

**ACCREDITATION ACTION REPORT
Candidacy Application Review**

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology took the following accreditation action at its April 25, 2024 meeting, as indicated below.

Name of Program: Shenandoah University

File #: 374

Professional Area:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Audiology |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Speech-Language Pathology |

Modality:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Residential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Distance Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Satellite Campus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contractual Arrangement |

Degree Designator(s): MS

Action Taken: Award Candidacy

Effective Date: April 25, 2024

Candidacy Accreditation Cycle: 04/01/2024 – 03/30/2029

Next Review: Annual Report due February 1, 2025

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

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:

- 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 how the faculty composition is sufficient to allow students to acquire the knowledge and skills required in Standard 3.

Compliance Expectation Determined: Initiated

Compliance Expectation for Award of Candidacy Status: Initiated

CAA concern and steps to be taken:

The site visit team was unable to observe that the program meets the expected level of compliance as it relates to faculty composition based on the review of the program's hiring plan and through interviews during the site visit. In the site visit report, the site visitors reported that the program director was the only faculty hired at the time of the site visit. The site visitors stated that the institution had hired a Clinical Director for the Communication Sciences and Disorders program, but this individual resigned their position one month prior to the site visit. In its response to the site visit report, the program reported that there is a hiring plan in place for the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) and two additional faculty positions. The program's hiring plan included how each faculty role will contribute to the learning goals and objectives of the program. The program provided a contingency plan to ensure courses are taught by experienced adjunct faculty for the incoming cohort in the event that the hiring plan is unsuccessful.

In its first annual progress report, the program must provide an update on its hiring plan and provide evidence of how the faculty composition is sufficient to allow students to acquire the knowledge and skills required in Standard 3.

Standard 3.5B - An effective speech-language pathology program is organized so that the scientific and research foundations of the profession are evident.

Requirement(s) of the Standard to be met:

- The program must demonstrate how the curriculum provides opportunities for students to:
 - Understand and apply the scientific bases of the profession
 - Understand and apply research methodology
 - Become knowledgeable consumers of research literature
 - Become knowledgeable about the fundamentals of evidence-based practice

- Apply the scientific bases and research principles to clinical populations

Compliance Expectation Determined: Initiated

Compliance Expectation for Award of Candidacy Status: Initiated

CAA concern and steps to be taken:

The site visit team was unable to observe that the program is organized to show that the scientific and research foundations of the profession are evident. The site visit team reported that the program provided evidence that supported that the program has a plan to reflect the scientific and research foundations in the curriculum. However, the plan had not been initiated. In its response to the site visit report, the program provided syllabi for its courses and described where students will learn research foundational methods.

In its first annual progress report, the program must provide an update on its progress towards the initiation of its plan to reflect scientific and research foundations in the program's curriculum.

Standard 3.6B - The clinical education component of an effective entry-level speech-language pathology program is planned for each student so that there is access to a base of individuals who may be served that is sufficient to achieve the program's stated mission and goals and includes a variety of clinical settings, populations, and age groups. The comprehensive clinical experiences must include direct contact with individuals seeking service, consultation, recordkeeping, and administrative duties relevant to professional service delivery in speech-language pathology.

Requirement(s) of the Standard to be met:

- The program must demonstrate that it has mechanisms to develop comprehensive plans of clinical education experiences so that each student has an opportunity to obtain a variety of clinical experiences in different work settings.
- The program must demonstrate that it has mechanisms to develop comprehensive plans of clinical education experiences so that each student has an opportunity to obtain experiences with appropriate equipment and resources.

Compliance Expectation Determined: Initiated

Compliance Expectation for Award of Candidacy Status: Initiated

CAA concern and steps to be taken:

The site visit team was unable to observe that the program demonstrates that it has mechanisms to develop comprehensive plans of clinical education experiences so that each student has an opportunity to obtain experiences with appropriate equipment and resources. Upon review of the program's equipment and materials list, the site visitors did not have enough information to determine if the program would be able to procure the appropriate equipment and materials that are appropriate for a wider age range and across the scope of practice. In its response to the site visit report, the program provided a detailed list of materials and equipment and its plans for purchasing the equipment.

The CAA reviewed the program's response to the site visit report and response to the CAA deferral letter, wherein the program provided information regarding the institution purchasing policy and procurement processes. The program clarified its material list and plans for purchasing materials

appropriate for a wider age range, and across the scope of practice. At the time of this application review, the program has not provided evidence that the equipment has been purchased.

In its first annual progress report, the program must provide an update on its plans to purchase the necessary clinical materials and equipment to demonstrate that it is initiating and maintaining mechanisms to develop comprehensive clinical educational experiences to ensure that students have the opportunity to obtain a variety of clinical experiences in different work settings with appropriate equipment and resources.

Standard 4.2 - The program makes reasonable adaptations in curriculum, policies, and procedures to accommodate differences among individual students.

Requirement(s) of the Standard to be met:

- The program must have a policy regarding proficiency in spoken and written English and other languages of instruction and service delivery and all other performance expectations.

Compliance Expectation Determined: Initiated

Compliance Expectation for Award of Candidacy Status: Initiated

CAA concern and steps to be taken:

The site visit team was unable to observe if the program has a policy regarding proficiency in spoken and written English and other languages of instruction, service delivery, and all other performance expectations. This was determined through a review of the university's website, CSD Student Handbook, and interviews conducted with the Program Director. In addition, in the site visit report, the site visitors reported that the program did not provide details concerning how students would be identified as lacking proficiency in spoken and written English, nor were processes outlined for intervention or failure to meet proficiency expectations in spoken and written English.

In its response to the site visit report, the program provided documentation from the Graduate and CSD Student Handbooks of its policy regarding proficiency in spoken and written English, as well as its policy on students and professionals who speak English with accents and non-standard dialects. However, the program did not provide a policy on how students would be identified as lacking proficiency in spoken and written English, nor were processes outlined for intervention or failure to meet proficiency in spoken and written English.

In its first annual progress report, the program must provide evidence of how students would be identified as lacking proficiency in spoken and written English, and processes outlined for intervention or failure to meet proficiency in spoken and written English.

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.