



September 11, 2020

Ms. Dannelle Whiteside
Interim President
Austin Peay State University
601 State Street
Clarksville, TN 37044

Dear Ms. Whiteside:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:

Significant Departure Program

Master in Speech-Language Pathology (M.S.L.P.)

Submission date:

6/11/2020

Implementation date:

8/2/2021

Case ID:

SC010865

Additional information was requested by the Commission via email; the response has been incorporated into the original submission.

The Master of Speech-Language Pathology (M.S.L.P.) degree program at Austin Peay State University (APSU) is a 54-credit hour program, intended to be ongoing, and scheduled for implementation in August 2021, on the institution's main campus. The target audience for the program is students with an earned bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSDI) and students with an earned bachelor's or master's degree in a different professional field who have completed the prerequisite courses that provide foundational knowledge and skills in CSDI. The institution anticipates admission of a 20-student cohort each fall term. Delivery methods will include face-to-face, hybrid, and online instruction.

The purpose of the implementation of the Master of Speech-Language Pathology was discussed in the context of the institution's mission and strategic plan, and appears to be appropriate. Evidence of legal authority to offer the program was documented through the March 20, 2020 minutes of the Austin Peay State University Board of Trustees and the May 15, 2020 approval letter from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

The need for the program was established through data from U.S. News and World Report, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Latest Numbers, the Communication Sciences and Disorders Health Education Survey, outcome data for employment in speech-language pathology, and a market analysis conducted for the institution by Hanover Research. The planning and approval process for the program was described



Ms. Dannelle Whiteside

September 11, 2020

Page 2

and appears to be appropriate. The process occurred at multiple levels with each level including faculty as voting members.

The curriculum for the program, course descriptions, and projected schedule of course offerings were provided and appear to be appropriate. APSU will seek accreditation for the program by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). The eight program student learning outcomes which were identified align with the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CFCC) standards. The program student learning outcomes will be assessed through both formative and summative measures that will be identified by faculty members. Assessment will follow the APSU procedures for assessing and evaluating institutional effectiveness in regard to student learning and program evaluation. The program will also be assessed annually by the Council for Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) to secure and maintain accreditation. The institution was asked to provide the programmatic goals for the program. The goals were submitted and appear to be appropriate.

The admission and graduation requirements for the program were noted and appear appropriate. The APSU policy for defining and determining credit hours was provided. It appears to be appropriate and consistent with common academic practice.

Administrative oversight of the Masters of Speech-Language Pathology program (M.S.L.P.) will be provided by the Program Director who will report to the department chair of Health and Human Performance. The director will be assisted by the Clinic Coordinator. Individuals serving in these roles will be responsible for the operation and success of the program. The program director was identified and appears to have appropriate credentials to serve in this role.

The Faculty Roster included the credentials of two existing faculty members and the expected credentials of an assistant professor and a clinical coordinator/supervisor to be hired prior to the program launch in fall 2021. The institution described the adequacy of these faculty members to support the program within the context of the APSU Faculty Workload policy. There appears to be a sufficient number of faculty members to deliver the courses and clinical experiences. The institution was asked to update the Faculty Roster Form to include all courses and significant non-course program requirements in the new program assigned to at least one faculty member qualified to teach the course content. The additional information was provided, and the faculty members appear to have qualifications appropriate to teach the assigned courses. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review team who will assess the program as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

The library and learning resources for the program were identified and appear adequate. Students and faculty can access library services and resources remotely through an authentication process which uses the user's last name and ID number. A number of discipline-specific databases are available which provide students and faculty access to full-text articles in the discipline. Resources can also be obtained through the interlibrary loan program.



Ms. Dannelle Whiteside

September 11, 2020

Page 3

Students in the M.S.L.P. program receive an orientation to library resources at the beginning of the first semester as part of MSLP 6044: Speech-Language Pathologist as Research Consumer. Assistance is also provided in person, by phone, chat, email, text, and through online tutorials on the library's website. Additionally, a library liaison is assigned to the Department of Health and Human Performance to support students and faculty. The library also provides technology lending services for items such as laptops, tablets, and adaptive technology for students with disabilities.

The institution provides a range of support services to all students. For students in the M.S.L.P. program, these include assistance from the College of Graduate Studies with the functions of admission, enrollment, and registration; access to technology support through the office of Information Technology's Help Desk; additional technology resources through the Office of Distance Education for online and distance learners; and support services for students with disabilities through the Office of Disability Services. Students in the M.S.L.P. program will be assigned an academic advisor during the first term to support timely program completion.

The facilities and equipment necessary for the program were described and appear appropriate. Space will be renovated for the development of the community speech-language clinic and equipment necessary for use in the program will be purchased during the planning year. Community partners have expressed interest in collaborating in the design of a shared space for a community clinic and are willing to leverage funds to support the design of the clinic. Existing classrooms available for use by the program are equipped with Smart boards, computers, document cameras, and audio; one classroom is a 30-seat computer classroom. The department has equipment (e.g., speech and language assessment and treatment materials and screening audiometer) which supports the undergraduate concentration in Communication and Sciences and Disorders that will be shared by the M.S.L.P. program for academic and clinical experiences.

A budget was provided for the 2020-2021 planning year and the first five years of implementation. Revenue appears to be adequate to cover program expenses. The budget included one-time and re-occurring expenditures as well as revenue from tuition, fees, and institutional reallocation. A contingency plan was described to manage aspects of program development so as not to impact program quality should financial resources not materialize. Such plans include the delay of renovations, the use of clinic space provided by community partners, and the prioritized acquisition of equipment. The department chair would also work with the Dean and the Provost to identify cost cutting measures should necessary resources not materialize. APSU is not currently on reimbursement for Title IV funding.

The institution's Institutional Effectiveness and assessment process was described and appears adequate. The annual process includes four steps: 1) planning; 2) assessing and analyzing outcomes; 3) improvement; and 4) review. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee provides oversight for the process and also provides feedback for the annual reports. The Master of Speech-Language Pathology (M.S.L.P.) degree program will be incorporated into this process.



Ms. Dannelle Whiteside
September 11, 2020
Page 4

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Master of Speech-Language Pathology (M.S.L.P.) degree program. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Crystal A. Baird at 404-679-4501 or via email at cbaird@sacscoc.org.

Please include the Case ID number above in all submissions or correspondence about this substantive change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/TDB:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Dr. Lynne S. Crosby, Vice Provost/Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Crystal A. Baird