

PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES IN PROGRAM

Undergraduate Masters Ph.D. Certificate

Title of Program: Hearing, Speech and Language Sciences

Date of Submission: 5-22-09

Brief Summary of Proposed Changes and Rationale (Attach additional information if needed)

A premajor has been under consideration for the past five years, in consultation with the HSLs faculty, CHHS Dean, CHHS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, and the Director of Undergraduate Admissions, and followed detailed data analysis with the assistance of the Associate Provost for Institutional Research and Assessment. The HSLs premajor is needed to:

- Address perceived and actual problems associated with enabling students to graduate with the HSLs major even when students have little to no likelihood of a future in graduate school or in the profession of communication sciences and disorders as a whole (also reducing student and parent complaints, negative perceptions, and poor reflection on the School when a large number of students are not admitted for graduate study in the field). The premajor would help to assure that those students most likely to successfully progress to advanced study are admitted to the program;
- Ensure that students in the HSLs major have realistic career goals in light of highly competitive graduate school admissions requirements in speech-language pathology and audiology;
- Enhance academic quality and rigor through improved balance of strong students in HSLs UG courses;
- Ensure appropriate time to graduation;
- Address excessive class size in key courses to bring enrollments in line with available instructional resources;
- Address increasing teaching, advising, research, service, and clinical practice demands;
- Help to retain current faculty and staff members, who are aware of the need for reduced UG program size;
- Address a lack of funds for part-time instructors and loss of teaching staff through early retirees no longer teaching;
- Address serious challenges related to fewer numbers of UG courses required for Q2S.

Students will need to earn a grade of B or better in each of the following premajor courses in order to be admitted into the HSLs Major: HSLs 108, HSLs 208, HSLs 213, and HSLs 250. These courses provide the foundational knowledge for further study in the program.

Based on data for currently enrolled majors, within four years of actual implementation, the premajor will enable the school to maintain enrollments in the major program at 63% of current enrollment level. In terms of demand, the range of currently enrolled undergraduate majors is from about 345 (fall count) to about 415 (spring count, which tends to be much higher than fall due to new transfers and newly declared majors). A 37% reduction is appropriate, given current staffing, program priorities, and the concerns related to future graduate school and career opportunities. This will result in a HSLs major student count of approximately 207 to 249. This number still lies at the upper limit of ideal enrollment levels as per the reasons given above. However, the premajor criteria allow students whose GPA is marginally adequate for graduate admission to demonstrate further improvement once accepted as an undergraduate major in HSLs.

The premajor is not expected to affect overall enrollment at Ohio University because students who do not meet requirements to matriculate in the HSLs major will have ample alternative major options within the University. Advising will be conducted with respect to expectations and alternative majors at the time when students enter the premajor. Similar advising will be conducted for students who are not admitted into the major program. It is important, for the reasons stated above, to disseminate information about the HSLs premajor in the summer and fall of 2009 in order to inform students of the new requirements prior to their application to Ohio University for matriculation in the fall of 2010. Implementation of the premajor requirements will apply to all newly admitted and transfer students who desire to be HSLs majors as of fall 2010 or later. The quarter-based premajor requirements will be converted to fit within the semester format as part of the Q2S process.

