

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

Five-Year Strategic Plan: September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2027

Theme #1: Facilitation of Student Success						
No.	C	Objective	Strategy	Benchmark	Estimated Date of Completion	✓
1-1	1	Acquire scholarship monies to assist the COMD program's top graduate applicants.	Along with the Office of Institutional Advancement, identify potential funding streams for the creation of annual scholarships for graduate students. Develop a collaborative relationship with identified sources. Draft a Memorandum of Understanding with funding sources.	A minimum of five (5) applicants will be offered sponsored scholarships upon enrollment in the COMD graduate program.	September 1, 2026	
1-2	1	Provide mentorship opportunities to COMD undergraduate students.	Create an Undergraduate Mentorship Committee (UMC) for undergraduate students in the communication sciences and disorders program. Draft the narrative for inclusion of the UMC as a standing committee in the department's by-laws.	A minimum of five (5) undergraduate students will be provided mentorship services through the UMC.	September 1, 2023	
1-3	1	Provide mentorship opportunities to COMD graduate students.	Create a Graduate Mentorship Committee (GMC) for graduate students in the communication sciences and disorders program. Draft the narrative for inclusion of the GMC as a standing committee in the department's by-laws.	A minimum of five (5) graduate students will be provided mentorship services through the GMC.	September 1, 2023	

1-4	1	Provide mentorship opportunities to American Sign Language Interpreter (ASLI) undergraduate students.	Create an ASLI Mentorship Committee (AMC) for students in the American Sign language Interpreter program. Draft the narrative for inclusion of the AMC as a standing committee in the ASLI program's by-laws.	A minimum of three (3) students will be provided mentorship services through the AMC.	September 1, 2023	
1-5	3	Host a variety of mini programs to increase student exposure to a variety of clientele in the Speech and Hearing Center.	The COMD Speech and Hearing Center will host mini programs with a variety of populations such as individuals with autism, Down syndrome, dysphagia, early childhood language disorders, hearing disorders and voice disorders.	Completion of at least two (2) of the six (6) mini programs listed under Strategy.	September 1, 2025	
1-6	1	Provide undergraduate educational opportunity in speech-language pathology for non-Hispanic minority students.	Develop a recruitment strategy to attract persons of diverse minority groups who reside outside the Rio Grande Valley into the field of speech-language pathology. Actively recruit these students to the COMD undergraduate program.	Ten percent (10%) of undergraduate students come from non-Hispanic, minority groups outside the Rio Grande Valley.	September 1, 2024	
1-7	1	Provide graduate educational opportunity in speech-language pathology for non-Hispanic minority students.	Develop a recruitment strategy to attract persons of diverse minority groups who reside outside the Rio Grande Valley into the field of speech-language pathology. Actively recruit these students to the COMD graduate program.	A minimum of three (3) graduate students accepted and enrolled in the Communication Sciences and Disorders graduate program come from non-Hispanic, minority groups outside the Rio Grande Valley.	September 1, 2024	

Theme #2: Expansion and Accreditation of Programs

No.	C	Objective	Strategy	Benchmark	Estimated Date of Completion	v
2-1	1	Develop a leveling certificate program in communication sciences and disorders.	Gain approval by the institution's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Receive final approval from the University of Texas System and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Implement the program.	A minimum of five (5) leveling students enter the level certificate program.	September 1, 2023	
2-2	1,3	Develop a professional doctoral (Au.D.) program in audiology.	Receive approval for the proposal through the institution's Graduate Curriculum Committee. Draft and submit the formal proposal for the research doctoral program.	Program earns University of Texas System and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval to offer the professional doctorate (Au.D.) in audiology.	September 1, 2023	
2-3	3	Apply for candidacy status for the audiology program.	Draft and submit the application for candidacy to the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). Undergo the initial site visit for candidacy.	Earn candidacy status through the CAA.	September 1, 2024	
2-4	3	Apply for initial accreditation for the audiology program.	Draft and submit the application for initial accreditation to the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). Undergo the initial site visit for initial accreditation.	Earn initial accreditation through the CAA.	September 1, 2026	
2-5	3	Implement a professional doctoral (Au.D.) program in audiology.	Commence the professional doctoral program in audiology.	First cohort of students is accepted into the professional doctoral (Au.D.) audiology program.	September 1, 2025	

2-6	2,3	Hire faculty for the professional doctoral (Au.D.) program in audiology.	Follow institution policies and procedures for the recruitment and hiring of tenure track and non-tenure track faculty in audiology.	3 tenure track and 4 non-tenure track faculty are hired.	September 1, 2024	
2-7	1,2	Develop a research doctoral (Ph.D.) program in communication sciences and disorders.	Develop a white paper proposal for a research doctoral program in communication sciences and disorders. Receive approval for the proposal through the institution's Graduate Curriculum Committee. Draft and submit the formal proposal for the research doctoral program.	Program earns University of Texas System and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval to offer the doctorate (Ph.D.) in communication sciences and disorders.	September 1, 2024	
2-8	2	Implement a research doctoral (Ph.D.) program in communication sciences and disorders.	Commence the doctoral research program in communication sciences and disorders.	First cohort of students is accepted into the research doctoral program.	September 1, 2026	
2-9	2	Hire faculty for the research doctoral (Ph.D.) program in communication sciences and disorders.	Follow institution policies and procedures for the recruitment and hiring of tenure track faculty in communication sciences and disorders.	Two tenure track faculty are hired.	September 1, 2025	
2-10	2,3	Apply for accreditation for the American Sign Language Interpreter (ASLI) program.	Develop the accreditation application to the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education. Undergo the site visit for initial accreditation.	ASLI program earns accreditation.	September 1, 2024	
2-11	2	Increase revenues generated by the Speech and Hearing Center.	Develop a collaborative relationship with the School of Medicine to receive referrals to the Speech and Hearing Center. Hire one (1) clinical assistant professor with 50% workload devoted to the provision of clinical services in the Speech and Hearing Center.	The Speech and Hearing Center receives a minimum of ten (10) referrals from the School of Medicine. One (1) clinical assistant professor is hired.	September 1, 2023	

Theme #3: Engagement with the Community

No.	C	Objective	Strategy	Benchmark	Estimated Date of Completion	v
3-1	4,5	Create an External Advisory Board for the American Sign Language Interpreter (ASLI) program.	Identify and recruit knowledgeable and dynamic professionals from the ASL and related communities to serve on the External Advisory Board for ASLI.	An External Advisory Board is created for the ASLI program and the first meeting of the board is held.	December 1, 2022	
3-2	5	Establish outreach for low-income populations related to the speech, language and hearing fields.	Identify and recruit community partners to collaborate with the COMD program to establish outreach programs to persons in the Rio Grande Valley region who are low-income. Develop and implement outreach programs.	A minimum of three (3) community outreach programs will be implemented.	September 1, 2025	
3-3	4,5	Develop a mentorship program for practicing professionals in American Sign Language Interpreting (ASLI) who have yet to pass their interpreter certification exams.	Form a Professional Mentorship Committee (PMC) to identify certified practicing ASLI professionals in the community. Draft the narrative for inclusion of the PMC as a standing committee in the ASLI program's by-laws. Implement a mentorship program for ASLI professions who have not yet passed the interpreter certification exams.	A minimum of three (3) professionals who have not yet passed their interpreter certification exams are mentored and pass their exams.	September 1, 2024	
3-4	4,5	Earn official continuing education (CE) provider status through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).	Apply for official CE provider status through ASHA.	Earn official CE provider status and provide at least two (2) CE activities for practicing professionals in the Rio Grande Valley community.	September 1, 2026	

3-5	4,5	Develop and nurture greater intercollegiate educational, clinical and research opportunities.	The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders will establish intercollegiate academic, clinical or research collaborations with other institutions within the University of Texas system or other universities in the state of Texas as well as institutions outside the state of Texas.	A minimum of two (2) academic, clinical and/or research collaborations will be implemented with institutions inside or outside the UT System.	September 1, 2025	
3-6	2,3	Collaboration between the American Sign Language Interpreter (ASLI) and Communication Sciences and Disorders (COMD) programs to establish a language and literacy program for school-aged children.	ASLI and COMD will collaborate to develop and implement a language and literacy enrichment program for school-aged children in the Rio Grande Valley community who are Deaf or hearing impaired.	A minimum of ten (10) school-aged children who are Deaf or hearing impaired in the Rio Grande Valley will be provided language and literacy enrichment by ASLI and COMD students.	September 1, 2026	

Theme #4: Creation of a Research Culture

No.	C	Objective	Strategy	Benchmark	Estimated Date of Completion	v
4-1	2,6	Increase publications in peer-reviewed professional publications.	Incentivize greater research publications of tenured and tenure track faculty by tying publications to exceptional merit pay increases.	Each current faculty member with a research doctorate publishes at least one (1) peer-reviewed research article each year.	September 1, 2023	
				Two new tenure track faculty hired as part of the development of a research doctoral (Ph.D.) program publish at least two (2) peer-reviewed research articles each year.	September 1, 2026	
4-2	2,6	Increase the number of faculty engaged in internal and external grant writing and funding.	Incentivize greater intra- and extramural research grant writing and funding by tying grant writing to exceptional merit pay increases.	A minimum of two faculty members with research doctorates write at least one (1) grant proposal every two (2) years. One (1) grant proposal funded at least once every four (4) years.	September 1, 2026	
				For new tenure track faculty hired for the research doctoral (Ph.D.) program, one (1) intra- or extramural grant proposal every year. One (1) grant proposal funded every two (2) years.	September 1, 2027	
4-3	2,6	Revise the department's promotion and tenure guidelines to emphasis greater research productivity.	Revisit the department's promotion and tenure policy for new tenure track faculty. Emphasize the importance of research and grant writing productivity for promotion to associate professor with tenure.	Two (2) new tenure track faculty members are hired; requirements in the area of research are made known to these members prior to them accepting employment.	September 1, 2025	

4-4	2,6	Increase the number of Research Fellows through the College of Health Professions.	Encourage new tenure track faculty hired for the research doctoral (Ph.D.) program in communication sciences and disorders to apply to the College of Health Professions as Research Fellows.	Both new tenure track faculty members are accepted into the Research Fellows program of the College of Health Professions.	January 1, 2026	
4-5	2,6	Develop a research mentor program.	For new tenure track faculty, pair a seasoned researcher and grant writer either within or outside the department to mentor these faculty members in their research endeavors.	Both new tenure track faculty members are assigned a research mentor.	January 1, 2026	

Theme #5: Improvement of Department Infrastructure

No.	C	Objective	Strategy	Benchmark	Estimated Date of Completion	v
5-1	2,3	Move all clinical documentation in the Speech and Hearing Center to the use of electronic medical records (EMR).	Through collaboration with the UT Health Practice Plan, move paper-based clinical documentation in the Speech and Hearing Center to electronic medical records (EMR) to provide students with documentation methods currently being utilized throughout clinical settings. Provide easy, secured access to client files without having to be on campus during pandemic or other catastrophic scenarios.	Clinical documentation for all clients in the Speech and Hearing Center will be housed on the UT Health Athena system.	September 1, 2024	
5-2	2,3	Update the Speech and Hearing Center observation and recording equipment.	Purchase and install CVi- CORS Interactive Audio Video Recording Solutions software in the Speech and Hearing Center to record assessment and therapy sessions for supervisor purposes (e.g., supervisor can provide feedback throughout the video). The software will also allow clinical supervisors to watch 2 to 4 sessions simultaneously from one computer, provide a secure supervisor/student talk-back system, and provide an automatic setting to record sessions.	Purchase and professionally install CVi-CORS Interactive Audio Video Recording Solutions software and utilize it during student assessment and therapy sessions.	September 1, 2023	
5-3	2,3	Provide state-of-the-art laboratories to enhance student academic and clinical learning—AAC.	Procure funding for instrumentation and space to develop a specialized laboratory in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).	A laboratory equipped with state-of-the-art equipment is established for graduate students to learn and provide therapeutic services for persons in the Speech and Hearing Center who require AAC services.	September 1, 2026	

5-4	2,3	Provide state-of-the-art laboratories to enhance student academic and clinical learning—language and literacy.	Procure funding for instrumentation and space to develop a specialized laboratory in language and literacy.	A laboratory equipped with state-of-the-art equipment is established for graduate students to learn and provide therapeutic services for persons in the Speech and Hearing Center who require language and literacy services.	September 1, 2025	
5-5	2,3	Provide state-of-the-art laboratories to enhance student academic and clinical learning—speech production.	Procure funding for instrumentation and space to develop a specialized laboratory in speech production.	A laboratory equipped with state-of-the-art equipment is established for graduate students to learn and provide therapeutic services for persons in the Speech and Hearing Center who require speech production services.	September 1, 2027	
5-6	2,3	Provide state-of-the-art laboratories to enhance student academic and clinical learning—voice and resonance.	Procure funding for instrumentation and space to develop a specialized laboratory in voice and resonance.	A laboratory equipped with state-of-the-art equipment is established for graduate students to learn and provide therapeutic services for persons in the Speech and Hearing Center who require voice and resonance services.	September 1, 2026	
5-7	2,3	Provide state-of-the-art laboratories for new tenure track faculty in the research doctoral (Ph.D.) program in communication sciences and disorders.	Procure funding for instrumentation and space to develop specialized laboratories for new tenure track faculty in the communication sciences and disorders research doctoral (Ph.D.) program.	Space for two (2) laboratories and start-up funding for two new tenure track faculty members are procured.	September 1, 2026	

Ratified by department faculty: **12/13/2021**

Approved by College dean: **01/18/2022**

KEY TO COLUMNS 2 AND 7

COLUMN #2:

C = College of Health Professions strategic plan theme number to which this outcome pertains (see below).

COLUMN #7:

✓ = Successfully completed.

IP = In progress.

R = To be revised.

D = Deferred indefinitely.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS STRATEGIC PLAN THEMES

1	2	3
Reduce the “Opportunity and Achievement GAP” for students	Building a World-class Teacher-Practitioner-Scholar Community	Creating Learning Environments to support Student Access and Success in a future Healthcare System
Building Strategic Academia-Government-Industry-Philanthropy Partnerships to meet regional and Texas Workforce and Research Needs	Engaging our Communities for Health Promotion and Well-being	Rewarding Excellence
4	5	6