DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS
PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

The Department of Communication Disorders prepared a self study following program review guidelines. A two-person external review team visited the campus; reviewed the self-study documents; interviewed unit personnel, university administrators, undergraduate and graduate students; and submitted an external review report. The Program Review Committee (PRC) studied all written materials. The PRC liaison for the Department discussed the self-study materials with the department chair and faculty. The PRC discussed the Department with the Dean of Health and Human Services. This document reflects the PRC’s findings and recommendations.

SUMMARY OF THE SELF STUDY

Introduction

The Department of Communication Disorders, one of three departments in the College of Health and Human Services, has the greatest number of full-time faculty in the College. The Department offers a Bachelor of Science in Communication Disorders, a Master’s of Science in speech-language pathology, and a Ph. D. with emphases in speech-language pathology and speech science.

Mission. The Department of Communication Disorders has established a mission statement for each of its degree programs. The mission for the undergraduate program is to produce a “liberally educated person with a pre-professional base to enter graduate study in Communication Disorders…” (self study, p.2). The mission for the Master’s program is to “provide the graduate student in speech-language pathology with the competencies and skills necessary to function as a prospective speech-language pathologist in any clinical setting” (self study, p.2). The mission for the doctoral program is to train students in developing “scientific and cognitive skills needed to identify and independently study important questions concerning human communication” (self study, p.2). The Departmental mission is congruent with the mission of the College in that “the education of the speech-language pathologist ‘builds on a broadly-based, liberal education and prepares individuals for professional and scholarly roles in the health and human service field’ ” (self study, p .3). Additionally, the Departmental mission is congruent with the University vision in that through departmental programs and experiences, an “interdependence of teaching, learning, scholarship, and service create an academic environment grounded in intellectual discovery” (self study, p.3).
History: The major in Communication Disorders began during the mid-forties as an undergraduate program in speech pathology and audiology. This program was located in the Department of Speech in the College of Arts and Sciences. The master’s degree program began in 1947 and the doctoral program began in 1966. In 1973, the College of Health and Community Services was established to provide degree programs in specialized areas in various health and community service fields such as nursing, medical technology, social work, physical therapy, and speech and hearing therapy. In 1984, the program in communication disorders received department status and was transferred with all degree programs to the College of Health and Human Services. In 1996, the audiology program was closed at the master’s and doctoral levels (self study, p.8).

The self study (p. 3) provides a recent history of the unit that notes that the last academic program review occurred in 1998 when the department was reviewed as a part of the larger review of the College of Health and Human Services. This is the first university program review of the Department by itself. Between the last review in 1998 and the current program review in 2004, numerous changes have taken place in the Department, including changes in personnel, curriculum, space, and leadership. Changes in personnel included the successful hiring of six tenure-track faculty, along with the resignations of two faculty and the retirement of one faculty member. In addition, several clinical supervisors were hired and several resigned during this period of time (self study, p. 3). During this same period of time, the Chair of the Department of Communication Disorders became the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services. The curriculum for programs in the Department changed during this period of time to reflect the new American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) standards (2003-04) (self study, p. 4). In 1998, the Department relocated to renovated space in the Health Center. The new space accommodated faculty and staff offices, a new speech and hearing clinic, and faculty labs (self study, pp. 6-7).

Recommendations made from the 1998 review were directed toward the College of Health and Human Services and some were also directed toward the Department of Communication Disorders. Among the recommendations made specifically for the Department were the following: “Make sure that all future department hires have the desire and ability to seek and secure external funding” (self study, p. 8); “Develop a plan to have more non-funded students in the master’s program” (self study, p. 8); and “Implement at least one new assessment activity by the end of Spring term, 1999” (self study, p. 8). All of these recommendations were completed.

Description of the Unit

Program identification. The Department of Communication Disorders offers the following degrees: Bachelor of Science in Communication Disorders; Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology; and a Ph. D. in Speech-Language Pathology or Speech Science.

The undergraduate degree focuses on providing students with a comprehensive program in basic science and human communication processes and development. Undergraduate
students are encouraged to become actively involved in communication disorders research projects. In 2004, one undergraduate course (CDIS 123 “Introduction to Communication Disorders”) was approved as a General Education elective, thereby allowing students from a variety of majors to learn about individuals with communication disorders. The majority of students graduating with a B.S. in Communication Disorders enroll in a master’s degree program because the M.S. is the entry-level degree in speech-language pathology (self study, pp. 8-9).

The graduate programs include the master’s and the doctoral degrees. The master’s degree is a five semester clinical training program. The master’s degree requires between 51-52 semester hours of academic coursework and clinical practicum experiences (frequently at the BGSU clinic in the first and second semester). During their final semester, students complete a full-time internship (40 hours per week). Master’s students have the opportunity to pursue Ohio School Licensure in order to work in school settings (self study, p. 9). The master’s degree is accredited by ASHA. The doctoral degree includes coursework in the following areas: core courses, basic required courses, foundational courses, and individualized emphasis courses. Doctoral students are mentored in their research projects and complete a dissertation. Upon graduation, doctoral students may continue with research or seek employment at a university (self study, pp 9-10).

In addition to the undergraduate and graduate programs, the Department houses the University Speech and Hearing Clinic. The Clinic offers diagnostic and therapeutic speech, language, and hearing services, while acting as a training facility for undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral level speech-language pathologists (self study, p. 24).

Faculty resources. The Department of Communication Disorders has 11 full-time tenured track faculty lines. Two lines were open at the time the self study was written. The Dean approved a search for one of the lines; this line has been filled, effective August 2005. Of the nine faculty, seven are male and two are female. The Clinical Supervisors are all female. Faculty workload assignments are typically 12 hours per semester (9 hours of coursework and 3 hours of research). The Department operates on a standard allocation of effort formula, which is 50% teaching, 40% research, and 10% service. The mean faculty salary for all ranks of faculty is located in the 20th percentile (self study, p.11).

Graduate assistant resources. Doctoral students usually receive half-time support and are assigned twenty hours per week to research, teaching and/or clinical supervision. Master’s level students are given a three-eighths assistantship, which equates to a 12.5 hour per week commitment. Master’s level students are typically assigned to teach IPC 102 or provide therapy for international students enrolled in the Oral Proficiency Program (self study, p.12).

Staff resources. The administrative staff includes a full-time clinical director, one full-time clinical supervisor, and several part-time clinical supervisors. The Department
has one full-time administrative secretary. The Clinic has one full-time secretary and one half-time secretary.

Student descriptions: The Department of Communication Disorders has a headcount of 93 undergraduate students, 44 master’s students and 6 doctoral students. The majority of students are Caucasian females from Ohio (self study, p.13).

Student recruitment efforts. The Department use a variety of techniques to enhance recruitment outcomes. They participate in undergraduate recruitment through on campus recruitment activities such as Preview Days. They engage in graduate recruitment efforts through attendance at National Conventions, offering graduate assistantships, holding Open House for prospective candidates, etc. In addition, the Department engages in several retention activities to maintain student enrollment (self study, pp. 14-17).

Facilities and equipment. The Department and the Speech and Hearing Clinic are housed in the University Health Center. The Clinic has 12 rooms available for diagnosis or therapy. These rooms contain video cameras and microphones so that students, faculty, and parents can monitor therapy activities. Many also contain two-way mirrors. In 2000, new laboratory equipment was purchased with a $55,000 NSF training grant (with matching funds from the University). The Department also has a student work room equipped with computers and a dedicated printer. One classroom (Room 222) had been equipped with video projection equipment (self study, p.18)

Financial resources. The personnel and operating expenses increased significantly from the time of the last program review in 1998. This is due to rising expenditures, increased number of faculty, and smaller undergraduate enrollments.

Self-evaluation

Faculty quality and productivity. There are two full professors, four associate professors, and four assistant professors in the Department. Based on student evaluations, faculty have demonstrated their value as teachers. Research productivity among faculty can be gauged by the 180 presentations given at national and international professional conferences over the past five years. At the same time, faculty have published over 80 articles in well-respected refereed journals. In the area of grants and external funding, faculty brought in $2,911,465 over the past five years. Another indicator of the quality of the faculty comes from national and international awards from learned professional societies being awarded to ten faculty members over the past five years (self study, pp. 39-42).

Student entry attributes. Seventy percent of undergraduate students entering the communication disorders program between 1997-2003 had high school GPA’s greater than 3.00. The mean GPA was 3.41. The mean ACT score was 22.31. Students entering the graduate programs from 1998 to 2003 had an average undergraduate GPA 3.61. The mean GRE scores for these students were 460.2 (Verbal) and 541.6 (Quantitative).
Admission criteria to enter the graduate program in CDIS are an overall GPA of 3.0 and a GPA of 3.2 in the major (self study, p.20).

Assessment of student learning outcomes. The Department of Communication Disorders has established learning outcomes consistent with the mission statements for the undergraduate and graduate programs. The Department has an annual assessment plan in place. Several measures are performed annually to assess student progress in achieving learning outcomes. Assessment reports are reviewed by the faculty and curriculum modifications and adaptations might be made in response to the assessment analysis. These reports are filed with the Student Achievement Assessment Committee (self study, pp 21-23). The Chair of the Department shared copies of the assessment documents with the PRC liaison; the forms are comprehensive in assessing student learning outcomes and building in remedial action.

Curriculum and instruction. The Department has a Curriculum Committee that monitors curriculum at the undergraduate and the graduate levels. Thus curriculum is monitored and revised annually. The master’s program has undergone external accreditation review from ASHA on a regular basis. The master’s clinical training program was recently re-accredited for an eight year period, an award that is only given to the highest quality programs (self study, p.24).

BGSU Speech and Hearing Clinic. The Clinic provides diagnostic and therapeutic speech, language, and hearing services, as well as serving as a training facility for undergraduates and graduates in the Department. The Clinic has a two-week summer residential program for adults who stutter. They are working with other treatment agencies such as the ALS Association, Children’s Resource Center, the Jordan Center, and WSOS Head Start (self study, pp.24-25). The Clinic is evaluated continuously by consumers.

Service component of the unit. Faculty meeting times are used for discussion of current issues and new business. Standing committees in the Department meet on a regular basis and report their findings to the faculty at faculty meetings. The Department administration includes the Department Chair, the Clinic Director, and the Graduate Coordinator. The responsibilities of these leaders are spelled out and each contributes service to the operation of the unit (self study, pp.26-27).

Comparative advantage and program distinctiveness. Because of Bowling Green’s geographic location, the programs draw students from rural and urban areas. As for the doctoral program, there is only one communication disorders doctoral program in Northwest Ohio; the closest neighbor doctoral programs are in Kent State, Wayne State, and Ohio State. The undergraduate program offers the unique opportunity for students to take part in an elective clinical practicum. The master’s degree is very competitive and usually has more than 80 applicants for the 22 seats available. The master’s degree has also distinguished itself by being accredited by ASHA for an eight-year period. The Department and the Speech and Hearing Clinic have done an excellent job in
collaborating with agencies in the community to draw consumers into the clinic and to arrange for internship experiences out in the community (self study, pp.28-29).

**Demand.** The demand for undergraduate courses in communication disorders is primarily from the Department’s pre-majors and majors. CDIS 225 *Speech and Language Acquisition and Development* is also required by majors in the hearing-impaired education program. CDIS 223 *Introduction to Communication Disorders* has just recently become a social science general education elective and the demand is yet to be fully determined, but the self study sees an increased demand starting to emerge. Demand for CDIS courses among the undergraduates has decreased, as evidenced by lower student enrollments. Demand for master’s courses has remained stable. The number of courses in the doctoral program increased between 1998 and 2003 (self study, p.29).

The employment demand for program graduates is highest among the master’s students because the master’s degree is the entry-level degree for employment in the speech-language pathology area. Between 2000 and 2003, the employment rate of the master’s students is 98.6%. By the year 2012, it is projected that 26,000 additional speech-language pathologists will be needed in the United States. Among the doctoral students in speech-language pathology or speech-science, there also appears to be a shortage according to ASHA, 2002. Based on an ASHA survey related to doctoral training programs in speech-language pathology/speech science, there are 62 programs in the United States offering doctoral programs in speech-language pathology and 25 programs offering doctoral programs in speech science. The majority of programs had 6-16 doctoral students in their program. In 2002, there were 333 unfilled slots available for potential doctoral students in university programs in the United States. Only 73 doctoral degrees in speech-language pathology and 6 doctoral degrees in speech science were granted nationally during the 1999-2000 academic year. The number of projected university faculty openings from 2002-2007 is 130 in speech-language pathology and 9 in speech science. In 200-2001, only 58% of faculty searches in these fields were successful (CAPCSD 2001 survey, see self study, p. 29-30).

**Connection to the mission.** The mission for the Department of Communication Disorders is consistent with the mission of the College of Health and Human Services and consistent with the mission of the University. The Department aspires to be a premier program in the State of Ohio. The Department has also aligned its strategies for operation to be consistent with the following themes of the University Academic Plan: Leadership in Learning; Critical Thinking About Values; Embracing the Arts; Understanding Cultures and Nations; and New Media and Emerging Technologies. Teaching, research, and service activities are tied together in helping the faculty members meet the missions of the Department, College, and University (self study, pp.31-36).

**Financial considerations and adequacy of resources.** The Department considers its operating budget to be inadequate, noting that in most years the budget is depleted before the end of the fiscal year. The annual standard allocation for faculty development is $500 per year per faculty member in general, and $700 for those faculty presenting research results. Recruitment expenses continue to escalate, as do expenses for office
supplies and equipment that are essential for daily operations. According to the self study, the unit feels the current operating budget is insufficient for faculty development and the day to day operational needs of the department (self study, p.37). Currently, there are two faculty lines open in the Department. The Dean has given approval for opening the search for one of the lines; the Department believes it is essential to fill both faculty lines. Salary levels, merit, laboratory space, and research start-up monies need to be available in order to remain competitive with other universities and in order to retain current faculty. The Department has expressed a desire to have university support for hiring at least one additional full-time clinical supervisor for the Speech and Hearing Clinic. Another essential hire is a full-time laboratory technician. This position was approved in 2001 and then the position was frozen due to budget cuts. This technician would help to maintain clinical and classroom equipment throughout the College. There is also a need for additional lab space for faculty and office space for graduate students (self study, pp.36-39).

**Doctoral program.** The self study offered the following summary of the Ph. D. program in Speech-Language Pathology or Speech Science.

**Program Faculty.** There are 11 faculty assigned to the doctoral program: four assistant professors, four associate professors, and three full professors. Between the academic years of 1998-99 and 2003-04, faculty teaching evaluations conducted by undergraduate and graduate students ranged from 5.17 (“above average”) to a 7.10 (“outstanding”) (self study, p.40). Over the last five years reported in the self study, faculty made over 180 research presentations at national and international conferences such as the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, American Academy of Audiology, and the International Conference on Voice Physiology and Biomechanics. They also had over 80 refereed articles published in national and international journals for learned societies related to communication disorders, speech, and hearing. The doctoral program faculty were also responsible for generating nearly three million dollars in external funding through grants. A number of these faculty members have also been recognized nationally and internationally with honors and awards from learned societies in the fields of speech, language, and communication disorders (self study, pp.40-43).

**Program Graduates.** There were two graduates from the doctoral program between 1997 and 2003. Four additional graduates are between 2004 and 2005. Both of the doctoral students who had graduated found employment, one as a post-doctoral fellow and the other in a hospital setting. According to the self study, the graduates of the doctoral program have historically found research and administrative positions in universities and hospitals (self study, p.43).

**Program Vitality.** The doctoral program appears to be going through a period of “revitalization.” Between 1995 and 1999, admission to the doctoral program was suspended due to the lack of faculty resources. Since the resumption of the program in 2000, the curriculum has been modified to allow for greater depth and focus of studies. While the numbers may be low, they are growing and there is an anticipation of recruiting up to ten doctoral students in the next few years. Over the past four years, the
doctrinal students made 25 research presentations at state and national meetings and co-authored or authored 12 publications in refereed journals. One doctoral graduate was awarded the Shanklin Award for her research (self study, pp.43-44). Though small in number, the self study sees the doctoral program as gaining momentum and program vitality.

Program Demand. The number of open faculty positions in the field of communication disorders far exceeds the number of qualified doctoral graduates (self study, p.44). A survey conducted by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders in 2000 indicated that in 2000-01, only 58% of university faculty searches in communication disorders programs were successful. The same survey projected that between the years 2002-2007, there would be a need for 130 faculty positions in speech-language pathology and 6 in speech science. It also reported that during the 2000-01 year, there were a total of 333 unfilled slots available for potential doctoral students in university programs (self study, pp. 29-30).

Program Interactions. The faculty in the doctoral program have engaged in a number of interactive ventures internal to the university and also on an external basis. Internally, the faculty have collaborated with other University faculty in neuropsychology, kinesiology and music. External to the University, the doctoral faculty have been involved with faculty and programs at Medical College of Ohio, Purdue University, and the College of Engineering at the University of Toledo. At the same time, faculty from these other universities have served on doctoral committees at Bowling Green State University. Some faculty from these same universities have taught courses in our doctoral program while others have been collaboratively engaged in joint research projects and joint grant activities with our doctoral faculty. These types of program interactions speak well of the doctoral program in light of the new university emphasis on “the scholarship of engagement” (self study, pp. 46-47).

Program Access. In 2003, the makeup of the doctoral student body of eight reflected open access to the doctoral program in terms of gender. There were five female students and three male students. In terms of race, there was only one African-American, but there were four students from other countries.

Student Outcomes Assessment. The doctoral program has developed an extensive student outcomes-based assessment program using formative and summative assessment information. The formative assessments are exams and papers administered in individual courses. The summative assessments are based on preliminary exams. Additional student outcomes are delineated for the areas of research and teaching for the doctoral candidates. All doctoral students are expected to acquire the specified core competencies in teaching and research. In order to assess the mastery of these core competencies, a number of activities take place, including: semester by semester student evaluations of the doctoral candidate’s teaching performance; semester by semester faculty review of the doctoral candidate’s progress; regular meetings between doctoral candidates and doctoral faculty to collaborate on and evaluate teaching and research; and successful completion of the doctoral dissertation, including the oral defense of the dissertation (self study, pp. 47-48).
Program Revisions from Previous Reviews. The 1998 PRC report recommended that the faculty and the Deans of the Graduate College and the College of Health and Human Services evaluate the doctoral program and either close the program or commit the resources needed to develop a nationally recognized doctoral program. A departmental plan was drawn up to continue support for the doctoral program. This plan called for filling all open faculty lines; hiring a full-time administrative staff clinic director; establishing labs for new faculty hires; enhancing recruitment and marketing of the doctoral program; modifying the curriculum; adjusting the faculty work loads of the faculty working with the doctoral program; and providing adequate technical support for the program. Since then, several aspects of the plan have been accomplished, including the filling of open faculty lines, the identification of additional lab space in the University Health Center Building, the modification of the curriculum in 2003, and the adjustment of faculty workloads for those faculty working in the doctoral program. In addition, a recruitment plan was to be developed and initiated in 2004-05. To date, there is still a need to address the inadequate technical support for the doctoral program (self study, pp. 48-49).

Unit planning

The planning process. The Department Structure Document (appendix F of the self study) identifies the standing committees that are responsible for unit planning relative to clinical policy, curriculum, faculty development, evaluation, and graduate studies. Committee membership on these standing committees is determined by the department chair in consultation with the faculty. Committees are given specific charges and timelines at the onset of each academic year by the department chair. Prior to the start of the fall semester each year, a day-long retreat is held to review progress for the previous year and to determine issues to address for the upcoming year. The Department has developed a plan that includes: measures used in assessment of the Department’s learning outcomes; indicators for success in accomplishing the university Academic Plan, and a seven-year strategic plan to guide the Department in programmatic planning (self study, p. 49).

Goals and strategies. The Department identified the following goals in their seven-year strategic plan:

Goal A: Maintain a cadre of eleven Ph. D. faculty members. Strategies: Fill all open faculty lines; use retention activities to provide mentoring and support for untenured faculty as well as supporting mid- and late-career faculty.

Goal B: Increase the number of doctoral students. Strategies: Have a consistent core of at least ten doctoral students over the next seven years; increase program visibility via marketing, web pages, etc.; focus on recruitment of master’s degree students; promote enrollment of part-time doctoral students; use a variety of recruitment techniques such as a bachelors-to-doctoral degree “bridge” program to recruit our best undergraduate students.
Goal C: Develop a five-year strategic plan for the Speech and Hearing Clinic. Strategies: The Clinical Policies and Procedures Advisory Committee will develop the five-year plan and have it ready to present to department faculty during the spring of 2005 for their review and approval; following approval, the plan would go into effect during the 2005-06 academic year.

Goal D: Identify funding for increased support staff (Clinical supervision and laboratory technician). Strategies: Explore additional sources of financial support to increase the number of part-time clinical supervisors and/or hire more full-time clinical personnel; maintain dialogues with other administrators in the College of Health and Human Services to explore cost-sharing/financial support of a full-time laboratory technician for the College.

Goal E: Acquire additional space for the Department. Strategies: Continue to inform College administration and University administration of the needs for additional space for offices, classrooms, and research laboratories; continue to explore and support the University capital plan to build a new wing to the University Health Center Building.

Goal F: Increase department research activity and productivity. Strategies: Use incentive plans that will yield a minimum ten percent increase in faculty publications, presentations, and grant submissions.

Goal G: Increase diversity of faculty, staff and students in the unit. Strategies: Work closely with resources on and off campus to help identify and implement effective recruitment strategies to promote greater diversity among students, faculty, and staff.

Goal H: Focus on departmental advancement and visibility. Strategies: Work with the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services to identify outreach strategies; develop an electronic newsletter; recognize and honor individuals who contribute time, talent, and money to the Department; assure a departmental presence at college and university events; work with the College to become an approved ASHA CE provider; co-sponsor a statewide get-together at the ASHA national convention; and provide a sponsorship for the Ohio Speech-Language-Hearing Association annual meeting (self study, pp.50-57).

Relationship to the Academic Plan. The University Academic Plan is predicated on the concept of “transforming BGSU into a premier learning community . . . by emphasizing inquiry, engagement and achievement . . . .” The mission statement, the Departmental Plan, and the Strategic Plan for the Department of Communication Disorders are all in harmony with and supportive of the University Academic Plan (self study, p.57).

Questions for the external review team. Questions posed in the self study (p.57) for the external review team:
1. What recruitment strategies might you suggest for the doctoral program?
2. How might the Department increase the diversity among faculty, staff, and student groups?

3. What initiatives would advance the programs in the Department to the next level?

RESULTS OF PREVIOUS REVIEWS

In 1998, the Department of Communication Disorders was included in the program review of the College of Health and Human Services. This current program review is the first time that the Department is being reviewed independently. In the previous program review, there were several recommendations for the Department. Two recommendations were made to the College of Health and Human Services but have implications for the Department. The College was asked to define its academic purpose by developing a scholarly mission statement. That mission statement has been developed and can be found on pages 2-3 of the current self study. In addition, the College was encouraged to analyze faculty salaries in order to be more competitive on the faculty search market. The College has done this and has made salaries more competitive and has also increased research start-up funds.

Recommendations made by the Program Review Committee specifically for the Department included a recommendation to look for future faculty hires that were interested in and capable of seeking/securinig external funds. The Department has used this practice in hiring since the previous PRC report. Also, the PRC recommended that the Department develop a plan to have more non-funded students in the master’s degree program. The Department has accomplished this by increasing the number of non-funded second-year master’s students. The PRC also recommended that each unit in the College of Health and Human Services “implement at least one new assessment activity by the end of spring term, 1999.” The Department has developed an extensive assessment plan which is updated on an annual basis (self study, Appendix A).

SUMMARY OF THE EXTERNAL REPORT

An external review team visited campus on October 17-19, 2004. The external reviewers met with College and University administrators; Department administration; department faculty, staff, and students; and PRC delegates.

Summary of External Reviewer’s Findings

Self-study report. The external reviewers found the self-study report to be thorough and well prepared. The report appeared to reflect history, current status, strengths, and challenges of the Department accurately. The report provided key data for admissions, course enrollments, personnel, operating expenses, GRE scores, faculty assignments, and faculty accomplishments. The external reviewers commended the Department for the ongoing attention to monitoring key data.

Strengths and weaknesses. The external reviewers observed the following strengths and weaknesses in the CDIS Department and Program:
Strengths

- Student body were positive about the program, the faculty, and clinical supervisors.
- Clinical supervisors were competent and collaborated with faculty to demonstrate best practices.
- There is an innovative attempt to integrate clinical and classroom experiences.
- Faculty were positive about the department and opportunities for collaboration.
- Approaches to teaching/research reflect new professional standards and accreditation guidelines.
- Faculty members outside of the department were positive about research contributions of faculty and students to interdisciplinary studies in psychology, gerontology, engineering, physics, and kinesiology.
- Excellent funding, teaching opportunities, and mentoring are available for graduate students.
- Offices and clinic space appear to meet current needs of the department.
- Office staff is friendly and supportive.

Weaknesses or Areas of Concern

- There are unfilled faculty positions (one search in process, one not open).
- There is a great need for a technology assistant.
- Clinical equipment is old, inadequate, and in need of maintenance.
- Financial support for continuing education for clinical supervisors is lacking.
- The Departmental Strategic Plan lacks clarity regarding the role of the clinic.
- Clinic could better serve the Department and community with a more diverse caseload.
- There are unfilled positions for Ph. D. students.
- If the University wants greater research productivity, more research space is needed.

Productivity of the faculty in teaching, research, and service. The record of faculty publications and presentations is impressive. Senior faculty members appear to be excellent mentors and role models for junior faculty. Junior faculty and senior faculty members seem to collaborate well on teaching, research, and grant work. Teaching loads seem to be balanced so that most faculty have opportunity to teach/interact with undergraduates and graduate students. All faculty seem to take on additional assignments to ensure that the doctoral students have seminars, colloquia, and independent studies. The Department might consider reviewing the ways teaching and research assignments are allocated in order to keep productivity stable.

Leadership. The students and the faculty are very positive about the leadership provided by the current chair. In addition, the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services is also held in high regard by the Department faculty and her continued presence is perceived as valuable to the life of the Department.
Current assessment process. The Department has an extensive process in place for data gathering and assessment. The Department is to be commended for its inclusion of data on student performance and satisfaction; alumni and community input; employer satisfaction; and monitoring of student performance on national examinations. The collection of data regarding specific skills and knowledge outcomes will not only meet the needs of ASHA accreditation standards, but should also provide extensive feedback for use in program planning and improvement in the future.

Ph. D. program. There are unfilled slots in the doctoral program. There are currently only 6-7 full-time doctoral students, but the department has set an enrollment target of 10. They plan to accomplish this through some new recruitment strategies including increased visibility and marketing and by including part-time doctoral students. While it may take several years to fully develop the doctoral subspecialty areas in speech science and research, it appears that with Bowling Green’s strong programs in Speech Language Pathology and the current shortages in the doctoral programs in this area, that it might be in the Department’s best interests to seek external funding through agencies such as the National Institute of Health, the Office of Education, and others to support doctoral training in Speech Language Pathology.

Strategic plan. The Department has a strategic plan that includes goals for the clinic, Ph. D. program, faculty recruitment and retention, support staff, space needs, and diversity. The external reviewers recommended that the Department find ways to prioritize these goals using a cost/benefit analysis.

External Reviewers’ Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations:
1. Continue work with strategic planning. Prioritize goals. Include more stakeholders in planning process.
2. Examine research capabilities and provide adequate support for incentives for faculty (especially junior faculty) and graduate students for research and professional development.
3. The Department needs to explore new ways to gain revenue through the Clinic. Possibly consider increasing the hearing aid sales industry or consider adding additional specialty clinical services.
4. Work on expanding the Ph. D. program by improving program and research visibility.

Concluding comments. The external reviewers found that the Department has an excellent program with good leadership and strong university support. Faculty are productive in teaching, research, and grantsmanship. In particular, there is an unusually positive sense of appreciation for the research contributions of faculty to other disciplines at the University. While the doctoral program is small, it has potential for growth. The clinical component of the program is making a contribution to the program and to the community. The faculty and students are engaged and there is a great sense of positive energy.
The Program Review Committee extends congratulations to the Department of Communication Disorders for the excellent work done in following the program review process and with the comprehensiveness of the self-study materials submitted. The PRC concurs with the external evaluators that the department has good leadership, engaged faculty and students, and a sense of positive energy. Further, the PRC is in agreement with the external report in giving high marks to the collaborative efforts demonstrated in the department in two primary areas: collaboration between clinical staff and academic faculty; and collaboration between faculty involved in research with interdisciplinary faculty on campus and at other universities. Of particular merit, noted by both the external evaluators and the PRC, is the excellent reputation of graduates from the Department’s programs. The programs’ graduates are viewed as being very strong and well prepared for internship experiences and employment.

The following findings and recommendations are intended to assist the Department in fulfilling its mission to: be consistent with the University vision to create an academic environment grounded in intellectual discovery; be consistent with mission of the College of Health and Human Services to prepare individuals for professional and scholarly roles in health and human services fields; and “contribute to the improvement of the spectrum of health and human services in Northwest Ohio, the state of Ohio, and the nation through instructional programming, research, and community service” (self study, p. 2).

1. Strategic Planning

Finding. The Department has a strategic plan that includes goals for the clinic, Ph. D. program, faculty recruitment and retention, support staff, space needs, and diversity (self study, pp. 50-57). While all of these areas have been identified as important areas by the faculty, it is necessary to assign priorities to the goals identified in the department’s strategic plan in order to ensure there are sufficient resources available to implement goals within the plan, as also noted by the external reviewers (pp. 4-5).

Recommendation. The PRC recommends that the Department conduct a systematic review of its strategic plan with a focus of prioritizing goals within the plan. Priorities should be based on needs, resources available, and cost/effectiveness. Faculty should ensure that all appropriate stakeholders are included in the planning process. Where the external reviewers suggested an external facilitator to assist with this activity, the PRC supports the faculty in wanting to pursue the prioritization on their own. These priorities should be completed and presented to the Dean for concurrence by December, 2005.
2. Research Support

Finding. The Department faculty are to be commended for their collaborative efforts on research. They have been engaged in collaborative research with other faculty across campus in other disciplines as well as with faculty at other universities. While the Department faculty have demonstrated their productivity in the area of research through presentations at national and international conferences and in refereed journal articles over the past five years, the PRC sees a need for the Department to examine their research capabilities and allocate resources accordingly. The College and the University have made a significant investment in the Department since the last program review. The PRC continues to advocate for providing “as much support as feasible,” in the words of the external reviewers, in order to enhance the possibility of receiving greater external grant funding through these efforts. However, the PRC notes that this level of continued support creates a clear expectation for a high level of productivity and external funding to be demonstrated by the time of the next program review.

Recommendation. The Department should continue to encourage and reward internal and external collaborative research; and it should review its allocation of financial resources to determine the most effective and equitable method of supporting faculty research. In addition, the Department should develop a plan for increasing grant productivity. A plan should be developed and presented to the Dean for approval by December, 2005.

3. Increasing Enrollment

Finding. Enrollment in the Ph. D. program could be improved as there are empty slots in this program. The Chair and faculty have been working on several strategies to increase the number of doctoral candidates in their program, including the development of a B.S.-to-doctoral bridge program and increased marketing strategies (meeting with CDIS faculty, February 21, 2005).

There is also a need to address enrollment figures at the undergraduate level; student demand for the undergraduate major in communication disorders is among the lowest at the University (enrollment figures from the National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity). Given that CDIS 123 was recently approved as a course in the BG Perspectives curriculum, there is a new opportunity to recruit undergraduates into the major. At the master’s level, enrollments are steady and appropriate. However, the PRC supports efforts to increase the number of applications to the master’s program (without increasing enrollments) as a means to continually improve the qualifications of admitted students.

Recommendation. Issues of recruitment, enrollment, and retention are of concern and deserve the critical attention of the faculty, the chair, and the dean.
• The chair and faculty should develop a recruitment strategy and a marketing plan to increase enrollment to the undergraduate major.
• Enrollments in the master’s program are healthy. Efforts to increase the number of applications, and thereby the quality of admitted students, should be pursued.

• Successful recruitment, enrollment, and retention of doctoral students is vital to the success of the doctoral program and the Department. While efforts to create a bridge program for our own undergraduates may be useful, the total recruitment effort should be national in scope and should be aimed at attracting the highest quality students to the doctoral program.

The Department should continue to use current students and visibility of program faculty as recruitment tools. Plans to achieve these ends should be presented to the Dean for approval by December, 2005.

4. Personnel Needs/ Requests

Finding. There is a great need for a college-wide electronics technology assistant to help set up equipment for research as well as to provide maintenance for equipment in the Campus Speech and Hearing Clinic. The external reviewers and the department chair agree on the desirability of opening the search for the faculty position currently not open. The purpose of opening this position would be to support research, teaching, and the doctoral program. In addition, the faculty noted a need for a full-time audiologist for the Clinic (meeting with CDIS faculty, February 21, 2005), to strengthen the field component of the Clinic and to assist in the projected increase of business related to hearing aid diagnostics and sales.

Recommendation. The Chair and faculty should prioritize their personnel needs and develop a plan for future hiring of both faculty and staff. The plan should be developed in light of available department, college, and university resources, as well as potential prospects of external funding. This plan should be presented to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services and the Provost for discussions regarding feasibility and resources, by December, 2005.

5. Campus Speech and Hearing Clinic

Finding. The Speech and Hearing Clinic could benefit from increased revenues to finance equipment updates, as noted by the external reviewers (p. 5). In addition, they are in need of a full-time technology assistant and a full-time audiologist (meeting with Department faculty, February 21, 2005). The Department is to be commended for the recent five-year plan developed for the Speech and Hearing Clinic (meeting with CDIS Chair, February 1, 2005).

Recommendation. The Chair and Clinic personnel need to develop a plan for increasing business in hearing aid diagnostics and sales. The plan should also address attracting a diverse clientele, including Medicare clients over the age of 65. Other potential revenue-producing activities for the Clinic, such as seeking additional external contracts, should be explored. The proposed audiologist position should be prioritized within the context of the Department’s overall hiring plan (see Recommendation 4). A plan to meet these needs should be presented to the Dean for her approval by April, 2006.
6. Space

Finding. According to the external reviewers, the Department “has adequate, clean, well-maintained space. Offices and clinic spaces appear to meet the current needs of the department” (p. 2). However, based on the PRC meeting with the Department faculty, there appears to be a need for more space, especially for storage areas and for research labs. In particular, if expectations for increasing success with external funding and achieving a greater volume of scholarly publication are to be met, research space will have to be expanded.

Recommendation. The Chair and Dean should meet with appropriate personnel at the University to specify space needs and to explore possible space expansion within existing institutional constraints. Based on this information, a plan should be developed to outline the future of gaining or developing additional space for the Department. Costs and financial responsibility should also be part of this plan. The plan should be shared with the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services for review and approval, by April, 2006.

7. Improving Electrical Equipment

Finding. Faculty report a lack of adequate electrical grounding in the communication disorders research labs and problems with transformers outside of the building (meeting with the CDIS faculty, February 21, 2005). At the PRC’s meeting with the Dean, the Dean indicated that these problems had not been reported to her in a timely fashion.

Recommendation. Faculty have a responsibility to report such problems to the Chair and Dean so that they can resolve the problem. Once identified, there should be a determination of costs and responsibility for costs. These problems should be resolved as soon as possible.

8. Assessment

Finding. The Department is to be commended for their extensive assessment program. The assessment process includes student performance and satisfaction, alumni and community input, employer satisfaction, and monitoring of students on national examinations. Of particular merit is the assessment plan for collecting data regarding specific skill and knowledge outcomes on each student in each course taught. These data will be used for accreditation purposes for the Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. This assessment tool was viewed by the PRC as a comprehensive and valuable means of data collection that will assist the Department in future program planning.

Recommendation. The Department should continue in its implementation of its assessment plan. With continued use of assessment of specific skill and knowledge
outcomes for each student in each course taught, the Department may consider a review and possible modifications of their assessment plan after two to three years of data collection. The Department should report its assessment findings in its annual report to the Student Achievement Assessment Committee.

_The Department of Communication Disorders should report annually to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services, with a copy to the Provost, on the implementation of these recommendations._