the graduate school in marketing the programs (Responsible: Terry, Brenda, Denise; late fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Delayed until approval from CAA
 - b. Action: Strategies for marketing both programs will be discussed by appropriate parties (Bender, Barnett, Austin, and Baggs; Fall 2017)

Issue 2. Intentional spiritual formation is important to the department to align with the university mission.

Outcome: Implement strategies that provide opportunities for intentional spiritual formation

Strategies:

1. Create assessment tool (Responsible: Terry; early fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Completed Fall 2015

2. Implement an assessment schedule (pre and post),
(Responsible: Terry, Brenda, Denise, and Connie; late fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Began assessment of first year graduate students (Fall 2015)
 - b. Action: Completed assessment of first graduating group (Spring 2017)
3. Survey students regarding interests or needs each academic year (Responsible: all faculty and staff; each academic year)
 - a. Action: A Spiritual Formation Committee was established to assist in meeting these goals (Fall 2016)
4. Identify opportunities each semester for intentional spiritual formation (Responsible: all faculty and staff; early each semester)
 - a. Action: Ongoing assessment (began Fall 2015)

Issue 3. Although outcome data for our graduate student exit exams meet accreditation standards, an enhanced focus on improving exit exam scores is important to align with the department value of “excellence.”

Outcome: Decrease number of rewrites on the comprehensive examination to less than 30%

Strategies:

1. Establish response criteria for each exam question
(Responsible: all graduate faculty; December each academic year)
 - a. Action: Completed for academic year 2015-2016
2. Educate students by providing model questions and discussion to enhance understanding of what constitutes a successful response (Responsible: Brenda and Denise; fall semester of second graduate year)
 - a. Action: Completed Spring 2016

FOCUS AREA 2: CLINICAL SERVICES

Issue 1: The on-campus clinic provides an excellent standard of care with skilled students and well qualified supervisors for a nominal fee. Enhanced opportunities for students and the community are obtained through a larger census.

Outcome: Maximize service provision in the on-campus clinic based on facilities, personnel, and demand by 2020

Strategies:

1. Determine maximum services that can be provided, given constraints of facilities, personnel (supervisors and students), and demand (Responsible: Diana, Rachel, Autum, and Terry; May 2016)
2. Assess impact of various fee schedules and payment options (Responsible: Diana, Rachel, Autum, Terry, and other administrators; spring 2017)
3. Develop marketing plan based on the assessment to increase census of clinic (Responsible: Diana and Rachel, others as designated; late summer 2017)
 - a. Action: Ongoing discussion with administration regarding impact of fee schedule on clinic census (Fall-Spring-Summer 2017-18)

Issue 2: External placement opportunities beyond ACU service provision are necessary to provide a well-rounded clinical experience.

Outcome: Increase external clinical placement opportunities

Strategies:

1. Complete expansion of our program to Dallas (see above)
2. Connect with our alumni for placement supervisors (Responsible: all faculty; ongoing)

Issue 3: The department utilizes local, contracted services with facilities to provide therapy services to individuals and expand clinical training opportunities to our students.

Outcome: Increase number of contracted clinical services to the community

Strategies:

1. Identify facilities in the community that are interested in partnering with the department to have clinical services provided at their site (Responsible: Diana, Rachel, and Autum; ongoing as personnel is available)
 - a. Action: Implemented one additional contract in Fall 2015
2. Obtain affiliation agreements with facilities (Responsible: Autum and Terry; ongoing)
 - a. Action: Ongoing in 2015-2016

Issue 4: Enhanced collaborative learning is facilitated in a modern, cross-disciplinary training facility.

Outcome: Explore feasibility of a new clinic-academic facility

Strategies:

1. Utilize assessment data (Issue 1, Strategy 1) to facilitate discussion with potential stakeholders outside of department (Responsible: all faculty and staff; summer-fall 2016)
 - a. Action: Began discussion with dean and provost regarding issues of current facility (Spring 2016)
2. Review history of previous discussions regarding a multi-disciplinary clinic (Responsible: Terry; May 2016)
3. Discuss with other health-related disciplines on campus the need for a new integrated facility (Responsible: Terry and Diana; summer-fall 2016)
4. Discuss with the administrators regarding the need for a facility (Responsible: Terry and Diana; May 2016)
 - a. Action: As the current Duncum Center has become available, penned a request to dean and Provost to obtain the Duncum Center to house the clinic (Fall 2016)
 - b. Action: Duncum Center was approved to house the clinic and name changed to Center for Speech, Language, and Learning. Moved clinic into this facility in January (Spring 2017) Completed Spring 2017
5. Discuss the need for a facility with the Office of Advancement (Responsible: Terry and Diana; summer 2016)
 - a. Action: Given the move of the clinic to the Duncum Center, have initiated conversations with the Office of Advancement for special funding needs of the clinic. (Spring 2017)

FOCUS AREA 3: CURRICULUM

Issue 1: A foundation of knowledge at the undergraduate level is important to ready the student for graduate studies at both Abilene Christian University and other institutions.

Outcome 1: Develop and implement an undergraduate neuroanatomy class

Strategies:

1. Develop course to be taught as a Special Topics elective (Responsible: Brenda; summer 2016)
 - a. Action: Developed and taught the course as a special topics course in the summer session (Summer 2016)
2. Assess the feasibility of the course being required (Responsible: Terry and Denise; summer 2017)
 - a. Action: Developed agenda for upcoming Visiting Committee meeting that include undergraduate curriculum issues. Neuroanatomy class will be part of that agenda.

- i. Visiting Committee completed with report (Fall 2017)
- 3. Move course (and possible degree plan change) through academic councils (Responsible: Denise; summer-fall 2017)
 - a. Action: Plan on hold until the outcome of the Visiting Committee meets in Fall 2017.
 - b. Action: Ongoing faculty discussion regarding sequencing of entire curriculum (Fall-Spring 2017) Plan to move several courses changes through academic councils in 2018-2019.

Outcome 2: Redevelop and offer the American Sign Language coursework in the undergraduate curriculum

Strategies:

1. Assess feasibility of redeveloping the ASL courses in the curriculum (Responsibility: Terry; fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Completed and approved by the administration (Fall 2015)
2. Secure funding for instruction through the Provost's office (Responsible: Terry; fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Funding for course development to be paid from Dean's Office, CEHS; Funding for course instructor will be paid for two years (total four courses) to be paid from the Provost's Office: Approved Fall 2015.
3. Identify a qualified instructor (Responsible: Terry; fall 2015)
 - a. Action: Instructor identified and contracted to develop the courses for instruction: Fall 2015
4. Offer coursework as Special Topics (Responsible: Terry and instructor; spring-fall 2016)
 - a. Action: Fall 2016 ASL I placed into Banner for fall registration: Spring 2016.
 - b. Action: ASL II placed into Banner for spring registration Fall 2016
 - c. Action: ASL I placed into Banner for fall registration Spring 2017.
5. Move course through academic councils (Responsible: Terry and other faculty; fall 2017)
 - a. Action: Have discussed with administration of expansion of this instructor's role in the department; Spring-Summer 2017
6. Action: Academic Council approvals for ASL I and II (Spring 2018)

Issue 2: The graduate program stays current in the wealth of knowledge and offers courses in the most effective manner for teaching the knowledge and skills necessary for the pre-professional student.

Outcome 1: Develop and implement a graduate course in cognitive disorders

Strategies:

1. Develop course to be taught as a Special Topics elective (Responsible: Terry; fall 2015)

- a. Action: Completed Fall 2015
2. Move course and degree plan change through academic councils (Responsible: Terry; fall 2017)
 - a. Action: Completed Spring 2017

Outcome 2: Develop and implement an additional graduate course in child language disorders

Strategies:

1. Develop course to be taught as a Special Topics elective (Responsible: Lynette; spring 2016)
 - a. Action: Developed in Fall 2015 and taught Spring 2016.
2. Move course and degree plan change through academic councils (Responsible: Lynette; fall 2017)
 - a. Action: Completed spring 2017

FOCUS AREA 4: PERSONNEL

Issue: The department maintains adequate personnel and programming to accomplish the goals of the department and university, specifically graduating students who are successful in their disciplines and allowing for productive faculty within a physically and spiritually healthy environment.

Outcome 1: Consider the separation of the degree plan specialist from the administrative coordinator position

Update: This outcome is no longer necessary, as the university moved to centralized advising—noted Spring 2016.

Strategies:

1. Compare roles of administrative coordinator and degree plan specialist in departments across campus (Responsible: Connie and Terry; spring-summer 2016)
2. Develop rationale and discuss with the dean (Responsible: Terry; fall 2016)
3. Follow-up with dean on budget planning for 2018 (Responsible: Terry; spring 2017)

Outcome 2: Maintain a pool of qualified professionals for adjunct teaching and graduate course facilitation

Strategies:

1. Establish minimum requirements for adjunct teaching/facilitators, based on course need (Responsible: all faculty; spring 2016)
 - a. Action: Completed (Spring 2016)

2. Identify local professionals qualified to teach undergraduate courses or serve as graduate course facilitators (Responsible: all faculty; ongoing)
3. Utilize instructor pool as needed (Responsible: Lynette; ongoing)

Outcome 3: Increase the number of supervisors available in the on-campus clinic and external contracts

Strategies:

1. Identify local professionals qualified to supervise (Responsible: all faculty; ongoing)
2. Assess funding sources available for supervision (Responsible: Diana, Rachel, and Lynette; ongoing)
 - a. Action: Hired additional faculty member who assists with supervision (August 2017)
3. Utilize supervisor pool as needed (Responsible: Diana, Rachel, and Lynette; ongoing)

Outcome 4: Consider the feasibility of dedicated time for scholarship for tenure track and tenured faculty

Strategies:

1. Assess CEHS graduate programs and others outside ACU regarding scholarship and percentage of teaching load expectations. (Responsible: all graduate faculty; fall 2018)
2. Develop a plan and communicate with CEHS dean. (Responsible: all graduate faculty; spring 2019)

FOCUS AREA 5: ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Issue: Engaged alumni provide valuable support to the department and university.

Outcome: Develop a mechanism to maintain frequent contact with alumni

Strategies:

1. Identify alumni to develop a department-level alumni organization (Responsible: Denise, Lynette, and Connie; spring 2016)
2. Work with identified alumni to facilitate department and alumni communication (Responsible: Denise, Lynette, and Connie; fall-spring 2016-17)
3. Department communicates ongoing projects with alumni group (Responsible: all faculty and staff; ongoing)