Doctor of Audiology Program

First Exam Learning Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Learning Goal 1 (ILG)</th>
<th>Every student who graduates from the Graduate Center, City University of New York must demonstrate a broad and specialized knowledge in their field.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goal Relative to ILG 1: 1</td>
<td>Au.D. Students will demonstrate a knowledge of speech-language, and hearing sciences the theoretical underpinnings of the field and an understanding of basic audiometric interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>First examination (written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goal Relative to ILG 1: 2</td>
<td>AuD students will demonstrate a broad and specialized knowledge of basic research principles as they relate to evidence based practice and to design of qualitative and quantitative studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>First examination (written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goal Relative to ILG 1: 3</td>
<td>AuD students will demonstrate applied audiologic skills pertaining to basic audiometric interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>First examination (written)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exam Structure

The first exam is administered after one and one half years of study (including one summer) in January when the students have completed between 45 to 48 credits (this number has increased due to our revisions to the exam). During the first three administrations, students were given a list of possible questions on the areas for which they were responsible including: Psychoacoustics, Anatomy and Physiology, Research Design, Instrumentation, Diagnostic Audiology, Physiological Acoustics, Speech Language Pathology, and Acoustics. They were given the questions during the summer and had six months to prepare their responses. They were, however, not given the Diagnostic Audiology question in advance. During the exam, they were given a series of questions in each of the topic areas and they had six hours to answer a total of six questions. The instructor for the course wrote the questions and was responsible for grading the particular question (if a student failed the question, other faculty member graded, as well).

Criterion for Failure

All grading is anonymous and students complete the exam in the computer center with secure exam. The APO is responsible for collecting the exams to insure anonymity. The EO is responsible for distributing the exam questions to the faculty member responsible for the given question. If the faculty member reading the question grades it as a failure, the question is evaluated by a second faculty
member. If the two assessments are not in agreement, a third faculty member makes the final judgment. A student who fails up to two questions has to retake the two topics they fail (different question) during a March readministration and resubmit a corrected version of the question they answered incorrectly during January administration of the exam. If the student fails more than two questions, the entire exam has to be retaken in March and they are required to answer all questions correctly. Students must ultimately pass all six questions (grade of at least 82.5% for each question).

Outcomes and Remedies

We have administered a first exam to five different cohorts of students and performance has varied with the different cohorts but there has been a trend where over the past three administrations, the majority of students taking the exam failed the Diagnostic Audiology questions which they ultimately passed upon retaking the exam. Note they did not have these questions in advance. We also noted that the students are failing to synthesize and integrate the information they are learning in their courses which is a tremendous disadvantage as they are expected to make diagnostic and rehabilitative decisions quickly based on the data they gather during clinical encounters. Of the 45+ students taking the exam, only one student was forced to leave the program by dint of her failure on the retake of the entire exam (she was given three chances as a result of an appeal which she won but ultimately the failure was upheld). As a result of the performance trends, we have made several changes to insure that our learning goals are met upon completion of the first exam and our students are prepared to advance to their second level.

Changes in Admission Process:
1. We have increased our standards for admission and our standards were already quite high. We now require an interview for students who meet the first cut for admission based on their transcripts, GREs, and writing sample. We are revising our approach to admission of students to the dual AuD PhD program based on performance on the first exam.

Changes in Curriculum:
1. We have revised the diagnostic audiology course dramatically, we have added a laboratory to the course and are requiring observations of testing during the first semester of their studies (they enroll in the diagnostics course in the second semester of their studies). We have changed the focus of our seminar class which is a course which accompanies the first semester of clinic. We have reduced the number of students in a given clinic, thereby improving the student faculty ratio. The latter change has financial implications and is not sustainable given the current economic climate, so we have instituted some changes in our tuition structure and in the clinical offerings.

Changes in Examination:
1. Students are not given the questions in advance. They are given the topic areas and during the six hour exam they will be given questions which require a synthesis and an integration across areas. For some areas they are given a choice but in other areas they will all be required to answer the one question on the topic.
**Changes in Preparation of Questions:**

1. At a recent faculty meeting we wrote the questions as a group insuring that they cut across topic areas and required the students synthesize and integrate.

**Changes in Grading of Exam:**

1. From the outset, two faculty members will be asked to grade each question for a given student. In this way a second grader is not biased by the failing grade given by the first examiner. If there is disagreement, a third faculty member will review the questions.