PROPOSAL FOR A DEPARTMENTAL NAME CHANGE

Submitted: October 18, 2002 Updated: October 30, 2002

1. Request

In seeking to more accurately reflect the nature of the research, teaching, and clinical activities that occur in our department, we are requesting to change our name from "Department of Communication Disorders" to "Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders."

Background Information about the Department

The Department of Communication Disorders offers B.A. and B.S. degrees in speech and hearing science, including pre-professional training in speech-language pathology and/or audiology, as well as a focus in teaching American Sign Language. Individuals who wish to work professionally as speech-language pathologists or as audiologists currently must hold a master's degree, and the Department offers M.S. and M.A. degrees in both of these areas. We also offer a Ph.D. degree for individuals wishing to pursue research and teaching careers in audiology, hearing science, speech-language pathology, or speechlanguage science. (To comply with national accreditation requirements that will be implemented within the next couple of years, which require the "entry level" degree for practicing in the field of audiology to be a doctoral degree, we are also currently in the process of developing a "professional doctorate" (Au.D.) in the area of audiology.) There are approximately 150 undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled as majors in the Department. The faculty consists of ten full-time, tenured or tenure-track professors (two full professors, four associate professors, and four assistant professors), plus two full-time, non-tenure-track clinical supervisors, three part-time clinical supervisors, and five adjunct instructors. The department is fully accredited by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

2. Rationale for Name Change

The primary rationale for this proposed name change is to more accurately represent the entire range of research, teaching, and clinical activities that take place in the Department. Specifically, we not only offer courses related to various speech, language and hearing disorders (e.g., fluency disorders, language disorders, aphasia, motor speech disorders, aural rehabilitation, etc.), but we also teach courses such as Language Science, Hearing Science, Anatomy and Physiology of the Speaking Mechanism, Phonetics, and so forth. In addition, faculty members in the department are involved not only in studying individuals who have various types of "communication disorders," but we also investigate "normal" aspects of hearing and speech and language production. Thus, we feel that the current name of "Department of Communication Disorders" does not fully reflect the basic science aspects of teaching and research that are a significant part of what we do. We believe that changing the name to "Department of Communication

Sciences and Disorders" more accurately incorporates the basic science teaching and research that occur within the department. In addition, we feel that this more appropriate description of our activities may also enhance our ability to recruit more graduate students that might be interested in basic research, but perhaps not clinical research.

3. Practice Elsewhere (and Procedures Followed in Making the Decision to Rename the Department)

The process of considering a name change was initiated by examining the departmental names of 40-45 of the top "speech and hearing" programs at major institutions around the country. This resulted in a list of 15 different departmental names for us to consider (see below), along with the possibility that we might also create something not used by any other program in our field.

- Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders (Northwestern, Florida, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, U. of Texas at Austin, Penn State, Syracuse, Georgia, Emerson)
- Dept. of Communication Disorders (Utah, Minnesota, Florida State, Boston U., U Mass.-Amherst)
- Dept. of Communication Sciences (Connecticut, Case Western Reserve, Vermont, Temple)
- Dept. of Communicative Disorders and Sciences (Wichita State, SUNY-Buffalo)
- Dept. of Communication Science and Disorders (U. of Pittsburgh, Kansas State)
- Dept. of Communicative Disorders (Wisconsin, San Diego State)
- Dept. of Speech and Hearing Sciences (Indiana, Arizona, Washington, Washington State)
- Dept. of Speech and Hearing Science (Illinois, Arizona State, Ohio State)
- Dept. of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences (Colorado)
- Dept. of Speech, Language, Hearing Sciences and Disorders (Kansas)
- Dept. of Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology (NYU)
- Dept. of Speech and Language Pathology and Audiology (Columbia)
- Dept. of Speech Pathology and Audiology (Iowa, Nevada-Reno, Western Michigan)
- Dept. of Hearing and Speech Sciences (Vanderbilt, U. of Maryland)

Dept. of Audiology and Speech Sciences (Purdue, Michigan State)

This list of departmental names from other institutions was presented to the faculty in September, and they were allowed several weeks to think about the possibility of a name change, consider the pros and cons of a possible change, etc. Then we met to discuss: (a) whether or not we should make a change and (b) if so, what the name should be. There was unanimous approval for making a change to more appropriately represent the nature of our teaching and research activities, but there were a number of preferences expressed by the faculty members with regard to possible departmental names. After considerable discussion, we narrowed the list of 15 possible names down to 4 that everyone agreed would be reasonable to seriously consider further. We then decided that each person would rank order those top 4 choices from most to least desirable and that the name with the *lowest* score would "win" (i. e., the lowest sum of the rankings across all faculty members would reflect the preferred choice of new names).

The 4 choices we elected to consider were: Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Dept. of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, Dept. of Speech, Language, Hearing Sciences and Disorders, and Dept. of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. The final vote totals for those 4 options were, respectively: 19, 33, 36, and 42. The choice of "Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders" was thus a strong preference, having received 9 of 13 first place votes.

Although this did not directly influence our decision, it is worth noting that of the 15 department names we originally considered, "Communication Sciences and Disorders" was the one utilized more than any other by programs around the country. For example, as can be seen above, it is the department name in our field at Northwestern, Syracuse, UT-Austin, Penn State, Florida, Oklahoma and various others. This same general designation is also utilized by one of the major organizations in our field, i. e., "The Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders." Thus, to more appropriately describe the full range of activities that go on here, we would like to request approval for the department to implement the name change from "Department of Communication Disorders." to "Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders."

4. Changes, if any, in Degree Names

The official degree names offered by the Department will not change. The current undergraduate degree is "Speech and Hearing Science," and the current graduate degree areas for both master's and doctoral students are "Audiology" or "Speech-Language Pathology."

5. Changes, if any, in catalog prefix descriptions, course designations, etc.

At present the catalog refers to courses in Communication Disorders with the acronym "CMDIS." The proposed departmental name of Communication Sciences and Disorders would result in needing to change the designation to "CSD."

6. Other Matters

Cost of Change/Administrative Structure

There are no substantive costs in making this change. Items such as departmental letterhead, business cards, etc. will eventually need to be replaced, but the current stock of such materials will be used up, not simply discarded. Thus, the change of name with regard to such materials will occur on an "as needed" basis and will not entail additional costs. Our departmental administrative structure will not change, nor will our status within the College of Health be affected.

Benefits of Change

The proposed name change will more accurately reflect the nature of our departmental activities, and as such, this may enhance our ability to attract graduate students (and

future faculty hires) with basic science interests. To some extent, this name change should improve the image of the department within the domain of the "health sciences" with which we are affiliated at the University, and it could even be of some benefit in terms of submitting applications for internal and external funding.