



UMass Amherst's Educational Effectiveness Plan (EEP) provides departments with an ongoing structure for conducting systematic inquiry into the effectiveness of their efforts to support student success. Departments initially developed and submitted their EEP inquiry plans and evidence gathering strategies in spring 2018 and are asked to provide updates on their progress on a regular basis. EEP activity is also incorporated into the University's strategic planning process – with departments including their EEP progress and findings into their 2021 Strategic Planning Refresh. What follows is the department's most current reporting, as synthesized by the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA).

Communication Disorders EEP

Identify the evidence you currently use (beyond GPA) to determine that your undergraduates have achieved the objectives you have for them.

Currently, we look at student performance on exams and in individual courses via homework and other assignments (e.g., pure-tone audiometry assignments, case study assignments, etc.).

Please describe the focus of your inquiry and explain why this inquiry is important to your department right now.

Line of Inquiry 2018: As we begin to work within our re-designed undergraduate curriculum, we are realizing that our senior year is light in terms of required coursework. Moreover, we are concerned that the content in the one required senior class is to some extent a repetition of what is covered in our elective Introduction of Communication Disorders class. Our line of inquiry will involve improving the senior experience within our major. Steps in the process will be: taking a look at required and elective classes offered to our seniors; determining what our current seniors would like to see in their final undergraduate year; exploring options for developing some type of summative course/experience for seniors; and developing new course(s)/experience(s).

Progress your department has made toward addressing your line of inquiry, and the types of evidence that you have collected to inform your inquiry.

We took three lines of inquiry to address two questions:

- 1) Are our students satisfied with their experience in our program?
 - a) a first line of inquiry was directed at graduated students. We did online surveys from the class of 2017 and 2018.
 - b) a second line of inquiry was directed at current students (Class of 2019, as seniors, and 2020, as juniors). We invited students from these two classes to a focus group.
- 2). Are we giving realistic advice to students regarding graduate study and post baccalaureate employment?

c) a third line of inquiry was to collect exit data from our students to track where they go directly after graduation and to attempt to cross-correlate graduate study and employment outcomes with general record data.

What are your department's next steps regarding your continuing and/or upcoming EEP line of inquiry?

In Spring 2019, the Faculty Senate approved a revised curriculum for our majors that was based on our EEP review. This curriculum change will not affect significant numbers of students until the 2023 graduation, so we are not planning to open a new line of inquiry until we can assess whether these changes have been effective. We are instead focusing efforts on supporting instructors of upper-level courses with public speaking and presentation, working on teams, and writing. We have established monthly brown bag discussions of teaching and the 2020-2021 calendar has meetings specifically for upper-level undergraduate instruction on the calendar.

In Fall 2020 we will pursue instructional support activities for instructors of senior-level classes. We will also share exit data for the class of 2020, and use it to develop and share practices for advising students on graduate study or careers. In Spring 2021, we will continue to pursue instructional support activities for instructors of senior-level classes. We will also collect exit data for the class of 2021. Besides the typical information, this survey will include a focus group of students who transferred to UMass in Summer 2019 and are graduating in 2021 with the new curriculum requirements. We will specifically ask these students to rate their senior year experience, including oral presentation, team-work, and writing. In Fall 2021 we will consider the data from the Spring 2021 focus group cohort in planning and discussing further instructional support activities for senior-level instructors.

What are the Student Learning Objectives for your department or program(s)?

Communication Disorders, B.S.

- Students can describe basic anatomical, physiological, neurological, cognitive, and perceptual processes underlying normal and impaired speech, language, and hearing.
- Students can describe familial, cultural, medical, and environmental factors that contribute to individual variation in the use of speech, language, and hearing for individuals with typical functioning and for individuals with communication disorders.
- Students can explain how speech and language are produced and perceived and can demonstrate the ability to differentiate between normal variability and disordered speech/language.
- Students can identify the symptoms and characteristics of a variety of disorders affecting communication across the lifespan and can identify type and severity of disorder from clinical reports and evaluations in both speech-language pathology and audiology.

- Students can identify the scopes of practice for speech-language pathologists and audiologists.
- Students can identify multiple approaches that researchers use to learn about normal or disordered human communication.

Experiential Goals

- Students can use the International Phonetic Alphabet to accurately transcribe speech samples of individuals with normal or impaired speech production.
- Students will analyze a language sample, use linguistic terminology to describe structures therein, and compare those structures to published norms.
- Students can reliably and accurately measure pure-tone hearing thresholds using air conduction audiometry.
- Students can accurately interpret audiograms.

Communication Disorders, M.A.

- Students will be able to describe how patient characteristics (e.g. age, demographics, cultural and linguistic diversity, medical history and status, cognitive status, physical and sensory abilities) relate to the provision of clinical services.
- Students will be able to describe disorders of speech, language, voice, and swallowing, and the influence of these disorders on the functioning of individuals and their families.
- Students will be able to use an evidence-based approach to assess individuals who have differences or disorders in speech, language, voice, and/or swallowing.
- Students will be able to develop and implement evidence-based treatment plans for individuals with disorders in speech, language, voice, and/or swallowing.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to critically analyze research and apply this information to making clinical decisions.

Audiology, Au.D.

- Students will be able to describe how patient characteristics (e.g. age, demographics, cultural and linguistic diversity, medical history and status, cognitive status, physical and sensory abilities) relate to the provision of clinical services.
- Students will be able to describe disorders of hearing and balance and the influence of these disorders on the functioning of individuals and their families.
- Students will be able to use an evidence-based approach to assess individuals who have auditory and/or vestibular disorders.
- Students will be able to develop and implement evidence-based treatment plans for individuals with auditory and/or vestibular disorders.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to critically analyze research and apply this information to making clinical decisions.

Communication Disorders, Ph.D.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to critically review and synthesize relevant research literature and to use it as the basis for developing research questions and hypotheses.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to design an experimental study, conduct all aspects of that study, and analyze the obtained results.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to clearly convey the results of their research in both written and oral formats.
- Students will gain exposure to a minor field of study and demonstrate how that field relates to their research.
- Students will develop the ability to write grant proposals to fund their research.