

Stockton Master's in Communication Disorders Program Earns Five-Year Accreditation

Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

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Contact: Maryjane Briant
News and Media Relations Director
Galloway, N.J. 08205
Maryjane.Briant@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4593
www.stockton.edu/media

Galloway, N.J. - Stockton's Master of Science program in Communication Disorders has received accreditation from the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

"We are extremely proud of Dean Theresa Bartolotta's team in the School of Health Sciences," said Lori A. Vermeulen, provost and vice president for academic affairs. "The faculty at Stockton is very student-centered and this accomplishment is another manifestation of their passionate dedication to providing excellent opportunities for their students."

"The Master's in Communications Disorders program is already popular, receiving approximately 300 applications for 32 spots," Vermeulen noted. "Its new full-accreditation status will likely make the program even more attractive to potential applicants."

The School of Health Sciences will have expanded teaching spaces in a new academic building expected to open in spring 2018, including a state-of-the-art simulation lab that will allow the students to participate in interprofessional clinical education experiences to prepare them for the changing health care environment.

Communication disorders are impairments related to speech, language, hearing, processing and/or comprehending verbal and non-verbal communications. Causes can include deafness or hearing disorders; voice problems, such as from a cleft palate; speech problems, such as stuttering; developmental disabilities, autism, brain injury or stroke.

The MSCD program is fulltime and takes five semesters to complete over two years. Students receive a minimum of 400 supervised clinical hours at the Stockton University Speech and Hearing Clinic, located at the Parkway Building, as well as in off-campus sites in educational and health care settings.

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"The program's unique achievements include: presentation of student research at state, national, and international venues; collaboration with students and health care workers in Colombia, South America; providing speech-language services through telepractice; and student leadership in organizations at the state and national levels," said Amy Hadley, associate professor of Communication Disorders. "Graduates of the program have been successfully employed in schools, health care settings and private practices."

At the conclusion of the site visit by representatives of the Council on Academic Accreditation, they commented that they could not believe how much Stockton's Communication Disorders Program had accomplished within five years, Hadley added.

"We foster a learning atmosphere that promotes collaboration and caring rather than competition -- and because of this, our graduates now working in the profession have earned the highest of praise for not only their level of expertise, but for their compassion," said Stacy Cassel, assistant professor of Communication Disorders.

Mikael D.Z. Kimelman, chair of the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, wrote to Hadley in announcing the five-year accreditation, "Congratulations to you, the faculty, and staff in the program, as well as the administration, on this national distinction."

"The extraordinary efforts of the faculty have led us to where we are today," said Dean Bartolotta. "The council's site team told us that we are 'the premier program in the region,' and I could not be more proud."

In addition to communication disorders, the School of Health Sciences provides students with state-of-the-art preparation for careers in health care including nursing, exercise science, public health, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

Other accreditations for the School of Health Sciences include: The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

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