



## **Strategic Plan**

*(Updated 3.1.2022)*

### **Executive Summary**

The DePaul University Speech Language Pathology Program is grounded in the Vincentian tradition and urban character of DePaul University with a primary goal of serving the most vulnerable and traditionally underserved populations. Our program is poised to be a leader in the field of Speech Language Pathology using evidence-based and ethical practice to train future Speech Language Pathologists who have a particular interest in working in urban areas to address health and service delivery disparities. Our bilingual/bicultural certificate program is one of only a handful in the United States, and with Chicago being home to one of the largest number of Spanish speaking populations in the United States, will offer graduate students an exceptional opportunity to become outstanding bilingual speech-language pathologists and leaders in their communities and the profession.

This 2020-2025 Strategic Plan serves to outline the goals that the DePaul University Speech Language Pathology Program will address to accomplish our mission and vision statements that align with DePaul University's Vincentian mission and the College of Science and Health Strategic Plan. Our Strategic Plan also meets the standards of the Council for Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) for the candidacy requirements for a Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology.

### **Summary of the Objectives**

#### **Program Development and CAA Accreditation**

CAA Accreditation activities will commence summer, 2020, and will include development of all the SLP courses aligned to the CAA standards (including syllabus development, formative and summative assessments, and learning activities), faculty searches, admissions of graduate students, recruitment of clients for the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic, and establishment of externship placements. The SLP Program will also establish an advisory board and also establish relationships with alumni and professionals within the State of Illinois.

Highly qualified faculty will be recruited and retained using a phased hiring strategy with a result of 6 faculty members hired by July, 2021, with a minimum of 57% of faculty hires holding a Ph.D. and demonstrated excellence and expertise in their areas of teaching and research. Recruitment strategies to attract a diverse student population will be implemented along with peer and faculty mentoring programs to support and retain these students. Clients within the Chicago area will be recruited into the on-campus DePaul Speech Language Clinic across the continuum of care through development of university and community partnerships. Externship sites will be developed, fostered and expanded to meet our standards of excellence in clinical education.

As part of program development, it is essential to establish community partnerships through clinical site connections, educational partnerships, and alumni activities. The DePaul University Speech Language Pathology Program will create the DePaul Community Advisory Board (DCAB) and establish four annual meetings to review and solicit feedback related to DSLP curricula and program implementation. Finally, relationships with alumni will be established and relationships with speech-language pathologists in the State of Illinois maintained through professional organizations (e.g., ISHA Annual Convention).

### **Establish bilingual/bicultural certificate SLP Program**

At least 10 bilingual (Spanish-English) students will be recruited and retained for the Bilingual English-Spanish Specialization Certificate (BESSC) through a holistic admission process and review. These students will gain expertise through specialized course work, engage in service-learning experiences, attain cross-cultural competence through global learning experiences, and accrue bilingual clinical experiences with both children and adults across a variety of settings and under the supervision of highly qualified bilingual supervisors. Most importantly, these students will partake in a concrete faculty and student mentorship program and check in system during both academic coursework and on/off site clinical experiences which will contribute to students becoming outstanding bilingual speech-language pathologists and leaders in their communities and the profession.

### **Scholarly Activities to elevate academic excellence and embrace a culture of creativity and discovery**

DePaul University is committed to supporting unique academic opportunities for faculty and embraces a culture of creativity and discovery. The Speech Language Pathology Program shares this commitment and will provide opportunities for faculty to elevate their online teaching skills, develop innovative programming through university and community collaborations, and develop global learning experiences within the curriculum. The SLP Program will also support faculty in development of their leadership skills within the university and profession. Annual travel funds for professional development will be provided to sustain excellence in teaching, clinical service delivery, and research, and mentoring support will be provided for faculty at various levels within the university to assist faculty in accomplishing their teaching and research goals.

### **Ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive SLP Program**

Among DePaul University's core values and traditions as a Catholic, Vincentian, and urban university is the high value it places on diversity and culture. The SLP Program plans to uphold these core values through its commitment to recruit and support first generation and underrepresented minority students to create an inclusive, engaging and welcoming environment. The SLP Program will also employ strategies to promote an inclusive environment for faculty, staff, and the clients they serve in the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic.

## **Strategic Plan Focus Areas**

**FOCUS AREA 1:** Program Development and CAA Accreditation.

**FOCUS AREA 2:** Establish partnerships through university collaborations, clinical site connections, educational partnerships, and alumni activities.

**FOCUS AREA 3:** Establish bilingual certificate SLP program.

**FOCUS AREA 4:** Scholarly Activities to elevate academic excellence and embrace a culture of creativity and discovery.

**FOCUS AREA 5:** Ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive SLP Program.