Program: Speech Pathology and Audiology B.S

Department: Speech Pathology and Audiology

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011: 220

Faculty member completing template: Laureen O’Hanlon  Date: Jan 9th 2012

Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present

1. Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?

Our undergraduate program has undergone rigorous continuous assessment throughout the past 6 years and each year we have refined our measurement tools and expanded our assessment to clearly distinguish between formative and summative assessment of both specific student learning in courses as well as overall program efficiency and effectiveness. We continually close the loop of assessment through curriculum modifications. Many of our student learning and program assessment processes for our undergraduate program were developed in response to our national accrediting body (ASHA) knowledge and skills assessment learning outcomes guidelines (KASA 2005). Our program-wide assessment processes include recently revising our alumni and employer surveys (2008 and 2010) as well as our discussions and responses from our advisory board (2010) to assess how well our program is meeting the learning outcomes. Also in 2010, as another program wide assessment, our faculty developed a specific student learning assessment to evaluate how students understood specific concepts across all cohorts groups. In 2011, we developed learning outcomes competencies to provide more specific formative assessment of student learning within all courses. In 2012, we plan to administer a revised specific student learning assessment focusing on targeted learning outcomes that cover concepts across our curriculum.

2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes ("takeaways" concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

Learning Outcomes presented below are not prioritized as each has a high priority. Although we chose these four to highlight based upon the instructions above, we prioritize, target and measure progress towards all of our learning goals as indicated in our department assessment plan as posted on the campus website: http://webapps2.csus.edu/assessment/plans/default.aspx.
1) **Understand and apply research literature to selected disciplines.** This learning outcome was targeted by our faculty because understanding and applying research is vital to succeeding in the educational and health fields related to our profession. Feedback from our alumni and employer surveys as well as from our advisory board input confirms that these skills are important for our graduates to succeed. This goal is also aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals and is a high priority for our national accrediting body.

2) **Analyze ideas and make critical evaluations.** This goal was targeted by our faculty because we highly value these skills within our profession and look for graduate applicants who demonstrate these skills at the superior level. Feedback from our alumni and employer surveys as well as from our advisory board input confirms that these skills are important for our graduates to succeed. This goal is also aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals and is a high priority for our national accrediting body.

3) **The student is able to interpret informal and standardized testing instruments to assess a variety of clients who demonstrate speech, language and cognitive problems.** This goal was targeted by our faculty based on feedback from our alumni and employer surveys as well as feedback from our advisory board. These groups indicated that this knowledge and skill was very important for a successful graduate of our program and was not as clearly demonstrated by some of our graduates as other knowledge and skills. This goal is also aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals and is a high priority for our national accrediting body.

4) **Understand and apply fundamental information in anatomy, physiology, neurology, and the psychology of communication.** This goal was targeted by our faculty based on feedback from our alumni and employer surveys as well as feedback from our advisory board. These groups indicated that this knowledge and skill was very important for a successful graduate of our program and was not as clearly demonstrated by some of our graduates as other knowledge and skills. This goal is also aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals and is a high priority for our national accrediting body.

3. *For undergraduate programs only,* in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible. These goals are directly based to the campus baccalaureate learning goals with our department learning goals focusing on the ability to apply research, analytical thinking and exceptional competence in the discipline along with strong scientific knowledge and skills. Our goal regarding understanding and applying research is aligned with the Baccalaureate learning goals of Intellectual and Practical Skills and Personal and Social Responsibility. Our goal for analysis and critical evaluation of ideas is directly aligned with the Baccalaureate learning goal of Intellectual and Practical Skills and Integrative Learning. Our goals for specific knowledge regarding anatomy and physiology of speech and language and standardized testing are aligned with the Baccalaureate learning goals of Competence in the Disciplines as well as Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World.

4. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:
   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.
b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.

c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.

d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

Learning Outcome #1.  a) We targeted this outcome in our alumni and employer surveys. We also plan to include a target question for understanding and applying research in our spring 2012 learning assessment questionnaire. b) In 2010, we had 15 employers and 66 alums respond to our survey. We survey our employers and alums every 2 years. All students in the undergraduate program and graduates from our undergraduate program enrolled in our graduate program will be given the student learning assessment questionnaire in spring 2012. c) Questions and results from our 2010 employer and alumni survey are available on our department 2010 Accreditation website: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/. Our employer and alumni survey included two questions targeting this learning outcome. One question focusing on whether our graduates apply current research findings to therapy regimens and the other on how well the curriculum provided graduates with research skills required by the discipline. In our student learning assessment for 2012, we will ask students a targeted question intended to measure their ability to understand and apply research. d) We evaluated the responses to our survey questions by totaling the responses and determining the proportion of respondents who indicated how well we were achieving the learning outcome.

Learning Outcome #2. a) We targeted this outcome through our student survey in 2010 and our 2010 student learning assessment. b) All students in the undergraduate program and graduates from our undergraduate program in our graduate program were given our student survey and student learning assessment in Spring 2010. c) Questions and results from our 2010 student survey and student learning assessment are available on our department 2010 Accreditation website: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/. d) We analyzed responses to the question on our student survey indicating students overwhelmingly felt challenged to think rigorously by our faculty. This consistent response across all cohort groups provides an initial indicator that students are being required to analyze and evaluate information on a level which pushes them beyond their comfort zone. We analyzed responses to the student learning assessment across questions which required substantial analyses and critical evaluation versus those which required primarily retrieval of knowledge and recognition. Performance on highly analytical questions was lowest for our junior level students but did show improvement for our seniors and graduates indicating that analysis and evaluation skills were improving as students progressed in our program.
Learning Outcome #3  a) We targeted this outcome in our alumni and employer surveys as well as through targeted discussions in our advisory board meetings. We also plan to include a target question for understanding and interpreting standardized assessment in our spring 2012 learning assessment questionnaire. b) In 2010, we had 15 employers and 66 alums respond to our survey. We survey our employers and alums every 2 years. Our advisory board meets each fall and spring semester and included 8-12 professionals from the surrounding community. All students in the undergraduate program and graduates from our undergraduate program enrolled in our graduate program will be given the student learning assessment questionnaire in spring 2012. c) Questions and results from our 2010 employer and alumni survey are available on our department 2010 Accreditation website: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/. Our employer and alumni survey included questions asking for overall preparedness across multiple knowledge and skill areas including assessment. Also our survey included opportunities to provide narrative responses to questions regarding specific areas for curriculum improvement. Focused discussions in our advisory board meetings include requests for input regarding curriculum strengths and weaknesses. d) Responses from our employer and alumni surveys as well as our advisory board indicated that graduates could improve in interpreting standardized testing scores.

Learning Outcome #4  a) We targeted this outcome in our alumni and employer surveys as well as through targeted discussions in our advisory board meetings. We also plan to include a few target questions for understanding fundamentals of anatomy, physiology and neurology in our spring 2012 learning assessment questionnaire. b) In 2010, we had 15 employers and 66 alums respond to our survey. We survey our employers and alums every 2 years. Our advisory board meets each fall and spring semester and included 8-12 professionals from the surrounding community. All students in the undergraduate program and graduates from our undergraduate program in our graduate program will be given the student learning assessment questionnaire in spring 2012. c) Questions and results from our 2010 employer and alumni survey are available on our department 2010 Accreditation website: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/. Our employer and alumni survey included questions asking for overall preparedness across multiple knowledge and skill areas including anatomy, physiology and neurology. Also our survey included opportunities to provide narrative responses to questions regarding specific areas for curriculum improvement. Focused discussions in our advisory board meetings include requests for input regarding curriculum strengths and weaknesses. d) Responses from our 2010 employer and alumni surveys as well as our advisory board indicated that graduates could improve in their knowledge of anatomy, physiology and neurology.

5. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.
Student Learning Outcome #1: In response to our assessment of students’ knowledge of and application of research, we increased focus on evidenced based practice across all of our curriculum and we will be adding a new question on our student learning assessment and to our employer, alumni and student surveys to determine how these curricular changes have impacted student learning.

Student Learning Outcome #2: In response to our assessment of students analyses and critical evaluation skills we have discussed ways to increase opportunities for analysis and critical thinking in all of our courses and faculty have incorporated dynamic in class learning activities and a broader array of assessment measures targeting critical thinking and evaluation. All courses have added specific learning outcome formative assessment competencies to syllabi which illustrate the varied means we are developing for assessing critical thinking and evaluation in all courses (see syllabi linked on our accreditation website: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/). We will also be adding a new question on our student learning assessment and to our employer, alumni and student surveys to determine how these curricular changes have impacted student learning.

Student Learning Outcome #3: In response to our assessment of students’ knowledge of and interpretation of standardized assessment, we increased focus on interpreting standard scores across all courses and we will be adding a new question on our student learning assessment and to our employer, alumni and student surveys to determine how these curricular changes have impacted student learning.

Student Learning Outcome #4: In response to our assessment of students’ knowledge of anatomy, physiology and neurology, we modified our curriculum and consolidated our voice and fluency class to allow for an Introduction to Medical Speech Pathology Course focusing on applications from the junior level anatomy and physiology course in terms of laryngectomy, cleft palate, dysphagia and neurological disorders. We will be adding a new question on our student learning assessment and to our employer, alumni and student surveys to determine how these curricular changes have impacted student learning.

6. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur. As indicated above we regularly survey our alums. Please see our Alumni Survey results as well as analyses and discussions of our survey results in our 2010 ASHA Accreditation report and our 2010 Program Self Study Report on our Accreditation website: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/

7. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program
exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

We pursue learning outcomes spelled out in the ASHA KASA guidelines. The set of outcomes developed in our department assessment plan are not in excess of the ASHA guidelines, they are aligned with the KASA guidelines but our more focused and also incorporate the University Baccalaureate Learning Goals.

8. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

We continually close the loop of assessment through curriculum modifications. For example, in response to student learning assessment across our cohorts we have incorporated increase focus on distinctions between speech and language across numerous courses. Evidence of the impact of these modifications is already emerging in anecdotal feedback from undergraduate and graduate site supervisors and upcoming formal reassessment of student learning is in progress for spring 2012. We also recently developed department wide formative assessment of learning outcomes across all courses utilizing Learning Outcome Competency plans in every syllabus specifying how students are assessed for all course specific learning outcomes. Our excellent national praxis exam pass rates for our graduate students who are nearly 100% alums from our undergraduate program

(http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/department%20information/department_data.html) clearly demonstrate success in achieving our learning outcomes. Finally, our National Accrediting Association and the CCTC both commended our program in our Fall 2011 site visits. Our ASHA site visit report and our portion of the CCTC report are available on our accreditation website

(http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SPA/accreditation/).