

FS P&BC Report to the FS APC (03/02/2024)
on Proposed new BS in Communication Sciences & Disorders (BSComSci) in SOM

Overview (taken from Proposal, Budget, & LOI received from OAPA):

The Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in communication sciences and disorders at the University of Louisville (UofL) is a four-year program (minimum 120 credit hours) that seeks to attract top students whose interests center on the biological, physical, sociocultural, and linguistic aspects of human communication and its disorders and differences. The existing MS graduate program in communicative disorders at UofL currently allows undergraduate Junior and Senior level students to enroll in a leveling program. The students are allowed to complete approximately 23 credit hours of elective speech-language pathology coursework. Many of the students go on to apply to the graduate program in communicative disorders, seek admission to other speech-language pathology graduate programs in the state of Kentucky, or pursue other graduate or professional degrees at UofL or elsewhere. Current UofL undergraduate students routinely attend prospective student meetings and inquire as to “why” UofL does not have an undergraduate option (in communication sciences and disorders).

The program may be considered unique in the following two ways. The program will be housed in the School of Medicine, within the Department of Otolaryngology—Head/Neck Surgery and Communicative Disorders. There are very few programs, nationally, that can make that claim and none in Kentucky. This is an important consideration given the vast clinical and research opportunities available to the students, in addition to the proximity and connections afforded to the program by UofL Health (and other neighboring hospitals/clinics, such as Norton Children’s Development Center and Norton Autism Center).

UofL is home to Kentucky’s only Doctor of Audiology (AuD) program. There are currently only 75 accredited programs nationwide. The BS in Communication Sciences and Disorders is designed to allow its students to pursue graduate training in either speech-language pathology or audiology. The 4+3 Accelerated Audiology Track allows undergraduate students to apply to UofL’s AuD graduate program during their junior year. Students fulfill their senior year of undergraduate credits and earn the BS degree after successfully completing the first year of AuD coursework.

Assessment:

The Revised Budget Spreadsheet now gives necessary details to be a standalone as a Proposal Budget document. Projected Revenues now include the fact that the Dean is allocating \$250,000 as new money to this program in each of the first 5 years.

The Budget expenses now project 2 new faculty at \$83,000 salary + the appropriate 28% fringe rate.

Projected “new tuition-share” in Proposal projects a 2-student loss in the first year of each new cohort class, with first graduating class of 8 students at end of year 4, which seems reasonable.

The Projected Budget indicates that this new BS degree program expects to be profitable by end of year 4 (graduation of first class) with reasonable projections of student enrollment at levels below the clinical capacity of the existing Speech Pathology MS and Doctor of Audiology programs in the same SOM department.

P&BC Recommendation:

P&BC finds the financial proposal to be reasonable and viable to become a self-sustaining profitable program and recommends approval of the revised proposal by the APC.

Pat
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Chair of the FS Planning & Budget Committee

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