

Social Work and Speech Pathology

Unit Missions and Descriptions

Unit Mission Statements:

The mission of the Speech-Language Pathology programs is to establish and provide distinctive academic programs for students in Speech-Language Pathology, collaborations with community partners, and service to individuals with communication, voice, and swallowing disorders across the life span.

The programs are committed to preparing students to become dedicated, competent clinical leaders in the field of Speech Language Pathology. The curriculum cultivates global and professional awareness and emphasizes the problem solving and critical thinking skills necessary to become strong professionals capable of serving varied client populations.

The mission of the Social Work Program is to provide a professional education for beginning-level generalist practice, with an emphasis on the poor, vulnerable, and underserved. Generalist practice is founded upon the purposes and core values of the social work profession. The program emphasizes the application of high-quality generalist practice skills across the lifespan and across systems of all sizes (individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations) to meet the specific needs and challenges of vulnerable populations.

Unit Descriptive Analysis:

The **SLP program** offers B.S and M.S. degrees in Speech-Language Pathology. The Master of Science education program in Speech-Language Pathology (residential) at the University of Montevallo is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard # 310, Rockville, MD 20850, 800-498-2071 or 301-296-5700.

We have 5 full time, tenure-track faculty and 3 full time Clinical Instructor positions. The program operates a Speech and Language Center that serves over 100 clients each year. Graduate students provide assessment and intervention to individuals across the lifespan under the supervision of the faculty and staff. All services are provided free of charge. We strive to prepare strong undergraduate students who are ready for graduate study and graduate students who will go forward to represent the program as outstanding professionals in the community.

The M.S. SLP program typically has 45-50 full time graduate students (approximately 25 per cohort) and about 65 undergraduate students. Our most pressing challenge is to continuously revise our courses and improve our own technical skills to meet the accreditation requirements

as the profession grows and changes. Another challenge is maintaining a strong undergraduate program to feed into our graduate program. There are now 8 MS SLP programs in the state, resulting in fewer applications each year. Additionally, the state is attempting to pass legislation allowing SLP Assistants at the associate degree level. This poses a threat to our undergraduate enrollment.

The SLP program typically develops a 3-5-year strategic plan to assist us with yearly planning. We developed a new strategic plan during the spring of the 2025. A brief summary is provided at the end of this narrative.

The **Social Work** program has three, full time faculty and approximately 70 undergraduate students. The program goals are as follows:

1. To educate generalist practitioners with a strong professional identity and commitment to the social work profession's historical knowledge, spirit, values, and ethics.
2. To prepare beginning-level generalist practitioners to engage, assess, and intervene in micro- and macro-level practices with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
3. To prepare culturally competent practitioners who understand and value human needs as they relate to social work practice.
4. To prepare practitioners who understand and appreciate the value of scientific inquiry, qualitative and quantitative data collection, and systematic data analysis for the purpose of informing best practices for service delivery, evaluation, advocacy, and critical thought.
5. To prepare generalist practitioners who understand the dynamics and consequences of social, economic, and environmental factors.
6. To prepare generalist practitioners to engage in advocacy and policy practice at the state, local, and federal levels for the purposes of developing consumer resources and enhancing service delivery.

Our most pressing challenge is to stay current with best practices in social work education, this includes changes in social work educational policy and accreditation standards. Our program has historically been robust, but experienced a low-enrollment period last year. Thus, we are currently working to maintain our existing majors and to recruit new students. Finally, we experienced a reduction in faculty this year, which forced a re-structuring of our program; more specifically, the field education office. The Field Director is a CSWE required position and an essential component of social work education, so we are currently working to fill this spot with an existing member of the social work faculty. This is all being done during a change of both department and college as social work integrates into the College of Health Professions.

20242025 SWSP Unit Plan Overview

Goal 1 and Goal 2 support **SLP Focus Area 1, Collaboration and Interprofessional Practice; CHP Focus area 1, Interprofessional Education; and UM Strategic Plan Theme 3, *Innovations for Teaching and Learning***. These goals focus on the successful delivery of our programs.

Goal 3 supports UM Strategic Plan Theme 3 efforts to safeguard the financial health of the University.

Goals 4 and 5 support **SLP Focus Area 4, Curriculum; CHP focus area 3, Career Readiness and workforce preparation; and UM Strategic Plan Theme 3, *Innovations for Teaching and Learning***.

Goal 6 supports the UM QEP (SACS-COC accreditation)

SWSP 25-26 unit plan

Start: 10/1/2025 **End:** 9/30/2026

Number: 1 Branding

Goal: Complete a rebranding of the now combined department of Social Work and Speech Pathology (SWSP).

Intended Outcome: The newly formed department will develop a clear website, new brochures and other marketing materials

Assessment Measures: The new department website will be completed by October of 2025. New business cards and brochures will be received by November of 2025. Additional marketing materials will be developed by January of 2026.

Budget account numbers tied to this Unit Plan: 10109

Number: 2 Collaboration

Goal: Identify ways for faculty to collaborate across the College of Health Professions.

Intended Outcome: Faculty will explore cross-disciplinary opportunities such as simulations, service opportunities, cross-listed courses, and support of minors across the college.

Assessment Measures: Create or expand at least three opportunities within the college.

Budget account numbers tied to this Unit Plan: 10109

Number: 3 SWK curriculum planning

Goal: The SWK program will redistribute faculty responsibilities within a 3-person unit.

Intended Outcome: The program faculty will work collaboratively to identify a Field Education Director and define the roles and responsibilities required to effectively run an accredited program with a 3-person faculty. The faculty will develop a course rotation plan with courses taught once per year. Faculty will delineate Field director duties that are covered under a course release versus an academic course.

Assessment Measures:

Course rotation plan.

Job descriptions for the Field Education Director and Program Director

Budget account numbers tied to this Unit Plan: 10109

Number 4: Four plus 1 or accelerated masters

Goal Explore alternative pathways toward the MS SLP degree.

Intended Outcome: The SLP faculty will create a proposal for a 4 plus 1 or early bird graduate model

Assessment Measures: Proposal submitted through Curriculog by January, 2026

Budget account numbers tied to this Unit Plan: 10109

Number 5 MS SLP leveling program

Goal: The SLP faculty will review the “leveling” course options as a pathway to the MS SLP

Intended Outcome: Faculty will explore requirements at other state institutions, review and revise current program requirements, including institutional and overall GPA policies.

Assessment Measures: Proposal submitted through Curriculog by January, 2026

Budget account numbers tied to this Unit Plan: 10109