

2025-2026 Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences Strategic Plan: Executive Summary

The mission of the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences (SLHS) is to educate speech, language and hearing professionals for a diverse and changing population, to advance knowledge through research, to deliver quality clinical services, and to serve as a resource for the community and professions.

SLHS faculty are committed to providing a high-quality education through our accredited Master's in Speech-Language Pathology program, ensuring that students meet or exceed CAA and CFCC standards. We aim for a cohort of 25-30 students, with the 5-year average cohort size at 29.8 students. One goal that we take particular pride in is that at least 50% of each MA-SLP cohort will have an audiology-focused rotation, working with d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing clients. So far through Spring 2026, forty-five percent of our first-year cohort was afforded this unique opportunity. This number is lower than previous years due to faculty leave.

We aim to graduate an average of 30 undergraduate students per year over five years who are eligible for graduate study in audiology and speech-language pathology and are aware of other relevant professional opportunities. Our 5-year average senior class size is 33.4 students. We offer high-quality opportunities, such as our well-established American Sign Language (ASL) minor.

The faculty and chair of SLHS are committed to deepening and broadening our relationships with the greater community. During a time of transition at the Unified Clinics, we have been open to communication with relevant personnel. Faculty and staff have been actively reaching out to external partners who are current or future clinical supervisors. One example is a recent meeting with Mary Free Bed representatives to discuss how we can mutually benefit from a closer relationship.

We strive to create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students, faculty and staff. In 2025-2026 academic year survey results, 100% of the first-year cohort felt respected, and 84% of felt included. Of undergraduate juniors, 100% felt respected and 100% felt included. Of undergraduate seniors, 83.3% felt respected and 90.9% felt included. Our desired benchmark is 90%. We continue to provide ongoing training and examples of respectful, inclusive treatment of one's colleagues and clients. When we do not meet our benchmark, faculty members or the chair specifically address the cohort with respect to any behaviors that are interfering with respect and inclusion. One additional way that we foster support for all students in the program is through the development and maintenance of a database of resources to support belonging and thriving in our community. We continue to use a holistic admissions approach and engage all SLHS faculty in the process.

Faculty in SLHS are committed to meaningful scholarship in our disciplines. In 2025-2026, faculty presented their work twenty-four times and published three papers, with six additional manuscripts under review. Faculty submitted and received one grant and engaged in eleven different data collection activities. We also value the inclusion of students in the research process. Faculty mentored five undergraduate honors theses, seven presentations, one publication with a student author, and three manuscripts under review with student authors.

Finally, the chair and faculty meet regularly with the College's Chief Development Officer to identify development opportunities for the Department. One recent example is the creation of an Amazon Wishlist for the pediatric speech and language clinic.