

**New Program Proposal
 Master of Speech Pathology
 Francis Marion University**

Summary

Francis Marion University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Master of Speech Pathology to be implemented in Fall 2018. The proposed program is to be offered through traditional instruction. The following chart outlines the stages of approval for the proposal; the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) and the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CALL) voted to recommend approval of the proposal. The full program proposal and support documents are attached.

Stages of Consideration	Date	Comments
Program Proposal Received	4/1/16	Not Applicable
ACAP Consideration	5/19/16	<p>The University’s representative explained the need for the proposed program. Then, representatives from both USC and SC State expressed concern about competition for practicum sites while acknowledging the need for the program. The USC representative suggested the three institutions work together to place students at practicum sites. In discussing the need for the program, the representative from SC State stated the legislature had provided SC State with additional funding to produce more Speech Pathologists and that the institution’s program is currently operating at capacity.</p> <p>Given the letters of support for the proposed program from both local medical practice offices and a local school district, staff asked for clarification about ways the proposed program will prepare students for employment in schools. The University’s representative admitted that the program is designed more for the healthcare setting and explained that students seeking certification for employment in public schools will need to complete an internship after graduating from the program. While completing this internship, these students would be issued an Internship Certificate, valid for one academic year; the Internship Certificate would then be converted to a professional certificate upon verification of a successful evaluation of the individual's performance during the initial year of employment.</p> <p>The representative then discussed the practicum requirement in more detail and stated that the practicum could be integrated into existing psychology courses with a clinical component. The representative also described the</p>

Stages of Consideration	Date	Comments
		<p>accreditation process and stated the application for accreditation will be submitted prior to the program's estimated start state so that the program can be formally admitted into candidacy before students are enrolled.</p> <p>ACAP members asked about the recurring state funding included in the cost chart and whether the program could be sustained without this funding. The University's representative stated that implementing the program is costly and that they may need to re-evaluate the implementation if the funding is not provided, but that the University is committed to implementing the program based on the great need for the program in the state. Staff then asked about the facilities costs included in the proposal. The University's representative explained that cost included the estimated utilities, equipment, and maintenance costs associated with offering the program at the new Carter Center for Health Sciences facility in downtown Florence.</p> <p>ACAP members voted to approve the program proposal.</p>
Comments and suggestions from CHE staff sent to the institution	7/1/16	<p>Staff requested the proposal be revised to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the program objectives in addition to the student learning outcomes. • Clarify how the proposed program will prepare students for employment in schools as discussed at ACAP, including an explanation about how the program will meet the requirements for its students to be certified by the SC Department of Education, or the steps students must take to be eligible for such certification after graduation. • Describe how the Psychology department will modify existing courses/clinicals to include a supervised practicum that will allow graduates to be a certified Speech Pathologist in SC. • Delete the narrative response provided in the articulation section since the response was "No." • Provide a justification for the length of the program and the credit hours required, including evidence that the length is comparable to other similar programs. • Explain how information will be presented to prospective students about the pre-requisites required that could lengthen the timeline to complete the program. • Discuss plans to collaborate with both USC and SC State in regards to practicum sites given the concern about

Stages of Consideration	Date	Comments
		<p>competition for practicum placements raised at ACAP as well as describe other possible collaborative efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the plan and timeline for developing the new courses. • Include the plan and timeline for hiring new faculty. • Include a statement about whether library resources are adequate to support the proposed program. • Explain the cost for facilities in the budget justification section. • Explain whether the program is sustainable without the additional state funding given the inquiry made at ACAP about the state funding of \$500,000 per year included in the cost chart. <p>In addition, staff requested a copy of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership’s strategic plan referenced in the proposal.</p>
Revised Program Proposal Received	7/28/16	<p>The revised proposal satisfactorily addressed the requested revisions. The cost chart was revised to reduce the reported new costs for facilities and to include the actual increase in appropriations received from the state that will support the proposed program; these state funds will support the program in years one and two. The institution also provided a copy of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership’s strategic plan referenced in the proposal.</p>
CAAL Consideration	9/8/16	<p>CAAL members requested clarification about the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence for the estimated number of students in the proposal. • Program costs. Cost appears expensive and tuition will cover about half of the expenses. Will the program be a cost center or a revenue center? • Practicum placements. <p>Response from Francis Marion University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two similar programs in the state. The estimate for students in the program is based on an assessment of the need in the local area and the ability to place students in practicum sites. • Tuition is based on the graduate nursing program which is a five-semester program where students take summer courses in addition to the academic year. Twenty (20) students per year will cover program expenses and should be self-supporting by the third year.

Stages of Consideration	Date	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Francis Marion received funding from the legislature to implement the program.• Francis Marion is already collaborating with USC Columbia for practicum placements. They are pursuing practicum sites in Horry County and Southeast North Carolina. Communication with UNC Greensboro consultant on referring students for practicum placements. In response to Commissioner inquiry about CHE assistance with practicum placements, FMU stated that South Carolina Area Health Education Consortium (AHEC) assists with practicum placement.

Review

Proposal consideration focused on program costs, funding, collaboration with similar in-state programs, practicum placements, and employment opportunities. University representatives responded satisfactorily, explained program need, tuition formulas and funding models, and collaborative opportunities with institutions and in-state and out-of-state consortia.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission approve the program leading to the Master of Speech Pathology to be implemented in Fall 2018.

Background Information

State the nature and purpose of the proposed program, including target audience and centrality to institutional mission. (1500 characters)

As result of requests from health care organizations and public school districts in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina, Francis Marion University began several years ago to explore the possibility of offering a Master's degree in Speech Pathology. Having determined that there is a shortage of qualified and licensed speech pathologists in South Carolina and especially in the northeastern region of the state; in the fall of 2013 an *ad hoc* committee examined more thoroughly the prospects for a Speech Pathology program. In December 2013, the committee recommended the establishment of a Master's in Speech Pathology program.

The Master of Speech Pathology program is consistent with South Carolina's statewide higher education plan, which emphasizes workforce development, especially in the field of healthcare occupations. The Speech Pathology program is also congruent with the mission of Francis Marion University to serve the people of the Pee Dee region and the state of South Carolina. The University offers professional degrees at the baccalaureate, master's, and specialist levels, and the Master of Speech Pathology will be one of the professional degrees that the University offers at the master's level. In the field of professional graduate degrees in healthcare, Speech Pathology will join the Master of Science in Nursing-Family Nurse Practitioner, Master of Science in Nursing in-Nurse Educator, and Physician Assistant programs. It should also be noted that in October 2008, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education approved the creation of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership. The proposed Master's degree in Speech Pathology was included as a priority in the strategic plan adopted by the Partnership. Please see the attached Document: *"Twenty-First Century Health Care Solutions for the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina"*, produced by the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership, 9/1/2009.

List the program objectives. (2000 characters)

An application for accreditation will be submitted by FMU to the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) once the program has been approved by the South Carolina Committee on Higher Education (CHE). Graduates will be eligible for licensure by the Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and by ASHA in the form of the Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) after qualifying work experience. Graduates who wish to work in the school system will be eligible for certification by the South Carolina Board of Education after a qualifying internship.

The program will recruit qualified students, particularly from the Pee Dee Region and South Carolina in accordance with the University mission and produce graduates to enhance the provision of speech-language pathologist services in the Pee Dee region.

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The Francis Marion University Speech Pathology Program seeks to provide a comprehensive academic course of study combined with supervised clinical experiences in a variety of settings in order to prepare graduates who are ready to provide the highest quality services for persons with speech and communication disorders.

Student learning outcomes:

Students who graduate from the proposed program will demonstrate:

1. knowledge of human communication disorders (speech, language and hearing) across the lifespan
2. an understanding of different linguistic and cultural communication norms and disorders
3. the ability to assimilate academic material into evidence-based clinical practice
4. the ability to think critically and evaluate research relevant to the field of speech-language pathology

5. knowledge of current standards of practice in the speech-language pathology profession including policies and standards of ASHA and state licensing procedures
6. behavior in accordance with ethical standards of the profession in academic research and clinical environs
7. the ability to work with other professionals to benefit the care of individuals with communication disorders
8. knowledge of regulations and record keeping in a variety of clinical settings

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Francis Marion University Speech Pathology Program seeks to educate and train graduate-level students to become exemplary professionals in speech-language pathology who provide excellence in clinical service to individuals with communication and swallowing disorders by helping them develop communication skills they never had or regain abilities they lost.

Specific Objectives:

1. Provide high-quality graduate education that is accessible to undergraduate speech and language and other qualified baccalaureate graduates
2. Increase the number of master's-level speech pathologists in the State and Pee Dee region.

Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the need for the program for the institution, the state, the region, and beyond, if applicable. (1500 characters)

According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the need for speech pathologists continues to increase for several reasons. These include: (1) Aging of the general population (2) Improved survival rates among infants and the elderly (3) Greater awareness of the importance of early identification and diagnosis of speech, language, and swallowing disorders in young children (4) Educational services—children with disabilities (5) Hospitals, clinics, and nursing care facilities increasingly provide treatment and services offered by speech pathologists. (6) Scope of practice—the scope of practice for Speech Pathologists continues to grow. (Katie Squires, “Addressing the Shortage of Speech Language Pathologists in School Settings,” *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*, Winter 2013). Added to the current need is an expected increase in retirements throughout the coming years should create excellent job opportunities for speech-language pathologists.

The BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook projects a growth of 21% in the number of speech-language pathologists from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average of all occupations.

A survey of local school districts and medical facilities in the FMU feasibility study found vacancies at 15 of the 17 entities contacted. Respondents made comments such as “absolutely there is a need “ , “we have been looking for a speech pathologist for over a year now” and “there is a terrible shortage and we have difficulty recruiting for speech pathology”.

Thus the need for speech pathologists is increasing, but the supply of qualified and licensed speech pathologists is not keeping pace. The result is a nationwide shortage of speech pathologists, and an acute unmet need in South Carolina, the Pee Dee region and in other rural areas of the state.

Employment Opportunities

Is specific employment/workforce data available to support the proposed program?

Yes

No

If yes, complete the table and the component that follows the table on page 4. If no, complete the single narrative response component on page 5 beginning with "Provide supporting evidence."

Employment Opportunities			
Occupation	Expected Number of Jobs	Employment Projection	Data Source
Speech Pathologist in FMU service area (2015-2025)	295	326 (plus 81 retiring)	Occupational Snapshot of Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations in the FMU Service Area (NESA)
Speech Pathologist in SC to 2017	1,880	1,950	Projectionscentral.com
Speech Pathologists in US (2014-2024)	135,400	164,300	US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program

Provide additional information regarding anticipated employment opportunities for graduates. (1000 characters)

The North Eastern Strategic Alliance provided the above information in row 1. Currently there are 295 speech pathology positions in the FMU service area. NESA predicts this number will rise by 31 positions by 2025 and that 81 of currently employed speech pathologists will retire by 2025.

The FMU survey conducted in 2013 documented unfilled positions in 15 of 17 employers surveyed,

Indeed.com, an employment website, listed 778 speech pathology positions in South Carolina. (mid March)

SpeechPathology.com, an employment website, lists 165 vacancies in South Carolina, 23 of which were posted in the past 2 days. (mid March)

Monster.com lists 127 vacancies for speech pathologists in South Carolina. (mid March)

The current speech pathology programs at USC-Columbia and SCSU report 100% employment of graduates over the most recent 3 years reported (2012-2014).

Provide supporting evidence of anticipated employment opportunities for graduates, including a statement that clearly articulates what the program prepares graduates to do, any documented citations that suggests a correlation between this program and future employment, and other relevant information. Please cite specific resources, as appropriate. (3000 characters)

Note: Only complete this if the Employment Opportunities table and the section that follows the table on page 4 have not previously been completed.

Will the proposed program impact any existing degree programs and services at the institution (e.g., course offerings or enrollment)?

Yes

No

If yes, explain. (500 characters)

The 20 new students in the program each year will be new students to FMU and not students that might be in alternate programs.

There will be interaction between faculty and students in the other healthcare graduate programs - namely Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant and Clinical Psychology - to the benefit of all. Faculty from the Department of Biology, Psychology and Sociology may be involved in teaching some classes in the speech pathology program.

This graduate program will offer opportunities for suitably qualified FMU graduates to further their education.

Besides working in a clinical setting such as a hospital, assisted living, rehabilitation center, or long term nursing home, a large percentage of graduates with a Master's degree in Speech Pathology work in the K-12 school setting. Through their coursework and practicums, our graduates will be well positioned to work in schools after a qualifying internship.

FMU Graduates will be eligible for licensure by the Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and by ASHA in the form of the Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) after qualifying work experience. Graduates who wish to work in the school system will be eligible for certification by the South Carolina Board of Education after a qualifying internship. The Internship Certificate is issued to an individual who holds the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) in Speech-Language Pathology or who has completed a master's degree that includes the academic and clinical requirements for the ASHA CCC and has achieved the minimum qualifying score on the required certification examination(s). This certificate is effective for one academic year and must be requested by the employing school district. It may be converted to a professional certificate upon verification of a successful evaluation of the individual's performance during the initial year of employment. The above information on laws and regulations for S.C. school based speech-language pathologists is found in Regulation R 43-53 of the SC State Board Credential Classification Provisions effective 5/25/2012. Moreover, after FMU's program has been fully certified then we will explore the possibility of offering two tracks in our Speech Pathology program to include certification within the program for both the clinical setting as well as the school setting. Those pursuing the school certification track will be required to complete their internship/school placement, thus requiring additional hours and/or summer school.

List of Similar Programs in South Carolina

Program Name	Institution	Similarities	Differences
Master of Speech Pathology	USC Columbia	Full-time 2-year program, similar curriculum following standards set by ASHA. Graduates undertake extra internship before graduation to be certified to work in SC schools.	Practicums of FMU students will take place in Pee Dee region with likelihood of employment within the region. There should be very little to no competition for practicum sites.
Master of Communication Disorder	USC Columbia		Part-time program offered through distance learning
Master of Arts in Speech Pathology and Audiology	SCSU	Full-time 2-year program, similar curriculum following standards set by ASHA.	Degree with thesis is offered as an alternative at SCSU. Practicums of FMU students will take place in Pee Dee region with likelihood of employment within the region. There should be very little to no competition for practicum sites.

Description of the Program

Projected Enrollment						
Year	Fall		Spring		Summer	
	Headcount	Credit Hours	Headcount	Credit Hours	Headcount	Credit Hours
Yr 1	20	300	20	300	20	180
Yr 2	40	540	40	540	20	180
Yr 3	40	540	40	540	20	180
Yr 4	40	540	40	540	20	180
Yr 5	40	540	40	540	20	180

Besides the general institutional admission requirements, are there any separate or additional admission requirements for the proposed program?

Yes

No

If yes, explain. (1000 characters)

All applications to the program must be submitted to the FMU Graduate Office. To complete the application a student must: ...

1. Provide a criminal background check.
2. Complete all prerequisites including the Pre-Professional Course sequence.

Prerequisite courses to be completed before matriculation:

1. At least 3 credits in Biological Sciences
2. At least 3 credits in Social/Behavioral Sciences
3. At least 3 credits in a Physical Science (preferably physics or chemistry)
4. 3 credits in statistics

For those who have an undergraduate degree in a field other than Communications Sciences and Disorders or equivalent, a post-baccalaureate sequence of courses must be completed before matriculation (ASHA requirement):

1. Anatomy and Physiology of the Speech and Hearing Mechanism (3 credits)
2. Language and Speech Development (3 credits)
3. Introduction to Speech and Language Disorders (3 credits)
4. Phonetics (3 credits)

Are there any special articulation agreements for the proposed program?

Yes

No

If yes, identify. (1000 characters)

Curriculum

Select one of the following charts to complete: Curriculum by Year **or** Curriculum by Category

Curriculum by Year					
Course Name	Credit Hours	Course Name	Credit Hours	Course Name	Credit Hours
Year 1					
Fall		Spring		Summer	
SP 531 School Age Language Disorders	3	SP 561 Dysphagia	3	SP 591 Motor Speech Disorders	3
SP 537 Speech and Hearing Science	3	SP 567 Research Methods I	3	SP 595 Medical Aspects of Speech-Language Pathology	3
SP 540 Communication Disorders in the Birth to Five Population	3	SP 570 Audiology and Aural Rehabilitation	3	SP 601 Advanced Clinical Practicum I	3
SP 545 Introduction to Multicultural Issues	1	SP 575 Adult Language Disorders	3		
SP 547 Neurology of Speech-Language and Hearing	3	SP 580 Clinical Practicum	2		
SP 550 Beginning Clinical Practicum	2	SP 581 Hearing Clinical Practicum	1		
Total Semester Hours	15	Total Semester Hours	15	Total Semester Hours	9
Year 2					
Fall		Spring		Summer	
SP 607 Augmentative/Alternative Communication	1	SP 621 Advanced Clinical Practicum III	9		
SP 610 Professional Issues and Ethics	1	SP 630 Research Methods II: Capstone Project	3		
SP 615 Voice Disorders	2				
SP 617 Fluency Disorders	2				
SP 620 Advanced Clinical Practicum II	6				
Total Semester Hours	12	Total Semester Hours	12	Total Semester Hours	

Total Credit Hours Required 63

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) certification standards require at minimum 36 hours of graduate work. These hours must include both academic and clinical work. However, most Masters of Speech Pathology programs require considerably more than 36 hours. Typically, a Masters in Speech Pathology require 5 to 7 semesters (including summer semesters) depending on the student's initial level of preparation. Total credit hours can range from the high 40's to the high 70's, with most programs in the 60's range. Credit hours for programs in surrounding states range from 46-89. Below are examples of ASHA accredited programs in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia: **SCSU** Length of the program 5-7 semesters with the total credit hours 46 - 54 depending on prerequisites. Web site: <http://www.scsu.edu/academicprograms/speechpathologyaudiology>

USC Length of the program 5-7 semesters with the total credit hours 78 - 91 depending on prerequisites. Web site: <http://www.sph.sc.edu/comd>

Appalachian State U. Length of the program 5 semesters for students with prerequisites with the total credit hours 60 credits for students with prerequisites. Web site: <http://comdis.appstate.edu>

ECU Length of the program 5 semesters for students with prerequisites with the total credit hours 54 credit hours for students with prerequisites. Web site: <http://www.ecu.edu/csd>

UNC-G Length of the program 5 semesters for students with prerequisites with the total credit hours 62 credit hours for students with prerequisites. Web site: <http://www.uncg.edu/csd/>

WCU Length of the program 5 semesters for students with prerequisites with the total credit hours 60 credit hours for students with prerequisites. Web site: <http://commdis.wcu.edu>

UGA Length of the program 5-7 semesters with the total credit hours 89 - 95 depending on prerequisites. Web site: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/csse>

GSU Length of the program 6-9 semesters with the total credit hours 67 - 94 depending on prerequisites. Web site: <http://education.gsu.edu/epse>

As summer semesters are nearly always used, the Masters in Speech Pathology is considered a two-year degree. USC's MSP program states that their students must maintain full-time status on a year-round basis for two calendar years.

The program would be longer for those entering without a speech-language undergraduate background or the pre-requisite courses. Almost all SLP programs require certain foundational credits or prerequisites for admittance to their course of study.

All prospective students will be able to ascertain both in print form and on-line a list of the prerequisite courses required for admittance into the FMU Masters of Speech Pathology Program. Universities look to ASHA certification standards for establishment of their admission requirements and/or their prerequisites for the Masters program in Speech Pathology. According to ASHA, the applicant must have demonstrated knowledge of the biological sciences, physical sciences, statistics, and the social/behavioral sciences. For those students who do not have an undergraduate degree in the field, specific undergraduate courses must be taken prior to formally beginning the Masters sequence.

Course Descriptions for New Courses

Course Name	Description
531 School Age Language Disorders	This course is an introduction to the nature, assessment, and treatment of speech and language disorders. The course will help prepare students for working with pediatric and adult populations with speech and language disorders.
537 Speech and Hearing Science	This course will provide a foundational understanding of the basic principles of acoustics, psychoacoustics, acoustics of voice and speech production.
540 Communication Disorders in the Birth to Five Population	This course explores communication disorders from infancy through the preschool period. Topics addressed include theoretical frameworks for the assessment and treatment of childhood language disorders, etiology and characteristics of language/communication disorders in infants and preschool children, and principles and methods of assessment and intervention.
545 Introduction to Multicultural Issues	This course focuses on the identification and treatment of speech and language differences in diverse populations. The course will explain terminology and concepts related to cultural and linguistic diversity and students will learn to evaluate how cultural variables impact service delivery and treatment options.
547 Neurology of Speech-Language and Hearing	This course provides an overview of neuroanatomy and neurophysiology with a concentration on neurological mechanisms related to speech, language and hearing. This course will increase knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including basic biological and neurological structure and function.
550 Beginning Clinical Practicum	This course provides clinical practice in the diagnosis and treatment of communication disorders. Clinical work is accompanied by regular group and individual meetings with clinical staff. Clinical hours are accumulated under direct supervision. Acceptable clinical hours may be applied toward ASHA certification.
561 Dysphagia	This course examines the anatomical bases of normal and disordered swallowing in children and adults. The course will prepare students to access and diagnose swallowing disorders across the lifespan.
567 Research Methods I	This course is an introduction to research procedures in the study of communication sciences and disorders with an emphasis on Evidence-Based Practice. The course is designed to increase knowledge of principles of basic and applied research and research design, improve ability to access sources of research information, and increase ability to relate research to clinical practice.
570 Audiology and Aural Rehabilitation	This course is an introduction to the theory and techniques of pediatric and adult audiology and the habilitation and rehabilitation of hearing differences across the lifespan.
575 Adult Language Disorders	This course introduces students to the prevention, assessment, and treatment of cognitive-linguistic disorders of communication resulting from stroke, dementia, and traumatic brain injury.
580 Clinical Practicum	This course continues the practice of diagnosis and treatment of communication disorders. Clinical work is accompanied by regular group and individual meetings with clinical staff. Clinical hours are accumulated under direct supervision. Acceptable clinical hours may be applied toward ASHA certification.

Course Name	Description
581 Hearing Clinical Practicum	This course provides students with the opportunity to conduct hearing screenings for children and adults under the supervision of an audiologist or speech-language pathologist, following protocols established by the American Speech, Language and Hearing Association.
591 Motor Speech Disorders	This course provides an examination of the neurological basis, assessment, and treatment of dysarthria and apraxia. Students will be introduced to the appropriate procedures for evaluation and intervention of children and adults with motor speech disorders.
595 Medical Aspects of Speech-Language Pathology	This course will provide students in medical field placements with knowledge regarding service delivery models, reimbursement issues, documentation requirements, assessment approaches, goal setting, interdisciplinary team approaches, prioritizing treatment concerns and discharge planning. Case study presentations and discussion will be generated from students' field placement experiences.
601 Advanced Clinical Practicum I	This course provides guided clinical observations and experiences under the supervision of an ASHA Certified Speech-Language Pathologist. This course will help prepare students for working with clients, patients, and students with communication and/or swallowing disorders. Acceptable clinical hours may be applied toward ASHA certification.
607 Augmentative/Alternative Communication	This course provides fundamental knowledge of the principles and functions of augmentative and alternative communication. The course will provide students with the skills needed to assess the needs of differing populations and determine the best treatment strategies.
610 Professional Issues and Ethics	This course will introduce students to issues related to employment settings, job exploration/preparation, credentialing, trends in service delivery, ethics, legal considerations, and professional advocacy in the profession of speech therapy.
615 Voice Disorders	This course provides a foundational understanding of the anatomical and physiological bases of voice production. Emphasis is placed on diagnosis and therapy for phonatory disorders in children and adults.
617 Fluency Disorders	This course explores the theoretical and diagnostic approaches to the modification of stuttering behavior. Students will learn to identify normal and abnormal anatomy as it relates to speech production and will learn to assess and diagnose fluency of speech across the lifespan.
620 Advanced Clinical Practicum II	This course provides guided clinical observations and experiences under the supervision of an ASHA Certified Speech-Language Pathologist. This course will help prepare students for working with clients, patients, and students with communication and/or swallowing disorders. Acceptable clinical hours may be applied toward ASHA certification.
621 Advanced Clinical Practicum III	This course provides guided clinical observations and experiences under the supervision of an ASHA Certified Speech-Language Pathologist. This course will help prepare students for working with clients, patients, and students with communication and/or swallowing disorders. Acceptable clinical hours may be applied toward ASHA certification.
630 Research Methods II: Capstone Project	This course will increase knowledge of applied research and research design, data collection, analysis and presentation of results.

USC, SCSU, and FMU all recognize the vital need for more trained Speech Pathologists in South Carolina. New clinical spaces and practicum sites will be explored to share and develop for all interested parties. Along those lines we are looking to develop more sites in nearby Horry and Dillon counties, which at present USC and SCSU do not routinely use for their practicum sites. In addition, we are applying for membership in the SARA program to secure and develop practicum sites in nearby North Carolina. Currently there are no SP programs in the southeast region of NC. ECU is the closest and this would allow FMU to take advantage of the Wilmington area of NC as well as the northeast corner of SC. During the final semester at FMU, students can return to their home towns to complete a semester of clinical practicum in an area of the state where they'd like to live. Students could choose to take this final semester to do a clinical practicum placement out of the Pee Dee and even out of the state through membership in the SARA program.

The courses listed in the proposal have been developed along with syllabi and student learning outcomes by our consultant. They represent core courses based on ASHA standards that are routinely offered in a Speech Pathology program. Additionally, these courses have received FMU institutional approval in 2015, progressing through the Graduate Council, Faculty Senate, and General Faculty last October. Moreover, some courses and in particular many prerequisite courses could be developed and offered by faculty outside the Speech Pathology program in departments such as biology, nursing, psychology or sociology.

Faculty

Faculty and Administrative Personnel				
Rank	Full- or Part-time	Courses Taught or To be Taught, Including Term, Course Number & Title, Credit Hours	Academic Degrees and Coursework Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution and Major	Other Qualifications and Comments (i.e., explain role and/or changes in assignment)
Director and Assoc. Professor *	FT	SP 537 Speech and Hearing Science, Fall (3) SP 561 Dysphagia, Spring (3)	D. Speech Pathology or equivalent, TBA	Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP)
Clinical Coordinator and Assistant Professor*	FT	SP 550 Beginning Clinical Practicum Fall (2)	D. Speech Pathology or equivalent, TBA	Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP)

		SP 620 Advanced Clinical Practicum, Fall (6) SP 580 Clinical Practicum, Spring (2) SP 581 Hearing Clinical Practicum Spring (1) SP Advanced Clinical Practicum, Spring (9) SP 601 Advanced Clinical Practicum I, Summer (3)		
Assistant Professor*	FT	SP 531 School Age Language Disorders, Fall (3) SP 540 Communication Disorders in the Birth to Five Population, Fall (3) SP 607 Augmentative/ Alternative Communication, Fall (1) SP 615 Voice Disorders, Fall (2) SP 567 Research Methods I, Spring (3) SP 575 Adult Language Disorders Spring (3) SP 630 Research Methods II Capstone Project, Spring (3)	D. Speech Pathology or equivalent, TBA	Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP)
Assistant Professor	PT	SP 547 Neurology of Speech-Language and Hearing, Fall (3)	D. Speech Pathology or equivalent, TBA or Ph.D. in Neuroscience, Physiology or similar area	
Assistant Professor	PT	SP 545 Introduction to Multicultural Issues, Fall (1)	Ph.D. in Sociology or similar area	
Assistant Professor*	PT	SP 610 Professional Issues and Ethics, Fall (1) SP 617 Fluency Disorders Fall (2)	Minimum, Masters in Speech Pathology or equivalent	Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP)

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		SP 595 Medical Aspects of Speech-Language Pathology, Summer (3)		
Assistant Professor*	PT	SP Audiology and Aural Rehabilitation, Spring (3)	Minimum, Masters in Audiology or equivalent	Certificate of Clinical Competence, Audiology (CCC-A)

Note: Individuals should be listed with program supervisor positions listed first. Identify any new faculty with an asterisk next to their rank.

Total FTE needed to support the proposed program (i.e., the total FTE devoted just to the new program for all faculty, staff, and program administrators):

Faculty	Staff	Administration
2.5	1	1

Faculty /Administrative Personnel Changes

Provide a brief explanation of any additional institutional changes in faculty and/or administrative assignment that may result from implementing the proposed program. (1000 characters)

The program will have a full-time director, a full-time clinical coordinator and one other full-time faculty member. All of the foregoing will be certified clinical speech pathologists.

Some classes in neurology and ethics may be taught by non-clinical Ph.Ds. from other departments of the university. In the second year and continuing after the first year, part-time instructors drawn from local practicing clinicians will be used to teach some courses

The working timeline calls for the initial hire of the program director two years before the entrance of the first class of students into the program in fall 2018. That timeframe will enable the program director to see the program through the CAA ASHA accreditation process. The accreditation process dictates that the program director is in place prior to the documents being submitted for candidacy. This necessitates hiring the director in fall 2016. Subsequent hires would include the clinical coordinator being hired one semester prior to the entrance of the first class of students and 1 full-time faculty member, with a second or third part-time faculty member being hired just prior to the entrance of the first class of students to provide specialized coursework and/or clinical supervision. The program director would develop job descriptions and expectations for all of these positions and coordinate the hiring process.

Library and Learning Resources

Identify current library/learning collections, resources, and services necessary to support the proposed program and any additional library resources needed. (1000 characters)

The 77,000 square foot James A. Rogers Library seats 475 and is open 85.5 hours per week. The library houses a collection of over 407,000 print volumes, 583 print subscriptions, 377,000 volumes of microforms, and 142 electronic databases to access information from almost anywhere. In addition, the library provides electronic access to over 340,000 accessible e-books and 34,499 accessible e-journals.

Currently we have online access to the following journals.

American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology
American Journal of Audiology
Brain and Language
Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research
Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools

We also have a selection of electronic books in this subject area and access to databases including Medline and Science Direct.

Through PASCAL partnerships, the Rogers Library provides access to an extensive collection of electronic resources.

New **ComDisDome** is an indexing and abstracting tool covering the communications disorders literature, with focus on speech-language pathology and audiology.

In examining the holdings of FMU's Roger's Library pertaining to speech language pathology and communication disorders, our consultant, Dr. Kristine Lundgren from UNC-G has affirmed that our resources are sufficient for speech-language pathologists and include all of the ASHA journals and journals related to the study of communication disorders.

Student Support Services

Identify academic support services needed for the proposed program and any additional estimated costs associated with these services. (500 characters)

Student academic services include the Academic Computing Center, the James A. Rogers Library, the All Campus Tutoring Center and the Writing Center.

Other student services include the Office of Counseling and Testing and the Student Health Center.

Recreational services include access to the gymnasium, racket ball courts, volleyball courts, weight rooms, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, participation in intramural sports and free entry to all university athletic events.

All current student services will be available to the speech pathology students.

Physical Resources

Identify any new instructional equipment needed for the proposed program. (500 characters)

Audiometers
Calipso Software for clinical records
Standardized tests
Anatomical models
Visi-Pitch computerized speech lab

Will any extraordinary physical facilities be needed to support the proposed program?

Yes

No

Identify the physical facilities needed to support the program and the institution's plan for meeting the requirements, including new facilities or modifications to existing facilities. (1000 characters)

No new facilities will be needed for this program. Classroom and faculty office space is available in the new Carter Center for Health Sciences, the Lee Nursing Building and the Richardson Center for the Child. The Center for Health Sciences and the Center for the Child have interview rooms that can be used for objective structured clinical exams (OSCEs). These rooms are equipped with video and audio recording systems to allow later viewing of experiences by teachers and students. Other classrooms and flexible lab spaces are available for teaching and practicing client interactions and technical skills.

Financial Support

Estimated New Costs by Year						
Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Total
Program Administration	142,800	145,656	148,569	151,540	154,570	743,135
Faculty and Staff Salaries	312,800	319,056	325,437	331,946	338,585	1,627,824
Graduate Assistants						
Equipment	100,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	140,000
Facilities	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,000,000
Supplies and Materials	50,000	60,000	60,000	62,000	62,000	294,000
Library Resources	4,000	4,080	4,162	4,245	4,330	20,817
Other*						
Total	809,600	748,792	738,168	749,731	779,485	3,825,776
Sources of Financing						
Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Total
Tuition Funding	456,000	785,522	801,232	817,257	833,602	3,693,613
Program-Specific Fees						
State Funding (i.e., Special State Appropriation)*	500,000	250,000	0	0	0	750,000
Reallocation of Existing Funds*						
Federal Funding*						
Other Funding*						
Total	956,000	1,035,522	801,232	817,257	833,602	4,443,613
Net Total (i.e., Sources of Financing Minus Estimated New Costs)	146,400	286,730	63,064	67,526	54,117	617,837

*Provide an explanation for these costs and sources of financing in the budget justification.

Budget Justification

Provide a brief explanation for the other new costs and any special sources of financing (state funding, reallocation of existing funds, federal funding, or other funding) identified in the Financial Support table. (1000 characters)

Note: Institutions need to complete this budget justification *only* if any other new costs, state funding, reallocation of existing funds, federal funding, or other funding are included in the Financial Support table.

Assumptions: 2% annual increase in salaries and tuition, 36% fringes.

As of July 1, 2016, the University has taken occupancy of a new facility in downtown Florence, the Carter Center for Health Sciences (CCHS). This building will house many programs within our school of Health Sciences, including the Speech Pathology Program. Now that we have moved into the building, better estimates for the actual cost of operation of the program are discernable. The \$300,000 estimate has been reduced to \$200,000 (please see amended cost chart above) which is slated for utilities, equipment, and maintenance costs associated with running the program.

The University has received \$925,000 as an increase in E&G costs. We have earmarked \$500,000 for the first year and \$250,000 for the second year for the costs associated with the development of the Speech Pathology Program. Those initial costs include staff hiring, training and accreditation costs. The inaugural class of students is scheduled to be 20 and they will enter in fall 2018. By the 3rd year of students in the program it will be self-sustaining.

Evaluation and Assessment

Programmatic Assessment: Provide an outline of how the proposed program will be evaluated, including any plans to track employment. Identify assessment tools or software used in the evaluation. Explain how assessment data will be used. (3000 characters)

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has accreditation standards which include evaluation and assessment.

Specifically:

- 4.1 The program conducts ongoing and systematic formative and summative assessment of the performance of its current students.
This may include both written answer and multiple choice quizzes and tests, research papers, class presentations and demonstrations.
- 4.2 The program documents student progress toward completion of the graduate degree and professional credentialing requirements and makes this information available to assist students in qualifying for certification and licensure.
Each student's progress is evaluated midway through the semester and at the end of the semester to ensure that the student is making adequate progress. Midterm and final semester conferences keep students informed of progress toward graduation. All academic records are maintained by the university Registrar.
- 4.3 The program conducts regular and ongoing assessments of program effectiveness and uses the results for continuous improvement.
ASHA requires data to be collected from multiple sources e.g. students, alumni, faculty employers, preceptors and the community. In addition, the following data must be gathered and published on the program's website: program completion rate, pass rate for the Praxis examination and employment rate of graduates. Employment data will be gathered through survey at graduation and 12 months after graduation.
- 4.4 The program regularly evaluates all faculty members and faculty uses the results for continuous improvement.
All FMU faculty complete an annual report that is evaluated by their supervisor who then offers a written critique followed by the opportunity for a discussion.
All classes are evaluated by students and data is collected anonymously and reported to the faculty member and the program coordinator and Dean.

Student Learning Assessment

Expected Student Learning Outcomes	Methods of/Criteria for Assessment
The student will demonstrate knowledge of human communication disorders (speech, language, hearing, and swallowing) across the lifespan	Successful completion of all academic courses as noted on transcript and CALIPSO reports. Formative and summative assessment in classrooms, skills labs and clinical settings to ensure sufficient mastery of subjects. Benchmarks will be established and refined in subsequent years. CALIPSO software provides a means for assessing the attainment of ASHA standards for Knowledge and Skills as well as providing a record of student/client interaction to ensure sufficient clinical interaction across the lifespan.
The student will demonstrate an understanding of different linguistic and cultural communication norms and disorders	Successful completion of all academic courses as noted on transcript and CALIPSO. Formative and summative assessment in classrooms, skills labs and clinical settings to ensure sufficient mastery of subjects. Benchmarks will be established and refined in subsequent years. CALIPSO software provides a record of student/client interaction to ensure sufficient coverage of norms and disorders.
The student will demonstrate the ability to assimilate academic material into evidence-based clinical practice	Successful completion of all clinical internships as noted on transcript and CALIPSO. Formative and summative assessment in classrooms, skills labs and clinical settings to ensure sufficient mastery of subjects and assimilation into clinical practice. Benchmarks will be established and refined in subsequent years. CALIPSO software provides a record of student/client interaction to ensure sufficient breadth of exposure.
The students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and evaluate research relevant to the field of speech-language pathology	Successful completion of all academic courses as noted on transcript. Formative and summative assessment in classrooms, skills labs and clinical settings to ensure assimilation of relevant research into clinical practice. Benchmarks will be established and refined in subsequent years.
The student will demonstrate knowledge of current standards of practice in the speech-language pathology profession including policies and standards of ASHA and state licensing procedures and will act in an ethical manner in all clinical settings.	Successful completion of SP 610 Professional Issues and Ethics which will include formative and summative assessment tools and positive feedback from clinical supervisors.

Will the proposed program seek program-specific accreditation?

Yes

No

If yes, provide the institution's plans to seek accreditation, including the expected timeline for accreditation. (500 characters)

FMU will seek accreditation from the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Application for review no later than February 2017 followed by review and readiness decision by CAA.

Formal application no later than August 2017 followed by site visit and candidacy decision.

Program starts August 2018.

Will the proposed program lead to licensure or certification?

Yes

No

If yes, explain how the program will prepare students for licensure or certification. (500 characters)

Graduates of the program (ASHA accredited) will be well prepared for the Praxis examination in Speech-Language Pathology. Successful completion of Praxis, along with supervised work experience, is necessary for full licensure by the SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) by ASHA, and certification by the SC Department of Education.

Teacher or School Professional Preparation Programs

Is the proposed program a teacher or school professional preparation program?

Yes

No

If yes, complete the following components.

Area of Certification

Please attach a document addressing the South Carolina Department of Education Requirements and SPA or Other National Specialized and/or Professional Association Standards.

**Twenty-First Century Health Care Solutions for the Pee
Dee Region of South Carolina**

A Planning Paper for the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership

September 1, 2009

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I. Introduction

At its meeting on April 8, 2009, the Governing Board of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership charged the Operations Committee of the Partnership with developing a preliminary strategic plan for the consortium. In response to that charge, the Operations Committee met on July 29, 2009, and discussed the possible activities of the Partnership in relation to the health care needs of the Pee Dee region.

As a result of the those discussions, the Operations Committee decided to formulate a planning paper that would be reviewed by the members of the Operations Committee and then submitted to the Governing Board of Pee Dee Health Education Partnership as a preliminary statement of the goals, objectives, and priorities for the next three to five years. This document, entitled “Twenty-First Century Health Care Solutions for the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina,” constitutes a preliminary draft of a strategic plan.

II. Background: The Pee Dee Health Education Partnership

In 2008, President Fred Carter of Francis Marion University initiated discussions with President Harris Pastides of the University of South Carolina, Mr. Rob Colones, CEO of McLeod Health, and Mr. Jim O’Loughlin, CEO of Carolinas Hospital System. The purpose of these conversations was the establishment of a consortium that would include the two universities and two regional medical centers and that would deliver health care degree programs and related services to northeastern South Carolina. The partnership would be modeled after the Greenville University Center in the upstate of South Carolina, and the Graduate Center of the Low Country in Charleston.

A memorandum of understanding to create a Pee Dee Health Education Partnership was signed by President Carter, President Pastides, Mr. Colones, and Mr. O’Loughlin and was submitted to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for consideration and approval. At its meeting on October 2, 2008, the CHE unanimously approved the memorandum of understanding. Pursuant to that action, which constituted official recognition of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership, the leaders of the consortium established a work group to draft a set of by-laws for the new organization. The work group produced by-laws that were approved at a meeting of the Governing Board of the consortium in April 2009.¹ At that same meeting, the Governing Board of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership directed the Operations Committee, augmented by additional representation from each of the four member organizations, to begin the process of strategic planning in order to set goals, objectives, and priorities for the next three to five years.

¹ The Pee Dee Health Education Partnership is registered with the South Carolina Secretary of State as a 501(c)3 eleemosynary organization.

III. Health Care Problems and Needs of Northeastern South Carolina

The health care problems and needs of the Pee Dee region have been extensively investigated and are well-documented. For example, one recent study prepared for Francis Marion University offered the following observations about health care needs in northeastern South Carolina:

- Basic health measures, such as life expectancy, indicate significant negative disparities between the Pee Dee region and the rest of the state and nation.
- The Pee Dee region is afflicted “with higher than average rates of obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other maladies.”
- Infant mortality rates are disturbingly high in many northeastern South Carolina counties (e.g., Darlington, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, and Williamsburg).
- Many residents of the region “struggle to obtain and keep health insurance, or if they have insurance, to make co-payments and deductibles.”
- There is a “need for a renewed commitment to rural and children’s health” in the Pee Dee region.
- Healthcare in the rural parts of northeastern South Carolina is not adequate for the very serious health problems faced by many residents.
- Delayed diagnosis and treatment put the health of many Pee Dee residents at risk and make inevitable later and more expensive acute care treatments.
- The Pee Dee region can benefit from “continued and increased investment” in health programs.
- Ways should be found to extend healthcare services to the rural areas of northeastern South Carolina.
- There are shortages of health professionals in many rural areas and communities, which have trouble recruiting and retaining doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers. This shortage, which is acute in some northeastern South Carolina counties, needs to be addressed.²

² “Creating Greater Opportunity in South Carolina’s I-95 Corridor: A Human Needs Assessment,” prepared for Francis Marion University, January 2009.

The Pee Dee Health Care Partnership was created to help address the shortages of health care professionals identified in the foregoing study. The purpose of the partnership is to provide a framework for the delivery of new health care degree programs in northeastern South Carolina. We hope that by “growing our own” health professionals, we can alleviate shortages and improve access to health care services for the residents of the Pee Dee region.

IV. Planning for the Future: Goals, Objectives, and Priorities for the Next 3 to 5 Years

Shortages of healthcare professionals, which include a shortage of primary care physicians, present a significant challenge to the region and the state. One way of alleviating the shortage of physicians is to rely more on Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants. While there are differences in educational preparation between the two groups, both Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants can perform many of the functions of primary care physicians. Nurse Practitioners are educated within a Department or School of Nursing. Physician Assistants are educated within the medical school model. Both programs are usually offered at the Master’s degree level.

Goal One: The Pee Dee Health Education Partnership will increase the supply of Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants for the region and the state, with an emphasis on educating NPs and PAs for rural and underserved areas.

Objectives:

- Establish an accredited Nurse Practitioner Master’s degree program at Francis Marion University that will eventually enroll and graduate about 25 to 30 NP students per class.

- In cooperation with the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, establish an accredited Physician Assistant Master’s degree program at Francis Marion University that will eventually enroll and graduate about 25 to 30 PA students per class.

Because Francis Marion University operates a baccalaureate nursing degree program, the academic and clinical infrastructure already exists for the Nurse Practitioner program, which therefore becomes the top priority for the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership. It should also be noted that graduate students who receive a Master of Science in Nursing degree will become qualified to serve as teaching faculty in two-year and four-year nursing programs, thus increasing the supply of qualified faculty for those programs in the region and the state.³

³ Shortages of qualified teaching faculty threaten to limit the capacity of 2 year and 4 year nursing programs to produce nursing graduates.

The PA Master's degree program will require cooperation between Francis Marion University and the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. FMU will be the lead institution in this endeavor, with the program housed and run at the FMU campus. USC will be an active partner, supplying support where needed, especially for the gross anatomy course, which is usually a part of the PA curriculum. The PA Master's degree program will become the second priority for the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership.

It appears that there will be some degree of curricular overlap between the Physician Assistant program and the Nurse Practitioner program. Shared subject areas include anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, research methods, and other courses. As noted above, both programs will concentrate on educating healthcare professionals for rural and underserved areas of the region and the state.

Goal Two: Formulate Plans for Additional Health Care Related Degree Programs to be Delivered in the Pee Dee Region under the Auspices of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership.

Objectives:

- The Pee Dee Health Education Partnership will support the University of South Carolina School of Public Health in bringing its Master of Public Health degree program to interested parties in northeastern South Carolina.

- The Pee Dee Health Education Partnership will conduct feasibility studies for additional health care related degree programs (including Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy programs).

Goal Three: Support the Expansion of USC School of Medicine in order to increase the supply of physicians in South Carolina.⁴

Objective: The Pee Dee Health Education Partnership will provide support for the assignment of third and fourth year USC medical students to Florence for clinical training at McLeod Health and Carolinas Hospital.

⁴ Forecasts indicate a growing shortage of physicians nationwide, perhaps reaching more than 100,000 by 2025. In addition, South Carolina ranks 37th nationally in physicians per 100,000 population and has fewer medical students per 100,000 population than the national average. Increasing the number of USC medical students will help address the physician shortage in South Carolina.

V. Timetable for Implementation

Availability of federal, state, and private funding will affect the timetable for achieving the goals and objectives outlined above. Assuming adequate funding support, the following schedule is projected:

- Master of Science in Nursing/Nurse Practitioner Program: complete planning during 2009-2010; obtain approvals and hire additional faculty during 2010-2011; begin program during 2011-2012

- Physician Assistant Master's Degree Program: complete planning during 2010-2011; obtain approvals during 2011-2012; hire faculty and program director during 2012-2013; begin program during 2013-2014

- Master of Public Health Degree Program: commence planning during 2009-2010; recruit cohort of students during 2010-2011; begin program during 2011-2012

- Additional high need health care related degree programs: conduct feasibility studies during 2010-2011 for physical therapy and speech therapy; conduct feasibility study for pharmacy during 2011-2012; based on results of feasibility studies, commence planning for additional programs during 2012-2013

- Commence planning for Third and Fourth Year USC Medical Students in Florence during 2010-2011; complete arrangements for Third and Fourth Year USC Medical Students in Florence by 2013-2014; placement of Third and Fourth Year USC Medical Students Begins 2014-2015

VI. Conclusion

The agenda outlined in this planning paper is an ambitious one, but we believe the goals and objectives are achievable, provided there is adequate funding. Obtaining recurring state appropriations appears to be critical to the success of the Partnership. FMU has submitted requests to the General Assembly for the MSN/Nurse Practitioner program and the Physician Assistant program. However, given the current economic situation in South Carolina, it seems unlikely that the state legislature will have sufficient revenues to make new recurring appropriations for any purpose. Thus it may be 2010-2011 before funding is obtained, which could affect the timeline for implementing the consortium's goals and objectives. While waiting for funding, the principal members of the Pee Dee Health Education Partnership will conduct the necessary planning and put into place the foundations for the new health care degree programs described in this document.