

SLP Xavier University of
Louisiana Department of Speech
Pathology Master's Degree
Strategic Plan 2023-2025

University Mission Statement

Xavier University of Louisiana, founded by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, is Catholic and historically Black. The ultimate purpose of the University is to contribute to the promotion of a more just and humane society by preparing its students to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society. This preparation takes place in a diverse learning and teaching environment that incorporates all relevant educational means, including research and community service.

Vision Statement

The new Master's Program in Speech-Language Pathology at Xavier University of Louisiana will join the state's premiere graduate programs in attracting high achieving post baccalaureate candidates through its recruitment of talented, intellectually engaged, and diverse faculty who embrace the university's commitment to scholarship, research and service in a global society. To date, none of the eight ASHA-accredited graduate programs in Communicative Disorders that currently exist in Louisiana focus on the training of professionals to competently serve multicultural or bilingual communities. Professionals graduating from the new Program at Xavier University of Louisiana will be specifically trained to address the unique needs of individuals and their families from underserved communities.

In addition, the Program will create a culture of evidence-based educational and clinical practices among its faculty, staff and students and will reflect the department's long-standing core values of compassion, professional excellence, community engagement and commitment to life-long learning.

Mission

The mission of the Master's Program in Speech-Language Pathology at Xavier University of Louisiana is to produce professionals who are clinically competent as defined by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to respectfully and compassionately address the needs (i.e., prevention, identification, treatment) of individuals across the life span with communicative disorders, differences or those who are at-risk of such problems within and across diverse communities, settings, and contexts.

Envisioned Future

It is 2027 and Xavier's Master of Science degree in Speech-Language Pathology is the premier academic program for educating students to serve in a global society. Program faculty are recognized for their research and practice in multicultural and multilingual speech-language pathology. Program graduates are working all over the country and even the globe providing services to individuals from diverse populations.

Baseline Data

Table 1. Completion Rates

Cohort	Number of Students Completed on Time	Percentage Completed Within Published Time Frame	Completion Rate
First Cohort – 2019 Graduation: May 2021	16	76% (16/21)	100% (21/21)
Second Cohort – 2020 Graduation: May 2022	18	100% (18/18)	100% (18/18)
Third Cohort - 2021 Graduation: May 2023	18	100% (18/18)	100% (18/18)

Table 2. SLP Praxis Examination Pass Rates

ETS Testing Year	Number of Students Taking the Exam	Number of Students Passed	Pass Rate
August 2020 – July 2021	14	9	64.29%
August 2021 – July 2022	22	18	81.82%
August 2022 – July 2023	22	21	95.23%
Three Year Passing Rate		48/58 = 82.76%	241.34%/3 = 80.45%

Table 3. Race/Ethnic Demographics

	Academic Year					
	201908	202008	202108	202208	202308	5 Yr Total
Total Enrolled Students	21	40	39	28	16	144
Asian	1	2	1			4
Black/African American	19	32	26	20	13	110
Hispanic			2	3	1	6
Two or More Races			1	1		2
Non Resident Alien					1	1
White	1	6	9	4	1	21

% Black/AA	90.5%	80.0%	66.7%	71.4%	81.3%	76.4%
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Focus Areas

Focus One: Student Recruitment and Retention

Issue(s): To be successful the Program must be successful at attracting and retaining a pool of high achieving postbaccalaureate students (from within and outside the geographic area) each year of its existence if it is to become the premiere graduate program to which it aspires. Particular attention must be paid to the recruitment and retention of candidates from underrepresented communities.

Outcomes: Each year the Program will have an ample pool of highly qualified postbaccalaureate candidates eligible for admission.

Indicators of Success:

1. Cohort groups of 20-22 high achieving master's degree candidates will be admitted to the Program each Fall;
2. At least 50% of each cohort group will be comprised of candidates from underrepresented groups; and
3. 90% of students will have completed the program within the program's published time frame (5 semesters).

Strategies to Achieve Outcomes: The following strategies are proposed to achieve the target outcome of student recruitment and retention:

1. The Program will develop a marketing plan to recruit highly qualified postbaccalaureate students.
Person responsible: The Vice President of Enrollment Management and Graduate Programs Manager (Dean's Office). They will work in conjunction with program faculty and Xavier University Marketing staff.
Timeline: Ongoing;
2. The Program will continuously update its application and selection process.
Person Responsible: Program Director, who will work in conjunction with all Speech Pathology Department Faculty
Timeline: Ongoing

Focus Two: Cultural and Linguistic Sensitivity

Issue(s): Exposure to individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities during training is essential for professionals to become competent in recognizing and addressing the unique needs of underserved populations.

Outcomes: All Master's candidates will be trained to provide evidence-based services to culturally and linguistically diverse clients in on-campus or off-campus settings.

Indicators of Success: By the end of each academic year, 100% of the Master's candidates will have been exposed to current research about cultural and linguistic diversity in their coursework and will have completed at least one clinical experience serving individuals from underserved communities.

Strategies to Achieve Outcomes:

1. Utilize CALIPSO records to identify sites which provide exposure to underrepresented clients and students who do clinical training at these sites.
Person responsible: Director of Clinical Education
Timeline: Ongoing; at mid semester each semester.
2. Ensure that topics related to the speech and language needs of underserved communities are infused in-depth throughout the department's graduate curriculum.
Person Responsible: Program Director will be responsible for examining all course syllabi to ensure this is infused throughout the curriculum.
Timeline: Ongoing-each semester.

Focus Three: Oral and Written Language Competence:

Issue(s): ASHA requires that Communicative Disorders professionals be proficient in spoken and written English to be able to perform professionally and serve as models for clients and their families. Students unable to consistently communicate professionally (i.e., use a variation of English acceptable for professional purposes) will be required to pursue remedial work as directed by the Program.

Outcomes: All Master's candidates in the Program will be competent speakers and writers of the English language as expected of speech and language professionals.

Indicators of Success: Upon graduation, 100% of candidates will be competent oral and written language users.

Strategies to Achieve Outcomes:

1. Utilize a syllabi assessment tool that evaluates how instructors are infusing competency in oral and written language in their courses.
Person Responsible: Program Director
Timeline: Annually; per semester.

Focus Four: Research

Issues: The term evidence-based practice (EBP) refers to an approach in which current, high-quality research evidence is integrated with practitioner expertise and client preferences and values into the process of making clinical decisions. It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association that speech-language pathologists incorporate the principles of EBP in clinical decision making to provide high quality clinical care (ASHA, 2005).

Outcomes: Students will be able to (a) evaluate the quality of evidence appearing in any source or format (e.g., refereed journal articles, textbooks, newsletters, advertising, etc.) prior to incorporating such evidence into clinical decision making; and (b) obtain, interpret, and incorporate new and high-quality research evidence having implications for clinical practice.

Indicators of Success: By the end of the first academic year, 100% of the Master's candidates will have been exposed to EBP as part of their didactic coursework and will have completed at least one clinical experience that required the candidate to make clinical decisions that are evidence based.

Strategies to Achieve Outcomes:

1. Infuse an EBP approach throughout the curriculum as evidenced in each course's learning outcomes and the activities, assignments, exams and/or projects aligned with those learning outcomes.
Persons Responsible: Course Instructors, Program Director
Timeline: Ongoing at the end of each academic year
2. Incorporate EBP into clinical decision making in clinical practicum experiences.
Persons Responsible: Director of Clinical Education; Clinical Educators,
Timeline: Ongoing at the end of each academic year