June 4, 2009

A. Lorris Betz  
Senior Vice President for Health Sciences  
5th Floor, Clinical Neurosciences Center  
Campus

RE: Graduate Council Review  
       Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Dear Vice President Betz:

Enclosed is the Graduate Council's review of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. Included in this review packet are the report prepared by the Graduate Council, the Academic Profile, and the Memorandum of Understanding resulting from the review wrap-up meeting.

Please forward this review to the Academic Senate to be placed on the information calendar for the next meeting of the Senate.

          Sincerely,

          David S. Chapman  
          Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies  
          Dean, The Graduate School

Encl.

XC: Bruce L. Smith, Chair, Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders  
    James E. Graves, Dean, College of Health
GRADUATE COUNCIL REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

February 23, 2009

The Graduate Council has completed its review of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. The External Review Committee included:

Dr. John Bernthal  
Chair, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders  
University Nebraska-Lincoln

Dr. Robert H. Margolis  
Professor, Department of Otolaryngology  
University of Minnesota

Dr. Carol Stoel-Gammon  
Professor, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences  
University of Washington

The Internal Review Committee of the University of Utah included:

Dr. Johanna Watzinger-Tharp  
Associate Professor, Department of Languages and Literature

Dr. Joanne Yaffe  
Associate Professor, College of Social Work

Dr. Marshall E. Smith  
Associate Professor, Department of Oralaryngology

This report of the Graduate Council is based on the self-study report submitted by the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, the results of the internal and external review committees, and comments from Dr. Bruce L. Smith, Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and Dr. James E. Graves, Dean of the College of Health.
DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Program Overview

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is in the College of Health. The department offers a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) or Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Speech and Hearing Science. The B.S./B.A. degrees are designed to prepare students for graduate study in speech-language pathology or audiology. The department offers four graduate programs including a Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Speech-Language Pathology, a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Speech-Language Pathology, a Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Speech-Language Pathology or Audiology. The M.S., M.A., and Au.D. degree programs are designed to prepare students for clinical practice in a variety of service settings. The Ph.D. program is a research degree intended to prepare individuals for research and academic careers. The department also administers a Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic that provides diagnostic and treatment services to individuals along the Wasatch front.

The department reports significant progress in addressing several recommendations it received during the 2002 Graduate Council review. These include (1) hiring an established scholar to assume the department chair position, (2) strengthening faculty at the senior associate level through promotion and hiring, (3) establishing the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) program, (4) developing courses to address new standards of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, (5) obtaining adequate space to house the Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic, and (6) obtaining additional space to house doctoral students. Several recommendations from the 2002 Graduate Council report are in need of additional attention based on the information provided in the department’s self-study report. These include (1) more fully developing the Ph.D. degree, (2) obtaining research and training grants to support and enhance the Master and Ph.D. degree programs, and (3) developing a plan to recruit students and faculty from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Faculty

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders has 9.5 tenure track and 6.25 non-tenure track faculty lines. Two of the tenure track lines were being searched at the time the department submitted its self-study report. Since that time, one assistant professor has been hired and there is an ongoing search for a senior faculty member in audiology. Of the current tenure track faculty members, one is a professor, five are associate professors, and three (including a new hire in Speech-Language Pathology as of August 2008) are assistant professors. The average time in service for the associate professors is 6.2 years (2 -12 years). The two most senior associate professors have been encouraged to prepare their papers for consideration for promotion to the rank of professor. One assistant professor is in his third year, one is in her second year and the other just began her position in the fall of 2008. There are five male and four female tenure track faculty members and among them are seven Caucasians, one Korean, and one Asian-American. The non-tenure track faculty consists of one male and six females, all of whom are Caucasian.
The faculty members in the department are well respected scholars and clinicians. The evidence suggests that they publish regularly and several have obtained extramural funding to support their research and training activities. The members of the faculty participate in a significant number of service activities within the university and their professional organizations.

**Students**

In 2006-2007 the department awarded 33 bachelor degrees, 29 master degrees, and two doctoral degrees. The department had a total of 68 pre-major and undergraduate students, 55 master students, and 23 doctoral students during the same period. The number of students enrolled in the B.S./B.A. degree programs decreased by 42% (27) between 2005 and 2007. No explanation was offered in the self-study report for this decline. Enrollment in the department’s graduate programs has remained relatively stable over the last three academic years. The number of students in the M.S./M.A degree programs in Speech-Language Pathology and the Au.D. degree program are comparable. The number of students in the Ph.D. program is very small (2 to 3 students per year). The department appears to attract highly qualified students to its programs. The overall acceptance rates for the M.S./M.A. and Au.D. degree programs is 75%, with the majority of applicants coming from the state of Utah. The majority of master students complete their programs within two years, Au.D. students complete their programs in four years, and Ph.D. students finish within five to seven years.

The available data suggests that students are generally satisfied with the quality of their education and the level of support that they receive from faculty members. However, some concerns were raised about the level of coordination and linkage between the didactic coursework and laboratory and field experiences. For example, students in speech-language pathology reported that the evidenced-based practices taught in courses were not always implemented in the clinic. In addition, students enrolled in the Au.D. program expressed concerns that some coursework was taught by faculty members who do not have strong backgrounds in clinical audiology.

The number of master and doctoral students receiving financial support is extremely small. The department offers six to seven scholarships per year from departmental endowments ranging from $500 to $5,000 per year. A grant from the Utah State Office of Education provides support to 10 M.S./M.A. students each year who are interested in working in the public schools following graduation. Additional support is available to a limited number of students through faculty research and training grants.

**Curriculum**

The undergraduate major in Speech and Hearing Science has two emphasis areas including Speech-Language Pathology and/or Audiology, and American Sign Language. The emphasis in Speech-Language Pathology and/or Audiology is intended to prepare students to pursue master or doctoral degrees. The curriculum appears to provide students with a solid foundation for advanced graduate study. However, there may be a need to develop laboratory experiences in some areas (e.g., phonetics; anatomy and physiology; acoustics) to enhance the quality and effectiveness of students’ preparation. The emphasis area in American Sign Language
has been suspended due to the small number of students applying to the program, competition from another program at Utah Valley University, and the department’s inability to recruit and hire a faculty member who can assume responsibility for the program. At the time of the review, a decision regarding the future status of the program was on hold until the search for a faculty member in Speech-Language Pathology was completed.

The curriculum in M.S./M.A. degree programs in Speech-Language Pathology is strong and meets all of the academic and clinical requirements for the Certificate of Clinical Competency – Speech-Language Pathology issued by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Graduates of the program also meet the requirements of the Utah State Office of Education to provide speech-language pathology services in the public schools. The department’s self-study identified several areas of needed improvement in the curriculum including Autism, augmentative communication, language and literacy, and bilingualism. Students are currently not required to complete a qualifying examination to advance to candidacy, although the department is exploring qualifying exam options that may be put in place in the future. The curriculum includes both thesis and nonthesis options to complete the degree program. The nonthesis option requires students to complete additional clinical and/or research experiences.

The Au.D. curriculum is sufficient to prepare students in all of the important areas of clinical practice. Graduates of the program meet the clinical requirements for the Certificate of Clinical Competency–Audiology issued by ASHA and the requirements of the Utah State Office of Education to provide audiology services in the public schools. However, there is a need to strengthen the clinical experiences in specific areas including psychoacoustics, advanced electrophysiology, and amplification. In addition, there is a need to broaden the program so that students can take course work in other academic units, especially the Medical School.

The curriculum in the Ph.D. degree program is adequate to prepare students for academic and research positions. Like the Au.D. degree program, the quality of the Ph.D. curriculum would be improved by requiring students to take relevant course work from outside of the department.

**Program Effectiveness and Outcome Assessment**

The department uses a variety of measures to assess program effectiveness including student course evaluations, student exit interviews, and the Praxis exams in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. The Praxis exams are required by ASHA in order for graduates to obtain a Certificate of Clinical Competency in Speech-Language Pathology or Audiology. The self-study included mean course and instructor ratings for undergraduate and graduate courses for the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 academic years. The mean ratings were above 5.0 (on a six-point scale) in all areas. Data for the 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 academic years were not reported. The response rates for the student exit interviews were small but students were consistently positive about the quality and effectiveness of their preparation. Data for the Praxis exams in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology was available for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years. Pass rates for the exams were 100% in both areas. Program completion rates in Speech-Language Pathology averaged 90% (88 – 93%) between 2004 and 2007. All of the graduates obtained employment in the profession following graduation. An average of 96%
(88-100%) of the students in Audiology successfully completed their programs during the same period. All of the graduates obtained employment in the profession following graduation.

**Facilities and Resources**

The faculty and staff in the department are housed on the 12th and 13th floors of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Building. The Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic is located in Research Park. The teaching and research facilities appear to be adequate to meet student and faculty needs. Office space in Social and Behavioral Sciences would benefit from refurbishing and student and faculty access to the 12th and 13th floors can be problematic because of poor elevator service. An additional concern relates to the considerable distance between the academic and clinical faculty and functions, and the separation of the department from the College of Health. Students and faculty have adequate access to computers. However, not all of the computers in the department meet information technology’s recommended guidelines for computer replacement.

**COMMENDATIONS**

1. The department has strong academic and clinical faculty.

2. The department is recruiting high quality students and provides adequate support to allow them to successfully complete their programs.

3. The degree programs are effective in preparing students to meet state and professional certification and licensure requirements.

4. Graduates of the degree programs are successful in obtaining a variety of clinical and academic positions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The department should develop contingency plans to assure the long-term viability of the Doctorate in Audiology (Au.D.) degree program if it is unable to identify and hire a senior tenure-track faculty member with significant clinical experience.

2. The curricula in the M.S., M.A., and Au.D. degree programs should be reviewed to assure that students are provided adequate laboratory and practicum experiences.

3. The department should review the linkage between didactic courses and clinical and practicum experiences to evaluate whether professionals in working field settings are consistently implementing evidence-based practices. Where necessary the department should take steps to align the practices used in clinical and practicum sites with the content presented in courses. This may require putting formal procedures in place that support collaboration between course instructors, clinical faculty members, and cooperating professionals.
4. The department should explore partnerships with other colleges, schools, and departments to identify areas of collaboration and cooperation that could expand course offerings to students.

5. The continued success of the M.S., M.A., Au.D., and Ph.D. degree programs hinges upon developing multiple sources of support for graduate students. The department should develop a comprehensive plan for expanding student support that includes internal and extramural funding opportunities, continuing education, and community outreach programs.

6. It was recommended in the 2002 Graduate Council Report that the department take steps to increase diversity among students, faculty, staff, and clients. The department’s self-study report indicates that little progress has been made in achieving this goal. The department should develop and implement a specific plan to achieve appropriate diversity among its student body, faculty, staff, and clients. The Office of the Associate Vice President for Diversity is committed to this goal and may provide useful ideas and strategies in this regard. The use of annual progress reports to the Graduate Council should be considered as a way to encourage the department to work effectively towards this goal.

**ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE INITIATION OF THE REVIEW**

1. In 2008-09, one of the department’s senior associate professors initiated the process to be promoted to the rank of professor.

2. The undergraduate emphasis in American Sign Language has been discontinued, inasmuch as the faculty member hired for Fall 2008 does not have expertise in that area.

3. The faculty member hired for Fall 2008 has a primary focus in Autism and augmentative communication, and thus provides expertise in two areas that the department wanted to cover.

Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Graduate Council:

John McDonnell (Chair), Department of Special Education
Jay Mace, Department of Meteorology
Kevin Rathunde, Department of Family and Consumer Studies
Memorandum of Understanding
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

This memorandum of understanding is a summary of decisions reached at a wrap-up meeting on 5 May 2009, concluding the Graduate Council Review of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. A. Lorris Betz, Senior Vice President for Health Sciences; James E. Graves, Dean of the College of Health; Bruce L. Smith, Chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders; David S. Chapman, Dean of the Graduate School; and Frederick Rhodewalt, Associate Dean of the Graduate School were present.

The discussion centered on but was not limited to the recommendations contained in the Graduate Council review completed on 23 February 2009. At the wrap-up meeting, the working group agreed to endorse the following actions:

**Recommendation 1:** The department should develop contingency plans to assure the long-term viability of the Doctorate in Audiology (Au.D.) degree program if it is unable to identify and hire a senior tenure-track faculty member with significant clinical experience.

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) implemented a plan to manage the Au.D. program in light of the fact that budget constraints have prohibited the hiring of a senior tenured faculty with clinical experiences. The Au.D. program is now being coordinated by the audiology clinic director, who is a Ph.D. level person. The department reports that the arrangement is working well at this time. Although it would be ideal to have a tenure-track faculty member in this position, the need is not as urgent as it was previously because junior faculty in the area are developing and will be able to staff the position in the future.

**Recommendation 2:** The curricula in the M.S., M.A., and Au.D. degree programs should be reviewed to assure that students are provided adequate laboratory and practicum experiences.

The Department has completed a review of its degree programs with regard to its laboratory and practicum offerings. It has addressed this recommendation by hiring an individual to teach their laboratory courses.
Recommendation 3: The department should review the linkage between didactic courses and clinical and practicum experiences to evaluate whether professionals in working field settings are consistently implementing evidence-based practices. Where necessary the department should take steps to align the practices used in clinical and practicum sites with the content presented in courses. This may require putting formal procedures in place that support collaboration between course instructors, clinical faculty members, and cooperating professionals.

The Department reports that linking didactic instruction and evidence-based practice to clinical and practicum experiences is a challenge for the field. The Department plans to address this issue by having tenure-track faculty teach seminars for clinical faculty which will be formalized in upcoming years. They also will consider integrating clinicians into coursework.

Recommendation 4: The department should explore partnerships with other colleges, schools, and departments to identify areas of collaboration and cooperation that could expand course offerings to students.

Although the Department faculty do participate in collaborative activities, they view the recommendation to expand course offerings as impractical within the constraints of the present curriculum.

Recommendation 5: The continued success of the M.S., M.A., Au.D., and Ph.D. degree programs hinges upon developing multiple sources of support for graduate students. The department should develop a comprehensive plan for expanding student support that includes internal and extramural funding opportunities, continuing education, and community outreach programs.

The Department plans to consider the following actions in order to expand graduate student support: They will consider converting auxiliary faculty funds to TAs, including more RA support in grant submissions, and implementing differential tuition from clinics to support students.
**Recommendation 6:** It was recommended in the 2002 Graduate Council Report that the department take steps to increase diversity among students, faculty, staff, and clients. The department’s self-study report indicates that little progress has been made in achieving this goal. The department should develop and implement a specific plan to achieve appropriate diversity among its student body, faculty, staff, and clients. The Office of the Associate Vice President for Diversity is committed to this goal and may provide useful ideas and strategies in this regard. The use of annual progress reports to the Graduate Council should be considered as a way to encourage the department to work effectively towards this goal.

Although the Department has made some progress in terms of faculty diversity they have been less successful in their attempts to increase student diversity. They plan to implement the following steps in order to address this concern:

- Work with Office of Diversity to obtain scholarship funding to recruit/retain students.

- Work more closely with Associate Dean of the College of Health to capitalize on existing programs in the College directed at minority students.

- Work with Center for Ethnic Student Affairs ([http://web.utah.edu/cesa/](http://web.utah.edu/cesa/)) to develop targeted mailings and/or special recruitment seminars.

- Obtain information from Graduate School, the Office of Diversity, and other appropriate groups regarding "success stories" on campus and programs that such departments have implemented.

- Avoid “reinventing the wheel” by assessing plans and accomplishments at other universities related to diversity recruiting and associated success stories.

- Encourage faculty to be more proactive in contacting prospective minority students from their classes, professional meetings they attend, and so forth.

- Consult with CSD faculty to develop departmental objectives with regard to recruiting minority students.

This memorandum of understanding is to be followed by annual letters of progress from the Chair of the Department to the Dean of the Graduate School. Letters will be submitted each year until all of the actions in the preceding paragraphs have been completed.

A. Lorris Betz
James E. Graves
Bruce L. Smith
David S. Chapman
Frederick Rhodewalt

David S. Chapman
Associate V.P. for Graduate Studies
Dean, The Graduate School

June 4, 2009