

**DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY  
THOMAS JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY  
JEFFERSON COLLEGE OF REHABILITATION SCIENCES  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2020-2025**

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology at Thomas Jefferson University is to provide the academic and clinical preparation to ensure that graduates have the competencies with which to excel as independent clinicians and as members of interprofessional clinical teams, while also exemplifying the highest ethical standards. The program aspires to accomplish this through the integration of diverse academic and clinical learning and research experiences in the field of communication sciences and disorders within the context of the rehabilitation sciences. Supervised clinical experiences will prepare graduates to treat individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with a variety of communication and swallowing disorders across the lifespan.

**Vision**

The vision of the graduate program in Speech-Language Pathology is to be recognized, both regionally and nationally, for its outstanding medical speech-language pathology program with a strong clinical component, interprofessional and comprehensive curriculum, and service to the community. The program will prepare students to improve the lives of individuals with communication and swallowing disorders recognizing, in accordance with the American Speech-Language- Hearing Association, that effective communication and swallowing skills are human rights accessible and achievable for all.

**Strategic Plan**

The Department of Speech-Language Pathology is committed to excellence by developing, monitoring, and assessing the academic and clinical components of the graduate program on a continuing basis. The following goals and objectives have been developed in order to promote its strategic plan by establishing a program of the highest quality and providing a focus that is congruent with the stated mission and values of both the University and the Jefferson College of Rehabilitation Sciences. The Speech-Language Pathology Strategic Plan will be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis at its annual retreat. It will also be updated periodically to align with any modifications made to the Thomas Jefferson University or the College of Rehabilitation Sciences strategic plans.

**GOAL #1 – Create a dynamic Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology program that incorporates the unique experiences available through Thomas Jefferson University.**

**Objectives:**

1. Establish the MS-SLP as a unique program within the geographical area

- a. Development Year (2020-2021). Cultivate the expertise of the clinicians within the Thomas Jefferson network who have diverse clinical expertise, both as preceptors/clinical educators and clinical adjuncts.
  - b. Academic Years 1 & 2 (2021-2023). Establish specialized “Clinical Learning Lab” experiences in the areas of swallowing and voice within the Thomas Jefferson community network.
  - c. Academic Year 2 (2022-2023). Provide opportunities for advanced study that will prepare students for focused clinical experiences within the medical/rehabilitation setting and which help prepare graduates for specialized clinical fellowships in voice and swallowing.
2. Establish interprofessional education experiences with the graduate programs in Occupation and Physical Therapy and Athletic Training within the College of Rehabilitation Sciences.
    - a. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Implement client-centered education throughout the curriculum by participating in the Jefferson Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education which offers training and educational opportunities for innovative teaching and evidence-based practices in healthcare.
    - b. Academic Year 1 (2021- 2022). Introduce “Health Mentors Program” into the curriculum beginning with inaugural cohort.
    - c. Academic Year 2. (2022-2023). Implement resources available through the on-campus Simulation Center.
    - d. Academic Year 3. (2023-2024). Create Interprofessional Scholarship event in coordination with Occupational and Physical Therapy and Athletic Training in order to promote interprofessional research practices.
    - e. Academic Year 4. (2024-2025). Create interprofessional grand rounds with Occupational and Physical Therapy.
  3. Establish relationships with clinical sites within the Thomas Jefferson network in order to provide students with experiences that are sufficiently varied with regard to scope of practice and cultural and linguistic diversity.
    - a. Development Year (2020-2021). Establish Intra-institutional agreement between the Program of Speech-Language Pathology and all affiliations associated Thomas Jefferson Enterprise.
    - b. Academic Years 1 & 2 (2021-2023). Increase the number of diverse clinical affiliations.
    - c. Academic Year 1 and each subsequent year (2021-2025). Provide yearly clinical supervision trainings for community clinical partners.
    - d. Academic Year 2 & 3 (2022-2024). Coordinate student learning opportunities with diverse community partners outside of the region.

**Outcome Measures: The Program will review the following outcome measures at the annual retreat.**

1. Number of diverse executed contract affiliations.
2. Number of clinical supervisor trainings.

3. Collect and analyze feedback from clinical supervisor trainings.
4. Analyze feedback from students regarding interprofessional training and cross-disciplinary experiences.

**GOAL #2 – Recruit academically driven students from diverse backgrounds for the Master of Speech-Language Pathology Program.**

**Objectives:**

1. Develop a recruitment strategy and marketing campaign to attract a highly qualified, diverse pool of graduate students.
  - a. Development Year (2020-2021) optimize utilization of electronic and in-person communications, technical sessions and information sessions with prospective students.
  - b. Development Year and each subsequent year (2020-2025) maintain quality web presence on Department, College, and University web pages.
  - c. Academic Year 2 and each subsequent year (2022-2025). Develop and maintain a recruitment presence at National (ASHA) and State level (PSHA) conventions.
2. Leverage opportunities within the Thomas Jefferson Enterprise to provide unique experiential learning and career opportunities.
  - a. Academic Year 2 (2021-2022) Recruit graduate assistants to support research projects within the department and the larger Jefferson network.
3. Promote geographic flexibility for clinical internships.
  - a. Academic Years 1 & 2 (2020-2023). Explore and secure state and national level student internship opportunities.
  - b. Academic Year 2 (2022-2023). Explore international/global level learning opportunities.
  - c. Academic Years 3 & 4 (2023-2025). Initiate international/global level learning opportunities for interested students.
4. Increase graduate assistantship allocation.
  - a. Academic Year 1(2020-2021). Recruit competitive students for graduate assistantship opportunities.
5. Develop a minor in speech-language pathology as part of Thomas Jefferson University's College of Health Sciences to serve as a conduit to the graduate program for undergraduate students without a Communication Sciences and Disorders major.
  - a. Academic Year 2 (2022-2023). Explore options for dual degree opportunities within the Jefferson system.
  - b. Academic Year 3 (2023-2024). Plan curriculum for dual degree program.
  - c. Academic Year 4 (2024-2025). Implement dual degree program.

**Outcome measures: The Program will meet, review and monitor student recruitment strategies and progress at each annual retreat.**

1. Number of completed applications received through CSDCAS
2. Number of applicants with GPA  $\geq 3.5$  and GRE scores  $\geq 50^{\text{th}}$  %ile
3. Percent of students completing the degree within 2-year time frame
4. Mean scores and pass rates on the Praxis exam.
5. Number of graduate assistants.
6. Number of applications received for dual degree program
7. Number of participating students in global learning opportunities.

**GOAL #3 – Obtain full accreditation for the SLP Master of Science Degree program through the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA).**

**Objectives:**

1. Participate in Candidacy through Full Accreditation process through the CAA.
  - a. Development Year (2020-2021). Apply for Candidacy Accreditation Status through the CAA.
  - b. Development Year & Academic Year 1 (2020-2022). Ensure that the curriculum reflects current CFCC 2020 and CAA 2017 standards and scope of practice through diverse curriculum offerings and detailed course development.
  - c. Development Year (2020-2021). Host CAA site visit.
  - d. Academic Years 1- 5 (2021-2025). Submit timely and comprehensive yearly CAA reports.
  - e. Academic Year 5 (2025-2026). Host CAA Accreditation site visit.
2. Hire faculty and develop infrastructure to fully support an accredited speech-language pathology program.
  - a. Development Year (2020-2021). Recruit and hire the Director of Clinical Practice and administrative assistant.
  - b. Development Year (2020-2021). Acquire necessary classroom, office and lab space.
  - c. Development Year & Academic Year 1 (2020-2022). Hire two new full time doctorally prepared faculty and secure adjunct faculty as needed.
  - d. Academic Year 2 (2022-2023). Hire two new full time doctorally prepared faculty.
  - e. Academic Year 3 (2023-2024). Hire one additional clinical faculty to manage clinical contracts and student documents.
  - f. Academic Year 4 (2024-2025). Explore hiring new full time doctorally prepared faculty and plan for expansion of cohort size if appropriate.

**Outcome measures: The Program will meet, review and monitor CAA Candidacy progress at each annual retreat.**

1. Candidacy site visit completion anticipated fall 2020.
2. Candidacy Accreditation completion anticipated spring 2021.
3. Review of curriculum.
4. Review of annual CAA reports.
5. Accreditation completion anticipated by spring 2026.

**GOAL #4 – Develop processes that ensure continuous program improvement.**

**Objectives:**

1. Develop a contemporary and comprehensive curriculum.
  - a. Development Year (2020-2021). Develop a curriculum that meets both CFCC 2020 and CAA 2017 Standards.
  - b. Academic Years 1&2 (2021-2023). Infuse various types of pedagogical practices into academic and clinical coursework to maximize experiential student learning.
2. Advance faculty support and teaching opportunities.
  - a. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022) and each subsequent year. Analyze aggregated course evaluation data from each student cohort.
  - b. Academic Year 2 (2022-2023). Support professional growth of faculty in research providing them with the resources needed to maintain their professional practice credentials and areas of teaching expertise.
3. Improve student performance and learning experiences
  - a. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Create and convene a Speech-Language Pathology Advisory Board, incorporating feedback into the curriculum.
  - b. Development Year & Academic Years 1-3 (2020-2023). Develop meaningful summative and formative assessment measures.
  - c. Academic Years 3 & 4 (2023-2025). Analyze feedback from external clinical site preceptors regarding student clinician performance in order to develop and/or improve student competencies.

**Outcome measures: The Program will meet, review and monitor continuous program improvement measures at each annual retreat.**

1. Evaluate student Praxis scores on an annual basis and ensure that they meet or exceed the National average.
2. Conduct and analyze exit survey and utilize data for program improvement.
3. Review course evaluations using data to improve curriculum and teaching practices.
4. Map course-based student learning outcomes to ASHA standards and develop ways to assess them.
5. Review and use feedback from the Advisory Board for program improvement.

**GOAL # 5- Commit to the principles of diversity, equity and social justice in order to improve access for individuals with communication, swallowing and feeding disorders.**

**Objectives:**

1. Promote an inclusive environment that celebrates differences in students, clients, families, faculty and the community.
  - a. Development Year (2020-2021). Actively engage in recruiting faculty applications from all ethnic groups with the aim of establishing a team of diverse faculty.
  - b. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Actively recruit and admit students from a variety of ethnic groups by implementing a holistic admission process.
  - c. Academic Year 1&2 (2021-2023). Implement diversity, bias and anti-racism training and participation for all speech-language pathology faculty through the IDEA committee of the Jefferson College of Rehabilitation Sciences.
  
2. Promote social justice for individuals with communication and swallowing/feeding disorders.
  - a. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Develop academic experiences that expose students to clients from a wide range of cultures and ethnicities.
  - b. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Implement student engagement through Jefferson’s “Health Mentor’s Program”.
  - c. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Establish NSSLHA student group and faculty advisor in order to enhance student engagement in projects and service related experiences with diverse populations within the Jefferson network and the wider community.
  - d. Academic Year 2 and subsequent years (2022-2025). Promote student participation in communication support groups for individuals with complex communication needs across the lifespan.
  
3. Support student understanding of social and cultural diversity.
  - a. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Explore strategies and opportunities for supporting student success in understanding social and cultural linguistic diversity, social determinants of health and access as well as anti-racism and bias through the curriculum.
  - b. Academic Year 1 (2021-2022). Choose key clinical and academic courses to implement training modules and student learning outcomes (SLO) that address social and cultural linguistic diversity, social determinants of health and access as well as anti-racism and bias.
  - c. Academic Year 2 (2022-2023). Continue to develop partnerships in the community and obtain new affiliation agreements that offer diverse clinical experiences across the lifespan.
  - d. Academic Year 3 (2023-2024). Coordinate student learning opportunities (communication and hearing screenings, observations) with diverse community partners in pediatric and adult settings.

- e. Academic Year 4 (2024-2025). Implement high impact learning experiences such as problem-based learning strategies, standardized patient experiences and simulation activities throughout the curriculum that depict a wide range of cultures.

**Outcome Measures: The Program will meet, review and monitor its commitment to diversity, equity and social justice at each annual retreat.**

1. Number of diverse student and faculty applicants.
2. Number of service learning projects/opportunities.
3. Review and monitor the quality and number of student learning outcomes.
4. Analyze student feedback regarding social justice training in order to improve student learning experiences.