

Degree/Certificate: BA and MS

Major/Option: Communication Disorders

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Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2013-14

Part I – for the 2013-14 academic year: Because Deans have been asked to create College-Level Summary Reports annually, the template has been slightly modified for a) clarity for Chairs and Directors, and b) a closer fit with what the Deans and Associate Deans are being asked to report.

1. **Undergraduate Student Learning Outcome:** Illustrate insight into the communication disorders profession by participating in service learning opportunities
2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

_____ SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;

__x__ SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;

_____ SLO met without change required

3. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.

COMD 450 Language and Literacy. Students had to examine, as well as apply knowledge of, diagnosis and remediation of language and learning disabilities in individuals manifesting disorders in understanding or using spoken/written language. The course focused on emergent and early literacy in young children. Students participated in a community service-learning experience in this class. The students created and implemented literacy centers for two kindergarten classes at a local elementary school. Service-learning is characterized by: 1) promoting civic responsibility, 2) furthering the learning and implementation of course objectives, 3) student reflection (e.g., reflection essays, journaling and discussions), and 4) a focus on collaboration between various professions (ASHA, 2007; Reading & Padgett, 2011; Simons & Cleary, 2005). Students were required to keep a reflection journal throughout the semester. While the reflections were guided by specific questions the students had to address, they were personal reflections and varied in content. An inductive qualitative analysis of common themes found in the pre-reflection and post-reflection journal entries was conducted to determine the SLO.

4. **Observations gathered from data:** Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.

While many themes were identified in the pre- (11) and post- (15) reflection entries, only the major themes found in the majority of journals are reported below.

a) Findings:

Themes from the pre-reflection entry

- All of the students (100%, 29/29) reported that they understood the purpose of their SL experience.
- Keeping the children on task and creating appropriate activities was reported to be the biggest expected challenge for the experience by 86% (25/29) of the students.
- Gaining professional and clinical experience was reported by 79% (23/29) students as their main hope for their SL experience.

Themes from the post-reflection entry

- SL experience increased their knowledge of literacy skills, which literacy skills to focus on with kindergarteners, and how to create appropriate literacy activities was reported by 97% (28/29) of the students.
- SL experience provided an understanding of the functioning level of a kindergartener was reported by 97% (28/29) of the students.
- The academic materials and class discussions were relevant and helpful for the SL experience was reported by 76% (22/29) of the students.
- Learned how to scaffold appropriately and use appropriate strategies based on child's developmental level was reported by 59% (17/29) students.
- The SL experience contributed to growth in understanding and knowledge of clinical skills was reported by 72% (21/29) of the students.

b) Analysis of findings:

While the student reflection journals captured the students' insights into the SL experience based on the questions they had to answer in the entry, their post-reflection journal entries may not have captured a great deal of insight into the profession of communication disorders. The majority of the students looked forward to gaining professional and clinical experience as demonstrated in the theme captured in the pre-reflection entry. The SL experience increased the students' knowledge of literacy skills and how to create and implement literacy activities. Learning how to appropriately scaffold a child through an activity is an important skill for clinicians to learn and that was a major theme in the journal entries. Overall the SL experience contributed to increased understanding and knowledge of clinical skills for our students. There is no opportunity for clinical work at the undergraduate level. That is why service-learning experiences are such a good fit in our program. The students can relate their coursework and use their knowledge with populations they may be working with in the future.

5. **What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?**

- a) Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).

COMD 450 and the SL will remain the same. The questions in the pre- and post-reflection entries will be changed to reflect insight into the profession of communication disorders so we can better capture the SLO. A pre-post survey regarding SL and the knowledge of the profession of communication disorders would also be a way to capture this SLO. We will contact Molly Ayers regarding survey development.

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

COMD 450 is offered every spring term. The reflection journal questions will be revised this upcoming term (spring 2015). The instructor will attempt to create a survey reflecting knowledge of SL and the profession of communication disorders.

6. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

No specific changes to the SLO related to COMD 450 are necessary at this time. Feedback from students support the continuation of this learning outcome.

Graduate Program Assessment

1. **Graduate Student Learning Outcome:** Demonstrate application of research in the discipline of communication disorders.

2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

_____ SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;

x SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;

_____ SLO met without change required

3. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.

Second year graduate students develop and present original research posters at the Inland Northwest Research Symposium that is held in March of the year. Three members of the graduate faculty evaluate each poster utilizing a rubric. (see attached). In order to

successfully pass this research experience, the student must score a minimum of 40 out of 50 points. Overall scores were utilized as evidence for completion of the assessment of graduate student learning outcomes. Copies of the completed rubrics are included in the individual student academic file that is archived in the department office.

4. Observations gathered from data: Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #9

- a. Findings: Thirty-one students' rubrics were reviewed. All students satisfactorily passed the outcome. Overall scores ranged from 42-50. The mean was 46.5
- b. Analysis of findings: While there was variability in the individual item scores, each student demonstrated the ability to apply research in the discipline of communication Disorders.

5. What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?

- a) Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).

The scoring rubric has been distributed to the graduate students prior to the development of the research poster. This has aided in the clarity of the expectations. A closer evaluation of the individual elements, which are evaluated by the reviewers, may yield information that will be instructive for future research presentations. The manner in which the graduate student learning outcome is written does not dictate HOW that outcome should be evaluated. A clearer outcome evaluation may be described for 2014-2015.

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

A specific reframing of the outcome may occur in Spring Semester 2015.

6. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

COMD will consider reframing our graduate SLOs to coincide with the Council of Academic Accreditation's knowledge and skills outcomes that are graduate students must meeting during their graduate career. Feedback from students and committee members support the continuation of this learning outcome.

NEW: PART II – CLOSING THE LOOP
FOLLOW-UP FROM THE 2012-13 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

In response to the university's accrediting body, the [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#), this section has been added. This should be viewed as a follow up to the previous year's findings. In other words, begin with findings from 2012-13, and then describe actions taken during 2013-14 to improve student learning along, provide a brief summary of findings, and describe possible next steps.

Working definition for closing the loop: *Using assessment results to improve student learning as well as pedagogical practices. This is an essential step in the continuous cycle of assessing student learning. It is the collaborative process through which programs use evidence of student learning to gauge the efficacy of collective educational practices, and to identify and implement strategies for improving student learning.* Adapted 8.21.13 from <http://www.hamline.edu/learning-outcomes/closing-loop.html>.

1. Student Learning Outcome(s) assessed for 2012-13

NA for undergraduate and graduate programs– No report was found for COMD for 2012-2013. Helen Bergland informed me I could leave this section blank.

2. Strategies implemented during 2013-14 to improve student learning, based on findings of the 2012-13 assessment activities.

3. Summary of results (may include comparative data or narrative; description of changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc.): Describe the effect of the changes towards improving student learning and/or the learning environment.

4. What further changes to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc. are projected based on closing-the-loop data, findings and analysis?