COMD Strategic Plan for 2025

Vision:The vision of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is to provide international leadership in research, excellence in education and clinical training, and service that advances the field by making effective communication a human right, accessible and achievable for all.

Mission: The mission of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders is to conduct innovative basic and applied research to enhance our knowledge of all aspects of human communication and swallowing across the life span; and provide excellence in education to prepare the next generation of scholars, clinicians, and educators with foundational scientific knowledge and skills, as well as clinical competence.

# Strategic Plan Goals:

## **DISCOVERY**: Conduct research advancing knowledge of theory, assessment, and intervention of communication and swallowing disorders.

### Increase faculty participation in research as evidenced by presentations, publications, and external grants.

1. External Grants and Contracts

Measure: Graduate faculty will generate research and service grant income to support its research productivity.

Target: Submission of 1 proposal for $100,000 by 30% of the graduate faculty members not currently working on a funded grant.

1. Publications and Presentations

Measure: Publication of research in national journals articles, book chapters, and presentations to national conventions.

Target: Publication or submission of two journal articles or book chapter(s) and one national or international presentation per graduate faculty member.

1. Professional Service in Research

Measure: Faculty members will serve as ad hoc reviewers, associate editors, and editors of professional journals as well as serving on national convention committees.

Target: 50% of tenured faculty Serve on editorial board; Journal review for one journal, or one national convention committee per graduate faculty member.

### Increase interdepartmental and interagency collaborative research that will lead to novel approaches to better understand and treat communication and swallowing disorders.

1. Membership in Interdepartmental or Interagency Collaborative Groups

Measure: Faculty will engage as active members (e.g., regularly attend meetings; serve on committees; conduct administrative duties) of collaborative groups with a research focus at the International, National, State or University level.

Target: Participation of 60% of faculty in an Interdepartmental or Interagency Collaborative Group

### Increase student participation in research

1. Increase undergraduate student participation in research

Measure: Undergraduates will participate in research through faculty lab work, honors theses, and other research projects with sufficient quality to be competitive for LSU’s Aspire and Discover Day programs and/or presented at state, regional, or national conferences.

Target: Ten presentations in three years

1. Increase MA student participation in research

Measure: MA students will participate in research through faculty lab work, theses, and other research projects with sufficient quality to be published and/or presented at state, regional, or national conferences.

Target: Four theses and 5-6 presentations each year

1. Increase PhD student participation in research

Measure: PhD students will participate in faculty mentored research through lab work, dissertations, and other research projects with sufficient quality to be published and/or presented at state, regional, or national conferences.

Target: Six dissertations completed in three years

1. Increase departmental funding for student travel to conduct research or present research findings at state, regional, or national conferences.

Measure: Students will receive funding through university, college, graduate school, department, faculty and other funding sources.

Target: 90% of PhD students receive at least partial funding; 20% of MA students; 10% of BA students.

## **LEARNING**: Increase students’ critical and analytical thinking as well as their reading and writing skills in the areas of normal and disordered communication and swallowing.

### Increase number of undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in degree programs to address shortage of trained professionals in communication and swallowing disorders.

1. Increase the number of undergraduate majors and graduates

Measure: Number of undergraduate majors and BA degrees awarded.

Target: One percent increase in undergraduate majors and graduates over the preceding year.

1. Increase the number of MA majors and graduates

Measure: Numbers of MA students majoring in Communication Disorders and graduating from the program.

Target: Admit 40 MA students per year and graduate 95% who enter with a COMD undergraduate degree in two years.

### Increase student knowledge and use of evidence-based methods and technology in coursework, research, and clinical practice.

1. Evidence-based methods in coursework

Measures: Students will be exposed to evidence-based methods from multiple sources in academic coursework

Target: 30 hours of exposure distributed across coursework

1. Evidence-based methods in research

Measures: Students will complete a thesis using evidence-based research, questions, and methodologies.

Target: 10% of MA students

1. Evidence-based methods in clinic

Measures: Students will identify current evidence-based research to support the assessment and treatment approaches used in clinic.

Target: Requirement for 90% of practicum experiences

### Increase student understanding of professional and ethical issues related to research, academia, and clinical practice by offering regular training opportunities.

1. Academic opportunities

Measure: Students will be exposed to professional and ethical issues from multiple sources in academic coursework.

Target: 30 hours of exposure distributed across coursework, IRB protection of human subjects training, and advising.

1. Clinical opportunities

Measure: Students will be exposed to professional and ethical issues from multiple sources in clinical practica.

Target: 20 hours of exposure distributed across handbook, required training in ethics, sexual harassment, HIPPA, Raintree, and supervisory meetings, as well as training required by off-campus sites.

### Promote faculty and staff participation in discipline-specific continuing education to enhance student learning, research, and clinical practice.

1. Faculty continuing education

Measure: Faculty will complete annual continuing education to gain the knowledge needed to and incorporate new evidence-based knowledge and practice into coursework and clinic practica

Target: 10 hours of annual professional development.

1. Staff continuing education

Measure: Staff will complete annual continuing education to support and enhance department efficiency.

Target: 5 courses of annual professional development in areas related to ethics, prevention of sexual misconduct, file management, software updates, and technology.

## **DIVERSITY**: Strengthen the intellectual environment by broadening the cultural diversity of the LSU community.

### Increase faculty and student awareness of cultural competence to support colleagues and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

1. Increase faculty awareness

Measure: Faculty will participate in annual continuing education in cultural sensitivity and support

Target: 90% of faculty will participate each year in cultural diversity training.

1. Increase faculty participation in university, state and national programs to recruit and support individuals from under-representative cultural backgrounds.

Measure: Faculty will participate in LSU’s McNair Program, Pre-Doctoral Scholars Institute, National Black Association for Speech Language Hearing programs, and other programs that are designed to recruit and support students from under-representative cultural backgrounds.

Target: The department will participate in at least 5 activities in three years.

1. Provide students with a broad range of academic and clinical experiences addressing culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Measure: Students will complete clinical experiences with individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds that approach the diversity of southern Louisiana.

Target: 32% African American, and 9% other.

### Increase percentage of faculty, staff, students, from under-representative cultural backgrounds.

1. Increase faculty diversity

Measure: The faculty gender and cultural diversity will approach that of the profession of speech-language pathology as a whole.

Target: The current population of speech-language pathologists is 4% male, 75% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic, 3.4% African American, and 7.6% other.

1. Student gender and cultural diversity

Measure: The student gender and cultural diversity will approach that of the profession of speech-language pathology as a whole.

Target: The current population of speech-language pathologists is 4% male, 75% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic, 3.4% African American, and 7.6% other.

## **ENGAGEMENT**: Contribute to the education, health, and well-being of individuals with communication and swallowing disorders and their families.

### Increase community partnerships to help guide collaborative research projects and the dissemination and implementation of research findings.

1. Increase collaborative research partnerships

Measure: The faculty will form collaborative partnerships in clinics, schools, university programs, and other agencies.

Target: 50% of faculty will conduct research with community partners

### Increase interprofessional and community-based education, clinical training, and clinical services.

1. Increase interprofessional and community-based education

Measure: Students will participate in interprofessional and community-based practica.

Target: Minimally two community-based practica for all students and one interprofessional practicum experience for 60% of students.

### Increase advocacy efforts by educating the public and legislative leaders about communication and swallowing disorders.

1. Increase advocacy efforts

Measure: The faculty will participate in workshops, support groups, informational meetings, letters to representatives, and other advocacy efforts.

Target: 75% of faculty will participate in advocacy efforts.