



# **SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY**

## **Strategic Plan**

**2020-2025**

August 1, 2020

## Executive Summary

Approved by the APSU Board of Trustees on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and approved by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission on May 15, 2020, the new Master of Speech-Language Pathology (MSLP) program seeks to build a program of excellence in teaching, currency of curriculum, conventional and innovative pedagogy, and a desire to *Lead through Excellence* to prepare highly competent speech-language pathologists. As part of a comprehensive and growing university, the MSLP program is fully committed to serving the community and playing a key role in its economic development and quality of life for individuals with communication and swallowing disorders. The creation of the program and fulfillment of the program mission is intended to serve APSU students and the community. The MSLP program and strategic plan initiatives articulated here seek to build a program of teaching excellence and exceptional client care that places a high value on community partnerships and interdisciplinary collaborations. MSLP faculty will use this strategic plan to direct their efforts in realizing its aspirations.

## History

Austin Peay State University (APSU) is located in downtown Clarksville, Tennessee, the state's fifth largest and youngest city demographically. The University began as Austin Peay Normal School when it was created as a two-year junior college and teacher-training institution by Act of the General Assembly of 1927 and named in honor of Governor Austin Peay, who was serving his third term of office when the school was established. Limited in purposes and resources initially, the school gradually grew in stature over the years to take its place among the colleges and universities under the control of the State Board of Education. In 1939, the State Board of Education authorized the school to inaugurate a curriculum leading to the Bachelor of Science degree. The degree was first conferred on the graduating class at the 1942 Spring Convocation. By Act of the Tennessee Legislature of February 4, 1943, the name of the school was changed to Austin Peay State College. The College was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in 1947. In 1951, the State Board authorized the College to confer the Bachelor of Arts degree and, in 1952, to offer graduate study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in Education. At the November 1966 meeting, the State Board of Education conferred university status on the College, effective September 1, 1967. In February 1967, the State Board of Education authorized the University to confer the Master of Arts and the Master of Science degrees. In 1968, associate degrees were approved. The State Board of Education relinquished its governance of higher education institutions to the Tennessee Board of Regents in 1972. In 1974, the Tennessee Board of Regents authorized the Bachelor of Fine Arts and the Education Specialist Degrees. In Fall 2017, the APSU Board of Trustees approved the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership, which was subsequently approved in 2018 by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. SACSCOC approved a Level Change to offer the first doctoral program (Ed.D.) in June 2018 and the program was implemented in Fall 2018. As of Fall 2019, the University offers a total of 93 undergraduate and graduate majors and certificates. Austin Peay State University is part of the Tennessee's State University and Community College system and is governed by the Austin Peay State University Board of Trustees.

The creation of the Master of Speech-Language Pathology (MSLP) program is linked to the APSU Master Strategic Plan and APSU Mission. The APSU Strategic Plan 2015-2025 identifies enrollment growth at the graduate level as a strategic priority.

*Objective 1.2.2: Create new graduate programs that meet current market demands or projected market demands.*

The Provost's office initiated the project to create the MSLP program in the summer of 2017. Data from multiple public sources revealed this type of professional graduate program is supported by consistently strong enrollment and continuous student demand. This combined with a positive job market outlook made this degree program a desirable option to meet student need and serve the community. In May of 2018, APSU commissioned Hanover Research to complete feasibility studies for both a Bachelor's and Master's degree offering. Results from this report dated June, 2018, recommended APSU move forward with the proposed MSLP degree program as well as an undergraduate concentration in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSDI). The Southern Association for Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) approved the new degree concentration in CSDI September 20, 2018, effective Spring 2019. This degree concentration in CSDI leads to a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Health and Human Performance and will serve as a feeder program for the graduate MSLP program.

The addition of the MSLP program at APSU will support the institution's ability to fulfill its mission. Inherent in APSU's mission statement is a commitment to developing programs and services that contribute to the region in a myriad of ways. The proposed MSLP will support this commitment through the professional preparation of speech-language pathologists that are needed not only in the local community and region but across the country. The professional service training model which will be provided at an on-campus clinical site will also provide high-quality services to the Clarksville and Ft. Campbell communities. The APSU Clinic for Speech-Language and Swallowing Disorders will function as a professional outpatient clinic in which all evaluation and treatment services will be provided by graduate student clinicians under the direct supervision of clinical faculty providers who are licensed to practice speech-language pathology by the state of Tennessee and hold a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC). Program faculty will also serve the community by contributing their expertise to businesses, schools, health care providers and other community institutions and organizations. Faculty will be prepared to serve as clinical experts and will conduct research on human communication and service delivery that will meet the needs of the community and region.

The MSLP program provides the entry-level degree required to become a speech-language pathologist. The APSU MSLP is a five semester 54 credit hour program that includes academic courses and supervised practicum experiences in variety of settings and with a myriad of populations.

### **Development of the Strategic Plan**

This inaugural MSLP 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is the culmination of two years of program development by MSLP faculty, the Health and Human Performance Department Chair, and the Dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences. The strategic planning process involved reviewing data from the feasibility study, the New Academic Program Proposal, and the application for Candidacy by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). The Strategic Plan accompanied the CAA Candidacy Application as it progressed through higher levels of university administration for approvals. Feedback from the review was incorporated into the final draft.

## **APSU MSLP Vision**

The MSLP Program aspires to be recognized for its leadership, excellence in teaching, and community service and partnerships

## **APSU MSLP Mission**

The mission of the Austin Peay State University Master of Speech-Language Pathology program is to lead in improving the lives of persons with communication disorders residing in Tennessee and surrounding regions through preparing professionals who are highly competent with the provision of evidence-based clinical services and who can provide these services while observing the highest standards of ethics, integrity and compassionate care; and by teaching and learning in a culture that cultivates excellence and collegiality, supports diversity, inclusion, critical thinking and engages with the community in meaningful ways.

## **APSU Program Goals**

1. Provide a graduate education culminating in the Master of Speech-Language Pathology that prepares students to meet the current professional standards for clinical certification and state licensure.
2. Offer graduate student clinicians exposure to diverse clinical populations, assessment procedures, treatment methodologies and work settings.
3. Prepare graduates of the program for complex work environments, interprofessional practice, evidence-based practice and an ability to adapt to changes in the profession.
4. Develop leaders that will impact the Clarksville community, region and state by expanding clinical services provided to the community through compassionate care, outreach, education and service activities.

## Strategies & Objectives

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a graduate education culminating in the Master of Speech-Language Pathology that prepares students to meet the current professional standards for clinical certification and state licensure.</li> <li>2. Offer graduate student clinicians exposure to diverse clinical populations, assessment procedures, treatment methodologies and work settings.</li> <li>3. Prepare graduates of the program for complex work environments, interprofessional practice, evidence-based practice and an ability to adapt to changes in the profession.</li> <li>4. Develop leaders that will impact the Clarksville community, region and state by expanding clinical services provided to the community through compassionate care, outreach, education and service activities.</li> </ol>		Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
<b>Strategy 1</b>	<b>Recruit, develop and retain faculty, staff, and community partners that support program success and sustainability</b>				
	Conduct faculty/staff searchers that recruit a robust and diverse candidate pool	X		X	X
	Hire the third doctoral faculty member	X			X
	Hire a full-time clinical educator to serve as Clinic Director	X	X		X
	Develop an internal process for coaching MSLP faculty to facilitate success with the RTP process	X			
	Host journal club for MSLP faculty to increase accountability of scholarly activity (weekly 12/16 weeks two consecutive terms)	X			
	Identify areas of research within the discipline or interprofessional opportunities with a strong potential for external funding	X			
	Submit two grant applications for outside funding	X			X
	Host an excellence in teaching professional development for MSLP faculty once a term	X			
	Identify a mechanism to celebrate and disseminate faculty/staff, and community partner successes				X
	Develop 2 new partnerships with established nonprofit, educational settings or healthcare system	X			X

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<b>Strategy 2</b>	<b>Deliver Exceptional and Effective Academic and Clinical Programs</b>				
	Secure clinical education equipment and materials outlined in the NAPP (distinguish between access to and owned)	X	X	X	
	Secure Clinical Affiliation Agreements for 25 sites	X	X	X	X
	Map clinical simulations across MSLP curriculum	X	X	X	
	Develop the 3 competency exams	X	X	X	
	Identify technology solution to administer and score the 3 competency exams	X	X	X	
	Establish an interdisciplinary swallowing and feeding clinic to provide services for individuals across the lifespan based on university and community partnerships	X	X	X	X
	Implement interdisciplinary learning experiences	X	X	X	X
	Identify a study abroad opportunity for MSLP students	X	X	X	
	Identify an innovative method to infuse/ or create new element that offers extra training in bilingual service delivery into the curriculum	X	X	X	X
	Describe and document Student Advisory Council purpose, policy and procedures	X		X	X
	Describe and document MSLP Advisory Board purpose, policy and procedures	X	X	X	

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<b>Strategy 3</b>	<b>Develop logistics that support and strengthen program development, implementation, delivery, and evaluation</b>				
	Submit CAA application for Candidacy	X			
	Successfully meet the CAA requirements for Candidacy status	X			
	Create advising tracking form (including verification of knowledge and skills)	X			
	Identify an affordable technological option for tracking student acquisition of knowledge and skills for certification	X			
	Adopt and implement a cloud-based tracking system for clinical hours and certification forms	X			
	Complete MSLP Student Handbook	X			
	Complete a faculty handbook specific to the MSLP program that outlines policies and procedures	X	X		
	Create the template for Student Support Committee to use in creating action plans	X	X		
	Finalize the Expectations for Professional Conduct form and place in the Student Handbook	X	X		
	Develop a volunteer program that supports the MSLP program and complies with all HIPAA and FERPA related regulations		X		X
	Compile inventory of clinical education materials and equipment	X	X	X	
	Develop a reporting mechanism for tracking community partnerships	X	X	X	X
	Develop a reporting mechanism for tracking internal collaborations	X	X	X	
	Move into a space on the APSU campus that accommodates all faculty/staff offices, the Clinic for Speech, Language, and Swallowing Disorders, and classroom appropriate for clinical education by August 2022	X	X	X	X
	Develop mechanism for updating public information	X			



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<b>Strategy 4</b>	<b>Lead in service and collaborative activities within the APSU, local, state, and national communities to improve the lives of those with communication disorders</b>				
	Identify and document leadership skill development in the curriculum	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
	Develop a mechanism for tracking service delivery to the community for services provided by the APSU Clinic for Speech-Language and Swallowing Disorders		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
	Develop an inventory of service opportunities at each level for faculty				<b>X</b>
	Develop an inventory of service opportunities at each level for students				<b>X</b>
	Develop a reporting mechanism for existing service partnerships and their outcomes and impact				<b>X</b>

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<b>Strategy 5</b>	<b>Engage in activities designed to improve the quality of the program</b>				
	Develop a rubric for measuring progress toward fulfilling the MSLP mission (1/2021)	X	X	X	X
	Develop rubric(s) to assess congruence of the program mission and goals and APSU (1/2021)	X	X	X	X
	Develop rubric to assess congruence of program's strategic plan with mission and goals of the program and institution (1/2021)	X	X	X	X
	Identify methods to collect data for collecting perspectives of external stakeholders regarding the program's success fulfilling its mission and securing input for strategic plan, and curriculum review (1/2021)	X	X	X	X
	Identify predictors of student success by evaluating successful applicants in context of admission requirements	X			
	Develop an alumni survey to assess program outcomes and perceptions of preparedness	X		X	
	Establish a relevant, impactful brand identify for the HHP MSLP program				X
	Develop and document a process for regular curriculum review (internal and external input)	X	X	X	
	Identify and document (MSLP internal faculty handbook) successful strategies to assist Student Support Committee in developing Action Plans	X	X	X	
	Evaluate effectiveness of verification of student acquisition of knowledge and skills	X	X		