ACCREDITATION ACTION REPORT

Re-Accreditation Review

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology took the following accreditation action at its February 16-19, 2022 meeting, as indicated below.

Name of Program: University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa

File #: 41

Professional Area:

- [ ] Audiology
- X Speech-Language Pathology

Modality:

- X Residential
- [ ] Distance Education
- [ ] Satellite Campus
- [ ] Contractual Arrangement

Degree Designator(s): M.S.

Current Accreditation Cycle: 2/1/2014 - 1/31/2022

Action Taken: Continue Accreditation

Effective Date: February 19, 2022

New Accreditation Cycle: 1/1/2022 - 12/31/2029

Next Review: Annual Report due February 1, 2023

Notices: The program is advised to adhere to the following notices that are appended to this report.

- PROGRAM COMPLIANCE EXPECTATIONS
- PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF DECISION AND ACCREDITATION STATUS
In the context of the institutional and program mission statements and in consideration of the credentials for which the program is preparing students, the CAA conducted its comprehensive review and found the program to be in compliance with the Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, except as noted below.

**AREAS OF NON-COMPLIANCE**

The CAA found the program to be not in compliance with the following Standards for Accreditation. Non-compliance means that the program does not have in place the essential elements necessary to meet the standard. The program must demonstrate its compliance with these standards when responding to prior concerns in the next annual report or reaccreditation application or by the time line specified below. The CAA will indicate in its review of that report whether the program has addressed these areas sufficiently to achieve compliance. Failure to demonstrate compliance with the standards may jeopardize the program’s accreditation status or require the CAA to place the program on probation.

A program will be placed on probation or accreditation withdrawn after the review of a second consecutive report reveals that issues continue for the same standard(s) and the program remains not in full compliance with all standards (effective January 1, 2021 - see [CAA Accreditation Handbook, Chapter XVII](#)).

**Standard 1.9** The program provides information about the program and the institution to students and to the public that is current, accurate, and readily available.

**Requirement for Review:**
- Websites, catalogs, advertisements, and other publications/electronic media must be accurate regarding standards and policies regarding recruiting and admission practices, academic offerings, matriculation expectations, academic calendars, grading policies and requirements, and fees and other charges.
- The program must make student outcome measures available to the general public by posting the results on the program’s website via a clearly visible and readily accessible link.

**Evidence of Non-Compliance:**
The CAA requires that information made available to the public be accurate, including all web content. The program reported in its application that one student completed later than on-time in the most recent year and one student did not complete in the year prior, however the student outcome data published on the program’s website ([https://cd.ua.edu/overview/accreditation/caa-accreditation-data/](https://cd.ua.edu/overview/accreditation/caa-accreditation-data/)) report 100% completion for the past four years.

**Steps to Be Taken:**
At the time of the next annual report, provide evidence that the student outcome data are accurate and current at the time of the submission.
**Standard 1.9** The program provides information about the program and the institution to students and to the public that is current, accurate, and readily available.

**Requirement for Review:**
- The program must publish to the general public on its website the program’s CAA accreditation status, in accordance with the language specified in the Public Notice of Accreditation Status in the CAA Accreditation Handbook, as required under federal regulations. This must be displayed in a clearly visible and readily accessible location. Additional references to the program’s accreditation status must be accurate but need not include all components of the accreditation statement.

**Evidence of Non-Compliance:**
The CAA requires programs to publish on its website the applicable accreditation statement in its entirety as articulated in Public Notice of Accreditation Status policy. The program’s published accreditation statement (https://cd.ua.edu/overview/accreditation/caa-accreditation-data/) has a typographical error regarding ASHA’s mailing address.

**Steps to Be Taken:**
At the time of the next annual report, correct the wording of the accreditation statement following the template provided in the *Accreditation Handbook*. In addition, the CAA approved edits to the Public Notice of Accreditation Status policy in February 2022 and requires all CAA-approved modalities for the program to be clearly listed in the statement. The correct statement should be written exactly as follows:

“The Master of Science (MS) education program in speech-language pathology (residential) at The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard, #310, Rockville, MD 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5700.”

**AREAS FOR FOLLOW-UP (clarification/verification)**
The CAA did not find the program to be out of compliance with the following Standards for Accreditation at this time. However, the program must provide additional information or an update in the program’s next annual report or reaccreditation application for clarification or verification of these issues, in order to monitor the program’s continued compliance in the stated areas.

**Standard 2.3** All faculty members (full-time, part-time, adjuncts), including all individuals providing clinical education, are qualified and competent by virtue of their education, experience, and professional credentials to provide academic and clinical education as assigned by the program leadership.
Requirement for Review:

- The program must demonstrate that the majority of academic content is taught by doctoral faculty who hold the appropriate terminal academic degree (PhD, EdD).

Evidence of Concern:

The program must clearly demonstrate that the majority of academic content is taught by doctoral faculty. On the faculty chart, Dr. McCutcheon is listed as not contributing to teaching but is listed as instructor on the course list teaching the Basic Audiology class. Not all faculty listed as contributing to classroom instruction on the faculty chart are listed on the course list (e.g., Stricklin, Albea). This makes it difficult to determine the credentials of those providing academic content and how that supports the program’s compliance with this requirement.

In addition, the faculty roster that was supplied with the application was out of date. Dr. McCutcheon is listed as an assistant professor but is now a full professor; Dr. Buhr is listed as assistant but is an associate professor.

Steps to Be Taken:

At the time of the next annual report, provide a current and updated faculty list and ensure that it is consistent with the course list.

PERFORMANCE WITH RESPECT TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The CAA has evaluated this program regarding its performance with respect to student achievement and provides the following report, required as an accrediting agency recognized by the US Secretary of Education [34 CFR 602.17(f)].

Comments/Observations:

The CAA assessed the program’s performance with respect to student achievement and found the program to meet or exceed the established CAA expectations (as described in accreditation standard 5.0-Assessment) in the following checked areas. Details regarding any of these areas found to be not in compliance are described earlier in this report in the context of the relevant standard.

| X | Program Completion Rates |
| X | Employment Rates |
| X | Praxis Examination Rates |

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE EXPECTATIONS

As an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, the CAA must comply with Criterion §602.20 [34 CFR 602.20]. This criterion requires that if an accrediting agency’s review of a program indicates that the program is not in compliance with any standard, the CAA must provide a written timeline to the program to come into compliance that is reasonable, as determined by the CAA, based on the nature of the finding, the stated mission, and educational objectives of the program. The timeline may include intermediate checkpoints on the way to full compliance and must not exceed three years for programs, regardless of professional area. If the review of a second consecutive report reveals that issues continue for the same standard(s), regardless of which requirements for review were
identified, and the program remains not in full compliance with all standards, the CAA may act to place the program on probation or withdraw its accreditation status in accordance with the policy and procedures outlined in the Accreditation Handbook. The CAA may place a program on probation or withdraw accreditation from a program prior to this time when there is clear evidence of circumstances that jeopardize the capability of the program to provide acceptable educational experiences for the students.

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THIS DECISION AND ACCREDITATION STATUS

The CAA publishes a notice of final accreditation actions on its website after comprehensive reviews are completed in accordance with its published policies. In the event an adverse action is taken and becomes final (i.e., withdrawal or withholding of an accreditation status), the CAA is required to publish a brief statement summarizing the reasons for withholding or withdrawing the accreditation status of a program, together with the comments, if any, that the affected program may wish to make.

The Criteria for Recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education requires all recognized accrediting agencies to provide for the public correction of incorrect or misleading information an accredited or preaccredited program releases about accreditation or preaccreditation status, contents of site visit reports, and accrediting or preaccrediting actions with respect to the program. [34 CFR 602.23(d) and 602.23(e)] The program must make accurate public disclosure of the accreditation or preaccreditation status awarded to the program, using the language provided in the Accreditation Handbook (see Chapter XII Informing the Public) on the academic accreditation website. If the program chooses to disclose any additional information within the scope of the ED rule, such disclosure also must be accurate. Any public disclosure of information within the scope of the rule must include the CAA’s name, address, and telephone number as described in the Accreditation Handbook. If an institution or program misrepresents or distorts any action by the CAA with respect to any aspect of the accreditation process, its accreditation status, the contents of the site visit report, or final CAA accreditation actions or decisions, the CAA will inform the chief executive officer of the institution and the program director that corrective action must be taken. If corrective action is not taken, the CAA will release a public statement that provides correct information and may invoke other sanctions as may be appropriate.