

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE:	Academic Affairs	NO:	AAC 13-32
		COMMITTEE DATE:	June 11, 2013
		BOARD DATE:	June 18, 2013

APPLICATION OF BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY TO AWARD THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of **Bridgewater State University** to award the **Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology**.

Upon graduating the first class for this program, the University shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b)
Contact: Aundrea Kelley, Deputy Commissioner for P-16 Policy and Collaborative Initiatives

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

June 2013

Bridgewater State University Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology

INTENT AND MISSION

The mission of the proposed Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program is to prepare highly skilled practitioners who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to serve all child and adult clients. The program's goal is to train future graduates to be effective speech-language pathologists who are competent and caring professionals serving southeastern Massachusetts. In accordance with the mission of Bridgewater State University (BSU) and the College of Education and Allied Studies (CEAS), the proposed SLP program would educate students residing in southeastern Massachusetts who are interested in careers as speech-language pathologists. The proposed program is intended to contribute to the resources that support the economic and cultural life of the commonwealth. The MS in SLP curriculum, in accordance with American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) requirements, is intended to have a strong multicultural emphasis that is well suited to the diverse cultural needs of this region. In addition, the CEAS is committed to support the proposed program to assure that diverse candidates are recruited and that all candidates are prepared to work with diverse clients and students.

The M.S. in SLP proposal has obtained all necessary governance approvals on campus and was approved by the BSU Board of Trustees on April 11, 2013. The required letter of intent was circulated on March 25, 2013.

Comments were received from Worcester State University (WSU) on April 17, 2013, outlining five issues including corrections to the proposal regarding the number of acceptances (55 not 32) and enrollments to WSUs' Speech-Pathology Graduate Program (32-36 not 16). WSU expressed concern that the existing, highly competitive nature of clinical placements for 400 direct patient hours will be made even more difficult for students with the introduction of a new program. The WSU program has been using at least 10 such placement sites in the Bridgewater area for many years and is concerned that students at each institution would be competing with each other for these placements. (WSU's comment letter is attached as an appendix to this staff report.)

BSU responded that although WSU places students in southeastern Massachusetts, BSU feels confident that there are sufficient clinical placements for their additional students. BSU stated that its needs assessment survey responses indicated that potential placement sites would welcome BSU graduate students in order to meet the need for Speech Language Pathologists in southeastern Massachusetts.

NEED AND DEMAND

Labor Market Outlook

According to the 2010-2011 Occupational Outlook Handbook of the Bureau of Labor and Statistics employment opportunities for Speech and Language Pathology are expected to grow by 23 percent from 2012 to 2020. As the large baby-boom populations grows older, there will be more instances of health conditions that cause speech or language impairments, such as strokes, brain injuries, and hearing loss. This is expected to result in an increased demand for speech—language pathologists. Employment opportunities for speech-language pathologists are plentiful, especially in school districts in southeastern Massachusetts as well as throughout the United States.

Student Demand

Demand from the student market for the proposed program is represented by the total number of applicants across Massachusetts institutions that offer an SLP program. According to data on the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) website describing the six existing master's programs in Massachusetts, the number of total applicants for the 2012 academic year ranged from 243 to 593 applicants per institution with 25 to 50 accepted and enrolled at each institution. Specifically, Worcester State University had 250 applicants with 55 acceptances and 32-36 enrollees, and the University of Massachusetts/Amherst had 243 applications with 67 acceptances and 25 enrollees. The Undergraduate Coordinator of Communication Disorders at BSU currently receives approximately 50 emails and telephone calls per year asking if BSU has a graduate program in SLP.

Duplication

There are six institutions granting SLP master's degrees in Massachusetts. Private institutions include Boston University, Emerson College, Massachusetts Institute of Health Professions, and Northeastern University. Enrollments average between 25 and 45 students per year per institution.

Public institutions include Worcester State University and the University of Massachusetts/Amherst where enrollments average about 55 to 30 students per year, respectively.

ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS

Admission

Students admitted to the proposed program must have a pre-requisite course in the neurological basis for speech-language pathology; a 3.2 undergraduate GPA for work completed in the junior and senior year or a 3.2 GPA for prerequisite coursework for students with undergraduate majors in fields other than communication sciences and disorders; official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate coursework completed outside of BSU; and Graduate Record Exam (GRE) General Test score within 5 years of having taken the exam. Students with a primary language other than English must submit a passing score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System

(IELTS). Three letters of recommendation from individuals outside of the BSU Communication Disorders program including two academic references and a third letter from a professional employer.

Students may transfer up to 6 graduate credits from another ASHA accredited graduate speech-language program. There are no articulation agreements with other state institutions at this time.

Projected Enrollment

	# of Students Year 1	# of Students Year 2	# of Students Year 3	# of Students Year 4*
New Full Time	10	10	10	10
Continuing Full Time		10	10	10
New Part Time				
Continuing Part Time				
Totals	10	20	20	20

Program Goals

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
ASHA Candidacy	Program will be approved by the Council of Academic Accreditation	1. Completion of the Council of Academic Accreditation application 2. Site review	1. Fall 2012 2. Determined by CAA/ASHA
Recruit, admit and retain students	Admit and retain a full cohort of students each year	1. Recruit applicants 2. Admit cohort 3. Assess retention and evaluate reasons for loss	1. Ongoing 2. Fall 2014 and forward 3. Ongoing
Increase capacity for clinical work	Clinical program has sufficient and appropriate placements, in-house and in the field, for candidates to complete the program.	1. Hire new clinical supervisor 2. Increase size and diversity of BSU clinic clients 3. Increase number and diversity of external clinical placements	1. Summer 2013 2. Summer 2013 and ongoing 3. Summer 2013 and ongoing
Evaluate program for learning outcomes	The MS in SLP will produce a yearly report on learning outcomes and modify curriculum as needed, based on the data as required by the Council of Academic Accreditation.	1. Program director, with faculty and advisory council members, will produce an annual evaluation of progress towards learning objectives. 2. The Advisory Council will review the findings of the evaluation and make	1. Fall 2014 and ongoing 2. Fall 2015 and ongoing

		recommendations for program change. 3. Program director and faculty will implement program changes	3. Spring curriculum changes to be implemented with each new Fall cohort.
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Curriculum (see Attachment A)

The curriculum of the proposed SLP program is based on the Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) standards and guidelines put forth for graduate programs seeking accreditation. All requirements are in compliance with ASHA standards.

Clinical Placements

In addition to the academic curriculum, students will be required to complete 375 clinical practicum hours in at least three different clinical settings, such as (a school, a hospital and a skilled nursing facility) during each semester of the program as required by ASHA. It is planned that clinical sites will include such placements as schools, hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing facilities, and private practices that employ speech-language pathologists. Specific sites will be determined during the 18 month period in which the SLP program application to the Council of Academic Accreditation is under review. BSU intends to enter into Clinical Education Agreements with external placement sites that will specify roles and responsibilities of each institution and requirements to ensure student safety. Prior to the start of any practicum experience, each student will be required to read and sign-off on a BSU Clinical Practicum Handbook. The handbook will include procedures and policies for both on-campus and external practicum placements. Policies and procedures will specify procedures for student remediation plans and how each party will deal with any complaints or problems that may arise.

The BSU external placement coordinator and/or the BSU clinic director will communicate external placement assignments to students. Students will meet the clinical supervisors at the potential placement sites for an interview prior to finalizing the placement. Prior to starting the placement, the student clinician and BSU external site supervisor will complete and sign a BSU Clinical Practicum Contract. This contract will specify days and times the student is expected to be at the placement, supervisory meetings, the type and frequency of supervision and feedback. The BSU clinical supervisor will review and sign the plan prior to the start of the practicum experience. As part of feedback and communication mechanisms, supervision will be in accordance with ASHA standards. All supervision of students in all placements (on and off campus) will be provided by ASHA certified speech-language pathologists as required by ASHA. The actual amount of supervision provided to the students by ASHA certified speech-language pathologists is determined by specified ASHA standards based on student experience, length of time at the placement, and student performance. BSU clinical supervisors will be available throughout the semester to support both the student and the external site clinical supervisor through a combination of e-mail, Moodle, telephone and site visits.

Sites will include schools that CEAS currently uses as placement sites, additional schools and programs, as well as hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing facilities, and private practices, including those that were surveyed as part of the self-study for the Council of Academic Accreditation.

RESOURCES

Budget (Attachment B)

The budget includes funding for several new hires including an additional faculty member to support the academic curriculum. An additional clinical supervisor and administrator is also included to assist the Clinic Director and the Program Director in the management of the Speech-Language-Hearing Center and documentation for the ongoing ASHA evaluation reports required for acquiring and maintaining Council of Academic Accreditation.

General administrative costs include a line for staff participation at the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders annual conference. Also included is funding for faculty to attend the annual American Speech-Language-Hearing Association convention for professional development activities required to maintain certification and licensure. Travel costs include clinical supervision and observation of students at clinical practicum sites.

Start up costs associated with 14 newly developed courses and instructional materials are reflected in the budget, including the purchase of diagnostic and therapy items. Equipment to support the clinical training of graduate students includes portable audiometers, observation and recording devices, speech science and voice analysis devices, and language analysis programs. Print and online subscriptions to major journals in the field, online data bases, books, instructional DVDs, and presentation equipment for the clinical classroom space are also included.

Faculty and Administration (Attachment C)

In the current undergraduate program, there are three full-time faculty (two tenured, one tenure-track), one full-time clinical supervisor/director, and six visiting lecturers each semester. An additional clinical supervisor will be added and two additional faculty will be hired.

Facilities, Library, Technology

The Clement C. Maxwell Library has over 24,000 volumes and subscribes to over 50,000 journals in print and electronic formats. The collection also includes thousands of video-recordings in streaming video, DVD, and VHS formats. With access to over 150 online databases including Medline, PsycInfo, ERIC, and Health Reference Center, among others, library users can search for information on a wide range of topics. Interlibrary loan services are provided to faculty, students, and staff. Additionally, BSU students, staff and faculty have access to the Massachusetts Virtual Catalog which allows users to request books directly from more than 250 libraries. Users can also take advantage of reciprocal borrowing privileges at 30 Massachusetts colleges and universities.

Information Technology (IT) resources include campus wide wireless internet access. Students are encouraged to have a personal computer and there are several computer labs across campus with computer work stations available in the Speech-Language-Hearing Center. The Center consists of a reception area and suite of twelve rooms that house client records, clinical hour documentation for current students and alumni, and diagnostic materials including four audiometers, a computer with SpeechViewer software and a dedicated printer, and anatomical models and materials used in Anatomy & Physiology and Speech & Hearing Science courses. Three treatment rooms are ADA accessible and have adjoining observation rooms that are

equipped with audio-visual recording capability. Sessions can be stored on a hard drive and/or be recorded directly to a DVD. The Multipurpose Room includes an observation window that can be used as a group treatment room or a small conference room. Staff offices are used by the Clinic Director, a visiting lecturer who supervises student clinicians, and a full-time faculty member. The Student Room is a dedicated space for students to use while engaged in clinical activities such as reviewing charts and planning treatment.

Affiliations and Partnerships

There are plans to develop an advisory council of faculty, clinical partners, and consumers once the proposed program has been approved. It is also planned that the evaluation and assessment components of the program will be determined by the advisory committee once it is created.

EXTERNAL REVIEW AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

The program was reviewed by Dr. Patrick Coppens, Professor, Communication Disorders and Sciences, State University of New York at Plattsburgh and Dr. Barbara Schmidt, Associate Dean and Executive Director of the Molloy College Speech, Language and Hearing Center in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology at Molloy University.

Dr Coppens found the proposed graduate program and undergraduate prerequisites, and the number of associated credits to be appropriate and thorough. He found the course syllabi to represent thorough coverage of the necessary material and course objectives to be aligned with the industry standards developed by the accrediting agency. Dr Coppens reported that combined these conditions point to an excellent academic preparation for future speech-language pathologists.

Similarly Dr Schmidt found the curriculum indicating that students completing the proposed program would meet the educational standards required for a Certificate of Clinical Competency awarded by ASHA. She also found the learning objectives to be consistent with those standards and the courses to be highly specialized to enable students to integrate theoretical knowledge with clinical practice. Dr Schmidt found there to be strong leadership for the program and potential for recruiting the diverse students needed in the profession. She indicated that the present clinical and laboratory facilities are adequate.

Concerns were noted by Dr Coppens' regarding the need to plan for incentivizing professional SLP's in clinical setting to supervise students, as well as concerns around the adequacy of support staff for the clinic and the program as increased numbers of students are admitted. Additionally Dr Coppens recommended hiring at least 2 more tenure-track faculty and 2 clinical placement supervisors.

Dr Schmidt found a lack of specifics regarding the number of computers or labs available to students. She recommended that the program should have updated computers, software and instrumental equipment available to meet student needs. She further recommended additional faculty, clear teaching load assignments and a summative assessment exam for students. As well Dr Schmidt recommended developing relationships with outside educational and clinical programs, and increasing the number of affiliations and external clinical practicum sites for students.

Institutional Response

The institutional response included agreement to make requests for administrative staff for the both the clinic and the program, and to calibrate this with increases in the admission of graduate students. BSU concurred that the number full-time faculty holding a Ph.D. and the number of clinical supervisors is a serious concern moving forward. Concern that implementation of the graduate program may present a detriment to the undergraduate program, was acknowledged. BSU recognized that the initiation of a graduate program in Speech and Language Pathology may serve to increase enrollment in the undergraduate Communication Disorders program, enlarging both programs. In order to ensure the quality of the graduate program and maintain the quality of the undergraduate program, BSU agreed with the recommendation for 2 additional full-time Ph.D. faculty, 2 clinical supervisors, and increased administrative support for the clinic, faculty and student documentation activity. The University also revised the proposed budget to include funding for the two additional faculty. BSU's response to recommendations to extend relationships with outside educational and clinical programs, and increasing the number of affiliations and external clinical practicum sites for students was to note that contracts with clinical sites will be further developed when the program is within the ASHA candidacy window. During the candidacy window ASHA will review clinical placement sites to determine the adequacy and appropriateness of the sites.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by **Bridgewater State University** and the external reviewers. Staff recommendation is for approval of the **Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology**.

Upon graduating the first class for these programs, the College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Curriculum Outline (Attachment A)

Graduate Program Curriculum Outline

(Insert additional rows as necessary.)

Major Required (Core) Courses (Total # of courses required = 19)		
<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
COMD 549	Dysphagia and Feeding	3
COMD 550	Voice Disorders	3
COMD 551	Language Disorders I: Birth – 5	3
COMD 553	Language Disorders II: K – 12	3
COMD 554	Speech Sound Disorders	3
COMD 555	Motor Speech Disorders	3
COMD 556	Cognitive Communication Disorders	3
COMD 557	Fluency Disorders	3
COMD 558	Aphasia	3
COMD 561	Augmentative and Alternative Communication	3
COMD 595	Assessment and Diagnosis in Speech-Language Pathology	3
COMD 590	Research Methods and Evidence-Based Practice in CSD	3
COMD 598	Capstone Experience in Speech-Language Pathology	1
COMD 581	5 practicum experiences in at least 3 different sites:	3
COMD 582	Clinical Practicum – Initial Experience	12
	Clinical Practicum – Advanced Experience	
	Subtotal # Core Credits Required	52
Elective Course Choices (Total courses required = 1) (attach list of choices if needed)		
COMD 560	Special Topics in CSD: Topics will vary as interests and needs arise and are not limited to Cleft Palate, Counseling, Professional Ethics, Neuropsychology, Literacy and the SLP, ELLs and the SLP, etc.	3
SPED 551	Autism	3
SPED 518	Reading Strategies in Special Education	3
READ 540	Early Childhood Literacy Instruction	3
READ 547	Teaching English Learners to Read and Write	3
	Subtotal # Elective Credits Required	3
Curriculum Summary		
Total number of courses required for the degree		19
Total credit hours required for degree		55

Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:

The student applying to the graduate program in speech-language pathology with an undergraduate degree in communication disorders must show evidence of successful completion (B- or better) in the following courses (or equivalents) and the student who has an undergraduate or graduate degree in another field must complete the following courses (or equivalents) prior to making application.

Prerequisite Requirements: (May be taken at BSU or elsewhere)

COMD 281 Speech Anatomy and Physiology

COMD 282 Speech and Hearing Science

COMD 290 Language Acquisition and Development

COMD 294 Phonetics

COMD 480 Clinical Procedures: An Overview

COMD 351 Introduction to Audiology

COMD 381 Neurological Bases of Speech and Language

COMD 393 Aural Rehabilitation

Biology

Another physical science, 3 must include Biology and 3 must be in Physics OR Chemistry

Math

Statistics

Developmental Psychology

Program Budget (Attachment B)

M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology Budget - Page 1

Category	Description	Amount			
Personnel					
Faculty - FT		AY 2014-15	AY 2015-16	AY 2016-17	AY 2017-18
	Ciocchi	\$114,841.36	\$114,841.36	\$114,841.36	\$114,841.36
	Miller	\$84,030.66	\$84,030.66	\$84,030.66	\$84,030.66
	Abdelal	\$86,693.28	\$86,693.28	\$86,693.28	\$86,693.28
	New Request	\$88,186.00	\$88,186.00	\$88,186.00	\$88,186.00
Faculty - PT					
	6 VL over full year	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00
Clincial - FT-					
	Abdallah	\$88,091.77	\$88,091.77	\$88,091.77	\$88,091.77
	TBD - Approved	\$75,588.00	\$75,588.00	\$75,588.00	\$75,588.00
Clinical - PT					
Clerical	Clerk IV	\$19,403.94	\$19,403.94	\$19,403.94	\$19,403.94
General Adm Costs					
	Office Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
	Postage	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00
	Staff Travel	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00
	Hospitality	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Memberships	CAPCSD	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00
Accreditation Costs					
	Candidacy App Fee	\$4,000.00			
	Initial Accred. Fee	\$3,000.00			
	Candidacy Site Visit	\$4,200.00			
	Initial Accreditation	\$4,200.00			
	Annual Fee	\$1,960.00	\$1,960.00	\$1,960.00	\$1,960.00
	Cand. Prog. Ann. Fee	\$1,960.00	\$1,960.00	\$1,960.00	\$1,960.00

	ASHA External Rev.	\$750.00			
Instruct. Mat/Library					
	Instructional Mat.	\$10,000.00	8,000	6,000	\$5,000.00
	Library Materials	\$40,000.00	37,000	37,000	37,000
Equipment		\$12,000.00	7,000	\$5,000.00	3,000
Field/Clinic Res.		\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Totals		\$676,005.01	\$649,855.01	\$645,855.01	\$642,855.01

M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology Budget - Page 2

Revenue Sources	AY 2014-15	AY 2015-16	AY 2016-17	AY 2017-18
Grants	\$27,300.00	\$29,400.00	\$29,400.00	\$29,400.00
Tuition	\$97,714.50	\$105,231.00	\$105,231.00	\$105,231.00
Fees	\$12,500.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
Totals	\$137,514.50	\$159,631.00	\$159,631.00	\$159,631.00

Faculty Form

Summary of Faculty Who Will Teach in Proposed Program							
Please list full-time faculty first, alphabetically by last name. Add additional rows as necessary.							
Name of faculty member (Name, Degree and Field, Title)	Check if Tenured	Courses Taught Put (C) to indicate core course. Put (OL) next to any course currently taught online.	Number of sections	Division of College of Employment	Full- or Part-time in Program	Full- or part-time in other department or program (Please specify)	Sites where individual will teach program courses
Ciucci, Sandra PhD Speech-Language Pathology CCC/SLP Professor Coordinator, Communication Disorders	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMD 551 • COMD 553 • COMD 598 	1 1 1	Day & Evening	Full-time	No	• Main Campus
Abdelal, Ahmed PhD Linguistics CCC/SLP Assistant Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMD 556 • COMD 558 	1 1	Day & Evening	Full-time	No	• Main Campus
Miller, Suzanne PhD Speech-Language Pathology CCC/SLP Assistant Professor	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMD 555 • COMD 590 • COMD 549 	1 1 1	Day & Evening	Full-time	No	• Main Campus
Abdallah, Joanne MS Speech-Language Pathology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMD 554 • COMD 595 • COMD 581 	1 1 1 (of 2)	Day & Evening	Full-time	No	• Main Campus

CCC/SLP Clinical Director & Supervisor							
TBA – New faculty hire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMD 558 • COMD 557 • COMD 561 	1 1 1	Day & Evening	Full-time	No	• Main Campus
TBA – New clinical hire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMD 581 • COMD 582 	1 (of 2) 1	Day & Evening	Full-time	No	• Main Campus

APPENDIX

Worcester State University Comment Letter



WORCESTER
S T A T E
UNIVERSITY

President's Office
Phone: 508-929-8020
Fax: 508-929-8191
Email: bmaloney@worccster.edu

April 17, 2013

Ms. Audra Kelley
Deputy Commissioner for P-16 and Collaborative Initiatives
Massachusetts Board of Higher Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, MA 02108-1696

RE: **Bridgewater State University's Proposed Master of Science
in Speech-Language Pathology Program**

Dear Ms. Kelley:

I write to express some concerns of Worcester State University about the proposed Master of Science program in Speech-Language Pathology from Bridgewater State University.

1. There are a number of Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Programs already in Massachusetts, specifically, for example, at Boston University, Northeastern University, Emerson College, MGH Institute of Health Professions, and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, as well as Worcester State University.
2. The Bridgewater proposal talks about the large number of applicants to current Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Programs in the state. We agree that this statement is accurate. All of these programs have a large number of applicants, more, in fact, than the capacity of the existing programs. However, of that large number, some applicants are not really academically qualified to attend any graduate school. Thus the number of qualified applicants is not as great as the number of applicants overall.
3. The Bridgewater proposal states that Worcester State University Graduate Program in Speech-Language Pathology accepts 32 students but enrolls 16. This is incorrect. We accept approximately 55 students and enroll 32-36 graduate students in Speech-Language Pathology per year.
4. One of the major needs for Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Programs is that all students must obtain a minimum of 400 direct patient hours. Worcester State sends our students to hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and schools. These placements are

already very competitive among the current Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Programs. The Boston area universities use all of the available health-care placements in the Boston area, but they also send students into the Worcester State University, central Massachusetts area. Worcester State is concerned that Bridgewater State's program needs for student clinical placements will contribute to an already tight clinical placement situation throughout the eastern and central Massachusetts areas. In addition, the WSU Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Program has used at least 10 hospital and long-term care placements in the Bridgewater area for many years. With a new program at Bridgewater State, these placements that Worcester State has used would be competed for by Bridgewater State.

5. Worcester State's Speech-Language Pathology graduate program has an excellent reputation. Many of the private Speech-Language Pathology programs have excellent reputations, too. When all is put in the balance, one reason excellent students choose us is the cost. For instance, Worcester State costs less than a third of MGH. Therefore, as another state institution, Bridgewater would be a bigger competitor to us than any of the existing private programs.

Sincerely,



Barry M. Maloney
President