

Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences (SLHS) Department

SLHS Pathway to Excellence

Academic Year 2015/2016 to 2020/2021

SLHS Vision

The Department will cultivate excellent, creative, interdisciplinary, and diverse approaches to research, pedagogy, and clinical practice in the fields of speech, language, and hearing sciences.

SLHS Mission

The mission of the Department is to educate students on the processes of hearing, speech, language, cognition, and swallowing, to engage in the scientific study of human communication and its disorders, and to serve the community of individuals with communication disorders or differences. In all endeavors the Department strives to foster a culture of inclusiveness and respect.

Executive Summary

The Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences (SLHS) department is a premier educational program in the state of Connecticut for the preparation of undergraduates in speech, language, and hearing sciences, of graduate students that enter the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology and of researchers in speech, language, and hearing sciences that establish the evidence base that informs practice. The Department plays an integral role in the Cognitive Sciences Program and the Connecticut Institute for the Brain and Cognitive Sciences, Brain Imaging Research Center, and has integrated research in place with Psychology, Linguistics, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, School of Music, Biomedical Engineering, Neuroscience, and other departments. It is intimately involved in state and national organizations that influence the health and welfare of the communicatively disordered population. External organizations are equally important and research and collaborations exist with many institutions. Please see Appendix A for a list of affiliated organizations. SLHS runs a speech and hearing clinic that provides the highest quality services to the community it serves. In all educational endeavors, SLHS is accountable to the Standards for Accreditation of the Committee on Academic Accreditation in Communication Sciences and Disorders in affiliation with the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

The strategic planning process is a fluid process that evolves over time and circumstances as a result of faculty review. The strategic plan in place during the 2014/2015 academic year was reviewed by the faculty during regular and ad hoc meetings and found to be in need of significant modification. While some goals had been met, others were no longer appropriate or were not able to be verified via available data. A faculty retreat was held during the academic year for each of the two divisions, speech-language pathology and audiology. The sections of the existing strategic plan were then assigned to various standing and newly formed departmental committees for more dedicated review and revision. The leadership of the department then began the process of reconsidering the vision and mission of the department as it aligned with the core values (Innovation, Leadership, Global Engagement, and Diversity) and academic vision (Research and Scholarship, Undergraduate Education, Graduate Education, Teaching Effectiveness, and Public Engagement) of the University.

Our strategic plan is organized into 4 sections.

Section 1 provides a general idea of SLHS goals and areas of interest relevant to the Core Values of the University of Connecticut.

Section 2 gives a description and a visual representation of the stakeholders, also known as strategic drivers, to whom the department is responsible.

Section 3 delineates the goals of the strategic plan as developed by the committees responsible for each area, as well as the means for determining accomplishment of the objectives.

Section 4 describes the process of communicating ongoing progress toward goals from the strategic plan to stakeholder groups. It also outlines expected input from stakeholder groups and expands upon the role of the Advisory Board in moving the Department forward.

Section 1

In the vision statement of the University of Connecticut, there are four Core Values of the University. This section describes how the Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences department goals and strategies support and encourage these core values. Below, each UCONN Core Value is followed by a list of the sections of the SLHS Strategic Plan and examples of the areas within those sections that address and/or support that Core Value.

UCONN Core Value: Innovation

The University of Connecticut is dedicated to the discovery and communication of breakthrough and foundational ideas; to translation and collaboration across disciplines and communities; and to positive transformation through research, scholarship, and creative works.

Innovation is integral to the achievement of the SLHS vision and mission as the department strives to engage in best practices in the education of students, conduct of research, and management of individuals with communication disorders and differences. Innovation will be demonstrated through achievement of goals related to increasing the amount and diversity of IPP and IPE, expanding the use of Team Based Learning for assessment of clinical competence and focusing on patient centered outcomes. In the area of research, innovative practices will include promoting the translation of research into clinical practice, conducting research using cutting edge methodology in assessment and treatment of disordered populations.

UCONN Core Value: Leadership

UCONN's students will become well-educated leaders and global citizens who excel in addressing the challenges of the 21st century; in them, we will cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and joy in lifelong learning. We will serve the state, nation, and the world through our research, teaching, and outreach.

Leadership is evident in the SLHS mission and vision as the Department aims to produce students, educators, researchers and service providers who are leaders at the local, state, and national levels. Goals in this area include explicit teaching of supervisory, research, and leadership skills and involvement in organizations across the continuum. As a STEM profession, SLHS has a responsibility to engage as interdisciplinary leaders in education and facilitating local and national policy change.

UCONN Core Value: Global Engagement

Through outreach, research, and partnerships, we promote sustainable development and a happy, healthy, and inclusive society. This engagement is local and global, based on intercultural understanding and recognition of the translational nature of the challenges and opportunities we face.

SLHS recognizes the need for increased awareness, support, and engagement amongst global scholars, clinicians, and individuals with disability or difference. SLHS is committed to increasing the involvement of students and faculty in international exchange for educational, clinical, and research opportunities.

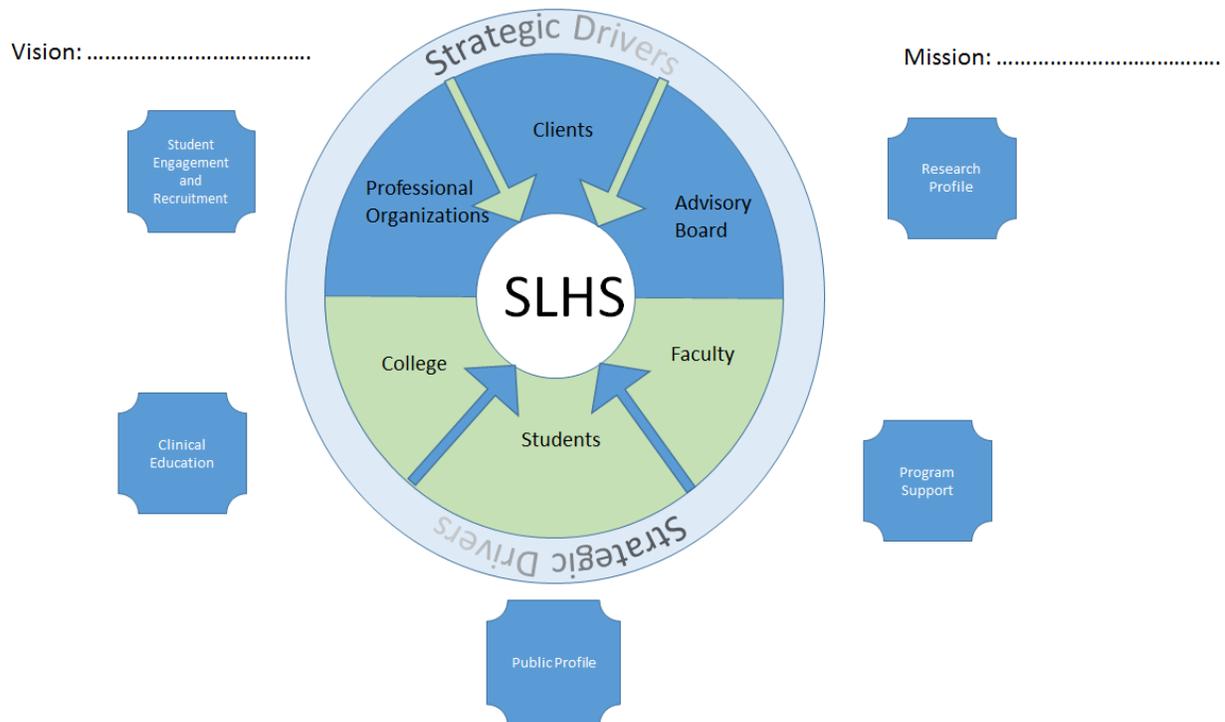
UCONN Core Value: Diversity

In our culturally and intellectually diverse community, we appreciate differences in one another as well as similarities, and aspire to be an increasingly inclusive educational institution that attracts, retains, and values talented people from all backgrounds. We believe in diversity in intellectual approach and outlook. We embrace diversity not as a keyword for token inclusion of the underrepresented, but as a commitment to fostering a welcoming environment in which all individuals can achieve their fullest potential and in which open and respectful communication is facilitated.

Diversity is inherent to the successful implementation of the vision and mission because SLHS promotes diversity in all of its endeavors. The goals relevant to this area include attracting diverse students and faculty and providing increased opportunities for practice and research across populations in a variety of settings for individuals with communication disorders and differences.

Section 2

SLHS is accountable to several groups of stakeholders or strategic drivers. Each group has different expectations and demands for this department. It is imperative that SLHS regularly determine the needs and expectations of its stakeholders through systematic communication. This section describes the stakeholders and the methods in place to solicit their feedback.



Each stakeholder groups represents a wealth of experience, opinion, and knowledge that is of benefit to the Department. In order to obtain this feedback, specific mechanisms must be in place and regularly accessed. The methods of obtaining feedback from stakeholders are delineated here.

Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings are held once a month during the academic year for the entire faculty. Additionally, the audiology faculty and the speech-language pathology faculty meet once a month as independent groups. The clinical faculty meet once a month as do the PhD faculty.

Surveys

Surveys are provided for all graduating students in the MA and AuD programs. These results are collected and disseminated to the faculty in the fall. Surveys of each class are conducted through the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) system and results are available to the instructor and the Department Head. Surveys are provided to all assessment clients in the Speech and Hearing Clinic.

Program Review

At a minimum of annually, the program is reviewed and a report formulated and submitted to the Commission on Academic Accreditation in affiliation with the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

An annual report of the Department's activities and the accomplishments of its faculty is developed through the HuskyDM system and submitted to the Dean's office.

Competency Review

The e*value system is accessed at the completion of each cohort's multiyear program to provide an aggregate review of the competency by diagnostic area in both audiology and speech-language pathology.

Committee Report

The results of committee work are disseminated through standing faculty meetings, by posting documents to the OneDrive system for review, and through the LISTSERVE systems managed by the Program Assistant.

Advisory Board Representation

The faculty liaison is responsible for bringing the views and information obtained at Advisory Board meetings to the attention of the faculty through faculty meetings or in direct report to the Department Head.

Undergraduate Advisor

The Department Undergraduate Advisor is responsible for providing feedback on opinions and issues expressed during advising meetings to the Department Head or faculty.

Department Head Meetings

The Department Head is responsible for transferring information both to and from the Dean of the College and the other Department Heads of the College.

Section 3

Members of the Department fulfill multiple roles across one or more of the groups below. Members contribute to the achievement of the strategic plan from their unique perspective as representatives of their respective groups and from their personal background and experiences.

The three main groups within the department are:

Academic

Functional Business

Client Service

The broad categories of individuals that operate within these groups are:

Administrator and Administrative Support Staff - Responsible for the ongoing operations of the department and all of its functions

Advisor - Responsible for the development of the student population within the major and professional programs

Clinical Service Provider - Responsible for the delivery of exceptional care to the client population in the clinic

Learner - Responsible for life long learning in order to provide the highest quality education, service, and research

Researcher - Responsible for the advancement of speech, language, and hearing sciences

Teacher - Responsible for provision of the highest quality of education

Members of our department will fulfill both group and individual roles and those roles will change and develop in response to department needs and the strategic plan.

The operations of the department are the responsibility of all groups and roles. To facilitate success a committee structure is utilized. A complete description of each committee's structure and function is included in the faculty manual.

Section 4

Strategic Goals and the Measurements of Success

Throughout the life of this strategic plan SLHS will use appropriate metrics that lead to the adjustment and refinement of our strategic goals and initiatives.

Core Value	Goal
Innovation	1. Increase innovation across research domains
	2. Establish and maintain compliance with accreditation standards in an efficient and user friendly manner
	3. Reduce the cost and time investment to students for participation in the graduate programs
	4. Investigate the risks and benefits of offering additional undergraduate and graduate degree or certificate programs
	5. Support and develop exceptional faculty
	6. Facilitate exceptional off campus experiences
	7. Increase alumni involvement in SLHS
	8. Develop a model of implementation science in an area of faculty expertise
	9. Integrate emerging technologies and methodologies into clinical education
Leadership	10. Improve the visibility of SLHS endeavors in curriculum and research and increase the national profile for the programs
	11. Improve SLHS utilization of University resources
	12. Embed principles of IPP/IPE into the curriculum

***Global
Engagement***

13. Establish opportunities for international clinical service

14. Increase the scope of the colloquia program to address research with global impact

Diversity

15. Increase the number and diversity of populations served by the UCSHC

16. Increase the opportunities for students to be educated about and/or serve diverse populations

17. Attract high caliber, diverse students to undergraduate and graduate programs

18. Increase the on-line education offerings within SLHS

19. Develop community resources for families, professionals, caregivers

***Efficient
Operations***

20. Improve the efficient and cost effective operations of SLHS

Section 5

Communication

SLHS is committed to a transparent system of government that is relayed effectively and efficiently to our stakeholders. This communication allows for the maximum operation, research support and engagement, and growth and development of programs within SLHS. This section describes the expected communication of progress toward goals to stakeholder groups. The avenues of communication include:

Annual Report to the Dean/Provost

Annual Report to CAA

Faculty and Committee Meetings

Website and Social Media

Research Publications

Consumer Publications/Newsletters

Marketing Materials

Classroom

Individual Meetings

E-mail

Student Organizations

Sponsored Conferences and Colloquia

Conference Presentations

Conference Attendance