

**Mercy College Communication Disorders Program  
Strategic Plan 2018-2023**

| College Objectives | Long Term Program Goal   | Action Steps  | Person/s Responsible       | Date Due for Action | Results/Update (July 2019)  |
|--------------------|--|---|----------------------------|---------------------|---|
| 1.1                | Continue to focus on underserved communities of students, including first and second generation, low income, minority, and adult students                          |   |                            |                     |   |
| 1.2                | Expand the use of innovative pedagogies and course redesign capable of increasing student learning and persistence   |   |                            |                     |   |
| 1.3                | In both undergraduate and graduate programs, increase students' preparedness to compete effectively in increasingly technological, complex and global environments |   |                            |                     |   |
| 1.4                | Continue efforts to address deficiencies in students' readiness for college in particular subjects   |   |                            |                     |   |
| 1.5                | Revise curriculum and program offerings to respond to workforce demand and needs   |   |                            |                     |   |
|                    | <b>Continue to strive for diverse student body</b>   |   | All faculty                | 2018 and ongoing    |   |
| 1.1                |  | Highlight unique aspects of the CD Graduate Program, student experiences and alumni on the web page | All faculty                | 2018 and ongoing    | All full time CD faculty members update their faculty webpages annually. Program collaborates with department of Public Relations to push out stories, photos and videos via Mercy newsroom and social media (example: Yanni and Laurel interview, 2018).   |
| 1.2                |  | Increase visibility of program initiatives and scholarly activities of faculty and students         | All faculty                | 2018 and ongoing    | Dr. Berkowitz maintains a Facebook page to keep in contact with students and alumni. She highlights achievements of students and faculty, and posts other occasional notes of interest which are also sent to PR and to the dean's office for blog posting. Applicants have mentioned these outreach methods in interviews. Dr. Brooks presented at the Third Annual Tech Supports for Cognition and Learning Conference at Mercy College. The presentation was titled: Practical AAC and Core Vocabulary. The audience consisted of SLPs, teachers, OTs as well as family members of AAC users. The presentation discussed different software Platforms, resources and techniques to target communication using core vocabulary, as well as transitioning from school to adulthood with an AAC device. Dr. Brooks also served on the Panel on Tech Resources and discussed Mercy College's Speech and Hearing Clinic services. Dr. Berkowitz has increased her Twitter presence and connected with other NIDILRR grantees and the lupus community as of Summer 2019. |
| 1.3                |  | Maintain sufficient number of qualified applicants for enrollment within the CD graduate Program    | All faculty                | 2018 and ongoing    | The number of qualified applicants is at least 400-500 per year.<br>A maximum of 46 students begin the Program each year.<br>At least 30% of CD undergraduate and pre-requisite students from Mercy College apply and are accepted into graduate program each year<br>The applicant pool includes students with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.  |
| 1.5                |  | Update current apps based on faculty/student/externship supervisors' recommendations                | IT department              | Jun-18              | All faculty and students were involved in selecting apps that were loaded on 12 new iPad which were based on the data collected in clinical and classroom use. Students have embraced the use of apps and are often seen using their own phones or tablets to work with clients.  |
| 1.3                |  | Hire a Clinic Director, Aural Rehabilitation faculty  | Uhler, Faculty Search Comr | 2018-20             | Professor Denise DiCristofaro was hired as Clinical Placement Coordinator in 2017 to place all graduate students in in-house and external clinical placements. Professor Ashley O'Rourke was hired as Clinic Director in January 2019. Mercy Alum, Donna Bradley was hired to teach Aural Rehab. Donna Burke will be the Undergraduate CD Coordinator beginning 9/19.   |
| 3.1                |  |   |                            |                     |   |

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|          | Program achieves benchmarks outlined within the Program Evaluation Plan.                                | All Faculty<br>Dr. Buhler, Clinic Director responsible for monitoring | May 2019 Program Retreat | Benchmarks were generally met in nearly all areas (see program Evaluation Report). The Praxis exam pass rate has been at 100% on first try for the past 8 years-well above the national average. CD Program used program fees to purchase ETS Test Taking Practice Books for all students. Faculty conduct 2-day Praxis Review course each January to review curriculum content in their areas of expertise.  |
| 1.2, 1.3 | Offer Praxis review sessions  | Faculty   | 2018, 2019               | Student survey data indicate strong student belief that test taking review, Praxis Review workshops and test prep resources led to their high pass rate.  |
|          | Increase school-wide Interprofessional Education (IPE) efforts and activities with other Mercy programs | All Faculty   | Ongoing                  | Prof. DiCristofaro, Dr. Kosky and Prof. O'Rourke are members of the IPE committee (in the School of Health and Natural Sciences). Each fall, members participate in an IPE event requiring in-house clinical students to participate in a mock "case history" assignment. The CD students work with students from the OT, PT, PA and nursing programs. Dr. Berkowitz received a Teaching Innovation grant from Mercy College with her collaborator in the Nursing program. They bring students to the simulation lab to teach/learn about tracheostomy, speaking valves and suctioning. Student response was positive. As of Fall 2018, this content will be incorporated into Advanced Speech and Hearing Science/Instrumentation course. Dr. Brooks participated in the Second Annual InterProfessional Education Panel Discussion: Traumatic Brain Injury. Dr. Brooks served on a panel including other professionals (Nursing, OT, PT, Vocational Therapist) as well as a brain injury survivor. Panelists discussed a memoir of a brain injury survivor titled "I'll Carry the Fork". As part of the panel, Dr. Brooks discussed the speech language pathologist's role in recovery post-brain injury, emphasizing the importance of an IPE approach to treatment and management of TBI. 2019-Dr. Brooks was selected for the Peer-to-Peer Mentor Research Team Academy through Langston University which is a 5-year commitment where Dr. Brooks will work collaboratively with colleagues in other departments at Mercy College (OT, Psychology) to research the needs of women from low SES and minority backgrounds with an acquired brain injury as they return to work while |
|          | Add opportunities for reflective practice   | Dr. Kosky and Dr. Brooks  | 2018-19                  | Dr. Kosky and Dr. Brooks require all graduate students engaged in facilitating oral discussion groups for seniors in the independent and assistive living facilities of a private residential senior living community (Atria, Ardsley, NY; Fountains, Tuckahoe, NY; Sunrise at Fleetwood, Mount Vernon, NY) to complete a written reflective assignment as a way to "reach an outcome of greater self-awareness through a self-reflection approach." Dr. Brooks requires graduate students to read "A Stroke of Insight." Students are assigned to write a paper reflecting on author's pre-stroke versus post-stroke life, the author's description of hemisphere asymmetries and the right and left minds, as well as milestones for recovery, the important role of the SLP, and what a patient needs the most during recovery.  |
| 4.3, 4.5 | Increase endoscopy training   | Dr. Berkowitz   | 2018-2020                | Dr. Berkowitz has added visits to the mannequin simulation lab to her unit on endoscopy. She uses 3 different endoscopes, so that students can generalize their learning across instrumentation. Students have been very receptive to learning practical skills on the endoscope  |

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| 2.1                |                        | Expand the PACT program and strengthen or launch other student success initiatives to foster increased persistence, graduation, and career placement in both undergraduate and graduate programs |  |   |  |
| 2.2                |                        | Expand the breadth and quality of extra- and co-curricular programs at all campuses to improve student engagement  |  |   |  |
| 2.3                |                        | Strengthen support for student health and safety   |  |   |  |
| 2.4                |                        | Position students for career success by strengthening career services and cultivating employer partnerships, internships, and mentoring opportunities  |  |   |  |
| 2.5                |                        | Leverage Mercy's signature graduate and undergraduate programs and successes into regional or national models  |  |   |  |
|                    |                        | <b>Continue to build program's reputation and connections</b>  |  |   |  |
| 2.5                |                        | Maintain current sources of scholarship and funding for students and investigate other sources   | Program director                                 | Awarded New York City Department of Education Scholarship every 3-5 years | NYC Board of Education Scholarship grant application was awarded to CD program for renewal for 2014-2019. Reapply in 2019.   |
| 2.4                |                        | Graduate students can apply for Graduate Assistantships  | Program director                                 | May 2019  | Students (9) were able to apply for GA jobs in May 2019. Many CD students are hired as GAs throughout college due to their excellent communication skills. These jobs support their tuition and living expenses.   |
| 2.4                |                        | Full-time Graduate students can apply to the CD Scholarship Fund   | Scholarship committee                            | May 2018 and ongoing  | 2 students selected each year for \$2,000 scholarship based on merit. (CD grad students awarded \$500 for medical mission expenses).   |
| 2.4                |                        | Graduate students can apply to work as research assistants on grant-funded projects  | Dr. Berkowitz                                    | Spring 2019 and ongoing   | Dr. Berkowitz is a Principal Investigator on a NIDILRR grant, running from Sept 2018 to Sept 2021. She is hiring bilingual and monolingual graduate students to test participants with lupus at Montefiore Hospital and Hackensack Hospital. Dr. Berkowitz also received a Faculty Development Grant from Mercy College for 2018-19 and for 2019-20, part of which funds an additional research assistant for her project on elder adults listening to accented English. |
| 2.4                |                        | Graduate students can apply for medical mission support  | Dr. Buhler and Scholarship committee             | May 2018 and ongoing  | Graduate students are awarded \$350-500 for medical mission expenses, funded by the scholarship funds.   |
| 2.4                |                        | Collaborate with other faculty within the SHNS to strengthen and expand clinical contracts.  | Clinic director and Clinic Placement Coordinator | 2018 and ongoing  | Calipso has been adopted and all clinical faculty and students are using it to manage clock hours and student evaluation and student feedback about faculty.   |
| 2.4                |                        | Fee for service will replace insurance in clinic   |  | Fall 2019-22  | Clinical fees are on a sliding scale and clinic will no longer be accepting insurance. Clients are free to pursue reimbursement with their insurers.   |
| 1.2                |                        | An average of 3 publications authored or co-authored by faculty are published per year   | Drs. Kosky, Berkowitz, and Brooks                | 2018-23   | Berkowitz, S.S. & Shikani, A.H. (submitted) Adding Heat Moisture Exchangers (HMEs) to Tracheostomy Care. AJSLP.<br>Berkowitz, S. S. (2019). Another look at WIC's breastfeeding data: state totals reveal more than regional averages. J. Human Lactation.<br>S. Salzhauser Berkowitz K. Kenney-Riley, K. Rapoza, & Lewis, A.N. (2018). Lupus: Disease Impact on Functioning & the Need for Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling Services. J Applied Research Counseling |

Services: Applied Research, Counseling.

Berkowitz, S. S. (2017). Teaching Transnasal Endoscopy to Graduate Students Without a Hospital or Simulation Laboratory: Pool Noodles and Cadavers. *Am J Speech Lang Pathol*, [Advance online publ, 1-7. doi: 10.1044/2017\_AJSLP-15-0119].  
 Rapoza, K. A., Kenney-Riley, K., Salzhauer Berkowitz, S., Lewis, A. N., & Rosen Reynoso, M. (2017). Lupus in Culturally Diverse Populations: A Transdisciplinary Model for Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, 48(4).

Dr. Brooks successfully defended her dissertation titled: Cognitive flexibility, problem solving and inhibition in acute versus chronic aphasia: Strategy use in conversational speech. The study discussed the importance of including assessment of executive functions (EF) into the diagnostic protocol for individuals with aphasia. Dr. Brooks is also currently involved in three studies in collaboration with the program director at Stonybrook University as well as physicians at Stonybrook University Hospital. Data collection is complete for one study and the data is being analyzed for publication; data collection are underway for the other two studies. Dr. Brooks also submitted a manuscript to *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*.  
 Faculty submitted conference proposals along with alumnae of the program. These projects are the fruit of capstone projects.

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| 1.2 | Increase student scholarly engagement with faculty. Faculty will jointly present on research/ capstone projects with students at local or national conferences | All faculty                              | 2018 and ongoing | Faculty submitted conference proposals along with alumnae of the program. These projects are the fruit of capstone projects.  |
|     | Two or more faculty will submit abstracts for national conferences.  | Drs. Buhler, Berkowitz, Brooks and Kosky | Annually         | Full time faculty submit and present poster sessions or presentations for the New York State Speech Language Hearing Association (NYSSLHA) and/or American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA) national conferences in 2018-23.  |
| 4.3 | Continue to partner with the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program  | Dr. Buhler                               | Annual           | Three students participated in Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) in 2017-18; and 2018-19. 3 students will participate in 2019 – 2020. Dr. Buhler is a member of their Advisory Board.  |
| 4.3 | Expand study abroad and exchange opportunities and develop high-profile internships  | Dr. Buhler, Berkowitz and Brooks         | Annual           | CD Scholarship Program has awarded 24 scholarships to students over the past 9 years. Trips to Bolivia, Peru and Columbia as well as Dominican Republic and Antigua are planned again for 2018-19 and 2019-20. Dr. Brooks and an Interprofessional medical mission team went to Antigua. Dr. Buhler visited Mekelle, Ethiopia as a potential future site for students. On these trips students gain experience in the importance of interprofessional collaboration, working with different cultures, hands-on experience working with different populations across settings. |

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|          |  | Increase ways to show appreciation to our externship supervisors for supervising our students  | Dr. Buhler, Scholarship Fund Committee | 2018 and ongoing | Program sponsors 2 ASHA approved continuing education events at Mercy College. Alums and area SLPs have supported them. Offered externship clinical educators 10 free admission spots to our annual workshops to thank them for their service to our students. This offer is done on a rotating basis to include all sites. Also each has received gift cards as a thank you for their service. Supervisors have been very grateful. Beginning in July 2018 and continuing each July, the SHNS sponsors a "Clinical Educator Appreciation Event".                              |
| 4.5      |  | Faculty members attend training opportunities offered through FCTL, Langston, and join learning communities to use new technologies. | All Faculty                            | Annually         | Dr. Berkowitz attended a June Intensive re: mapping arguments for critical thinking. Dr. Kosky attended a two-day June FCTL workshop, Digital Story Telling. Dr. Brooks attended a workshop titled: Dysphagia, Respiration, and Cognition: Medical SLP Challenges Across the Continuum of Care.  |
| 1.3      |  | Encourage and support faculty efforts to expand and refine use of technology.  | Program Director and Faculty           | Annually         | Dr. Buhler, Kosky and Dr. Brooks expanded teaching skills by implementing Top Hat software in class presentations to assess and remediate student comprehension of concepts. In fall 2019, we will pilot PollEverywhere as a teaching tool. Dr. Brooks included The Modified Barium Swallow Impairment Profile (MBSImP™©). MBSImP™© in the Dysphagia course. It has become more widely used across different clinical settings and training in this method will make our students more prepared for future careers as SLPs working with individuals with swallowing disorders. |
| 1.3      |  | Assessment of clinical paperwork   | Graduate Faculty Advisors              | 2018-23          | Calipso software is used to track students' progress toward and compliance with ASHA certification standards and completion of knowledge and skills outcomes (KASA). All full-time faculty must monitor advisees' paperwork and KASA forms   |
| 1.2, 1.3 |  |  |  |                  |  |

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| 3.1                |                        | Increase the effectiveness of faculty and staff through mission-focused hiring, retention, and development |                      |                     |                            |
| 3.2                |                        | Optimize enrollment to make the most effective use of the college's human and capital resources            |                      |                     |                            |
| 3.3                |                        | Pursue efficiencies to slow the rising costs of higher education and the growth of student debt            |                      |                     |                            |
| 3.4                |                        | Deploy effective responses to higher education disruption  |                      |                     |                            |
| 3.5                |                        | Expand and diversify sources of revenue, particularly in the areas of grants and fundraising               |                      |                     |                            |
|                    |                        | <b>Increase grant applications and fundraising</b>   |                      |                     |                            |

Faculty will apply for larger grants as opportunities present, with the help of the Office of Sponsored Programs, Dean's office and Provost's office

Dr. Berkowitz, Dr. Buhler, Dr. Kosky, Dr. Brooks

2018, 2019-20

Dr. Berkowitz, along with Dr. Rapoza from Psychology and Dr. Kenney-Riley from Nursing, received a grant for \$600,000 over 3 years, from NIDILRR, to study adolescents with lupus. The grant was funded on Sept 30, 2018. Dr. Berkowitz received a used endoscope and light source from a Pentax grant. Dr. Kosky was awarded a one-year grant (2018 - 2019) of \$12,784 from the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) Intergenerational Connections: Students Serving Older Adults program supported by the AARP Foundation for her proposal, Reminiscences of Older Adults: Undergraduate Students Engaged in Intergenerational Communication via Community Service. Dr. Buhler was awarded Carvel grant for \$10,000, TD Bank grant for \$15,000 and \$15,000 from Mercy College to purchase a new Audiology suite in June, 2019.

3.5

Faculty will apply for Mercy College grants at least once per year

All faculty

2018

Dr. Berkowitz has been awarded a Faculty Development Grant (\$2800) to study elders' perception of accents. This grant has been renewed for the 2019-2020 school year. Dr. Berkowitz has been awarded a Teaching Innovation Grant for expanding speaking valve training (\$2000). Dr. Kosky and Dr. Brooks were awarded a micro-teaching grant (\$1,000) that paid the registration fees for 20 graduate students enrolled in cnds 550 Communication Disorders for Adults to attend the Adler Aphasia Center, Maywood, New Jersey, annual one-day workshop, Reading

3.5

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- 4.1 Strengthen Mercy's personalized educational environment
- 4.2 Create a great working environment for Mercy faculty and staff
- 4.3 Increase activities designed to instill a sense of civic responsibility in students
- 4.4 Expand alumni services and programs to re-establish and/or deepen connections with the alumni community
- 4.5 Develop and sustain strong community connections that position the College as a community asset

**Increase connections with alumni and community.**

Increase awareness of communication disorders in the community through student promotion projects and advocacy, faculty or community lectures, and exploration of other assignments involving community organizations.

Dr. Kosky is a committee member of the Westchester chapter of the Walk4Hearing, Hearing Loss Association of America (HHLA)

Dr. Buhler is on the Advisory Board of Healing the Children Northeast, Leadership in Education of Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) and is a Board Member of Westchester Institute of Human Development (WIHD). Dr. Brooks serves as NSSLHA advisor and participates in aphasia advocacy as she travels with a member of the Adler Aphasia Center (a stroke survivor with aphasia) to educate EMT/EMS/firefighters/police officers and other first responders on aphasia and other communication disorders post-stroke or traumatic brain injury on a monthly basis. Dr. Brooks also spoke on a podcast to educate first responders on signs/symptoms of aphasia and is also currently creating an educational video with public access television to educate the public on aphasia.

4.3, 4.4, 4.5

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|     | Increase offerings in clinic  | All faculty              | 2018 and ongoing | Dr. Berkowitz began offering services to transgender individuals in the Mercy College Speech and Hearing Center. Dr. Brooks coordinated and continues to grow an aphasia communication group which provides graduate students with the opportunity to gain experience and expertise in working with individuals who have experienced a stroke or other neurological impairment. Student clinicians will train and instruct clients on strategies to improve communication and cognitive skills in a supportive environment. Professor O'Rourke initiated a pediatric feeding group in summer 2019 and bilingual speech and language evaluations were offered again. |
| 4.5 | Explore new partnership with at least one community agency on an annual basis | Dr. Kosky and Dr. Brooks | Annually         | Possible collaboration with Burke Rehabilitation Center to expand our aphasia group as well as to collaborate on research studies using our lab/equipment (e.g., IOPI) to add to evidence based research. Continue to expand collaboration with Stonybrook University /Hospital to provide research opportunities for our students.   |
| 4.5 | Invite alumni to speak  | All faculty              | Annually         | All faculty seek out alumni to guest lecture in courses as appropriate, and as clinical educators and adjunct instructors where appropriate.  |
| 4.4 |   |                          |                  |   |