

**Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences  
University of Colorado Boulder  
Strategic Plan  
Fall 2019 – 2024**

**This document is designed to operate as our guiding plan over the next five years. However, it will be evaluated each year during the faculty retreat to assess and modify strategies as the faculty deem necessary.**

**Mission Statement**

*The Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences at the University of Colorado Boulder provides outstanding educational opportunities to its students by creating a broader and more inclusive range of options for connecting fundamental knowledge with applied experiences in research, classroom, clinical, and community settings.*

**Aspirational Vision Statement**

*With an emphasis on inclusion and diversity, SLHS will grow in productivity and translation of its research within the disciplines and its scholarship and research to undergraduate and graduate education, clinical services, and community engagement.*

**Strategic Plan**

The primary actions that will be the focus of our mission and vision statements were developed over the course of the fall semester by several working teams of faculty, staff, and students assigned to different components of the program review. These actions were then prioritized, and implementation stages were formulated by the teams and approved by the SLHS faculty during the fall faculty retreat.

- 1. Enhancing and Integrating Educational Experiences of Students.** Students' educational experiences at all levels will be enhanced by creating a broader and more inclusive range of academic, research, and clinical opportunities.
  - a. Greater emphasis will be placed on translational research – particularly by CU faculty – in academic courses at all educational levels (Undergraduate and Graduate).
  - b. Student research collaborations with T/TT track faculty and clinical faculty will be encouraged.
  - c. Careful and continual vetting of adjunct teaching faculty to improve and sustain quality education in courses will be established.
  - d. Various research/translational reading groups for students and faculty will be established at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
  - e. A program for undergraduate and graduate student collaborations on research projects and in clinical settings will be established.

2. **Strengthening Diversity within the Academic and Clinical contexts.** The department will improve current programs and develop additional programs and initiatives within the department with a focus on diversity.
  - a. SLHS faculty will create opportunities for frequent exposure and participation in faculty research for undergraduates, especially for students from underrepresented backgrounds.
  - b. SLHC faculty and staff will develop and market programs that serve diverse populations, including bilingual services, with an emphasis on services to diverse populations within the CU campus community.
    - i. Increase screenings and bilingual services in the community.
    - ii. SLHS faculty and staff will maintain and expand financial assistance programs for academic and clinical services, including scholarships and grants.
    - iii. SLHC faculty and staff will advocate for expansions of CU insurance (e.g., Gold Plan) to cover speech, language, and hearing services, including transgender voice services.
  - c. SLHS will continue to develop and establish an American Sign Language (ASL) minor.
3. **Strengthening the Departmental Culture of Research and Scholarship.** SLHS will develop creative solutions for enhancing research production and translation of research for clinical application by promoting faculty collaborations and opportunities between academic/research and clinical faculty at CU Boulder and collaborations and opportunities with researchers outside of CU Boulder.
  - a. Solutions will be created and implemented to reduce current teaching and service demands on tenure/tenure track faculty (e.g., curricular reviews, streamlining departmental service obligations).
  - b. SLHS administration will add an appropriate scholarship component to contracts for all multi-year clinical faculty, allowing them to participate in research, teaching, and community outreach.
  - c. Department will identify and encourage the use of existing shared supports for faculty research (e.g., participant registries, research administrative support, IT support, statistical support, more support for grant writing).
  - d. Establish a *research implementation working group* in the department to help integrate the translation of research findings to clinical and practical applications.
  - e. Increase the scope and contexts of research by incorporating more qualitative and clinical research in the department to expand from current “bench” research.
  - f. SLHS will establish regular venues for sharing student and faculty scholarly and research activities (e.g., a regular research colloquium; collaborative research working groups involving T/TT faculty, clinical faculty and students; establishing a yearly set of “Pecha Kucha” talks within the department to keep current on departmental research activities.).
  - g. SLHS will increase numbers of submissions to academic/research journals.
4. **Enhancing the PhD program in SLHS.**

- a. Develop a viable PhD curriculum for SLHS research doctorate and an implementation plan for sufficient academic and research coverage.
  - b. Increase doctoral funding through external sources.
  - c. Increase recruitment efforts to bring outstanding doctoral students to CU Boulder.
  - d. Seek increased opportunities for research outreach for doctoral students both within CU Boulder and outside of our campus.
- 5. Increasing Community Outreach by the Department.** SLHS will establish inclusive, on-going, and engaging community relationships.
- a. SLHS will establish a stronger set of links with its alumni base (e.g., strengthen communication with alumni via website and social media, host a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for establishment of the department, establish a department/alumni working group to create more alumni integration and support into the department).
  - b. SLHS will develop and promote a faculty speaker program to reach out to community organizations, local educational agencies, and community service providers and provide faculty talks and consultantships.
  - c. SLHS faculty will increase service on committees, boards, and councils at the state, national, and international levels.
  - d. SLHS will seek opportunities to host regional, national, and international conferences within the discipline of human communication sciences and disorders on the CU Boulder campus.
  - e. SLHS will expand marketing and outreach for both clinical and consultative services (e.g., additional development of its website and social media presence).
- 6. Increasing Departmental Resources to Boost Mission.** SLHS will improve processes and increase resources to support optimal integration of the rest of this strategic plan within the department.
- a. SLHS will advocate for and establish 3-year contracts for clinical faculty that are funded by continuing general funds.
  - b. SLHS will advocate for two additional T/TT faculty lines (one in SLP and one in AuD) to provide curricular flexibility for improving doctoral program and to bring our student/faculty ratio closer to that of our AAU Peer Institutions (See Q. 3 and Q. 14).
  - c. SLHS will seek additional graduate student funding both from the University and from external sources.
  - d. SLHS will maintain and increase revenue-producing offerings through Continuing Education.
  - e. SLHS will improve clinical educational processes, including establishing an effective Electronic Health Record (HER), developing new clinical policies and procedures, and developing a clinical education handbook and syllabus.

**Role and Mission within the University:** SLHS has demonstrated the ability to work cooperatively toward the goal of bringing the Department into the central mission of the College of Arts and Sciences and Flagship 2030 Initiatives, while at the same time increasing its stature

and standing nationally in research and academic programs. Below are some examples of the roles SLHS serves on campus and ways in which SLHS contributes to Flagship 2030 initiatives:

***Strategic Imperative 1: Shape Tomorrow's Leaders.*** The previously discussed strategic plans are oriented to creating discipline-specific leaders in audiology and speech-language pathology. The focus on critical thinking and problem-solving is inherent in our programs – especially due to the clinical components of this program and our service to individuals with disabilities and individuals from diverse backgrounds (due to the importance of communication on socialization and education. Our strategic goals 1, 2, and 5 are oriented to providing the knowledge and experience needed for students to become leaders in the next generation.

***Strategic Imperative 2: Be the Top University for Innovation.*** The SLHS faculty is already highly recognized for innovation across many areas. The work in hearing aid technology, the integration of sign language with normal language acquisition, the working being done with Asian-Pacific languages in developmentally delayed and normal infants and preschoolers, and the utilization of qualitative research methodologies within clinical research venues are only a few of the innovations active in our department. Several of our strategic goals (1, 2, 3, and 5) are oriented toward innovation and its dissemination beyond CU Boulder.

***Strategic Imperative 3: Positively Impact Humanity.*** As a department that consists of two disciplines and helping professions, SLHS designed to assist those with various kinds of disabilities and to ensure inappropriate placement into disability categories due to diversity issues does not occur. Importantly, our research extends not only how to work with individuals with disabilities but the research into typical and atypical speech, language, and hearing development and processes provides greater understanding of disability and diversity in our modern world. (See strategic goals 2 and 3).