Strategic Plan
2011 to 2016
Forward

I am pleased to share the 2011 – 2016 Strategic Plan of the Department of Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Toronto. This strategic plan provides a roadmap for the future growth of Speech-Language Pathology. I would like to thank the SLP Strategic Planning Committee who provided guidance and valuable time to this endeavour. I also warmly acknowledge the individuals and groups who were consulted to provide input into planning, including leadership teams at UHN, TRI, Holland-Bloorview, Baycrest, clinical educators, faculty, and staff. I am deeply appreciative of their input, expertise, and support.

The Department of Speech-Language Pathology is in a period of tremendous growth. The Department has made substantial gains in the size of its student body and its research productivity in the last decade and is poised to grow further in terms of education, research, dissemination, and strategic partnerships. The next four years will see unprecedented growth in funding and new opportunities for growth. We are well poised to achieve our vision of “global leadership in education and research”.

Sincerely,

Luigi Girolametto, PhD
Professor and Chair

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**Strategic Planning Steering Committee**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Luigi Girolametto</td>
<td>Professor and Chair, Department of Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair, Strategic Planning Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Bradley</td>
<td>Collaborative Practice Leader, Holland-Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assistant Professor (Status), Department of Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Cook</td>
<td>Executive Director, Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn Ellwood</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of Clinical Education, Department of Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosemary Martino</td>
<td>Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Department of Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Melchior</td>
<td>Business Officer, Department of Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penny Parnes</td>
<td>Executive Director, International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Assistant Professor (Status), Department of Speech-Language Pathology</td>
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Introduction

The Department of Speech-Language Pathology in the Faculty of Medicine is a graduate department that offers three degrees:

- Master of Health Science (MHSc) – a professional graduate program
- Master of Science (MSc) – a research-stream masters’ program
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) – a research-stream doctoral program

Currently, 91 full-time students are enrolled in the MHSc program (46 students in year 1 and 45 students in year 2), which will increase to the full complement of 100 professional students (50 in each of two years) as of September 2012. The doctoral programs (MSc and PhD) have 15 students enrolled (3 MSc and 12 PhD). The full-time faculty consists of 11 members, of which 9 are tenured or tenure-stream, and 2 senior lecturers.

All tenured or tenure-stream faculty members teach foundations and/or clinical courses in the MHSc stream and supervise research-stream students. The senior lecturers are the Academic Coordinators of Clinical Education who coordinate the clinical placements for the MHSc students and teach basic and applied courses in the department.

The Department of Speech-Language Pathology received a full 7-year accreditation from the Council of Accreditation of Canadian Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (February 2009) and from the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies (June 2006).

The following groups were consulted/will be consulted for input into the Strategic Plan prior to submission to the Dean of Medicine:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Consultation Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning Task Force</td>
<td>March 26, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLP Senior Advisory Committee</td>
<td>April 2, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairs of OSOT and PT</td>
<td>April 10, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Education Advisory Committee</td>
<td>April 25, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>April 16, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>April 10, 2012 – Year II Presidents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advancement</td>
<td>May 23 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLP Alumni Association</td>
<td>May 28, 2012</td>
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**Executive Summary**

The Department’s Strategic Plan outlines six priorities:

**Strategic Priority 1:** Educate leading clinicians and scientists who will contribute to fulfilling the vision and mission of SLP at U of T.

**Strategic Priority 2:** Strengthen our research enterprise and impact.

**Strategic Priority 3:** Support our students, faculty, and staff to ensure their success.

**Strategic Priority 4:** Disseminate innovations that improve the communication and swallowing of individuals locally and globally.

**Strategic Priority 5:** Strengthen communication and collaborations with local and global strategic partners.

**Strategic Priority 6:** Expand funding base and existing infrastructure to support educational and research initiatives.

The implementation of these priorities will be guided by the Chair of the Department and the Senior Advisory Committee, which is composed of the Chair, Business Officer, Associate Chair, and Coordinator of Graduate Studies. A number of department committees will have the responsibility for core priorities related to their specific mandates (e.g., the Curriculum Committee will undertake curriculum enhancements under Strategic Priority 1).

The Strategic Plan of the Department of Speech-Language Pathology is well aligned with the Faculty of Medicine’s Strategic Academic Plan 2011 – 2016 and Roadmap for Global Health 2011 – 2016. Additionally, it supports the strategic priorities of other departments in the Rehabilitation Sector (i.e., Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, and the Department of Physical Therapy). Furthermore, many of the Department’s priorities contribute to the overall direction of the International Centre for Disability Research.
Department of Speech-Language Pathology
Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision

Global leadership in education and research that advances innovations in communication and swallowing sciences

Mission

We create and disseminate knowledge that prevents and remediates communication and swallowing disorders

Values

We are guided by our core values:

- Excellence and innovation in education, research, and clinical practice
- Research that informs evidence-based practice
- Integrity and ethical decision making
- Social responsibility, equity, diversity, and professionalism
- Supportive, responsive, and respectful relationships
- Compassion and advocacy for individuals with communication and swallowing disabilities, their families, and the professionals who work with them
- Interprofessional collaboration and effective partnerships with our academic and clinical communities, the public, and global partners
Strategic Priority 1
Educate leading clinicians and scientists who will contribute to fulfilling the vision and mission of SLP at U of T.

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<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Implementation Actions</th>
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| 1. Attract the best and brightest students to the Department | • Develop up to 3 undergraduate courses to expand exposure to SLP  
• Increase the number and size of merit-based entrance scholarships  
• Enhance the website to support student recruitment |
| 2. Undertake a curriculum renewal of the MHSc program | • Adopt an electronic format for MHSc portfolios  
• Update the Integrated Learning Experiences (ILEs) for each academic unit  
• Revise the research-to-practice curriculum  
• Revise the course offerings in the last academic unit (i.e., Unit 8), with particular attention to Physical Analysis  
• Eliminate the part-time program option |
| 3. Expand clinical education capacity | • Reduce paperwork related to student placements  
• Shorten student placement assessment form  
• Increase clinical capacity by creating partnerships with professional and regulatory bodies (OSLA, CASLPO)  
• Form a clinical education advisory committee |
| 4. Support and advance international student internships | • With ICDR, develop protocols related to international student internships  
• Apply for funding (e.g., Education Development Fund Grant) to evaluate international student placements |
| 5. Expand our MSc and PhD programs within the Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science (i.e., GDRS) | • Evaluate administrative efficiencies in merging the MSc/PhD program with the Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science (i.e., GDRS)  
• Increase the number of MSc/PhD students in SLP’s funded cohort to a stable 15-18  
• Track the career paths and achievements of graduates of the SLP MSc/PhD program over time |

“After my stroke, I came to know speech pathologists from the U of T; students, graduates, teachers. They guided me on the road to speech recovery. Then, I had the privilege to speak to the graduating class from the patient’s perspective. The students’ questions demonstrated their intelligence, expertise, commitment to their profession and eagerness to learn. Their questions challenged me and, more important, made me confront my emotions relating to my ongoing speech recovery. Thank you U of T!”

Harvey Strosberg, QC, LSM, LLD
Strategic Priority 2
Strengthen our research enterprise and impact.

“The Review Committee was impressed with the research environment in the Department... Since 2004-05, the level of research funding in the Department has increased by 22%. Faculty members hold grants from all three federal funding agencies, as well as grants from foundations and various other agencies. The Department has also been successful in obtaining salary awards, including a Canada Research Chair and a CIHR New Investigator award. These data compare favourably with peer units across Canada, making the University of Toronto’s program one of the leading groups in SLP research in Canada.”

External Reviewers, Drs. Baum, Mishna, & Novak (April 2011)

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| 1. Increase research funding and productivity | • Increase research funding by 20% by 2016 (using 2010/11 as the baseline)  
• Adopt key performance indicators to track research funding and productivity |
| 2. Enhance participation in interdisciplinary research | • Establish a presence in interdisciplinary institutes (e.g., Institute of Human Development, Brain Institute, etc), collaborative programs (e.g., Neuroscience, Genome, Aging, etc.) and EDUs |
| 3. Increase engagement with the hospital research institutes | • Increase the number of joint appointments in fully affiliated teaching hospitals  
• Increase the number of collaborative grants with scientists at the fully affiliated teaching hospitals |
| 4. Increase visibility and impact of SLP research | • Showcase faculty members’ research on the SLP website  
• Highlight our international research activity via all communication vehicles (e.g., website, newsletters)  
• Investigate and select methods for assessing impact of SLP research  
• Increase SLP leadership in key research communities, nationally and internationally |
### Strategic Priority 3
*Support our students, faculty, and staff to ensure their success*

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| 1. Foster a culture of wellness that enhances the quality of study and work life | • Evaluate student, faculty, and staff perceptions regarding the quality of the work/study environment  
• Promote wellness activities (e.g., yoga sessions, workshops)  
• Implement the SLP workload policy to distribute the teaching and committee work equitably  
• Support alumni activities that foster wellness (e.g., buddy breakfast, spirit award, info social) |
| 2. Create a welcoming environment that promotes diversity in the student body | • Participate in the FoM survey on the diversity of our student body  
• Promote diversity in admissions and all images we use to advertise the SLP department  
• Increase student bursary funds to promote socio-economic diversity among students |
| 3. Encourage faculty and staff to develop their skills and contribute to the department, university, and community | • Increase staff participation in skills-based workshops  
• Assist faculty to develop a comprehensive career plan that includes advancement and promotion  
• Support the teaching and professional development of clinical faculty in partnership with the University, regulatory bodies, and professional associations (e.g., CFD, CASLPO, OSLA)  
• Develop an award system for faculty and staff innovations |

“We chose to study at U of T because of the people, the clinical opportunities, and (of course) the great city of Toronto. We’ve become the best of friends with our fellow students who will one day be our future colleagues. Our classmates work extremely well in small group teams on various projects and assignments. Being immersed in the center of “hospital row” on University Avenue, we’re able to take advantage of many opportunities to attend seminars given by leading practitioners in the field. Before attending U of T, we were concerned about the high reputation of the Department and the pressure we might face to excel. However, we found our classmates, faculty, and staff to be extremely caring, supportive, and helpful. We also really enjoy the time we spend together outside of the classroom - exploring the city, going to plays and movies, and socializing. In fact, SLP at U of T has a longstanding tradition of superb potluck lunches and dinners. We are thrilled with our choice of profession and extremely happy we decided to launch our careers as Speech-Language Pathologists at U of T.”

Anna N and Talia G, MHS Students, Class of 2013 (June 2012)
Strategic Priority 4
Disseminate innovations and advancements that improve communication and swallowing of individuals locally and globally

“...the research outcomes of faculty members (and students) have direct applicability to health care and education, contributing to society in the advancement of SLP service delivery and its quality.”

External Reviewers, Drs. Baum, Mishna, & Novak (April 2011)

“The number of citations since 2005 constitutes a 230% increase compared to the pre-2005 data.”

Dr. Luc de Nil, former Chair (April 2011)

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| 1. Disseminate innovations by offering professional development | • Implement one to two professional development opportunities for SLPs annually  
• Track the number of workgroups, faculty presentations, and student presentations |
| 2. Strengthen knowledge dissemination to support evidence-based care | • Revise research-to-practice to enable students to develop evidenced-based practice guidelines |
| 3. Inform and contribute to policy at local and global forums | • Ensure and showcase faculty participation on key professional and regulatory bodies related to SLP  
• Increase and showcase faculty participation on international associations or research meetings related to SLP (e.g., IALP, ASHA, Dysphagia Research Society) |
Strategic Priority 5
Strengthen communication and build collaborations with local and global strategic partners

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| 1. Strengthen communications within the Department and heighten the SLP’s profile externally | - Send monthly email blasts to update members of the department, including students  
- Use faculty meetings to promote an awareness of each other’s work  
- Launch a new website with a focus on Departmental news  
- Improve the format of the Intercom newsletter |
| 2. Build relationships with key partners locally and globally         | - Formalize a recruitment and engagement strategy for adjunct/status only appointments  
- Build partnerships with ICDR in areas of communication and swallowing disorders |
| 3. Create a culture of alumni engagement that supports the vision and mission of the department | - Improve the alumni section of the website to include news and events for and from alumni  
- Increase engagement of Alumni who are mid-to-late career stage (e.g., JF Walker lectures and targeted invitations to write articles for the Intercom)  
- Connect alumni to the department by more frequent communication through email newsletters, social media, website  
- Connect new graduates to alumni at the Grad Reception |

“The I think the biggest contribution of the SLP Alumni Association is that it provides social, financial, and professional networking supports to the current students and this contributes to a very positive memory of their time at U of T. The community of graduates from the U of T SLP Program has a strong cohesive identity within the profession.”

Janice Waugh Bennett, Past President, SLP Alumni Association

“The Department is encouraged to look for new opportunities to integrate research endeavours in the context of interdisciplinary teams that span Departments, Faculties, and institutions. Opportunities for new funding, team grants, and expansion of the current research programs within the Department will enable more graduate student enrolment and productivity.”

Dean Catharine Whiteside (Aug 8, 2011)
**Strategic Priority 6**

Expand the funding base and existing infrastructure to support educational and research initiatives

“...more funding for graduate students is necessary and should be a top priority for fundraising by the Department, with the assistance of the Office of Advancement in the Faculty of Medicine.”

Dean Catharine Whiteside (Aug 8, 2011)

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| 1. Enhance funding to support the six strategic priorities | - Create a fund raising team  
- Develop and market a continuing education program with 1 to 2 offerings annually  
- Increase the number of students in the MHSc program to 100  
- Develop and teach up to 3 undergraduate courses to increase revenues |
| 2. Raise funds to support research and educational endeavours | - Raise funds to create an endowed research chair or professorship in child language disorders or adult neurogenic disorders  
- Expand support for student bursaries and scholarships  
- With the SLP Alumni Association’s Fund Raising Committee explore fund raising opportunities |
| 3. Renew infrastructure to support education | - Renovate Room 452 to accommodate 60 students  
- Renovate Room 414 to accommodate the SLP Test Library |