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## March 13, 2015 Annual Retreat

Communication Disorders & Sciences

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**Communication Disorders & Sciences  
Annual Retreat Minutes  
March 13, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

Faculty Present: Angela Anthony, Trina Becker, Beth Bergstrom, Lynn Calvert, Chris Chambers, Jill Fahy, Frank Goldacker, Naomi Gurevich, Nichole Mulvey, Jean Smitley, Rebecca Throneburg, Brenda Wilson

Absent: Tena McNamara

Graduate Applications

Twelve graduate assistants were chosen from candidates who were to be offered admission to the graduate program. Faculty reviewed the cohort application list and supported an offer of admission to 14 candidates. Three additional applicants to the cohort program as well as 12 applicants to the traditional program will be considered to complete the class of 15.

Department Strengths

Faculty shared perspectives on departmental strengths and what these strengths tell us about our department. Many comments emphasized clinical teaching and mentoring; we blend practical learning with content and theory, know our students well. Our clinical services are highly regarded by families and clients, and we get referrals as a result. Internship sites also request EIU students again after having one of our students. Faculty model leadership and service to the profession, university, and community. We also collaborate to solve problems, and honor our responsibilities to students, both individually and collectively.

Topical Discussions

Faculty divided up into groups to address four topics: Online Cohort planning, teaching and learning resources, student research expectations, and undergraduate curriculum mapping. Following small group discussion, groups shared with the full faculty.

1. Online Cohort Planning Discussion (Jill, Frank, Becky, Trina, Lynn, Angela)

Adjustments that would need to be made to shift the cohort to an in-load model were discussed. Faculty are currently near full loads without room for research and service. If we infuse the cohort program in-load, we would need additional faculty to cover all the CUs. We could consider revising course sequences so the on-campus section is taught in one semester, and the online course is taught in another semester, balancing teaching loads for those faculty involved. However, this may require faculty to give up other courses to still have room for supervision or program coordination. Faculty felt strongly that we need to maintain the model in which on campus and online sections are both taught by the same person. Financial models need to be explored related to costs of running the program. Planning should also consider the long-term model for new cohorts (e.g., every other year, every three years?). Emphasis was placed on the intent to prepare students to meet requirements for working in the state of Illinois; out-of-state candidates should be clearly informed of this during the application process and when admitted.

Concerns were raised regarding the start of a new cohort this summer. With one retirement in 2014 and three in 2015, we are losing four experienced teachers and supervisors. One of our two positions has been filled; the other is still open with an expanded position description. Filling the second position will put us at 12 faculty, which is still down 2 from our “full” faculty of 14. The uncertainty of hiring in the current campus climate also raised concerns for adequate staffing to meet ASHA accreditation requirements, and concern about the re-accreditation site visit in 2016. Uncertainty about salaries within the Continuing Education model and the ongoing campus discussions related to online programs in Fall 2014 led to delays in advertising the program this year. In addition, the pool of candidates for the online cohort was not as strong, and faculty questioned whether there was precedent for offering admission to students who had applied for the traditional program. It was suggested that we consider delaying the program for a year to examine the best approach to staffing.

Following discussion with all faculty, a motion was made to table admission of graduate students to the hybrid cohort. (Becker, Throneburg) Motion passed unanimously. Angela and Becky will follow up with Dean Augustine and Legal Counsel to determine next steps.

### 2. New Faculty Teaching and Learning Resources (Jean, Nichole, Naomi, Chris, Beth, Brenda)

The group discussed ways in which faculty can help each other identify effective teaching strategies. It was noted that we need to think more deliberately about what we can do to help each other and need to intentionally make time for sharing (e.g., clinical supervisor lunches). Suggested topics include case-based teaching, making students aware of expectations, efficient use of graduate assistant time, clinical supervision strategies, and advising. ASHA SIGs are also a good source of information.

### 3. Research Expectations (Naomi, Becky, Brenda, Trina, Beth, Angela)

Ways to make student research more efficient were discussed. Undergraduates and graduate students could be paired on projects (i.e., thesis and/or independent studies) to do related studies. Data collection could be simplified with shared projects, use of existing data from faculty projects, use of existing clinic data, or work with our in-house clients. Graduate student projects from the research class could also serve as a starting point for follow-up research with clients. Ideas were also explored regarding use of data from in-house clients and courses; we noted that our strength is in clinical teaching, so if we can connect to what we are already teaching, supervising, and researching, we can make the process more efficient for everyone. Opportunities for independent studies could include helping supervisors research evidence in a specific disorder area or develop home programs for clients. A list of opportunities can be generated to support faculty needs, then we can intentionally advise students into varied levels of research opportunities.

Completing a master’s thesis limits students’ ability to take special topics (thesis hours substitute for topics in the program) and may decrease motivation for choosing the thesis track. As we examine our goals for student research at the graduate level, we should take into consideration that all students get a functional research experience in the graduate course. Students could be encouraged more deliberately to continue these projects through independent studies and/or submission of their research for presentation at conferences.

At the undergraduate level, opportunities for research and related coursework could be expanded for students as a whole. Currently our primary focus is on Departmental Honors students. Topics at the undergraduate level could include basic research methods (e.g., single subject design), how to read a research article for EBP. A course such as this could be an elective, and could build interest in research and lead to more independent studies.

#### 4. Undergraduate Curriculum Mapping (Jill, Nichole, Jean, Lynn, Chris, Frank)

Jill shared background on the university's process of updating the undergraduate learning goals, including the focus on general education this year, and shift to focus on the majors next year. We are already addressing the revised goals in many ways, however we need to update our current curriculum map and incorporate the 5<sup>th</sup> learning goal, Quantitative Reasoning. As we evaluate our coursework, we need to consider the achievements of our graduating seniors related to the learning goals and our expectations for their knowledge base upon graduation. For example, what do we think they should be able to critically read? Can we articulate what functional outcomes are for our seniors? The ongoing process will include a deliberate look at course syllabi to determine where learning goals can be incorporated and how assignments reflect these goals. Jill and Nichole have collected a preliminary list of class assignments to examine what we are already doing. Discussion of this topic will continue in curriculum committee.

#### Summer Scheduling

Angela shared the EIU 3 plan proposed by the Psychology Department and opened a discussion regarding the option of a shift to three 4-week summer sessions instead of the current 4, 6, or 8 week options. Faculty brainstormed ideas for shifting summer teaching, including possible online course options. Discussion also addressed current topics of coursework for second year graduate students and ideas for updating the Professional Regulations course.

#### Departmental Efficiency, Time Management, and Needs

Angela opened a discussion to explore ways to increase efficiency in the department and assist with better managing time, particularly in light of the upcoming retirements and faculty reductions. Suggestions for new departmental initiatives/needs were also requested.

1. Advisement could be restructured so that advisors worked with a cohort of students (based on graduation year). In addition, transfer students and second bachelor's students could be advised in separate groups. This would allow an advisor to focus on needs of a particular group of students' needs and make advising less time consuming.
2. A couple faculty members could be assigned as undergraduate admissions contacts to oversee open houses, recruitment, and maintain contact with the advising center on campus. It was noted that we are getting more direct calls to the department to set up visits than in the past; this may be related to spring open houses now focusing on admitted students only. Brochures and our department video also need to be updated.
3. Recruitment at the undergraduate level needs to be examined, as our numbers are down. Suggestions included use of the intro class (CDS 2000) to bring in students; an online section could be offered, possibly in the summer. In addition, clearer communication to advisors in the Advising Center to encourage students in related majors to take the course could draw more students. A career day at local schools was also suggested. An ad hoc committee could be formed to address UG recruitment

4. Chris is currently updating our undergraduate advising grid. We also need to look at the undergraduate catalog and update it.
5. Brenda noted that the CDS departmental policies should be reviewed and updated.
6. Contact with CDS alumni needs to be improved. We need a system for tracking alumni; this could be via the website, email, or Facebook. Previous systems have not been maintained. Nichole is currently working on a way to get personal emails from our current group of students in order to maintain contact after graduation.
7. Suggestions for splitting up retreat into a fall and spring meeting were proposed. Faculty supported the idea of having a meeting in early fall to revisit initiatives for the coming year. No decision was made regarding changes to the spring retreat.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45.

cc: Provost Lord  
Dean Ornes  
Booth Archives