

**ACCREDITATION ACTION REPORT
Annual Report Review**

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology has reviewed the program's accreditation annual report and took the accreditation action indicated below.

Name of Program: Stephen F. Austin State University

File #: 220

Professional Area:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Audiology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Speech-Language Pathology

Modality:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Residential
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Distance Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Satellite Campus
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contractual Arrangement

Degree Designator(s): M.S.

Current Accreditation Cycle: 4/1/2014 – 3/31/2022

Action Taken: Approve substantive change for distance education and continue accreditation

Effective Date: July 17, 2020

Next Review: Reaccreditation application due February 1, 2021

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**

Standard: 3.1B An effective entry-level professional speech-language pathology program allows each student to acquire knowledge and skills in sufficient breadth and depth to function as an effective, well-educated, and competent clinical speech-language pathologist (i.e., one who can practice within the full scope of practice of speech-language pathology). The education program is designed to afford each student with opportunities to meet the expectations of the program that are consistent with the program's mission and goals and that prepare each student for professional practice in speech-language pathology.

Evidence of Noncompliance:

The master's program in speech-language pathology must perform the following functions:

- The program must provide sufficient breadth and depth of opportunities for students to obtain a variety of clinical education experiences in different work settings, with different populations, and with appropriate equipment and resources in order to acquire and demonstrate skills across the scope of practice in speech-language pathology, sufficient to enter professional practice. Typically, the achievement of these outcomes requires the completion of 2 years of graduate education or the equivalent.
- Establish a clear set of program goals and objectives that must be met for students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for entry into professional practice.
- Offer a plan of study that encompasses the following domains:
 - Professional practice competencies
 - Foundations of speech-language pathology practice
 - Identification and prevention of speech, language, and swallowing disorders and differences
 - Assessment of speech, language, and swallowing disorders and differences
 - Intervention to minimize the impact for speech, language, and swallowing disorders and differences
- Offer the academic and clinical program on a regular basis so that students are able to satisfy degree and other requirements within the program's published time frame.

There are many course number discrepancies between the courses listed in the annual report and on the Knowledge and Skills within the Curriculum form. There is no course SPE 506 listed on the annual report, whereas it is listed as Dysphagia course on the Knowledge and Skills form and course descriptions. In addition, in the course description, SPE 506 is listed as Dysphagia and SPE 505 is listed as Language and AAC. It is uncertain how students are able to obtain adequate knowledge in language and AAC in a combined course. Furthermore, social aspects are not addressed in the courses listed.

Steps to be Taken:

In the reaccreditation application, provide accurate course numbers with course descriptions. In addition, provide evidence that the coursework covers the depth and breadth of the knowledge and skills.

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 2.2: The number, composition and workload of all full-time faculty who have responsibility in the graduate program are sufficient to allow them to meet expectations with regard to teaching, research, and service of the sponsoring institution.

Areas of Concern:

- The program must demonstrate that all faculty who have responsibility in the graduate program and have obligations to provide teaching, research, and service as part of their workload:
 - Are accessible to students
 - Have sufficient time for scholarly and creative activities
 - Have sufficient time to advise students
 - Have sufficient time to participate in faculty governance
 - Have sufficient time to participate in other activities that are consistent with the expectations of the sponsoring institution
- The program must demonstrate that all faculty who have responsibility in the graduate program and have obligations to provide clinical education and services as part of their workload:
 - Are accessible to students
 - Have sufficient time for scholarly and creative activities
 - Have sufficient time to advise students
 - Have sufficient time to participate in faculty governance
 - Have sufficient time to participate in other activities that are consistent with the expectations of the sponsoring institution

The program has increased the number of students by 16.28% in the past year in the on-campus program and are in the process of enrolling 10 more students in their distance learning program. A faculty line was approved and advertised; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all open positions are currently closed with the possibility of searches re-opening in late fall or early spring. In addition,

the program mentions that if the faculty is hired, then the program may increase the number of students. It is not clear that with the increase in students, how the present faculty will be accessible to students, have sufficient time for scholarly and creative activities, advise students and participate in faculty governance.

Steps to be Taken:

In the reaccreditation application, provide the status of the new faculty position and how the faculty, without the new hire, will have sufficient time for activities outside of the teaching workload.

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 U.S. Secretary of Education [[34 CFR 602.17\(f\)\(2\)](#)].

Comments/Observations:

<i>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 <u>not</u> in compliance are described earlier in this report in the context of the relevant standard.</i>	
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\(a\)\(2\)\(iii\)](#)]. 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 establish timelines for programs that are not in full compliance “to take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance with the agency’s standards”. As the programs that the CAA accredits are at least two years in length, the maximum time allowed under this criterion is two years. If, after review of a required report, the program remains out of full compliance with any standard and sufficient progress toward compliance has not been demonstrated, 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, as noted above. However, a program will be placed on probation or accreditation withdrawn after the review of a third consecutive report reveals that issues continue for the same standard(s) and the program remains not in full compliance with all standards.

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.