

FACULTY GROWTH AND SUFFICIENCY WEBINAR

Transcript

Ann Tyler

Welcome to the Next Steps Summer Webinar series, my name is Ann Tyler and I am the Chair of the ASHA Ad Hoc Committee to Plan Next Steps to Redesign Entry-Level Education for SLPs, which is hosting this webinar series.

We will be recording the first part of this webinar which consists of a presentation about the Growth of the Professoriate and Faculty Sufficiency, so that others can view it asynchronously. The Next Steps website where you registered for this webinar will host all of the Next Step webinar recordings within a couple of days after the live webinar event has taken place. The QR code on this slide will take you to the Next Steps website on www.asha.org.

We will not be enabling the chat function during the presentation, but because the primary reason for the webinar series is to gather widespread input from stakeholders, we are of course **very** interested in your perspective. So, we have reserved more than half of each webinar to convene breakout groups, which will be recorded. We have also prepared surveys, so that those attending the live webinar events and also those who access the webinar recordings at a later point in time, can share their perspectives with the committee.

During the breakouts, you will be joined by a few other attendees to discuss questions related to this webinar's topic. Each breakout group discussion will be recorded in Zoom and transcribed. Committee members will then have access to the transcript and qualitative analysis will be conducted. The breakout group recordings will not be made public and committee members will not have access to the recordings or any personally identifying information. Only group data will be reported.

There is also an email address for each webinar topic to which you can send comments and questions at any time. Those email addresses can also be found on the "Next Steps" webpage on www.asha.org. Again the QR code shown here takes you to the Next Steps webpage.

Along with those listed on this slide, I was appointed to the Ad Hoc Committee on Next Steps to Redesign Entry-Level Education for SLPs in the Summer of 2021. We have worked together during this past year to identify the most important topics related to SLP education for which widespread stakeholder input is needed.

Members of this ad hoc committee were chosen to represent different employment settings and functions as well as to ensure Bi-Directional communication between the ad hoc committee and the Council for Academic Accreditation, the Council for Clinical Certification, the National Students Speech Language Hearing Association, the Council for Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders, the Specialty Certification Boards in SLP and from SIG 10 (Issues in Higher Education) and SIG 11 (Administration and Supervision).

The ad hoc committees charge from the ASHA Board of Directors, was to advance discussion and planning to redesign entry-level education for speech-language pathologists and formulate recommendations for the ASHA Board of Directors about how comprehensive input might be obtained from a large group of stakeholders to advance entry-level education for SLPs.

We were also charged with gathering perspectives and synthesizing information about what data, dissemination efforts, and actions are needed to make recommendations and propose a plan for advancing us SLP education, what alternative models of education and changes to the current educational model should be considered, as well as how should stakeholders be engaged to obtain comprehensive input from their larger communities.

The ad hoc committee has given a great deal of attention to the questions of what competencies are needed for entry-level practice, how should they be acquired and measured, which aspects of the current model are serving the profession and public adequately and which are not, and lastly, are there changes to the current model that would address any gaps or unmet needs that have been identified.

The ad hoc committee was not charged with considering what the entry-level degree designator should be. The ad hoc committee is **not** examining, or even discussing, the degree designator for the entry-level degree in speech language pathology (i.e., Master's Degree vs Clinical Doctorate). It's not on the Agenda! It's not in the Charge!

Instead, the ad hoc committee on Next Steps has been highly focused on determining what is needed to adequately prepare SLPs to enter the profession. And how to address some of our longstanding problems such as insufficient faculty growth and capacity, the need to increase student diversity, and how we can continue to prepare students across the full scope of practice and across a wide variety of practice settings to provide services to individuals across the lifespan with an educational model that was developed more than 60 years ago.

There was a previous ad hoc committee on Graduate Education in Speech Language Pathology that convened in 2018 that focused on the question of *"Which aspects of our current entry-level educational model are serving the profession and the public well, versus falling short, to adequately prepare SLPs across practice settings?"*

In addition to identifying areas that are serving the profession and the public well and not so well, the previous ad hoc committee also gathered stakeholder input on the question of *whether there are changes to the current model of entry-level education that would address gaps or unmet needs?* Their report can be found at the URL shown here or from the QR code on this slide.

Based on the results obtained from many surveys and focus groups, the previous ad hoc committee concluded that there are aspects of the current educational model that most respondents identified as challenging. These included that students are not consistently prepared even across the Big 9, nor sufficiently prepared to enter practice across common work settings for SLPs. That there is insufficient students and faculty diversity, that most undergraduate majors cannot go on in the field yet clinical shortages are severe, that there is a significant scarcity of placements and supervisors and that there is a scarcity of SLPs specializing in important clinical areas.

Additional concerns reported by the previous ad hoc committee included trying to fit the full scope of practice across the lifespan into 2-year master's program, that the current model lacks a competency-based education framework to guide preparation and self-evaluation of one's readiness for specific areas of practice, that access to graduate education is limited due to the predominance of our "full time residency" model, that there is an over-reliance on volunteers for supervision, that there is unequal training across SLP programs, and there is a lack of sufficient faculty to teach all topic areas.

Here are some reflections from Ad Hoc Committee Next Step Members when asked, "What Dissatisfies You About the Way Things Are Now?" One Member said, "I'm concerned about the difficulty that both academic and clinical faculty have in achieving graduate student competency across our ever-expanding scope of practice. While I believe we are successful at teaching foundational clinical skills that apply to all populations across the lifespan and across our scope of practice, we are not successful at achieving competency across the Big 9, particularly in the area of implementing evidence-based practice."

Another Member said, "I am dissatisfied with the wide-but-shallow preparation that sends clinicians out into the field without a clearly charted path for how to deepen the areas in which that clinician actually ends up working in."

Another said, "Many graduate classes provide an overview of several methodologies and viewpoints in different areas that often results in limited knowledge of each methodology and a lack of expertise to apply in daily practice." And finally, "Our ever-expanding scope of practice is making graduate education and pre professional preparation in 5-6 semesters very challenging, I often ponder this thought. Has our perception of "entry-level" changed due to this expansion of scope of practice? If so, how have programs adapted? Has the role of the clinical fellowship changed in response? Could it? Should it?"

There are many critical needs that are not being met, gaps, and significant challenges. These include that there is a dire need to increase the number of SLPs, Student and Faculty Diversity, Student readiness for work in diverse practice settings & with diverse populations as well as Pathways to deepen knowledge across the full Scope of Practice.

There is also a need for expanded opportunities to varied clinical experiences, to further develop critical & analytical thinking, to improve oral & written communication, to grow research literacy & adoption of evidence-based practices and lastly to instill cultural humility, professionalism, empathy, and more.

We also need to develop a competency-based educational framework with pathways to learn, assess and recognize or signal specific competencies as well as new pedagogies and curricular goals to prepare students for the future of work. These are just some of the goals and which the ad hoc committee on Next Steps had been focusing. With your help, we hope to advance consideration about how these goals can be met.

Because the scope of these issues is vast and complicated, we decided to divide the problem space up into six (6) areas and formed a “working group” on each topic. These six (6) topics can be seen here.

The goal of the Next Steps webinar series is to communicate what ASHA is working on and to solicit input from stakeholders about their perceptions and to gather ideas about how entry-level education for SLPs can be improved and lifelong learning advanced. Webinar attendees are also invited to participate in a breakout group discussion, which will be recorded, and then the transcripts will be qualitatively analyzed. All survey responses and breakout discussions on the following seven (7) topics will be considered, analyzed, and incorporated into the final report.

In summary, there are many aspects of the current educational model in speech language pathology that could be improved. The Ad Hoc Committee on Next Steps to Redesign Entry Level Education for SLPs has taken a deep dive into the topics listed here and prepared a presentation for each webinar that summarizes the challenges and opportunities in each of these areas. Each webinar starts with the portion of the presentation you just heard, and then transitions into the areas listed here so that stakeholder input can be gathered in a focused manner. Stakeholder input is being collected in three ways for each webinar.

First, for those attending the live webinar events, the **breakout room discussions will be recorded**, transcribed and then qualitatively analyzed with no personally identifying information shared. Secondly, a survey has been prepared for each webinar. If you attend a live webinar, then the QR code will be provided to access the survey immediately following the event.

If you watch this webinar asynchronously, the survey link will be made available on the Next Steps web page on www.asha.org where all of the "Next Steps" information can be found. You can see a QR code for the Next Steps webpage displayed here. Third and Lastly, there is an email address listed under each webinar topic on this slide, and they can also be found on the Next Steps webpage. You are invited to email your ideas, concerns, or ask questions at any time.

We hope that you will participate or watch these webinars asynchronously. Most importantly, please share your perspectives and ideas on these topics with the committee. Thank You.

Sonja Pruitt-Lord

Good Evening everyone. We are now going to focus on tonight's topic, Growth of the Professoriate and Faculty Sufficiency. My name is Sonja Pruitt-Lord. I'd like to recognize our working group members shown here for developing this webinar.

The graph shown here is trend data obtained from the CSD Education Survey from the past nine (9) years. It shows a downward trend in number of research doctoral degrees granted since the 2012-2013 fielding. When coupled with the simultaneous growth in numbers of Masters SLP programs, it is clear that faculty insufficiency is becoming a major challenge for sustaining our academic programs. The projected need for research doctoral faculty is quickly outpacing the growth of research doctoral graduates.

Here are some additional data points, the average number of research SLP and Speech Science doctoral degrees conferred was 107 per year over the 9-year period from 2012 to 2021, with a range of 92-131. In the same 9-year period, 20-35% of open SLP/Speech Science research doctoral faculty positions went unfilled. Lastly, there has been substantial growth in the number of SLP Master's programs. There are now 307 SLP Master's programs, with 35 in the candidacy phase. There are eleven (11) more programs under review and twenty (20) are scheduled to submit applications between now and 2024.

Given the lack of growth in the number of PhDs in speech-language pathology over the past 10 years, many are concerned that there will not be sufficient PhD level faculty in speech-language pathology to support the current programs, let alone the many new programs that are in the process of becoming accredited.

Let's examine more closely the data from the recent CSD Education Survey on the number of **Professional Searches and Positions filled by Area of Study**, which appears in the first column and is broken into three (3) categories – searches specifying an opening and **speech-language pathology**, in **speech and language science**, or **not specified**.

Focusing on speech-language pathology area, the majority of position searches were filled with candidates with a research doctorate in CSD, please note that 44 of the 96 faculty searches in speech-language pathology went unfilled. That's 46% that went unfilled. It is also important to notice that 7 of the 96 speech-language pathology searches were filled by individuals with a clinical doctorate in speech-language pathology and that according to the CSD Education Survey, SLPs with clinical doctorates are contributing to the didactic teaching, clinical education and administrative needs of approximately 50 academic programs, and lastly, from the CSD Education Survey, we also know that there are more than 80 individuals with clinical doctorates teaching in academic programs in the United States.

Enrollment in Research Doctoral Programs directly impacts the pipeline of SLP faculty. Here you see some key data points from the recent 2020-2021 CSD Education survey. Capacity for the new doctoral students in research doctoral programs was only **43%** filled, leaving more than half the slots empty. In addition, across all research doctoral programs, the biggest impact on enrollment has been insufficient student funding and an insufficient number of qualified applicants. However, of the 267 offers of admission made, 89.5% of these were with funding. Lastly, there also some good news with respect to increasing diversity in our future professoriate. The percentage of students enrolled in research doctoral programs from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups has increased almost **42%** and the past 10 years. The proportion of those enrolled was highest this past year at **18%**.

Thus far, we have explored some of the variables that address the question of whether there will continue to be sufficient PhD level faculty and speech-language pathology to support the number of current and future programs. These include the number of research degrees granted, the number of academic searches and proportion of positions filled, the number of current and emerging master's SLP programs, and research doctoral enrollments. We turn next to exploring variables that effect recruitment and retention of research doctoral students.

Data concerning What Perspective Research Doctoral Students are Looking for in a program are important to consider. From a variety of sources, we know that prospective students are looking for programs with a part-time option, online components and program delivery, flexibility, and lastly, barriers that prospective student's site include time, the need for relocation and sufficient funding.

Mentoring is another important variable; a recent project of the Council on Graduate Schools on PhD completion provides us with information on **Best Practices**, which include, Focus on "fit" to recruit and retain students, the importance of providing timely and continuous mentoring (e.g., early and often), part of this includes providing clear, documented metrics for program completion with timely progress monitoring and feedback. Preparing students for the roles and responsibilities of academic life, which for example, might include providing a positive but realistic view of obtaining a PhD and working in academia and lastly by providing different opportunities to students seeking academic careers at different institutions.

With respect to mentoring best practices the Academic Affairs Board of ASHA (or AAB) suggested in their 2016 final report on PhD programs in CSD that...."if we can act as a collective community to improve PhD CSD education, we can increase enrollment and completion, increase the number of graduates who choose academic positions, and add to the research and scientific base in our discipline."

ASHA has launched a number of Academic and Research Mentoring programs through the ARM Network, for example, some of those listed here. There is also information at the ASHA link for Students Considering and Pursuing a PhD in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

If we consider how to improve PhD education and Communication Sciences and Disorders, and thus increase enrollment and the number of graduates, some possible solutions include, focusing on student-centered practices as we think creatively to innovate research doctoral programs and to use best practices in mentoring to increase retention in the research student pipeline.

Innovative programming is another possible solution. Here are some examples, the Long Island AuD Consortia, wherein students attend classes on all three campuses with 1/3 credits taken at the "home" institution. Combined degree programs (or sometimes called "bridge" programs – where in students work on the PhD and Masters in an integrated manner as well as part-time enrollment – 25 programs offer an opportunity to earn the Master's Degree on a part-time basis.

Here are trend data for First Employment Position for Research Doctoral Graduates. Note, in yellow the fluctuating percentages of graduates choosing faculty/academic positions which is trending to smaller proportions. While those assuming postdoctoral positions, seen in dark blue may be increasing. We do consider that collectively there's still a majority of PhDs who are employed in positions that support CSD education.

Academic faculty positions clinic positions and academic settings, for example, PhD level clinic directors who also have teaching responsibilities and even postdocs who eventually go on to faculty researcher positions and CSD programs.

It is important to consider some of the **Possible Barriers to Pursuing Academic Employment**, some of these barriers cited across several surveys focus group reports include, stagnant salaries, stress related to multiple responsibilities, lack of teaching experience, as well as the threat of not being tenured. Lastly, from recent survey years, approximately 1/3 of graduates entered faculty/academic positions. In the recent CSD Education Survey, 34.8% joined academia.

Related to our challenges and the growth of the professoriate, is the Challenge that "Not all SLP Master's programs consistently have departmental capacity to cover teaching across the full scope of practice and lifespan with their faculty expertise.

When asked about their Departmental capacity to cover the full scope of practice we find from recent CSD Education Survey data that 47% of programs indicated that faculty had concerns about their department's capacity to teach across the full scope of practice and lifespan. First, further curricular areas for which programs reported having limited faculty expertise included all of the Big 9.

Questions to consider when we think about the range of possible solutions to our challenges in covering the SLP curriculum include, are there other models of faculty utilization that could help programs to cover the full scope of master's SLP content, what are some alternative models of faculty utilization to consider. For example, graduates from interdisciplinary health sciences degree programs and other related disciplines may be excellent candidates for faculty positions in SLP programs and lastly, graduates of clinical doctoral programs in SLP are already assuming faculty roles.

Additionally, we've considered what opportunities exist for shared coursework or consortia. Programs from different types of institutions have unique needs and challenges in covering the full curricula within their various budgetary constraints. There are certainly many constraints and barriers to programs collaborating across universities to provide the full depth and breadth needed to teach our expanded scope of practice across the lifespan, but there are also some exciting opportunities to be explored along this vein.

In this slide and the next, examples of innovative collaboration are provided. San Diego State University has two Office of Special Education Preparatory (OSEP) grants. One of them, Project MAINSAIL, is an interdisciplinary education program for 16 EDSE and 16 SLP students with a focus on children with significant autism who are dual language learners, it will prepare 36 fully qualified bilingual school psychologists and SLPs skilled at collaborating for these learners with high intensity needs.

More examples of innovative collaboration through the Department of Education personnel preparation grants at the University of Central Florida. Project SPEECH is an innovative federally-funded project from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) designed to prepare professionals to work with children with high-intensity needs. The project provides funding for courses leading to either a Masters of Education (M.Ed) in Exceptional Student Education or a Masters of Arts (MA) in Speech Language Pathology. Additionally, scholars who participate in Project SPEECH earn a graduate certificate in Interdisciplinary Language and Literacy Intervention. Another example is the Graduate Certificate for Interdisciplinary Language and Literacy Intervention emphasizes interdisciplinary preparation of special education teachers and speech-language pathologists to support students with high-intensity needs. And lastly, we know there are other models and examples of innovative approaches to working through these challenges to maintain educational quality and we would like to know more about them.

Please share relevant information and your opinions with us.

We would really appreciate hearing from you! So, please provide input on this important topic by taking the Survey.

Thank you once again for watching this Webinar.