



COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE

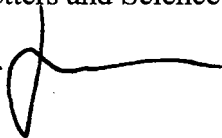
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS

---

1975 Willow Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706  
(608) 262-3951  
FAX (608) 262-6466

JAN 6 1997

**Memo**

**To:** Alex Nagel, Associate Dean of Letters and Science  
**From:** Jon F. Miller, Professor and Chair   
**Subject:** Assessment Plan  
**Date:** January 3, 1997

---

Attached find the Department Assessment Plan. The first section deals with the Undergraduate Program and the second section covers the Department Graduate Programs.

Cheers.

\llg

Attachment

**Assessment Plan**  
**Department of Communicative Disorders**  
**College of Letters and Science**

December 1996

**I. The Undergraduate Major**

**Introduction**

The Department of Communicative Disorders has a long history of program evaluation of the graduate programs through accreditation of the Masters programs in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association. While these reviews do cover undergraduate course work, they have not focused on the review of specific educational goals for the bachelors degree in Communicative Disorders. This proposed plan will be the first department effort to evaluate the specific educational objectives of our undergraduate program.

The undergraduate major provides students with an overview of the field of communication disorders and the disciplines of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Course work provides students with the knowledge and skills to pursue careers in clinical service, which require a masters degree as the entry level degree, a career in scientific research requiring doctoral and post-doctoral study, or a career outside the field. Students can complete a bachelor of arts degree, a bachelor of science degree or bachelor of science in education degree. The choice of completing the degree in Letters and Science or the School of Education depend upon career choices which include working in the public schools, which require specific education courses for certification, versus research careers or clinical careers in other settings, e.g., hospitals and private clinics. The field is changing rapidly relative to employment options. In the past, most student opted for the bachelor of science in education degree, but this past year, our graduates were almost evenly split between the L&S degrees and the School of Education degree. The department has been concerned about the balance between the basic science of the field and the focus on clinical application or clinical skills in the undergraduate program. Plans are underway to develop a new basic science degree in communication sciences directed toward preparing students for careers in speech, language and hearing research. This initiative will explore interdisciplinary links with Communication Arts and Psychology.

**Assessment plan:**

The assessment plan will be organized around the three required components, the specific educational goals of the program, the assessment methods to be used to evaluate the specific goals, and the process used to monitor the program and to implement any changes required to meet the goals or changes in the department educational goals.

**Educational Goals:**

The assessment plan for the undergraduate program should be placed in the context of the department mission statement which has been articulated in our student Handbook and in our Strategic Plan (see appendix A for the complete version). The general mission states:

The program in Communicative Disorders provides students with opportunities for study in the areas of speech-language pathology, audiology, and the normal aspects of speech, hearing, and language. The purpose of the graduate program is to provide students who wish to become competent teachers, clinicians, and researchers with a solid foundation in

both the theoretical and applied aspects of the discipline of Communicative Disorders.

The assessment of the undergraduate curriculum must take into account the goals of the students, careers in research or a career in clinical service in either audiology or speech-language pathology, or employment outside the field with a focus on the speech and hearing sciences. All of our assessment efforts that are in place have been directed toward the evaluation of our masters degree clinical training program as part of our national accreditation review that takes place every five years. The assessment of our undergraduate program will focus on three areas, basic knowledge goals, critical thinking goals and basic skill goals. These three areas should provide the opportunity to evaluate the diverse career goals of our undergraduate students.

The field of Communication Sciences and Disorders is expanding as our knowledge base increases regarding the cause and consequence of human communication disorders. The field is grounded on a firm understanding of the basic biological and psychological functions of the systems associated with communication, including perception, motor and cognitive processes. In addition, since human communication continues to develop through adolescents, students must have a thorough understanding of human development particularly the linguistic and cognitive processes that underlie verbal communication. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association lists nine basic areas of knowledge essential for the undergraduate degree, two addressing basic biological and behavioral sciences, three areas focused on basic communication processes and four related to the etiology, assessment and remediation of speech, language and hearing disorders in children and adults. The first five areas dealing with basic sciences development and basic communication processes are essential for an undergraduate degree with the masters degree emphasizing the last four areas dealing with hearing speech and language disorders. In general our department agrees that these nine areas are essential but prefers the following six basic areas of knowledge as critical for an undergraduate major.

**Basic knowledge goals:**

1. Knowledge of anatomical and physiologic mechanisms of hearing and speech production.
2. Basic knowledge of the physical and psychophysical properties of sound and the perception of speech and language.
3. Knowledge of language and communication development including speaking and listening.
4. Knowledge of the influences of genetic, neurological, perceptual, motor, cultural and environmental differences on the acquisition and maintenance of oral communication skills.
5. Basic knowledge of the consequences of hearing impairment on communication skills through the life span.
6. Basic understanding of how speech and language disorders influence communication effectiveness.

**Critical thinking goals:**

1. The ability to integrate direct observation with reading past research to formulate hypotheses about an individual's hearing, speech or language deficit.
2. The ability to clearly communicate basic principles of hearing speech and language through both written and spoken means.

3. The ability to read, identify and propose solutions to conflicts in the research and clinical literature through the application of a knowledge base in communicative disorders.

**The basic skill goals we expect of all of our students include:**

1. The ability to understand the quantitative measures related to hearing, speech and language performance.
2. The ability to read and evaluate the basic research in the field of communicative disorders.
3. The ability to use modern information technology to conduct literature searches and to identify new research developments on a given etiology or methodology associated with speech, language or hearing.
4. Some acquaintance with the assessment and intervention methods in communicative disorders.

**Methods of Assessment**

The Department currently has about 270 undergraduate majors over sophomore, junior and senior classes. The evaluation of this many students would create an undue burden on the faculty. We therefore propose to evaluate the students participating in two classes, usually taken in their senior year, Communicative Disorders 371, observational methods which is a writing intensive course, and CD 390 the beginning practicum course in Communicative Disorders. This would provide access to 25 to 35 students using the course work context to evaluate all three sets of educational goals for the undergraduate program. We would implement the evaluation in the Spring semester every other years for four years, then every three to four years recognizing that changes would not be expected at yearly intervals. We will use the following methods to assess the educational goals of our undergraduate curriculum.

1. Communicative Disorders will continue to use as a metric of meeting our educational goals, the number of undergraduate students accepted into masters degree programs in universities around the country. This will address the performance of those students seeking careers in clinical service, and most of those students pursuing careers in research.
2. The two courses, CD 371, and CD 390 provide an opportunity to evaluate the basic knowledge and skills as well as the ability to integrate these to provide solutions to clinical problems, i.e., demonstrate critical thinking skills. Success in these courses will provide a direct evaluation of all three sets of educational goals of the undergraduate program. The professors teaching these courses will be asked to report on the preparedness of the students participating in this course and their ability to synthesize basic research into clinical practice.
3. The final projects of the CD 390 course will be evaluated as a specific demonstration of the application of research and clinical practice to develop an individualized evaluation and intervention plan for an individual with a speech, hearing or language disorder. This project also require the implementation of the treatment plan and the evaluation of the resulting changes in speech, language and communication skills. Students are required to develop a poster of their project and present it to the faculty, staff and students in the department during the end of semester 390 poster session, a three hour display and discussion session.

**Feedback mechanisms**

The Department Undergraduate Committee will implement the evaluation and integrate the results for review by the faculty and staff at our annual end of the year Work Party. The committee

will create review the knowledge goals each year and assemble the assessment data every two in the first years of implementation. As the assessment process is sharpened, we expect that the data collection can be done every three to four years to reduce the time required for this effort without jeopardizing the quality of the effort. The committee will review the data with the faculty and suggest changes in the curriculum where educational goals are not being met. In addition the committee will evaluate the assessment plan to determine its validity in measuring the educational goals of the Undergraduate curriculum.

## **II. The Graduate Program**

### **Introduction**

The Department of Communicative Disorders has a long history of evaluating our graduate programs. The assessment of the Masters programs has been an ongoing process as part of the accreditation of our Masters programs in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology by the Academic Accreditation Council of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. The accreditation of the Department has been renewed every five years and requires a self study and a site visit by members of the Board of Examiners. The Doctoral Program evaluation has been less formal and has consisted of employer surveys of our graduates every five to eight years. We have also surveyed our doctoral graduates at the same time. This assessment plan will provide a review of our current activities for evaluating the Masters programs and will also include a revised version of our doctoral program assessment plan.

### **Masters Program Assessment Plan:**

The assessment plan will be organized around one primary educational goal, the application of basic science and clinical research data toward the solution of clinical problems involving speech hearing and language through the life span. This objective can be broken down into several parts, each of which will constitute an educational goal of the Masters program.

### **Educational Goals:**

1. Promote the Acquisition of knowledge of the theoretical bases for clinical and research endeavors.
2. Promote the application of knowledge to clinical and research laboratory environments.
3. Provide stimulation and guidance toward the development of clinical competence and independent scholarly research.
4. Develop the skills for independent learning and the individual responsibility for life-long professional growth.
5. Promote the acquisition and application of knowledge of the diverse of human conditions and experiences that impact on communicative behavior; acknowledgment of one's own personal and cultural bias; and recognition and the appreciation of differences related to gender, age and aging, family group and culture.

### **Methods of Assessment and feedback mechanisms:**

1. The Department surveys graduates and their employers every two years, two years following graduation, survey forms are attached. These surveys provide information about preparation for the employment, areas that they felt need of further work and areas they felt were covered

satisfactorily. These surveys have revealed a number for program deficiencies in the past which have led to curricular modifications. Two recent examples are worth noting. First, the survey of six years ago revealed that students employed in medical settings were expected to perform evaluations of swallowing competence as well as to develop intervention programs to improve swallowing among aging patients. We instituted a course on swallowing five years ago that is now taken by 80% of our masters students. Recent surveys document that students now feel well prepared for this type of clinical activity. A second example concerns counseling of clients with hearing, speech or language problems. Students found that they were less prepared in this area than their job required so we instituted a seminar on counseling that 90% of our students take. This course has gotten rave review from students and we expect that future surveys will show that this is no longer a deficiency of the department.

2. Students have the option of taking a comprehensive examination or write a masters thesis involving the conduct of original research. The majority of students take the comprehensive examination, a five hour written examination, assessing each students ability to integrate course work and clinical experience. Three examinations are developed each year for students majoring in Audiology, Speech-Language Pathology or Speech, Language or Hearing Science. A committee of three to five faculty read and grade the examinations. Students who fail may take the examination a second time. The faculty review the examination results each year by area group, Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, and make suggestions for curricular revision. This process involves tuning the curriculum each year.

3. Students who wish to go into clinical service positions must be certified by the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association. Certification involves graduating from an accredited program and successfully completing the National Examination in Audiology or Speech-Language Pathology administered by the Educational Testing Service. We have never had a student fail this exam.

4. Students who elect the thesis option complete their work under the supervision of a three faculty member committee chaired by their thesis advisor. The process requires a meeting to approve the topic and research plan with the student presenting a writing document detailing the research question(s) and rationale. The completed research document is defended by the student at a two hour final oral examination.

5. The ultimate assessment of the outcome of our masters programs is the employment of our students. Over the past 10 years, our students have competed very well in the job market, both in public school systems and hospital and clinics with 95% employed within four weeks of graduation. Many employers specifically recruit our students before they graduate citing their exceptional academic training, clinical skills and experience and maturity.

### **Assessment Plan for the Doctoral Program**

The doctoral program is an individualized program of study designed to meet the needs of individual students who wish to pursue careers in research in Audiology, Speech Pathology, Language Pathology, or Speech, hearing or Language Science. While each student must follow the Graduate School curriculum guidelines for majors and minors, we have found that most students pursue fairly independent plans of study. Assessment of these students follows the traditional methods, a preliminary examination after course work is completed, generally two years, and a dissertation defense. The form of these evaluations in our Department is consistent across areas of study. The preliminary examination consists of a six hour written examination in

the major area one hour of which must be in the basic science of normal performance, a three hour examination in a minor area in the Department, and a two hour oral examination within the week following the written examination. The dissertation process requires a committee of five faculty, one of which must be from another department. The committee meets with the candidate to approve the dissertation topic and research plan. When the research is completed the committee convenes for a two hour defense of the document.

A second assessment method that we have used involves surveying former students and their employers to evaluate the details of our training program relative to preparation for careers in research and teaching. The last survey was done eight years ago and revealed that students felt well prepared to conduct independent research but expressed a need for more teaching experience as a part of their doctoral training program. This has been a continuing problem for us since we do not have any TA positions in the department. We have recently adopted the practice of employing doctoral students as lecturers to fill short term staffing needs. Each of these students has a faculty mentor to help them during the semester. This has been a very successful program.

While it is possible to attempt a more rigorous assessment of our doctoral students, the individualized nature of their educational programs and their job settings is not conducive to more quantitative productivity measures. The ultimate assessment of our doctoral graduates is their employability. All of our students are employed before they leave the program. The current group of doctoral students is being recruited after they finish their preliminary examinations.

### Employer Questionnaire, April 1995

You have been given this form because you are the supervisor / employer of a recent graduate of the Department of Communicative Disorders at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Our department is in the process of evaluating our academic and clinical training program. As a part of that process it would be very helpful to have your responses to the following questions. In making your judgement, please compare the individual's performance with that of other persons who perform similar duties. We would be most grateful if you would complete the following questionnaire and return it to us by June 1, 1995. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Circle the area in which this person works:**      Audiology      Speech / Language Pathology

Please use the following scale to rate this person:

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 = Excellent     | 4 = Below Average   |
| 2 = Above Average | 5 = Unsatisfactory  |
| 3 = Average       | NA = Not Applicable |

Academic background preparation	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Breadth and depth of theoretical information	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Ability to apply theoretical and research information	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Ability to keep abreast of new developments in the field	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Knowledge of a wide range of communicative disorders	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Clinical background preparation	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Diagnostic skills	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Therapy skills	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Supervision effectiveness	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Teaching effectiveness	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Research or other scholarly productivity	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Ability to write effectively	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Efficient use of time	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Problem solving skills	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Ability to consult freely with other professionals	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Counseling clients with respect to progress or special problems	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Proficiency with clinical instrumentation	1 2 3 4 5 NA
Proficiency with computers	1 2 3 4 5 NA
<b>OVERALL EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>1 2 3 4 5 NA</b>

In which areas do you feel that this person is the most competent as a function of his/her academic and clinical preparation?

In which areas do you feel that this person is the least competent as a function of his/her academic and clinical preparation?

Please add any additional comments which you feel would be helpful to us in our evaluation.



**FORMER-STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE, APRIL 1995**

Faculty and staff of the Department of Communicative Disorders at the University of Wisconsin-Madison are attempting to evaluate the quality of our graduate training program. We would be most grateful if you would complete the following questionnaire and return it to us by June 1, 1995. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

**Degree obtained at the University of Wisconsin-Madison:**  MS  PhD

Date of Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

**Area of Concentration:**  Speech Pathology/Science  Language Pathology  Audiology

Current employment status:  Full-time  Part-time  Unemployed

**Professional area in which you are working (check primary area only):**

Speech Pathology  Language Pathology  Audiology

Speech Science  Hearing Science  Other

**Employment Setting (check primary setting only):**  Elementary or Secondary School

Hospital Clinic  Speech/language/Hearing Clinic  Rehabilitation Center

College/University  Residential Center  Private Practice

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate state or province of employment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you completed a Clinical Fellowship Year?**  Yes  No

**Have you taken the ASHA National Examination?**  Yes  No

**If Yes, what was your score?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you applied for the certificate of Clinical Competency from ASHA?**  Yes  No

In relation to your professional goals and in comparison with colleagues with similar professional goals, rate your professional training using the five-point scale presented on the next page. \_\_\_\_\_

**-continued-**

**FORMER-STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE, APRIL 1995**

The following information will be very helpful to the faculty and staff in improving the academic and clinical training program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Using the rating scale shown below, please answer each question by marking through the rating you feel best exemplifies your training. Please add any comments that you wish to make.

**RATING SCALE**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 = Excellent coverage or preparation     | 5 = Unsatisfactory coverage or preparation                 |
| 2 = Above average coverage or preparation | NA = Not Applicable  |
| 3 = Average coverage or preparation       | NP = Not available in the academic/clinic training program |
| 4 = Below average coverage or preparation |  |

<b>ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>RATING</b>
Exposure to theory	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Exposure to research	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Knowledge of normal speech, language, & hearing processes	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Knowledge of a wide range of types of communicative disorders	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Value of coursework for current employment demands	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Academic background preparation relative to you co-workers	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP

<b>DIDACTIC COURSE CONTENT</b>	<b>RATING</b>	<b>DIDACTIC COURSE CONTENT</b>	<b>RATING</b>
Speech Science	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Aphasia	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Hearing Science	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Dysarthria	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Instrumentation	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Apraxia	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Language Development	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Craniofacial Anomalies	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Cognition	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Audiology Assessment	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Phonetics	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Auditory Rehabilitation	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Anatomy and Physiology of Speech Mechanisms	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Hearing Aids	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Anatomy and Physiology of Hearing Mechanism	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Auditory Pathology	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Neural Processes	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Augmentative Communication Systems	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Phonology Disorders	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Supervision	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Language Assessment	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Diagnostic Methods	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Language Disorder / Children	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Dysphagia	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Voice Disorders	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP	Manual Communication	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP
Fluency Disorders	1 2 3 4 5 NA NP		

- continued -

**RATING SCALE**

- 1 = Excellent coverage or preparation  
 2 = Above average coverage or preparation  
 3 = Average coverage or preparation  
 4 = Below average coverage or preparation

- 5 = Unsatisfactory coverage or preparation  
 NA = Not applicable  
 NP = Not applicable in the academic clinic training program

<b>CLINICAL EXPERIENCE: ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>RATING</b>						
Phonology Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Language Disorders / Children	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Fluency Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Voice Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Neuromotor Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Pure Tone Audiometry	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Hearing Screening	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Speech Audiometry	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Acoustic Immittance	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Electrophysiologic Audiometry	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Tests of Central Auditory Function	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Hearing Aid Selection / Dispensing	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
<b>CLINICAL EXPERIENCE: MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>RATING</b>						
Phonology Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Language Disorders / Young Children	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Language Disorders / Adolescents	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Language Disorders / Adults	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Augmentative Communication Needs	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Fluency Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Voice Disorders	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Aphasia	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Apraxia	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Dysarthria	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Hearing Disorders / Children	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Hearing Disorders / Adults	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Laryngectomies	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP
Craniofacial Anomalies	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP

<b>CLINICAL EXPERIENCE: OTHER</b>	<b>RATING</b>							
Interpretation of Case History Information	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP	
Report Writing	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP	
Third Party Billing Policies and Practices	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP	
Counseling	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP	
Cultural / Ethnic Diversity	1	2	3	4	5	NA	NP	

**COMMENTS:**