



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Jeff Jessee, Dean of the College of Health and Vice Provost of Health Programs

Cc: Margaret Spencer, Committee Chair & Term Assistant Professor of Speech-Language Pathology  
Ellen Brigham, Term Assistant Professor of Speech-Language Pathology

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

**Program/s in this review:** Speech-Language Pathology (PBCT)

**Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):** N/A

**Campuses where the program is delivered:** Anchorage

**Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role:**

The mission of the Speech-Language Pathology PBCT is to prepare speech-language pathologists for lifelong success by providing an excellent student-centered learning environment to prepare them for professional careers and advanced study in speech-language pathology. The program was recently moved from the School of Education to the College of Health, where it complements the College of Health's programs in Physical Therapy Assistant and Occupational Therapy. The program makes an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of people and communities by preparing professionals who already have baccalaureate degrees for application to graduate programs in speech-language pathology (a Master's degree is required for certification). The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce development predicts moderate employment growth for Speech-Language Pathologists in Alaska (+12.4%), with an average of 16 annual openings.

**Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity:**

The Speech-Language Pathology PBCT was initiated in spring 2015. Since then, 28 students have graduated from the program. The number of graduates has dropped substantially from 18 in 2017 to five in both 2018 and 2019. The number of majors has averaged 16 per year. Six of the eight courses required for the Speech-Language Pathology PBCT can also be taken by undergraduate students pursuing a Minor in Speech-Language Pathology (similar to the PBCT, the Minor prepares students for applying to graduate programs). By serving both undergraduate students (in the Minor) and students who already have a baccalaureate degree (in the PBCT), the program maintains an excellent return on investment. On average, the full tuition revenues almost cover the program's instructional costs. For every dollar invested in instruction, the program has returned an average of \$0.94 in full tuition revenue (and the average return has increased to \$1.00 since 2016). While the program demand, efficiency, and productivity of the Speech-Language Pathology PBCT may seem low, the overall demand for all program options is strong. The programs also demonstrate high efficiency and productivity.

**Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success:**

The curriculum was designed to meet the standards developed by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA). The program also adapted the ASHA assessment plan to guide the development of student learning outcomes. Overall, the program is highly effective in meeting its goal to successfully prepare students for graduate studies. Almost all program graduates (94% of those that could be tracked) were accepted in a Master's program. Students report being very well prepared for their graduate studies.

**Program Duplication / Distinctiveness:**

UAA is the only university within the University of Alaska system to offer program options in speech-language pathology.

**Commendations and Recommendations:**

The Speech-Language Pathology PBCT is essential to prepare students for graduate studies. Student demand for education in speech-language pathology is strong, with some students pursuing the Minor and others pursuing the PBCT. Together, these program options are successful in providing students with a pathway to graduate studies in Speech-Language Pathology. The program has several options for enhancement. These include marketing Speech-Language Pathology courses as electives to other programs in the College of Health, developing an AAS in Speech-Language Pathology Assistant, and providing educational options by distance. At this point, the program should be continued and it should continue to explore its options for growth.

**Decision:**

Continuation.