

University of Central Missouri- Communication Disorders

2026-2027 Strategic Plan (CAA Standard 1.5)

Goal #1: The faculty of the Communication Disorders (CD) Program will participate in all actions needed during the planning and completion of the renovation of the Welch-Schmidt Center for Communication Disorders (Center), including relocation of the Center during the 2026-2027 school year.

Overview: The following activities will be completed for this goal.

- 1) The CD program faculty will provide feedback and advocate for architectural design plans aimed at meeting long and short-term goals of the program (e.g., enhance student and faculty recruitment, support teaching and research, enhance faculty collaboration)
- 2) The CD program faculty will collaborate with the University of Central Missouri administration and Facilities, Planning and Operations for the purpose of relocating the Center to a location on campus to maintain clinical training and service delivery to the surrounding communities.
- 3) The CD program faculty will collaborate with the University of Central Missouri administration and Facilities, Planning and Operations for the purpose of relocating the Center back to the renovated space in the Martin building to maintain clinical training and service delivery to the surrounding communities.

Responsible Faculty: Dr. Samantha Washington & Elizabeth Smith

Targeted Long-Term Program Goal: #3

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #1- Student Access and Success & Goal #2- Academic Excellence; HCBPS Plan Goal- Enhance Faculty Development; CAA Standard 3.2B: Curriculum Currency & CAA Standard 6.3 Physical Facilities; Program SWOT: Weakness-Need for Modernization of Facilities to Attract Faculty and Students.

Goal #2: Continued analysis of assessment data for adopting potential changes to the Program

Overview: The following two activities will be completed for this goal.

1) University Assessment:

The assessment results for 2025-2026 for both the BS and MS speech-language pathology programs will be submitted by September 30, 2026. The targeted goals and assessment procedures for the 2026-2027 school year will be identified, discussed and decided by the faculty. Program assessment results and plans for both the BS and MS programs will be placed in Nuventive. Changes from the 2025-2026 analysis will be implemented in the 2026-2027 school year.

2) Advisory Council

The 2026-2027 Advisory Council meeting will be held on Sept 18, 2026. During this meeting, the faculty will share with the Advisory Council the following information:

- Undergraduate and Graduate University Assessment Information
- Program Long-Term Goals for 2025-2030
- 2026-2027 Strategic Plan
- Academic Changes
- Clinical Update
- Other as needed

The above information will be shared several weeks prior to the meeting, summarized and clarified during the meeting, and feedback will be elicited by the faculty to consider in making changes to any of the documents or content therein.

3) Survey- Educational Offsite Clinical Instructor

The Council on Academic Accreditation for Audiology and Speech Language Pathology (CAA) annually evaluates compliance with the Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Standard 5.3: Ongoing Program Assessment indicates the program must collect data from multiple sources (e.g., alumni, faculty, employers, off-site clinical educators, community members, individuals receiving services) and allow evaluation of the program's success in achieving its goals, objectives and the extent to which student learning outcomes have been met.

During the 2026-2027 school year, the Assessment Committee will choose from the following groups to evaluate relevant aspects of the program.

- 1) Recent graduating graduate or undergraduate students
- 2) Alumni
- 3) Faculty

- 4) Employers
- 5) Offsite supervisors
- 6) Clients receiving services in the Welch-Schmidt Center for Communication Disorders
- 7) Etc.

The following steps will need to be completed:

- 1) The Assessment Committee will identify a group to obtain assessment data (Fall 2026)
- 2) An assessment instrument will be developed or an already existing dataset will be adopted (e.g., Graduate Exit Survey). (Fall 2026)
- 3) The instrument will be sent out to the target group (Fall 2026)
- 4) The data will be reviewed by the assessment committee or a subcommittee of the assessment committee and based on the result, suggestions will be shared with the faculty. (Spring 2027)
- 5) Discussion of the findings and recommendations will occur, with possible changes to the recommendations based on faculty feedback. (Spring 2027)
- 6) The faculty as a whole will vote on the suggested changes and the changes will be implemented in the 2027-2028 school year or as deemed appropriate. (Spring 2027)

Responsible Faculty: Advisory Council Committee Members & Assessment Committee Members

Targeted Program Long-Term Goal: #1

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #3: Organizational Excellence; HCBPS Plan Goal: Enhance Faculty Development; CAA Standard 5.3: Ongoing Program Assessment & CAA Standard 5.4: Maintaining Ongoing Assessment; Program SWOT: Opportunity- Use the Calipso software to obtain data for program decision-making.

Goal #3: To successfully complete a search for an assistant tenure-track doctoral faculty member with experience in speech-language pathology (i.e., voice and feeding/swallowing and/or cognitive-linguistic communication disorders).

Overview: The program faculty will be searching for a tenure-track, assistant professor position with a terminal degree (i.e., PhD or EdD) with expertise in voice and swallowing disorders. The program will follow the faculty search guidelines provided through the university. The new doctoral faculty member will be employed by the beginning of the fall semester of 2027. The following are steps to follow for the successful completion of the goal:

- 1) Identify a search chair and search committee members
- 2) Complete search paperwork, including the search plan.
- 3) Obtain approval of plan
- 4) After approval, initiation search plan including posting all advertisement will begin
- 5) Begin reviewing applications after due date and consider which applicants to interview
- 6) Invite the applicants to campus for the interview
- 7) After the interviews, the committee will decide on who to offer the position. Prior to offering the position, references will be contacted and interviewed. The results from the reference interview will guide the final decision.
- 8) The Department of Human Services chair will contact and offer the position to the applicant.

Responsible Faculty: Search Committee

Targeted Program Long-Term Goal: #6

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #2- Academic Excellence; CAA Standard 2.2: Faculty Sufficiency- Overall Progra; Program SWOT: Weakness- Reduce # of Faculty (reduce capacity), Weakness- Reduce Opportunities for Student Research Due to Reduced # of Faculty, Threat- Small Candidate Pools for Faculty Searches.

Goal #4: To successfully complete a search for an instructional faculty member with experience as a medical speech-language pathologist.

Overview: The program faculty will be searching for an instructional faculty position with expertise working with adults as a medical speech-language pathologist. The program will follow the faculty search guidelines provided through the university. The new instructional faculty member will be employed by the beginning of the fall semester of 2027. The following are steps to follow for the successful completion of the goal:

- 1) Identify a search chair and search committee members
- 2) Complete search paperwork, including the search plan.
- 3) Obtain approval of plan
- 4) After approval, initiation search plan including posting all advertisement will begin
- 5) Begin reviewing applications after due date and consider which applicants to interview
- 6) Invite the applicants to campus for the interview
- 7) After the interviews, the committee will decide on who to offer the position. Prior to offering the position, references will be contacted and interviewed. The results from the reference interview will guide the final decision.
- 8) The Department of Human Services chair will contact and offer the position to the applicant.

Responsible Faculty: Search Committee

Targeted Long-Term Goal: #6

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #2- Academic Excellence; CAA Standard 2.2: Faculty Sufficiency- Overall Program, Program SWOT: Weakness- Reduce # of Faculty (reduce capacity), Weakness- Reduce Opportunities for Student Research Due to Reduced # of Faculty, Threat- Small Candidate Pools for Faculty Searches.

Goal #5: Reviewing and development of policies, procedures and materials for supporting academic and clinical success for students with diverse learning needs.

Overview: The Student Success Team, formerly known as the Retention and Progression Committee, will focus during the 2026–2027 academic year on strengthening policies, procedures, and materials that support academic and clinical success for students with diverse learning needs. The SST’s initial focus will be on students providing clinical services in the Welch-Schmidt Center for Communication Disorders, including those who require remediation and those at varying developmental levels of clinical skill development. Through this work, the SST will clarify its role, increase student and faculty awareness of available supports, gather student feedback, and identify program, college, university, and community resources to promote student success. This goal supports a proactive and equitable approach to helping students progress successfully through academic coursework and clinical education.

- 1) Create and distribute one SST flyer by the beginning of Fall 2026 describing the purpose and focus of the Student Success Team.
- 2) Schedule one SST office hour per month during Fall 2026 and Spring 2027. Office hours may rotate between in-person and virtual formats to increase student access.
- 3) Provide at least one faculty-facing presentation or written communication during Fall 2026, with a reminder/update in Spring 2027.
- 4) Hold at least one student focus group or structured feedback opportunity during the 2026–2027 academic year.
- 5) Create a centralized student support resource list or guide that can be shared with students and faculty by Spring 2027.

Responsible Faculty: Student Success Team

Targeted Long-Term Goal: #3

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards & Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #1: Student Access and Success; HCBPS- Improve Student Success; CAA Standard 4.2: Student Adaptations & CAA Standard 4.9: Student Support Services

Goal #6: By July 31, 2027 develop and implement three additional marketing strategies (i.e., recruitment video, develop relationships with high school counselors, flyers for potential students) for recruitment of students to the BS in Speech-Language Pathology program.

Overview: The undergraduate speech-language pathology program is an important pipeline to the graduate program. The faculty continue to work with Undergraduate Admissions and attend all campus undergraduate recruitment events. During the 2025-2026 school year the program faculty began initial collaboration with Integrated Marketing and Communication in the development of a recruitment video. The video is in a mid-stage of development and should be completed by the end of the fall of 2026. In addition the program will begin to develop direct connections with high school counselors at high schools where a large number of students choose UCM. In addition, the program will develop useful materials to share with high school counselors regarding the program, including targeted/suggested classes to take as dual credit courses. The plan for this goal is provided below.

To further strengthen recruitment efforts, the program will expand outreach to high school students, counselors, and prospective families by increasing marketing initiatives, enhancing informational resources, and strengthening partnerships with schools that regularly send students to UCM.

Objective 1: Increase awareness of the undergraduate SLP program among prospective students.

Action Steps:

- Complete and launch the undergraduate SLP recruitment video on the program website and social media platforms by Fall 2026.
- Develop updated promotional materials (flyers, handouts, website, etc) highlighting career opportunities, program outcomes, student experiences, and pathways to graduate study.
- Increase distribution of marketing and recruitment materials to targeted regional high schools and community colleges.
- Promote the program through university recruitment events, open houses, and admissions-sponsored activities.

Expected Outcome:

- Prospective students will have greater awareness of the undergraduate SLP program, resulting in increased inquiries, campus visits, and applications.

Objective 2: Strengthen relationships with high school counselors and educators.

Action Steps:

- Identify regional high schools with historically strong enrollment pipelines to UCM.
- Schedule annual outreach meetings (virtual or in-person) with high school counselors to discuss the undergraduate SLP program and career opportunities within the profession.

- Develop counselor-specific informational materials outlining program requirements, admission expectations, and recommended high school coursework.

- Provide information regarding dual credit opportunities that support student success within the undergraduate SLP curriculum.

Expected Outcome:

- High school counselors will have increased knowledge of the program and be better equipped to guide interested students toward the SLP major at UCM.

Objective 3: Enhance the recruitment experience for prospective students and families.

Action Steps:

- Review and update materials provided during campus visits to ensure accurate and engaging information regarding the SLP program.

- Develop a standardized information packet for prospective students that includes curriculum information, career pathways, clinical opportunities, graduate school preparation, and student involvement opportunities.

- Incorporate current undergraduate and graduate student testimonials into recruitment materials and presentations.

- Offer opportunities for prospective students to interact with current students and faculty during campus visits and recruitment events.

Expected Outcome:

- Prospective students and families will gain a clearer understanding of the undergraduate SLP program and feel more connected to the department and university community.

Objective 4: Monitor and evaluate recruitment effectiveness.

Action Steps:

- Track participation in recruitment events, counselor outreach activities, and campus visits.

- Monitor undergraduate application and enrollment trends annually.

- Collect feedback from prospective students, families, and counselors regarding recruitment materials and processes.

- Utilize collected data to refine recruitment strategies and outreach efforts each academic year.

Expected Outcome:

- Recruitment efforts will be data-informed and continuously improved to support sustained undergraduate enrollment growth.

Responsible Faculty: Dr. Kourtney Dey

Targeted Long-Term Goal: #6

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goals: #1- Students Access and Success & #4- Inclusive and Diverse Communities; HCBPS Plan Goal- Strengthening Marketing and Recruitment; Program SWOT: Strength/Weakness- Graduate Program Depends Heavily on Undergraduate Program

Goal #7: Faculty Development.

Overview: The Communication Disorders program is entering a period of significant faculty transition, with a high proportion of early-career faculty and no tenured faculty members in the program. To support faculty success, retention, scholarship, teaching excellence, and progress toward promotion and tenure, the program will prioritize faculty development and mentorship during the 2026–2027 academic year.

Objective 1. Align faculty development resources with program priorities and faculty advancement.

Action Steps

- The program will review available resources (e.g., GA support, professional development funds, travel funding, workload adjustments) to ensure alignment with faculty development needs.
- The program will allocate support in a manner that intentionally facilitates faculty progression toward promotion and tenure.
- Annually review resource allocation to ensure that available supports promote faculty success in teaching, scholarship, leadership, and service

Expected Outcome: Faculty development resources will be allocated through a transparent process that aligns with faculty responsibilities, supports promotion and tenure, and advances the teaching, clinical, research, and service missions of the program.

Objective 2. Increase participation in professional development activities to support promotion and/or tenure of faculty.

- Encourage each faculty member to participate in at least one professional development activity related to teaching effectiveness
- Encourage each faculty member to participate in professional development activities that enhance scholarship
- Encourage faculty participation in professional development opportunities that strengthen service and leadership
- Provide opportunities for faculty members to share knowledge gained during program meetings or retreats

Objective 3. Develop faculty leadership capacity to support the long-term needs of the program.

- Identify leadership and administrative competencies that are important for future program success (e.g., CAA accreditation report and compliance, assessment, curriculum, etc.)
- Ensure that each major administrative function of the program has at least one additional faculty member identified to learn the associated responsibilities and processes to support continuity of the program's operations
- Provide opportunities for faculty to participate in leadership development through workshops, ASHA programming, and mentoring

Expected Outcome: Faculty will develop leadership knowledge and administrative experience that strengthens the program's long-term sustainability.

The above three areas support the development of faculty skills needed to make progress toward promotion and tenure. Leadership development, project management, and teaching/learning in higher education.

Responsible Faculty: Dr. Samantha Washington

Targeted Long-Term Goal: #5

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #2: Academic Excellence; HCBPS Plan Goal- Enhance Faculty Development; CAA Standard 2.4: Faculty Continuous Competency

Goal #8: Review and change as needed the mapping between the knowledge and skills associated with certification standards and undergraduate & graduate courses for the new graduate curriculum by the end of the 2026-2027 school year.

Overview: Some of the courses in the undergraduate curriculum and the vast majority of graduate courses are adopted in teaching the knowledge and skills needed for certification after graduating with a MS in speech-language pathology. Emphasis will be placed on the following new classes placed in the undergraduate and graduate curriculum:

- CD 5100 Fundamentals of Evaluation
- CD 5405 Language Disorders in Early Childhood
- CD 5406 Clinical Management Seminar I
- CD 5407 Clinical Management Seminar II
- CD 5513 Professional Issues in Speech-language Pathology I
- CD 5514 Professional Issues in Speech-language Pathology II
- CD 5940 Internship I
- CD 5941 Internship II

The Assessment and the Curriculum committee will collaborate with the instructors of the new courses, considering the content of each course, relating the content to the certification knowledge and skills. The specific knowledge and/or skill (there could also be more than one per class) will be mapped directly to the course. The mapping will need to be documented within the knowledge and skills folder in Calipso, our academic and clinician management software and also within the syllabi of the individual course.

Responsible Faculty: Assessment and Curriculum Committee

Targeted Long-Term Goal: #2

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #2- Academic Excellence; HCBPS Plan Goal- Update and Expand Academic Programming; CAA Standard 5.2: Program Assessment of Students

Goal #9: An adhoc committee or a standing committee of the choice of the faculty will review and propose changes to comply with 2027 CAA accreditation standards to be implemented August 1, 2027.

Overview: The American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) updated the Speech-Language Pathology certification standards, effective August 1, 2027. Currently the Program training is based on meeting the 2020 standards. In order for students to be certified as speech-language pathologists, the program will need to meet the 2027 standards.

ASHA provides a crosswalk document, comparing the differences between the two sets of standards. The following steps will be completed:

- 1) Faculty will decide on the appropriate committee makeup by September 1, 2026.
- 2) The committee will engage in meetings to consider how to organize implementation of needed changes based on the ASHA crosswalk document by Nov 1, 2026.
- 3) The committee will organize changes, deciding who is responsible for the changes and implement the changes into the program by August 1, 2027.

Responsible Faculty: Dr. Samantha Washington (Program Coordinator) and Elizabeth Smith (Director of Clinical Services)

Targeted Long-Term Goal: #1

Relationship to Program UCM Strategic Plan, HCBPS College Strategic Plan, CAA Standards and/or Program SWOT Analysis: UCM Plan Goal #3: Organizational Excellence; CAA Standard 5.3: Ongoing Program Assessment & CAA Standard 5.4: Maintaining Ongoing Assessment; Program SWOT: Strength-Maintaining Continued Re-Accrediation