

**STRATEGIC PLAN
(EFFECTIVE: MAY 2024)
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS (CSD)
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY**

INTRODUCTION

CSD's strategic plan is designed in consideration of West Chester University's (WCU) strategic plan called "[Reimagining Student Success: Building on WCU's Momentum.](#)"

**MISSION STATEMENT
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY (2024-2025)**

West Chester University is a community of educators that develops graduates to succeed personally and professionally and contribute to the common good.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS:

1. **Enhancing student learning.** We will enhance student learning with the following definition in mind: Learning is a social, transformative process that enhances career and world readiness. It is promoted through high-impact practices, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, application of concepts, and co-curricular activities and improves students, faculty, and staff as members of a community of educators. Learning contributes to the common good, improves quality of life, increases intellectual dexterity, and motivates future learning.
2. **Advancing DEI.** We will increase equity in student success by identifying and removing barriers to equity in access, engagement, well-being, persistence, timely degree completion, and post-graduate success for historically underrepresented and marginalized students.
3. **Fostering and Sustaining Community.** We will foster and advance an equitable and welcoming environment that promotes belonging, well-being, and a shared commitment to the common good creating sustainable community of educators.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCE**

The Strategic Priorities of the College of Health Sciences (CHS) are to provide high quality education and to motivate lifelong learning through programs offered in the departments of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Health, Kinesiology, Nursing, and Sports Medicine. Specifically, the CHS aims to:

1. Develop and deliver exceptional learning opportunities in health sciences education to undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education students.
2. Contribute cutting edge research, scholarship and thought leadership in health science that improves public health and well-being.

3. Improve health equity, outcomes and healthcare services for people in our local community, while maintaining a global perspective.
4. Foster supportive learning environments, collaborative workspaces, and culture of innovation, across disciplines within the college and university.
5. Recruit, retain, and create a welcoming and inclusive environment for faculty, staff, and students who reflect the diversity of our world today.
6. Engage alumni, as well as nonprofit, philanthropic, public, and business leaders, as champions and supporters.

These priorities are advanced through the teaching, scholarly, and service activities of the faculty, staff, and CHS students. The College is committed to the themes and standards established in the WCU's Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

West Chester University's Department of Communicative Disorders offers three programs: (1) a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) program in CSD, (2) a Pre-Graduate Program (P.G.P.) allowing students with a degree in another discipline to complete core undergraduate CSD courses as a prerequisite for applying to a Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) or Audiology graduate program, and (3) a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Speech-Language Pathology.

- The B.A. program and the P.G.P. offer a firm theoretical basis for understanding the nature of normal communication and swallowing processes and with an introduction to communication disorders .
- The M.A. program offers learning experiences that address the knowledge and skill standards defined by ASHA's Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC) in Speech-Language pathology, including
 - Content targeting knowledge of theoretical and evidence-based frameworks for understanding the prevention, assessment, and treatment of communication and swallowing disorders
 - Opportunities to apply knowledge in the application of critical thinking and problem-solving skills within closely supervised on- and off-campus clinical practice settings
 - Opportunities to learn and apply competencies to support interprofessional collaboration
 - Research opportunities to prepare students for becoming informed consumers of the literature and for pursuing graduate work beyond the master's level if desired.

Together with other programs in the West Chester University community, the B.A., P.G.P. and M.A. programs support students in becoming individuals who are broadly educated, excel at critical thinking and evidence-based problem solving, and behave in accordance with values documented in ASHA's Code of Ethics, the College of Health Science's Strategic Priorities, and WCU's mission, including inclusion and cultural sensitivity.

Below are CSD Action Steps and Implementations within the framework of WCU's Mission Statement.

WCU Strategic Goal 1: Enhancing Student Learning

WCU's Outcomes	CSD Action Steps	Implementation Status
<p>1. Increase student access to high-impact practices (HIPs) and experiential learning opportunities (ELOs) across the curriculum and co-curriculum (Boyer Report, provocation II.3)</p> <p>Initiative 1. Identify and address barriers to participation in HIPs and ELOs, with a particular focus on historically under-represented and marginalized students.</p> <p>Initiative 2. Embed academic programs with opportunities for career exploration, development, and readiness by creating and championing a holistic career integration strategy that centers on equitable access for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will review and revise, as needed, the B.A., P.G.P., and M.A. curricula to ensure that instructional content and delivery methods are consistent with the standards of WCU, PASSHE, ASHA, and other entities. • The CSD Department Assessment Coordinator will review and revise, as needed, the CSD Department Assessment Plan and will compile the relevant assessment data. • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to support student involvement in research as mentors, independent study instructors, or thesis advisors and/or committee members. • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to participate in events to disseminate information about the available programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will review each curriculum annually. Instructors will review each of their courses upon completion. • The Assessment Coordinator will review the Assessment Plan annually and will update the database upon the completion of the classes/tasks from which assessment data are collected. • The faculty will monitor the quantity and quality of student research experiences and outcomes, such as presentations and publications in professional venues. • The Chairperson will coordinate faculty participation in events on a continuous basis.
<p>2. Use the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to create curricular and co-curricular opportunities that promote the value and importance of creating a sustainable society to foster world readiness</p> <p>Initiative 1: Promote learning related to the United Nations Sustainable Development goals by prioritizing grant funding and scholarships that align with them.</p> <p>Initiative 2. Pilot a WCU-focused online sustainability literacy and engagement training that educates and promotes the adoption of sustainable practices and behaviors across the campus population.</p> <p>Initiative 3. Promote learning about sustainability by expanding participation, funding, and access for WCU's Brandywine Project sustainability workshops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will explore the incorporation of a Service-Learning component into appropriate classes. • The CSD Department will continue to disseminate information to students about volunteer opportunities, studies at international institutions, sites for clinical observations, professional conferences and events, and other enrichment. • The CSD Department will establish a broader presence on social media outlets. • The CSD Department will establish routine communication with selected constituencies (current students, former students, alumni/ae, prospective students, families of students, former staff and faculty members, friends of CSD at WCU) in the form of an electronic newsletter. • The CSD Department will update the CSD web site with material about communication delays, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will explore the issue as needed. • The CSD Department faculty members will disseminate information on a continuous basis. • The CSD Department's Communication Director will coordinate all social media accounts. • The CSD Department will use multiple modalities to communicate with selected constituencies.

<p>for students, faculty, and staff, and resources for organizations.</p>	<p>disorders, differences to enhance the information available to the broader community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will create presentations on communication delays, disorders, differences to share with university- and community-based associations upon request (for instance, student associations or parent-teacher associations). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson will coordinate the CSD web site updates on a continuous basis and will evaluate the site as needed. • The Chairperson will prepare and evaluate the presentations to university- and community-based groups.
<p>3: Improve the holistic advising experience for students as a teaching practice that promotes learning, including all relevant structures, practices, and procedures</p> <p>Initiative 1: Implement a plan for providing intentional, high-quality co-curricular advising to all students.</p> <p>Initiative 2: Create a transparent infrastructure and process that assures coordination between student support and academic departments in the development of the Academic Support and Advocacy Center that assists in improving the overall quality of advising interactions with students for faculty and staff members, utilizing the Committee on Advising Excellence as an advisory board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to monitor the academic performance of students across programs and will participate in the formal B.A., Pre-Graduate, and M.A. review processes already established in the CSD Department. • The CSD Department faculty members will implement best practices in student advisement. • The CSD Department will use the results of surveys from various constituencies to inform the curriculum, as well as the content and delivery of the classes across the programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will review B.A. and P.G. students annually and M.A. students semi-annually. • The program coordinators (B.A., P.G., M.A.) and the Chairperson will monitor advisement. • The B.A. and M.A. Coordinators and Chairperson will administer the relevant surveys on an annual basis, and the CSD Department will faculty members will discuss and apply the results.
<p>4. Create intentionally inclusive and engaging learning experiences using evidence-informed pedagogies.</p> <p>Initiative 1. Catalog, develop, and implement new formal institutional and disciplinary definitions of and initiatives for teaching excellence that promote equitable outcomes, sustainability, and student engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will continue to explore new formats for class delivery (e.g., online, hybrid, videoconference) across the three CSD programs. • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to explore and implement innovative methods of instruction to support a diverse range of student learning styles (e.g., lecture, discussion, case studies, problem-based scenarios, demonstration, simulation, IPE). • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to use an evidence-based framework for clinical instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructors for classes will explore the appropriateness of new formats for class delivery. • Instructors will evaluate each class after its conclusion and make changes as appropriate. • Each on-site clinical practicum experience will include an assignment to address evidence-based practice.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSD faculty will present to each other on innovative teaching methods during faculty meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson will coordinate the schedule of presentations in faculty meetings in Fall Semesters.
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WCU Strategic Goal 2: Advancing DEI

WCU Outcomes & Initiatives	CSD's Action Steps	Implementation Status
<p>1. Establish the infrastructure, including resources, incentives, strategies, and accountabilities, to advance equity in student success for historically underrepresented and marginalized student populations.</p> <p>Initiative 1. Increase the number of grants and other external funding applications focused on student success by 5% (MA plan; PASSHE DEI SMART initiative 1, priority 2; UN 4,5).</p> <p>Initiative 2. Increase strategies to motivate institutional personnel to actively promote data-driven progress towards achieving equity in student success goals (MA plan; PASSHE DEI SMART initiative 1, priority 2; Boyer Report provocation 11; UN 4, 5).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will explore internal and external sources of funds to support expanded services for unrepresented/underrepresented populations. • Classes across the curriculum will include information on communication diversity. • The CSD Department will create and implement a Recruitment Plan for faculty searches that enhances the likelihood of recruitment of individuals from diverse populations. • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to learn about university- and community-based resources for international students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will explore opportunities on a continuous basis. • Instructors will update the content of the classes each time these are scheduled. • The Search Committee Chairperson will prepare the plan for approval by the Social Equity Office, as searches are approved. • The CSD Department faculty and staff members will update their information on a continuous basis.

<p>2. In conjunction with the Moon Shot for Equity goal teams, transform institutional cultures to be equity-minded through the implementation of basic needs infrastructure, well-being programming, intentional and inclusive space for the cultivation of community and leadership, professional development opportunities, and mentoring/advising training.</p> <p>Initiative 1. Ensure that there is a coordinated basic needs infrastructure that all faculty, staff, and administrators can use to participate in every student's community of care (MA plan).</p> <p>Initiative 2. Improve the well-being, mental health, and physical and psychological safety of students, faculty, and staff by ensuring that university practices and support services (including but not limited to counseling services and campus policing practices) are informed by an understanding of racial trauma and social justice concepts and are responsive to students' current patterns of engagement (MA plan).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will continue to host events to celebrate student success and to include members of the university and larger community. • The CSD Department will monitor enrollment levels to ascertain the relationship of those levels to available resources. • The CSD Department will continue to maintain a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, clinic patients/families, and visitors with observance of safety-related practices and policies. • The CSD Department faculty members will review the clinical populations served in the WCU Speech and Hearing Clinic for the purpose of identification of unrepresented/underrepresented populations, then will explore possible expansion of clinical services to address identified needs. • The CSD Department faculty members will explore areas of clinical competence least represented in their experience and expertise, then will pursue professional development to expand their skills, as appropriate, in these areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will plan and evaluate these events as appropriate. • The Chairperson will monitor and report on enrollment patterns semi-annually. • The Chairperson, Program Coordinators (B.A., P.G., and M.A.), and Clinic Director will monitor compliance with practices and policies on a continuous basis. • The Clinic Director will report on clinical statistics annually and will coordinate the discussion of expansion of clinical services. • The CSD Department faculty members will select appropriate professional development endeavors to enhance their present skills.
<p>3. Increase equity in access to higher education by closing equity gaps in retention rates to WCU for historically underrepresented and marginalized students by 5% by year.</p> <p>Initiative 1. Identify and eliminate barriers to equity in student success in university policies and practices around the implementation of registration holds.</p> <p>Initiative 2. Identify and eliminate financial barriers to equity in student success by implementing retention grants to increase student persistence.</p> <p>Initiative 3. Eliminate all developmental courses at WCU by replacing all existing non-credit bearing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will explore additional sources of financial support for students (e.g., scholarships, assistantships, other awards), and faculty members will disseminate information about awards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson and Program Coordinators (B.A. P.C.P. M.A.) will explore financial resources, and CSD Department faculty members will disseminate information on a continuous basis.

developmental courses with co-requisite (credit-bearing, college-level) alternative courses.		
<p>4. Equip all students with the tools and resources to thrive beyond their time at West Chester University.</p> <p>Initiative 1. In partnership with employers who hire WCU students, champion the creation and implementation of diverse, equitable, and inclusive recruiting strategies that remove barriers for graduates entering the workforce (MA plan; UN 8, 16).</p> <p>Initiative 2. Using a data-informed approach, expand the integration of career readiness education in the classroom, providing more equitable access to knowledge, opportunities, and social capital necessary for students to achieve their professional goals (UN 4, 5, 8, 10).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will continue to maintain a record of high pass rates for M.A. students who complete the SLP Praxis. • The CSD Department will continue to maintain a record of high employment rates within three months of graduation for M.A. students. • The CSD Department faculty members will explore collaborative service delivery activities with university- and community-based entities. • The CSD Department will continue to expand the Bilingual Emphasis track in the M.A. curriculum to enhance the preparation of future Speech-Language Pathologists to serve bilingual populations. • The CSD Department will provide information about the department, as well as about communication diversity, to any international students who desire such information to explore career opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The M.A. Coordinator will monitor and report on examination results annually. • The M.A. Coordinator will monitor and report on employment statistics annually. • The Clinic Director will explore collaborative opportunities and will coordinate the discussion of expansion of clinical services. • The Bilingual Emphasis Coordinator will report on the status of the track annually. • The Chairperson, Clinic Coordinator, and Graduate Coordinator will coordinate information dissemination about the department.

WCU Strategic Goal 3: Fostering & Sustaining Community

WCU Outcomes & Initiatives	CSD's Action Steps	Implementation Status
<p>1. Advance a living, learning, and working environment dedicated to fostering a sense of belonging among all members within and beyond the University community by supporting initiatives that align with university values and contribute to the common good (Boyer Report).</p> <p>Initiative 1. Explore the creation of a comprehensive, campus-wide data collection and assessment system that measures community engagement and outcomes for students, faculty, staff, and community partners who participate in community engaged learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department faculty members will explore methods to inform the university community of their expertise on the topic of communication diversity to expand their visibility as resources for other faculty members who need information about various conditions. • The CSD Department faculty members will encourage student participation in local and national NSSLHA, as well as in PSHA as student members. • The CSD Department will establish routine communication with selected constituencies (current students, former students, alumni/ae, prospective students, families of students, former staff and faculty members, friends of CSD at WCU) in the form of an electronic newsletter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The faculty will report on avenues on a continuous basis. • The NSSLHA Advisor will coordinate faculty support for NSSLHA and PSHA involvement. • The CSD Department will use multiple modalities to communicate with selected constituencies.

<p>Initiative 2. Expand community engagement beyond the campus experience to support and promote a culture of community engagement and leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will continue to involve alumni in the life of the department. • The CSD Department will consider ways to include community members in departmental decision-making, such as by inviting clients in the Speech and Hearing Clinic to participate in interviewing prospective graduate students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The faculty will monitor opportunities for alumni involvement and invite alumni to departmental activities when appropriate. • The Graduate Program coordinator and Chairperson will explore the feasibility of incorporating community feedback into departmental processes.
<p>2. Create a comprehensive experience that is designed to enhance well-being, growth, and a sense of belonging for all at the university that aligns with university resources (Boyer Report, U.S. Surgeon General).</p> <p>Initiative 1. Assess, identify, and recommend organizational services and programs that support the mental, physical, and professional well-being and belonging of university employees.</p> <p>Initiative 2. Assess the well-being and belonging of university students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD faculty and staff will continue to attend departmental, college-wide, and university-wide events designed to promote well-being and sense of belonging among employees. • The CSD Department will continue to survey students about their experiences within the Department during intentional events aimed at promoting student well-being and sense of belonging. • The Speech and Hearing Clinic will survey clients and the wider community to assess their needs and develop programming to meet identified needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson will coordinate departmental events and disseminate information about college- and campus wide events to faculty and staff. • The Program Coordinators (B.A., P.G., and M.A.) will create and disseminate surveys among students and solicit feedback through formal and informal conversations about the department's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities from the students' perspectives. • The Clinic Director will create and disseminate surveys to solicit feedback from clients on an ongoing basis.
<p>3. Create inclusive and sustainable university environments that meet the needs of current and future members of the community.</p> <p>Initiative 1. Promote physical space equity on campus.</p> <p>Initiative 2. Transform WCU into a dynamic living laboratory and creative space by enhancing the outdoor community experience.</p> <p>Initiative 3. Explore the feasibility of establishing living-learning communities to enhance the residential student experience.</p> <p>Initiative 4. Improve and activate public gathering spaces to create welcoming environments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will continue to host events that foster engagement and a sense of belonging for faculty, staff, students, and the wider community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The faculty will coordinate events and disseminate invitations across the department, campus, and community.

<p>4. Continue to enhance culture of sustainability on campus by integrating sustainability education and promoting responsible use of environmental, social and economic resources in innovative and effective ways.</p> <p>Initiative 1. Improve financial and technological productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness through innovative systems, processes, and behaviors.</p> <p>Initiative 2. Develop and apply Zero Waste guidelines that encourage the redesign of university operations, practices, and policies to use financial, material, technological, and human resources efficiently and sustainably.</p> <p>Initiative 3. Promote and enhance the WCU Sustainability Council's Green Office Program by providing educational resources to employees, integrating sustainability training into orientation programs, and assessing outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSD Department will continue to demonstrate fiscal responsibility with appropriate stewardship of financial resources. • The CSD Department faculty members will continue to explore internal and external sources of financial support for instruction and scholarly activity. • The CSD Department will update the inventories of departmental resources and will retire or repurpose items as necessary. • The CSD Department will continue to implement a professional development plan for temporary faculty members to increase the pool of qualified instructors. • The CSD Department will continue to minimize waste through enhanced use of innovative, virtual systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson and Clinic Director will monitor income and expenditures on a continuous basis and will report on accounts annually to the faculty members. • The CSD Department faculty members will explore and evaluate options on a continuous basis. • The CSD Department will evaluate the status of resources annually and will recommend disposition/purchase of items. • The Chairperson will coordinate the implementation and will evaluate components of the plan annually. • The Chairperson, Program Coordinators (B.A., P.G., AND M.A.), and Clinic Director will investigate systems that allow for secure creation, management, and retention of departmental and clinic materials in daily operations.
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Mechanism for Regular Evaluation of the Strategic Plan

The CSD faculty members review and update the Mission Statement and the Strategic Plan every five years (or more frequently, should the WCU and/or CHS Mission Statement and/or Strategic Plan change).

Additional Standards (CAA)

1.3 The Program develops and implements a long-term strategic plan.

The plan must be congruent with the mission of the institution, have the support of the university administration, and reflect the role of the program within the community. Components of a plan may include long-term program goals, specific measurable objectives, strategies for attainment, a schedule for analysis, and a mechanism for regular evaluation of the plan itself and of progress in meeting the plan's objectives. The plan and the results of the regular evaluation of the plan and its implementation must be shared with faculty, students, staff, alumni, and other interested parties.