

# Abilene Christian University

## Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

### Strategic Plan

2023 - 2025

#### **Executive Summary:**

The work of the ACU CSD faculty toward continuous growth and improvement in teaching, scholarship and service is shaped by our vision: ***We believe that communication connects us to God and one another.*** *Therefore, we are committed to equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to minister to those with communication disorders. We work to know students as individuals, and to mentor them in the developmental process of becoming excellent, ethical professionals in our field. We seek to walk with them through this process as they grow in their knowledge of God, themselves, and a world in need.* Our mission aligns with this vision: *To equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills for effective ministry to persons with communication, cognitive, and swallowing disorders from a Christ-centered perspective.* Our core values are reflected in our work as we progress in our mission: Excellence, Community, Passion, Integrity.

The faculty and staff conceived of seven focus areas for this two-year plan. Targeted outcomes and strategies were developed to address each of the focus areas, and the plan went into effect in January, 2023. The areas and targeted outcomes are as follows:

#### **Area 1: Program and Curriculum –**

**Issue 1: The program should ensure coverage of areas of professional practice outside of disorder area content in the curriculum.**

- 1) The program will provide a program of Interprofessional Education (IPE), curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students to develop knowledge and skills in Interprofessional Practice (IPP), at both undergraduate and graduate levels
- 2) The program will progress toward infusion of concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) throughout the curriculum (reinforcing and expanding content in the course already in the curriculum which covers major topics in DEI).
- 3) The program will provide curricula and experiences allowing students to develop entry-level knowledge and skills in the area of supervision.

**Issue 2: The current MS-SLP curriculum should be evaluated annually to ensure completeness and effectiveness.**

- 1) The program will evaluate curricular changes implemented in Fall 2022 in terms of educational outcomes and student satisfaction.

#### **Area 2: Spiritual Formation Across the Program –**

**Issue 1: The department works to align efforts to support undergraduate student spiritual health/growth with the university spiritual formation program, and should utilize resources to support graduate student spiritual health in alignment with the mission of the university**

- 1) Each graduate student will complete a spiritual health/needs assessment and create a growth action plan.
- 2) Students will select and participate in activities that will nurture their individual spiritual health, needs and growth.

### **Area 3: Clinical Education and Experiences –**

**Issue 1: The department seeks to build and/or strengthen relationships with community professionals as they participate in planning for and engaging in the development of new SLPs via collaboration with the MS-SLP program.**

- 1) The department (both divisions) will collaborate with area school districts and/or private school systems to provide beginning clinical learning experiences (hearing or speech/language screenings, evaluations) for first semester graduate students (rotation 1).
- 2) The department will make faculty and staff (program supervisors') clinical expertise available to community SLPs, agencies and organizations for consultation and continuing education, developing as a "center for clinical excellence" in specific areas of expertise.

### **Area 4: Personnel –**

**Issue 1: The department must maintain a fully-staffed faculty of highly qualified personnel in order to maintain a healthy and well-functioning MS-SLP program.**

- 1) The department will plan for a seamless transition for hiring and integrating new faculty as current faculty members retire.

### **Area 5: Scholarship –**

**Issue 1: The department desires to see increased faculty research output.**

- 1) The department will develop a program of release time and research support funding for two faculty members per year (one per division).

**Issue 2: The department wishes to increase student engagement in scholarly activities**

- 1) The department will increase the variety of opportunities available for students to engage in faculty or independent research.

### **Area 6: Alumni Engagement –**

**Issue 1: Engaged alumni provide valuable support to the department and university.**

- 1) The department will connect with alumni by offering networking/continuing education opportunities
- 2) The department will work with the alumni office to create an alumni organization (Wildcat SLPs)

### **Area 7: Development and Endowment –**

**Issue 1: A department-specific endowment for graduate program scholarships assists in increasing the diversity of student cohorts.**

- 1) The department will work with University Advancement to create endowment for the purpose of providing significant graduate student scholarships.

**Issue 2: An endowment to support the clinical programs enables the department to expand clinical services and supervision in both locations.**

- 1) The department will work to create an endowment to support the clinical education programs at the two campuses.