ACCREDITATION ACTION REPORT

Candidacy Application

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: West Liberty University
File #: 353

Professional Area:

- [ ] Audiology
- [x] Speech-Language Pathology

Modality:

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

Degree Designator(s): M.S.
Action Taken: Award Candidacy
Effective Date: February 19, 2022
Candidacy Accreditation Cycle: February 1, 2022 – January 31, 2027
Next Review: Annual Progress 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

Date of Decision: February 19, 2022
The CAA conducted its comprehensive review in the context of the institutional and program mission statements and in consideration of the credentials for which the program is preparing students, and determined that the program demonstrated sufficient compliance with the Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, unless noted below.

**Standard 2.1** The number and composition of the program faculty (academic doctoral, clinical doctoral, other) are sufficient to deliver a program of study that achieves the following objectives:

- 2.1.1 allows students to acquire the knowledge and skills required in Standard 3,
- 2.1.2 allows students to acquire the scientific and research fundamentals of the discipline,
- 2.1.3 allows students to meet the program’s established goals and objectives,
- 2.1.4 meets the expectations set forth in the program’s mission and goals,
- 2.1.5 is offered on a regular basis so that it will allow the students to complete the program within the published time frame.

**Requirement(s) of the Standard to be met:**

- The program must document
  - the distribution of faculty in terms of the number of full-time and part-time individuals who hold academic doctoral degrees, clinical doctoral degrees, and master’s degrees

| Compliance Expectation Determined: Initiated |
| Compliance Expectation for Award of Candidacy Status: Initiated |

**CAA Concern:**
The number and composition of the program faculty (academic doctoral, clinical doctoral, other) must be sufficient to deliver the program of study. The program currently expects to have five full-time faculty (1 AuD, 3 master’s, and 1 PhD) and three adjuncts (all PhD) when the program opens in Fall 2022. The program reported that the PhD faculty would be a new hire - Allegra Cornaglia - who is completing a PhD program with the degree conferral expected in Spring 2022 and who has accepted the faculty position beginning August 2022. Two of the master’s level faculty are actively pursuing research doctoral degrees, with anticipated completions in 2023 and 2024; the third master’s level faculty was expected to compete a clinical doctorate program in speech-language pathology in December 2021. The university supports additional faculty be hired in 2023 and 2024.

**Steps To Be Taken:**
At the time of the first annual progress report, confirm that Ms. Cornaglia has begun her faculty position and has had her doctoral degree conferred, expected in Spring 2022. Provide an updated hiring plan and teaching schedule that includes the current degrees of all faculty members assigned to all courses being offered for the program of study.
Standard 6.3 The program has adequate physical facilities (classrooms, offices, clinical space, and research laboratories) that are accessible, appropriate, safe, and sufficient to achieve the program’s mission and goals.

Requirement(s) of the Standard to be met:
● The program must demonstrate that its facilities are adequate to deliver a program that is consistent with its mission and goals.

Compliance Expectation Determined: Initiated
Compliance Expectation for Award of Candidacy Status: Initiated

CAA Concern:
The CAA expects that a program’s physical facilities are adequate, accessible, appropriate, safe, and sufficient to achieve the program’s mission and goals. It is noted that Phase 1 (clinical space) of the 3-phase building project for the 4th floor of Campbell Hall has been completed and that the program’s academic and clinic faculty have moved into their new space. The site visitors verified the adequacy of the faculty offices, classrooms, and clinic space. However, the next two phases have been requested to be included in the capital campaign and no timelines have been mentioned as to when the next phase would begin. It is not clear what the next steps will be if monies are not forthcoming from that campaign, or how that may affect the building project’s completion.

Steps To Be Taken:
At the time of the first annual progress report, clarify the status of phases 2 and 3 for the 4th floor Campbell Hall building project and note timelines for the additional planned phases. Describe efforts and conclusions to assess the adequacy of the current and planned space as the program is launched.

PERFORMANCE WITH RESPECT TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The CAA 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)]. Upon award of Candidacy status, no students are enrolled in the program; thus student achievement data has not been collected. However, the CAA assessed the program’s process for collecting and reporting student achievement data and found the program to meet or exceed the established CAA expectations as described in the Candidacy Compliance Continuum for accreditation standard 5.0 – Assessment.

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.