Speech Language Pathology Program

Program Summary

Program Design

Program Mission: The Speech Language Pathology program provides students pre-professional and professional training in speech-language pathology and audiology, which is founded on state and national standards, evidence-based practice, research, and science and technology, to prepare them to serve persons with communication disorders and their families in an ethical and culturally competent manner.

Program Vision: The Speech Language Pathology Program at CSUEB will deliver innovative instruction, excel in research, and expand community-based collaboration to create a vibrant and supportive learning community that engages and inspires students, faculty, staff, and clients with communication disorders.

Program Changes Since Last Accreditation Activity: In response to the CSD 2011 Biennial Report, five areas were targeted with four being completed and a fifth area partially completed with ongoing progress.

KASA Portfolio Performance Tracking: Performance on this comprehensive portfolio (submitted near Program Completion) is being graded consistently (grading rubric provided in this document and also accounts for 40% of the earned grade in a required course, SPPA 6030 (Clinical Organization and Management) since Fall 2012.

Instructional/Research Infrastructure Enhancements: In 2011-2012, University funds were acquired to significantly re-enhance the Speech Science Lab and AAC Lab with new equipment, as well as instructional materials for clinic/classroom preparation, software for advanced linguistic analysis and qualitative research.

New Faculty Hiring: In 2012-2013, 2 new tenure-track faculty members began teaching full time. One with expertise in Augmentative and Alternative Communication began in Fall 2012, with a second new faculty member who began in Winter 2013 with expertise in Bilingualism and School-based Issues.

Enhancing Candidate Competency in Collaboration: More instructional and clinical training opportunities are being offered to facilitate candidate competency in collaboration and consultation. The program is heavily emphasizing community-based service learning and team-based learning effective Fall 2012. Clinical rounds and clinician teams have been introduced in multiple on-site clinical training programs.

Implementation of New Curriculum Tied to Program Improvement: The new CSD curriculum has been fully implemented with two new courses added in response to our last CTC accreditation site visit. In 2012-13, a new course was introduced in Autism Spectrum Disorders (SPPA 6999a) with a second new elective on School-Based Issues offered in 2013-14 to enhance candidate preparation for service delivery in school settings. Further, a new faculty-led clinical program for college students with autism has been introduced in our clinic in 2012-13, and another clinical opportunity was introduced in Summer 2013 for screening bilingual preschoolers and elementary school children.
Program Faculty and Staff
There are currently seven full-time faculty and staff members in the CSD Department and four part-time clinical supervisors. Varied duties are divided among the 7 faculty and staff members:

Dr. Nidhi Mahendra, Associate Professor and Department Chair (also Undergraduate Advisor)
Dr. Elena Dukhovny, Assistant Professor and Graduate Coordinator
Dr. Kai Greene, Assistant Professor and Graduate Advisor
Dr. Shubha Kashinath, Graduate Advisor (also Continuing Education Administrator)
Dr. Robert Peppard, Associate Professor Emeritus
Ms. Shelley Simrin, Clinic Director (also Lecturer and Practicum Supervisor)
Ms. Jenny Rosenquist, Director of Autism Spectrum Disorders Services (also Lecturer and Practicum Supervisor)

Additional administrative and clinic supervisory duties are performed by Ms. Jill Chandler (half-time staff), Director of the Hearing Screening Program and two, full-time non-clinical administrative staff members - Ms. Marianna Wolff, Administrative Support Coordinator (ASC) and Ms. Rosa Coleman, Administrative Support Assistant (ASA).

Program Student Learning Outcomes
The program has developed the following approved student learning outcomes for candidates completing the Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology from our program at CSUEB. Candidates completing our graduate program will be able to:

- Screen, assess and treat individuals with a variety of communicative disorders across the lifespan
- Communicate effectively with clients, families, and other professionals
- Evaluate and apply clinical research, recognizing the need for evidence to support best practices in clinical service delivery
- Consistently apply ethical professional standards, recognize and respect the limits of their professional preparation and clinical skills, and work effectively with other professionals
- Demonstrate cultural competence and commitment to advocacy for persons with communicative disorders

Curricular Requirements
The Speech Language Pathology (SLP) Program requires the completion of 74 quarter units of academic credit completed with a letter grade of B including the courses detailed below. Students also earning the Speech Language Hearing Services Credential complete 78 units of academic credit including the 74 aforementioned units as well as a 4-unit course EPSY 5021 - Introduction to Educating all Students in Diverse Classrooms, and fulfilling the State of California's Basic Skills Requirement. These requirements must be completed within five calendar years after admission to the program, with at least 63 units completed in residence. SLP Program courses are designed to meet and exceed current standards issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and American Speech Language Hearing Association.

Course of Study
The SLP curriculum prepares candidates to integrate basic science, clinical research, evidence-based practice cultural competence strategies and cutting edge technology to best serve diverse clients with varied communication disorders across the lifespan. Emphasis is placed on
direct and indirect interactions with real patients, case studies, challenging clinical scenarios, collaborative practice, service learning and problem-based learning assignments in multiple courses. Across program courses and practica, students present information to instructors, peers, health care providers, patients, and their families. Students learn techniques to conduct interviews and collect case history data, and to communicate concisely via clinical writing. The program strives to address culturally competent communication, civil discourse and conflict resolution in multiple courses. Within multiple CSD courses through a variety of clinical, service learning, and collaborative practices, students develop knowledge of multicultural issues germane to the profession and to serving diverse clients across the lifespan. Candidates are prepared thoroughly in the theory and practice of disorders affecting speech, language, hearing, cognition, respiration, and swallowing across the lifespan. Over the course of their studies, students integrate information on typical development, varied developmental and acquired disorders, multicultural issues, evidence-based and ethical practices and in screening, assessment, treatment, and prevention of communication disorders as well as interdisciplinary collaboration.

The typical course of study involves advanced coursework with clinical emphasis and the start of clinical practicum in Year 1. Year 2 focuses on ongoing advanced coursework and completion of special-topic electives. Year 2 continues to emphasize enhancement of clinical competence by completing practica in on-campus and off-campus clinical settings, treatment and diagnostic evaluation practica, and audiological assessment experiences. Year 2 ends with two quarter-long internships (one of which must be in a public-school setting), completing the Master’s Comprehensive Examination, presenting a Graduate Portfolio and passing the national PRAXIS exam with a score greater than or equal to 600. To better understand the breadth and depth of coursework in the major, readers are directed to review our course listings, descriptions, and specific syllabi. The program completed a significant curriculum overhaul in 2008-2009 and has implemented its enhanced curriculum since Fall quarter of 2010. Changes made highlight the breadth of scope of practice in speech-language pathology, evolution of ASHA and CTC curricular standards, and contemporary knowledge base and evidence-based practice in the profession. The program has been most responsive to our last CTC accreditation visit in which suggestions were made about adding coursework/content on Autism and School-based Issues unique to SLPs. Both these courses were added in the last 2 years as well as an enhanced emphasis on collaborative practice (part of our AY 2011-2012 cluster improvement plan), literacy content (part of our AY 2012-13 cluster improvement plan) and serving diverse and multicultural clients (part of our AY 2013-14 cluster improvement plan).

Assessment of Candidates

The assessment system used by the Speech Language Pathology Program at CSUEB is designed to meet the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) Standards, the California Teaching Credentialing (CTC) Standards, and the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educator Preparation (CAEP- formerly NCATE). The Program provides comprehensive and integrated assessment and evaluation measures to monitor candidate performance and to improve programs. As required by ASHA, CTC and CAEP, candidate performance is tracked via multiple assessments on admission, at appropriate transition points, and on program completion. This Program Assessment document details these transition points, associated assessments, and also provides the assessment tools and their rubrics for review.
Candidates are notified of this multi-pronged assessment plan in multiple ways. Information on candidate assessment is shared via the program website detailing degree requirements at http://www20.csueastbay.edu/ecat/graduate-chapters/g-sppa.html#ms-sp-lang-path, via a Clinic Manual that details clinical practicum requirements, expected performance, and assessment policies and procedures at http://www20.csueastbay.edu/class/departments/commsci/files/docs/pdf/clinic-manual-2013-2014.pdf, via a designated course for capstone requirements (See SPPA 6030: Clinical Organization and Management in course description and linked syllabus) group and individual advising sessions facilitated by academic faculty, a posted unofficial degree audit form to assist students with self-advising (See http://www20.csueastbay.edu/class/departments/commsci/files/docs/pdf/ms-unofficial-degree-audit-catalog-year-2012.pdf), and group and individual advising sessions facilitated by academic faculty.

There are several key transition points in the program at which candidates are assessed (See Transition Points; also Transition Points and Associated Assessments). Candidates are selected for entry into the program using key assessment measures measured on a 37-point rating scale. Once admitted, there are three major points of transition: Post Practica One (at the end of treating four clients with a communication disorder in clinical practicum) - Post Practica Two (at the end of 100+ hours of client treatment)- and upon program completion subsequent to all coursework, completing two internships (one of which must be in a school-based setting), passing a Comprehensive Examination, successfully submitting a Graduate Portfolio, and obtaining a passing score on the PRAXIS exam.

The required Comprehensive Exam fulfills the University Capstone experience required for the Master of Science Degree in Speech Language Pathology and Audiology. Candidates must demonstrate clinical competency in 13 key topic areas required for the national Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology. Candidates also submit a comprehensive portfolio containing a graded class project or clinical practicum report showcasing their knowledge in all 13 areas. These areas are:

1) Articulation & Phonology  2) Fluency  
3) Voice & Resonance      4) Receptive Language  
5) Expressive Language     6) Hearing  
7) Swallowing              8) Cognitive Bases of Communication  
9) Social Aspects of Communication 10) Communication Modalities  
11) Ethical Conduct        12) Research and Evidence-Based Practice and  
13) Service Delivery to Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Populations.  

Comprehensive examinations also cover most aspects of these aforementioned 13 topic areas. Finally, candidates must pass the national PRAXIS examination by obtaining a score of 600 or better. On completion of all courses, practica, clinical competencies, and examinations, candidates may apply for the Preliminary Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential.

Primary Candidate Assessments: Graduate Admission Rating
Multiple measures are used in the admissions process to the Speech-Language Pathology graduate program and considered by the Graduate Committee (comprised of the Graduate Coordinator and 2 full-time, appointed, faculty/staff members). Applicants seeking to enter the program must have a baccalaureate degree in Communicative Sciences and Disorders (CSD) from a regionally accredited four-year institution. Alternatively, applicants to the Master’s program, having earned a degree in a non-CSD major, must have completed prerequisite courses, for the undergraduate degree in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

It is a requirement of California State University East Bay that applicants have a grade point average of 2.5 in the last 90 quarter hours (equivalent to 60 semester hours) of their coursework. Further, to be considered for admission, prospective applicants must have a GPA of at least 3.0 within the CSD major. Applicants must submit three letters of recommendation and a statement of purpose for review by the graduate committee. The CSD program clearly emphasizes that recommendation letters are preferred from faculty members familiar with the applicant’s coursework, professional demeanor, and clinical skills.

All sources of information about applicants are evaluated using a Graduate Admission Rating Sheet (available on request), in which applications are rated by the graduate committee, on GPA in the major, overall GPA, experience, clinical potential, academic potential, and multicultural or multilingual experience for a maximum possible 37 points. After each member of the graduate committee individually rates applicants on the Graduate Admission Rating Sheet, the three ratings are totaled. Applicants are ranked based upon their rating. Top applicants are admitted to the graduate program. Applicants not admitted are placed on a waiting list according to their ranked order. If slots open, wait-listed applicants are admitted per their order on the waiting list.

The process detailed above illustrates the steps used to select potential candidates to the graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Approximately 97% of the candidates admitted to the graduate program also apply for the preliminary credential. To be eligible for the Preliminary Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential, potential candidates also must pass fulfill California’s Basic Skills Requirement, take an additional CSUEB course EPSY 5021 (Title: Educating All Students in Diverse Classrooms), and complete an internship (SPPA 6066) in a school setting.