ANNUAL REPORT OF EFFECTIVENESS

Academic Year 2001-2002
Summer 2001, Fall 2001, Spring 2002

DEPARTMENT OF AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH PATHOLOGY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF AUDIOLOGY/SPEECH PATHOLOGY

ANNUAL REPORT OF EFFECTIVENESS

Academic Year 2001-2002

DEPARTMENT GOALS:

1. to reduce the number of classes with small enrollments and increase the average enrollment for AUP classes.

2. to increase the number of AUP majors and the student:faculty ratio in the Department.

3. to develop service courses for students outside the AUP Department.

4. to develop a course numbering and prerequisite system which is clear and enhances matriculation of students.

5. to develop a reputation and contacts which enable a high percentage of graduates to be admitted to accredited graduate programs in speech pathology or audiology.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:

Activities of faculty and the Chair of the Department, interactions with other agencies, activities of graduates, and enrollment data will be used to assess progress on these goals.

RESULTS AND IMPROVEMENTS:

1. All 16 AUP courses were offered twice per year, in recent years. That resulted in classes of 4-8 students when the courses were offered the second time. In Academic Year 2001-2002, only seven courses were offered twice, so the number of classes with small enrollments was reduced considerably (from 16 to seven). The nine courses that were offered only once during the year had enrollments of 15-20. For AY 2002-03, only 2-3 courses will be offered twice (those are beginning courses which will be needed by new students, particularly community college transfer students, in order to be able to complete the Degree in two years).

2. Recruitment activities on and off campus have increased the number of majors from 51 to 62 in the past two years. The IHL Student Fair in Jackson, advising of "undeclared" students, contacts with prospective students identified by DSU recruiters, recruitment of "undeclared" students by current majors, and an Open
House have been helpful in bringing new students into the Department. The student:faculty ratio has increased from 12.75:1 to 15.50:1. With the reduction of one faculty position, the ratio in the coming year is expected to be at least 20.66:1.

3. “Speech and Language Improvement” and two sign language courses have been developed, and have attracted some non-majors. These will be promoted through communications with DSU academic advisors. They will also be recommended to fill general education and special degree requirements for students outside the AUP major.

4. The previous course numbering system started with a 400 number for the “Introductory” course, a 100 number for one of the beginning courses, and numbers in the 300’s for two other beginning courses. The “Introductory” course has been changed to 300, with other beginning courses numbered 302, 304, etc.; and higher level courses have 400 level numbers, also progressing according to the order in which they should be taken.

5. The Chair has established relationships with faculty and Chairs at many universities in this region, which have Master’s Degree programs in Speech and Hearing. These include the University of Mississippi, Mississippi University for Women, Jackson State University, University of Southern Mississippi, University of Memphis, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Valdosta State University, University of Louisiana at Monroe, and the University of Texas at Austin, among others. This was accomplished through a presentation at the Mississippi state conference in this profession, chairing a session on issues in higher education at that conference, participation in the (national) Council of Academic Programs in Communication Science and Disorders, attendance at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention, and maintenance of relationships of longstanding in the profession.

There were 11 graduates of this Department in the Spring, 2002, and all 11 were admitted to accredited graduate programs in this profession. Those programs included the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Mississippi, etc. The Chair of the Department of Speech Pathology at the University of Mississippi made the first visit here, to recruit our graduates. All four who applied were admitted, and two are enrolled there (the other two chose to attend other universities). That Chair has chosen two Delta State graduates to be her graduate assistants, and has expressed considerable praise for them. That Chair has also asked to return each year to recruit our students.

WRITING ISSUES

The pass rate on the Writing Competency Test for students in this Department has been above the all-University rate (e.g., 75% to 55% last year). However, there is room for improvement, and some things have been initiated to address the issues. Faculty have agreed to hold students to a standard of writing that will enable them to be successful in graduate studies.
Students with questionable writing abilities are identified in beginning AUP courses (through examinations and written assignments), discussed among faculty, and in some cases the students are advised to go to the Writing Center for assistance.

Also, a special writing assignment in an advanced course taught by the Department Chair was implemented during the past year. Students were given different topics and required to write a library paper with appropriate documentation and essentially no errors. The deadline for the papers was a month before the end of the semester, so they could be assessed and returned for re-writes, where that was needed. This has helped to emphasize the need for good writing, the need to complete assignments early so they can be edited and improved, and has reassured other students that their writing skills are very good (and will be an asset in graduate studies).

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW
DEPARTMENT OF AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH PATHOLOGY
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE
DELTAS STATE UNIVERSITY

The Audiology and Speech Pathology undergraduate major was approved in 1970, along with the Speech and Hearing Clinic. These entities continue to complement each other, and are located administratively in the College of Arts and Sciences. Most graduates of the program have gone on to Master’s Degree programs in Speech Pathology or related fields such as Special Education, or they have been employed as speech clinicians, primarily in public schools. A few graduates have pursued Master’s Degrees or employment in other fields. The Clinic provides diagnostic, therapeutic, and consultative services related to speech and hearing disorders to Delta State University students, faculty, and staff (at no cost to them), as well as to citizens of this region (at quite reasonable fees). This service also provides clinical practicum opportunities for Audiology-Speech Pathology majors, quite important in preparation for employment or graduate studies.

The Program has been noted by the IHL for the number of students per faculty member (12) and the number of credit hours per faculty member (95) in the Fall Semester (1999 data). The following is the Program’s response.

In the Fall, 2000 a new Chairman came into the Program, and several procedures have been instituted to address the enrollment issues. Regarding the number of majors, the Program has dramatically increased its student recruitment and retention efforts. The Chair and faculty participated in the IHL “student fair” in Jackson in 2000 and 2001. New recruitment materials have been developed. Phone calls, letters and brochures have gone to prospective students identified through recruitment visits to high schools and community colleges, and through ACT profiles. Program representatives have participated in on-campus visitation days by prospective students, and have met with interested students and new majors any time they arrive. Current majors have also been encouraged to bring in acquaintances who have not declared a major, to take the “introductory” course and/or consider this major. The student organization, National Student Speech, Language and Hearing Association, previously dormant, has been activated and
has participated in recruitment activities (it will sponsor an “Open House” in the Clinic next month, aimed at bringing prospective students). The Chair and faculty have served as advisors to “undeclared” majors, and some of them have now declared their major as Speech Pathology. Also, a new advising/registration system has been implemented which will serve students better, and probably improve retention.

With respect to the number of credit hours, several changes have been made. Previously, all sixteen courses in the major were offered twice per year, resulting in some small classes. Now, twelve of those courses will be offered only once per year, assuring larger class sizes and more credit hours per course. Previously, three practicum courses which are necessarily small, were required in the curriculum. Two of those have been eliminated, replaced by lecture courses which can accommodate more students. Also, new courses have been developed to provide service to non-majors: an off-campus “survey of speech disorders” course, a “phonetics-based pre-reading” course for education majors, two courses in “sign language” which will meet the foreign language requirement in the general education curriculum, and a “speech and language improvement” course for the general education curriculum.

It should be noted that this is a clinical field, and those tend to have more “hands-on” experiences, and therefore smaller classes. Also, the enrollments here compare favorably with other programs of its type in this state (for examples, Communicative Disorders programs at Jackson State University and the University of Mississippi).

Most importantly, the situation has changed since the 1999 data were obtained. The Audiology and Speech Pathology major now has 62 students, an increase of 29%, and the number of majors per faculty is now 15.5. Changes noted above are expected to result in increases in credit hours per faculty member, and continue to impact favorably on the number of majors per faculty.