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 27 – March 2, 2019 meeting, as indicated below.

Name of Program: Western Washington University

File #: 168

Professional Area:

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

Modality:

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

Degree Designator(s): M.A.

Current Accreditation Cycle: 02/01/11 - 01/31/19

Action Taken: Continue Accreditation

Effective Date: March 2, 2019

New Accreditation Cycle: 02/01/19 - 01/31/27

Next Review: Annual Report due February 1, 2020

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 1.9 - Public Information**

**Evidence of non-compliance:**

At a minimum, the following results of student outcome measures for the most recently completed 3 academic years must be provided:

- number and percent of students completing the program within the program’s published time frame for each of the 3 most recently completed academic years,
- number and percentage of program test-takers who pass the Praxis Subject Assessment examination for each of the 3 most recently completed academic years (programs need report only the results once for test-takers who take the test more than one time in the reporting period),
- number and percentage of program graduates employed in the profession or pursuing further education in the profession within 1 year of graduation for each of the 3 most recently completed academic years.

Graduation rate, Praxis pass rate, and Employment rate published on the program’s website (https://chss.wwu.edu/csd/graduate-program-success-0) are not current. Data for completion and Praxis pass rates include 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 academic years. Data for employment rates include 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 academic years. In addition, data presented for program completion, Praxis pass scores and employment rates do not include percentages as required.

CAA’s review of the program’s 2017 annual report found data reported on the program’s website for employment and graduate rates were not current. **Thus, information made available to the**
public regarding the program’s student outcome data continues to be a concern and may jeopardize the program’s accreditation status if not fully addressed at the time of the next annual report.

Furthermore, it is not apparent that the program has an effective system in a place to update published student outcome data in a timely manner to ensure compliance with this standard.

Steps to be Taken:

In the next annual report, the program must demonstrate that student outcome data published on the program’s website reflects current, accurate, and complete data to include the number and percent for the 3 most recently completed academic years for program completion rates, Praxis pass rates, and employment rates. Also describe the process used to ensure the website is updated regularly (at least annually) to support compliance with this standard. Refer to the CAA guidelines for posting public information are available at: https://caa.asha.org/reporting/student-achievement-measures/presenting-student-achievement-data/.

AREAS OF PARTIAL COMPLIANCE

The CAA found the program to be in partial compliance with the following Standards for Accreditation. Partial compliance means that the program has in place some, but not all, of the essential elements necessary to meet all aspects of 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.

- There are no areas of partial compliance with accreditation standards.
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 3.1B – Overall Curriculum**

**Evidence of concern:**

The program must 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 difference.

A review of student records during the site visit indicated the plan of study does not encompass the depth and breadth of assessment and intervention of speech, language, and swallowing disorders and differences. Evidence demonstrated a lack of student contact hours in certain disorders and age categories. Furthermore, a review of syllabi indicated little documentation of skill development in major content areas. In response the program indicated the SLP Curriculum Committee and SLP Clinic Director met in December 2018, identified changes and developed guidelines for on-going implementation to address curriculum deficiency.

**Steps to be Taken:**

In the next annual report, the program must provide evidence that implementation of the proposed plans to increase opportunities for all students to acquire the depth and breadth of assessment and intervention of speech, language, and swallowing disorders and differences has been successful in meeting the expectations of this standard.

**Standard 3.6B – Clinical Settings/Populations**

**Evidence of concern:**

The program must demonstrate that it has mechanisms to develop comprehensive plans of clinical educational experiences so that each student has an opportunity to experience the breadth and depth of clinical practice, obtain experiences with diverse populations, a variety of clinical experiences in different work settings, and with appropriate equipment and resources,
and learn from experienced speech-language pathologists who will serve as effective clinical educators. Experiences across the breadth and depth of age groups and populations, in addition to skills-related experiences, were found to be limited for many students, particularly in adult populations at the time of the site visit. In response, the program indicated several changes planned or in progress (e.g., new clinic programs, new part-time clinical educator, improved system of student data entry to correct under-reporting of clinic experiences).

**Steps to be Taken:**

In the next annual report, the program must provide evidence that each student has an opportunity to experience the breadth and depth of clinical practice with diverse populations.

**Standard 3.8B – Clinical Education-Client Welfare**

**Evidence of concern:**

The program must demonstrate that the supervision provided to each student is adjusted to ensure that the specific needs are met for each individual who is receiving services. Evidence that supervision was not appropriate was observed during the site visit. In response, the program indicated adjustments to supervision were made for aural rehabilitation off-site placements, adjustment to the SLP clinical educator’s schedule to allow for 100% supervision of students, and that language has been added to policies and procedures.

**Steps to be Taken:**

In the next annual report, provide an update on the outcome of the reported procedural changes.
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)(2)].

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.

- Program Completion Rates
- Employment Rates
- 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.