

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS

LEVEL II REQUEST FORM

Item No.: 138-1004-R0108 Date of Meeting: January 10-11, 2008

Institution: The University of Montana - Missoula

Program Title: Request to Establish a Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders

Level II proposals require approval by the Board of Regents.

Level II action requested (check all that apply): Level II proposals entail substantive additions to, alterations in, or termination of programs, structures, or administrative or academic entities typically characterized by the (a) addition, reassignment, or elimination of personnel, facilities, or courses of instruction; (b) rearrangement of budgets, cost centers, funding sources; and (c) changes which by implication could impact other campuses within the Montana University System and community colleges. Board policy 303.1 indicates the curricular proposals in this category:

- 1. Change names of degrees (e.g. from B.A. to B.F.A.)
- 2. Implement a new minor or certificate where there is no major or no option in a major;
- 3. Establish new degrees and add majors to existing degrees;
- 4. Expand/extend approved mission; and
- 5. Any other changes in governance and organization as described in Board of Regents' Policy 218, such as formation, elimination or consolidation of a college, division, school, department, institute, bureau, center, station, laboratory, or similar unit.

Specify Request:

The University of Montana – Missoula requested and received approval of a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communicative Disorders and a Master of Science degree in Speech-Language Pathology during FY 07. Implicit in those two requests was a request to establish a Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders, however, we inadvertently neglected to check #5 on the submitted Level II form, in addition to #3. The first seven pages of the undergraduate and graduate program narratives are attached, with direct references to the establishment of a department highlighted.

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The University of Montana – Missoula
Proposal for the Establishment
of a
Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders
Submitted: October 31, 2007

Description of Program

Overview

This document provides the narrative for two coupled level II requests: the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology and the Bachelor of Arts in Communicative Disorders. The ultimate goal is to provide the first professional degree (Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology) as a means of abating the extreme shortage of certified professionals in this discipline in Montana. It is essential to respond to this shortage by establishing both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, because one needs the latter in order to become a licensed practitioner of speech pathology services. A qualified pool of master's degree students will depend, in large part, upon an undergraduate degree, and their coupling will further ensure the program is cost-effective.

The Proposed Degrees

This proposal includes requests for permission to develop a bachelor's degree in Communicative Disorders and a master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP), both planned to be housed in a new Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders in the School of Education. The bachelor's degree prepares graduates for advanced study in speech-language pathology and/or audiology, or to enter the profession as a clinical aide or assistant in one or both of those professions. The intent is for the master's degree program to be accredited by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and for graduates to be eligible for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP).¹ Thus, they would be eligible for licensure in most states, including Montana.²

In 2005, the School of Education invited Dr. James Blair from Utah State University to serve as a consultant to investigate the feasibility of offering: 1) a doctor of audiology (AuD), 2) a master's in Speech-Language Pathology that would include pre-requisite courses without an SLP undergraduate degree, and 3) a combination of both a master's degree in SLP and an AuD. Dr. Blair, Chair of the Department of Communicative Studies and Deaf Education at Utah State, had previously served as a consultant to Idaho State University as they developed their AuD program. His final report at UM indicated that both the baccalaureate-level and master's-level SLP degrees were feasible.

Bachelor's Degree

Students desiring to complete the baccalaureate degree in Communicative Disorders will follow a pattern similar to that followed by candidates in teacher education insofar as they will be

¹ <http://www.asha.org/about/membership-certification/>

² http://mt.gov/dli/bsd/license/bsd_boards/slp_board/licenses/slp/lic_summary.asp

required to become admitted to the professional program in order to complete the curriculum necessary for the bachelor's degree. Thus, they will spend their first two years of study completing general education and program core requirements in order to demonstrate competence at the level requisite for admission into the professional program in Communication Disorders.

As is the case for students in most programs, lower-division core requirements for the major will be met in several departments across campus. It is anticipated that the Communicative Disorders program could enroll as many as 50-60 students annually, with approximately 30-35 lower division students dispersed among courses in the following areas: general psychology, analysis of behavior, human anatomy, human physiology, interpersonal communication, and sign language. Courses currently taught at The University of Montana that would fulfill these expectations would include the following (Syllabi available in Appendix A):

- COMM 110S Introduction to Interpersonal Communication
- COMM 131 American Sign Language I
- COMM 132 American Sign Language II
- SCI 201N Anatomy and Physiology I (at COT)
- SCI 202N Anatomy and Physiology II (at COT)
- PSYC 100S Introduction to Psychology (at COT)

The above list does not include an analysis of behavior course. This expectation could be met with PSYC 260S, Fundamentals of Learning; however, if that course is not available, two other options for a new course in this subject exist, as faculty expertise is present both within the School of Education and at the College of Technology. (Letters of support from Communication Studies and the College of Technology can be found in Appendix B.) The impact on enrollments in general education courses will depend on the degree to which the Communicative Disorders program attracts new undergraduate students to the University.

Admission to junior level classes will require a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, as well as successful completion of required prerequisite courses. To continue in the program, admitted students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better and meet minimum grade expectations in Communicative Disorders classes each semester. The highly-technical information associated with a program of this nature, in addition to the master's degree requirement for licensure and the aforementioned GPA standards, is likely to result in lower enrollment in upper-division courses. Present estimates there range from 20-25 students. A careful review of similar programs available in this region (most notably the University of Wyoming, Idaho State University, and Portland State University) suggests an established program at UM should ultimately produce 15 bachelor's degree graduates per year.

Upper-division Communicative Disorders professional requirements would include courses that fulfill the preparation expected for admission to an accredited graduate program, as developed in detail by the new faculty we seek to hire who would bring this specialization to our campus. Blair's report, coupled with the standards of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), examinations of other university programs, and a comprehensive review by licensed professionals in the field have all indicated the primary sources of knowledge will emerge from the study of biological sciences, physical sciences, social/behavioral sciences, mathematics, human communication processes, communication disorders, and both written and oral language. The bachelor's degree curriculum and included courses will be evaluated by ASCRC and the Faculty Senate prior to implementation.

The following is a typical list of course requirements for an undergraduate program in Communicative Disorders:

Bachelor's Degree Professional Program Curriculum	Credits
Orientation and Observation of Clinical Practice	1
Language, Speech, and Hearing Development	3
Fundamentals of Anatomy for Speech and Language	3
Disorders of Articulation	3
Acoustics and Anatomy and Physiology of the Ear	3
Phonetics/Developmental Phonology	3
Clinical Processes and Behavior	2
Basic Audiology and Acoustic Immittance	3
Speech Science	3
Language Science	3
Neural Bases of Speech and Language	2
Language Assessment and Intervention for Preschool Children with Disabilities	4
Aural Rehabilitation (Children)	<u>3</u>
Total	36 credits

All of the aforementioned courses in the program are new and will need to be evaluated by ASCRC and Faculty Senate before implementation. Syllabi examples are provided in Appendix C for the following selected courses on the list: Orientation and Observation in Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education; Language, Speech, and Hearing Development; Disorders of Articulation; Acoustics and Anatomy of the Ear; and Speech Science. Additionally, sample undergraduate programs of study at Idaho State University, East Carolina University, the University of South Dakota, Utah State University, Eastern Washington University, Portland State University and the University of Rhode Island are provided in Appendix D.

Natural content linkages would emerge among these proposed SLP courses and two program areas that currently exist in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction: Special Education and Literacy Studies. Designing the aforementioned courses to address all three areas—especially with regard to language assessment and intervention, clinical practice, and behavior analysis and modification—would allow the School of Education to expand options for students by building on the strengths of existing programs and faculty. Moreover, it would enable the two departments to provide great depth simultaneously via specialization and collaborative synergy.

The Bachelor's Degree Professional Program Curriculum shown above is foundational to several professional endeavors. Traditionally, it would serve students intending to pursue graduate degrees in either speech-language pathology or audiology (not planned for UM at this time). Two clinical instructors (described under Resources, page 12) would share primary responsibility for these courses.

The proposed baccalaureate degree program in Communicative Disorders is necessary and primarily designed to provide both the prerequisite curriculum and the candidate pool for the M.S. in SLP, which carries the professional license. That said, offering a stand-alone baccalaureate degree program is not a reasonable alternative, because that would not prepare licensed professionals for the state and region. Competition for the graduate program will be available to students from other campuses, as well; consequently, it is likely that some of the

bachelor's degree students may, either not be successful in being among the 15 or 20 admitted to the M.S. each year or choose other related degree pursuits along their academic journeys. Therefore, it is important to envision smooth transitions for career options for Communicative Disorders students who find themselves in that situation; the School of Education is well-poised to do so.

With a program designed to educate the next generation of teachers who oversee learning for children world-wide, the School of Education offers the perfect applied human science focus as an academic home to this program. Best of all, the School of Education mission is consistent with program goals for the Speech-Language Pathology program, thereby providing context for some additional options for Communicative Disorders graduates who are not successful in being admitted to a graduate program. One possibility for the Communicative Disorders undergraduate program would be to construct a pre-professional curriculum that matches closely with the pre-education curriculum currently completed by prospective elementary teachers. Assuming that students who have chosen Communicative Disorders are also interested in working with young children, a shift to elementary education would appear a viable option whereby they might find similar professional satisfaction. Beyond that, students in the SLP program would also likely have gained knowledge well-suited to the special education endorsement, an area in which there is also great demand in the state, region, and nation. Through advising, students could be directed toward general education courses that would fill elementary education requirements. Additionally, some of their SLP upper-division, professional-level coursework could substitute for special education's clinical experiences and be applied to future endeavors in exceptionalities and behavior management required of elementary teacher candidates.

Beyond elementary education and special education, there are other academic options for transitioning SLP students. Another possible advising approach would be to encourage Communicative Disorders undergraduates to complete the minor in Human and Family Development, which offers several focal areas including Early Intervention, Early Childhood, and School Age developmental levels. At the other end of life's spectrum, gerontology is also a focus area in Human and Family Development that could provide an interdisciplinary link for Communicative Disorders students. With greater longevity, the shift of the baby boom to retirement age, and medical technology that increases survival rates for stroke victims, there is an anticipated increased demand for services in helping stroke victims regain their speech. Finally, these students might also do well to complete a Social Work minor. Students with a Communicative Disorders degree and a Human and Family Development minor or Social Work minor would appear to be well-prepared candidates for the Master of Social Work (MSW) program in addition to being qualified for professional employment in a variety of service settings or agencies providing assistance to individuals and families across the life span.

Master's Degree

Given the proposed number of faculty, admitting 15-20 students per year into the master's program should be appropriate. Admissions to master's degree programs in Speech-Language Pathology are extremely competitive. ASHA tracks application, admission, and acceptance rates for member institutions, and the table below reflects the 2002-2003 data for master's degree programs in Speech-Language Pathology among four institutions in this region. On average, these institutions had a 36 percent admission rate, and a 92 percent acceptance rate.

Institution	Applications	Admissions	Acceptances
Eastern Washington University	62	23	15
Portland State University	90	20	20
Utah State University	74	41	41
University of Wyoming	43	12	12
Average	67	24	22

Two years of graduate study are generally required for master's degree completion for students whose undergraduate major was in Communicative Disorders. Some institutions allow admitted students without the foundation at the baccalaureate program to complete prerequisites concurrent with their graduate degrees, and in this case, three years of study are generally required for degree completion. Numerous institutions offer prerequisite courses for non-matriculated students, an option particularly advantageous in Montana where teachers or others who already possess an undergraduate degree in another discipline could facilitate their transition into a graduate-level Speech-Language Pathology program. Offering some or all of these prerequisite courses online, as some institutions do, might further enable the new department to make the program accessible to students across the state.

The program of study for the master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology requires both coursework and practicum opportunities. Initially, these tend to be overseen on campus under direct supervision, then shifted to various off-campus settings with continued closely-maintained supervision by faculty, and finally held in more distant sites where students could be supervised by others in the profession (specifically, by ASHA-certified practitioners).

The following classes constitute a typical master's degree program:

Master's Degree Speech-Language Program Curriculum

Courses	Credits
Introduction to Education and Psychological Research	3
Language Assessment and Intervention for School Aged Children and Adolescents	3
Adult Disorders of Motor Speech	3
Disorders of Fluency—Stuttering	3
Communicative Disorders Related to Orofacial Anomalies	3
Disphagia	3
Neuropathologies of Speech and Language	3
Disorders of Phonation	3
Augmentative and Alternative Communication*	3
Bilingual/Bicultural Services	2
Professional Practice in Speech-Language Pathology	2
Advanced Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology I	1-3
Advanced Clinical Practicum in Speech-Language Pathology II	1-3

Internship in Public Schools in Speech-Language Pathology I	1-4
Internship in Public Schools in Speech-Language Pathology II	1-4
Externship in Speech-Language Pathology	1-6
Thesis	<u>1-7</u>
Total (Minimum-Maximum)	41-58 credits

*This course could be taught by a member of the Department of Curriculum Instruction's Special Education faculty.

All but two courses are new (exceptions are Thesis and Introduction to Education, and Psychological Research) and will be delineated in detail by the expert faculty we seek to hire. Subsequently, each course will be evaluated by the Graduate Council and Faculty Senate before implementation. Sample syllabi from Utah State University are provided in Appendix E for the following courses: Disorders of Fluency – Stuttering; Language Assessment and Intervention; and Disorders of Phonation. Further, sample master's curricula in Speech-Language Pathology for Idaho State University, the University of South Dakota, Utah State University, Eastern Washington University, Portland State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Rhode Island are provided in Appendix F. As is the case with all accredited curricula, the new program would follow established outcomes (and corresponding student benchmarks) recommended by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association for certification of Speech-Language Pathology, whose knowledge and skills outcomes appear in Appendix G.

Timeline for Implementation

FY 07	Hire Department Chair and Administrative Assistant to begin Summer, 2007.
Fall 07	Formal application to ASHA for candidacy status evaluation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current ASHA Council on Academic Accreditation standards state this must be done 18 months in advance of when students are expected to enroll; however, the Council is conducting a comprehensive review of the Candidacy program at this time in an effort to streamline the content and number of its reporting steps. Conversations with Council personnel suggest the group has been flexible regarding this deadline with other institutions, and that they are considering reducing this timeline to 12 months in advance of enrollment application. • The Candidacy application requires both campus and state authorization to offer the graduate degree for which Candidacy is sought. • Develop detailed curricular proposals (bachelor's and master's) for institutional governance review; timing to coincide with campus deadlines in late September.
FY 08	Department Chair will work with campus structure and personnel to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit and hire additional faculty; • Oversee remodeling of clinical facility, purchase equipment, and expand library holdings; • Recruit and selection entering master's degree students;

- Recruit undergraduate majors;
 - Establish clinical experiences/sites; and
 - Prepare and submit ASHA Candidacy application and progress reports.
- Fall 08 First bachelor's (estimated 15 year one; 50-60 at full capacity) and master's students (15-20) enroll.
- Fall 10 First master's degree students graduate.*
- Completed application for ASHA accreditation due (no later than 24 months after the enrollment of the first cohort of graduate students).
- Spring 12 First class of bachelor's degree students graduates.

*Assumes students possess an undergraduate SLP degree when admitted.