

**Queens College Graduate Program in Speech Language Pathology  
Long Term Strategic Plan 2022-2025  
Executive Summary 2023-2024**

**Long Term Strategic Goals, 2022-2025**

1. Obtain a 'state of the art' space to house the graduate program in Speech Language Pathology with the capacity to provide additional clinical services and academic and community programs.
2. Expand the commitment to serve the community and college through enhanced communication and interprofessional connections among the program, college and surrounding community.
3. Further promote diversity, equity and inclusion within the program and support the development of clinicians and researchers who are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion.
4. Encourage innovations in academic and clinical education to expand graduate student knowledge and clinical application skills consistent with ethical, evidenced-based practices in speech language pathology.
5. Recruit and support faculty members who are committed to high quality graduate education, equity and inclusion.

**Annual Subgoals and Outcomes for Program's Long Term Strategic Plan**

**Sub-Goals for LTP Goal #1**

Consult with the renovation team and administration as needed to ensure renovation of the Gertz Building will meet the future needs of the program.

*Outcome:* The Speech Language Hearing Center (SLHC), continued in its temporary location in Kissena Hall 2, across the street from the main campus as construction on the Gertz Building continued this past year. The SLHC remained fully operational in this temporary setting for both in-person and telehealth treatment and evaluation services.

Renovation work on the Gertz building continued and currently, the expected timeframe for completion of the renovation is late Fall 2024. We will continue to engage with the renovation team to coordinate the re-opening of the on-campus center.

**Sub-Goal for LTP Goal #2**

Enhanced training in interprofessional education and practice through student participation with the Give Kids a Smile program in collaboration with students and faculty from the New York City College of Technology Dental Hygiene and Vision Care clinical programs to provide free hearing screenings to children ages 5-12 years at their annual community event.

*Outcome:* This annual volunteer initiative provides educational, preventive, and restorative dental and vision services to children. This year, under the guidance of two licensed and certified speech language pathology faculty members, our students joined the interprofessional program to provide hearing screenings to approximately 80 children. After screenings were completed, families and caregivers were provided with results to share with their physicians as needed, as well as educational material about hearing care and hearing loss prevention. Additional screenings and educational material regarding hearing care and prevention of hearing loss were also provided to the dental hygiene students and faculty who work in an environment where they are exposed to consistent noise (50-85 dB) from their dental equipment. This shared experience benefited an underserved population in the community, enhanced the program's connection to the community, and provided a strong interprofessional education and practice opportunity for students in each professional program. Following the positive response from the community participants, our program has been invited to be a featured member of this annual health event.

**Sub-Goal for LTP Goal #3** Establish our Culturally Responsive Clinical Student training curriculum across the program with specific student education, engagement, and clinical application identified in each semester.

Outcome : Following successful changes to the New Student Orientation last year, the curriculum committee consulted a speech language pathologist with an expertise in implementing culturally responsive student training. The resulting curriculum is woven into each semester's seminar class as well as establishing independent lectures, events, clinical application activities and reflections for student participation. Content breadth and depth is sequenced across the length of the program to reflect and acknowledge students' progressive growth in knowledge and clinical skills. The updated initiative focuses on dynamic learning in the areas of cultural responsiveness, cultural humility, implicit and explicit bias, the power of language in the first year, and on health and educational equity, socioeconomic factors, cultural beliefs in clinical care, and current case studies/ clinical application in student field placement settings during the second year.

#### **Sub-Goal for LTP Goal #4**

Exploration of a New York State Department of Education Bilingual Certification track for speech language pathology students in our graduate program.

Outcome: There is a significant need for bilingual/multilingual certified speech language pathologists in New York. With over 300 individual languages spoken in the county of Queens alone, bilingual/multilingual persons with communication challenges are often underserved in both health care and educational settings. This semester, initial discussions were held with faculty from the speech language pathology graduate program and the bilingual certification program on campus to explore establishment of an accelerated pathway for our bilingual/multilingual graduate students toward bilingual certification. A committee was formed to review in detail the New York State requirements, current course offerings, and clinical education experiences that would advance this pathway. The committee will meet in the Fall 2024 to review findings and feasibility.

#### **Sub-Goal for LTP Goal #5**

Secure a substitute faculty line to maintain appropriate student faculty ratio for academic and clinical education. Initiate a new search to hire a distinguished faculty member committed to teaching, research, service, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Outcome: A substitute lecturer faculty line was established for the 2023-24 academic year. A highly qualified instructor was hired who successfully engaged students in coursework and clinical education. This substitute line will continue through the 2024-25 academic year as the program works with college administration to re-engage a search for a new permanent professorial faculty member.