

Portland State University Faculty Senate Motion
9 January 2023

Changing Area Distribution Designation for Speech and Hearing Sciences Courses

Motion presented by the Academic Requirements Committee

The Faculty Senate approves the distribution designation for the SPHR undergraduate courses as follows beginning Fall 2023:

Social Science

- SPHR222 Intro to SPLHR (4)
- SPHR372 Speech and Language Development in Children (4)
- SPHR385 Autism (4)
- SPHR394 Guided Observation (1)
- SPHR395 Directed Clinical Assistantship (2)
- SPHR401 Research (0-15)
- SPHR402 Independent Study (1-12)
- SPHR404 Cooperative Education/Internship (1-15)
- SPHR405 Reading and Conference (0-15)
- SPHR406 Special Projects (1-8)
- SPHR407 Seminar (0-15)
- SPHR408 Workshop (0-15)
- SPHR409 Practicum (0-12)
- SPHR410 Selected Topics (0-12)
- SPHR463 Language Disorders in Children (4)
- SPHR464 Speech Sound Disorders in Children (4)
- SPHR465 Introduction to Research Methods (4)
- SPHR471 Neurolinguistics (pre-req of SPHR461) (4)
- SPHR473 Perspectives on Disability (4)
- SPHR480 Sociocultural Aspects of Communication (4)
- SPHR485 Bilingualism & Communication Disorders (4)
- SPHR488 Clinical Audiology
- SPHR489 Aural Rehabilitation (4)
- SPHR491 Principles of Behavior Analysis: Clinical Applications (4)
- SPHR495 Neurogenic Communication Disorders (4)
- SPHR496 Introduction to Clinical management (4)

Science

- SPHR371 Anatomy and Physiology of Speech and Swallowing (4)
- SPHR370 Phonetics and Acoustics (4)
- SPHR461 Neurology of Speech and Hearing (4)
- SPHR487 Hearing Sciences (4)

Background and rationale

Background: At PSU, the courses offered through the department of Speech and Hearing Sciences (SPHR) are currently designated as Arts & Letters for the academic distribution; however, the content of the courses cover the science and social science fields. The mischaracterization of the courses is undercutting their ability to market their courses to students in those fields. At Provost Jeffords' recommendation in Phase II of the PRRP process, the SPHR department requests that their courses be reclassified to maximize their course offerings.

Rationale: Speech and Hearing Sciences is a multidisciplinary field comprising many areas, including biology, physics, neuroscience, education, psychology, sociology, and other health-related fields. Thus, the SPHR course content falls under the areas of either Science or Social Sciences rather than Arts and Letters. Academic units at institutions in the United States that offer Speech and Hearing Science courses are typically categorized as science, social science, or professional fields. The background of the SPHR faculty and their research areas also cover the fields of science and/or social sciences. By having the correct area distribution designations, their courses will be more accessible to students in the science and social science fields.

After reviewing the curricular content and the context under which the request was made, the ARC supports the request for the area distribution designation.

Attachments:

Speech and Hearing Sciences memo
CLAS memo



Portland State

Speech & Hearing Sciences

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences

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May 20, 2022

To: Academic Requirements Committee
 ATT: Suwako Watanabe, Chair

From: Christina Gildersleeve-Neumann, Department Chair
 Jeff Conn, Acting Chair, Curriculum Committee
 Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

Re: Changing Academic Distribution Area from “Arts and Letters” to “Social Science” and “Science” for PSU Speech and Hearing Sciences Courses

We are writing to the ARC to petition to change the academic distribution area for:

- 4 Speech and Hearing Sciences (SPHR) courses from “Arts and Letters” to “Science”
- The remaining SPHR courses from “Arts and Letters” to “Social Science”

In her April 28th, 2022 letter to the SPHR department titled “Speech and Hearing Unit Narrative Report Response,” Provost Jeffords summarized the outcomes of our participation in Phase II of the PRRP process and outlined recommendations for the SPHR department. These included the recommendation that “Speech and Hearing would benefit from increasing partnerships with other units in ways that could maximize course offerings and resources.” **Reclassifying our courses as Social Science and Science is one important way to maximize our course offerings to other units, in line with Provost Jefford’s recommendations.** In informal communications with CLAS Dean Rosenstiel, he has often emphasized that our department has been historically misunderstood at PSU. This reclassification would help our department to be better understood and better connected with related units.

The field of Speech and Hearing Sciences is a multidisciplinary field comprising components from many areas, including biology, physics, neuroscience, education, psychology, sociology, and other health-related fields (e.g., rehabilitation therapy, counseling, etc.). Currently, SPHR courses are included as part of Arts & Letters for the purposes of academic distribution requirements. This groups SPHR with fields such as Applied Linguistics, Architecture, Art, Arts and Letters, Communication, Conflict Resolution, English, World Languages and Literatures, Music, Philosophy, Theater Arts, and Writing. However, our field is more in line with social-science-based concepts, content, and research conducted in fields such as Psychology, Anthropology, and Sociology, than with the humanities. The research of our faculty more often aligns with these social science or science fields (e.g., use of APA style in publications), and our faculty have actively participated in I-CASS (Interdisciplinary Consortium of Social Sciences) collaborations, with SPHR Chair serving a term as the chair of I-CASS. We offer both a BA and a BS (and both MA and MS), which also aligns more closely with other social science programs at PSU. Furthermore, our tenure-track faculty are evaluated regarding tenure and promotion along similar lines as other social science fields regarding research-related expectations. The mismatch between our course content and our current academic distribution area is reducing the accessibility and value of our courses for students outside our department.

Across the country, departments in our discipline are typically categorized with social science, science, or professional fields. **Table 1** highlights a few examples.

Table 1. Sampling of U.S. universities included in review of SPHR course distribution requirements.

University	Department Name	Course Distribution/Division
University of Washington	Speech & Hearing Sciences	Natural Sciences
Western Washington University	Communication Sciences and Disorders	Social & Behavioral Sciences
University of Northern Colorado	Audiology and Speech-Language Sciences	Social & Behavioral Sciences
University of Iowa	Communication Sciences and Disorders	Professional Fields distribution area
Washington State University	Speech and Hearing Sciences	College of Medicine
University of Colorado, Boulder	Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences Hearing Science, Anatomy & Physiology	Social Science Natural Science

We are requesting that all courses with the SPHR prefix (see undergraduate course list in **Table 2**) be reclassified as Social Science for the purposes of academic distribution requirements—excluding 4 specific courses listed in **Table 3**, which we are requesting be reclassified as Science. These changes would align PSU with the policies and practices of other universities and would make these courses more accessible for students in other departments to apply to general-education requirements, in line with Provost Jefford’s recommendations.

Table 2. Full list of SPHR undergraduate courses we request to reclassify as Social Science (SS), excluding four courses flagged as “SCI.”

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Reclassification Request
SPHR 222	Intro to SPLHR	4	SS
SPHR 370	Phonetics and Acoustics	4	SCI
SPHR 371	Anatomy and Physiology of Speech & Swallowing	4	SCI
SPHR 372	Speech and Language Development in Children	4	SS
SPHR 385	Autism	4	SS
SPHR 394	Guided Observation	1	SS
SPHR 395	Directed Clinical Assistantship	2	SS
SPHR 401	Research	0-15	SS
SPHR 402	Independent Study	1-12	SS
SPHR 404	Cooperative Education/Internship	1-15	SS

SPHR 405	Reading and Conference	0-15	SS
SPHR 406	Special Projects	1-8	SS
SPHR 407	Seminar	0-15	SS
SPHR 408	Workshop	0-15	SS
SPHR 409	Practicum	0-12	SS
SPHR 410	Selected Topics	0-12	SS
SPHR 461	Neurology of Speech, Hearing and Swallowing	4	SCI
SPHR 463	Language Disorders in Children	4	SS
SPHR 464	Speech Sound Disorders in Children	4	SS
SPHR 465	Introduction to Research Methods	4	SS
SPHR 471	Neurolinguistics (pre-req of SPHR 461)	4	SS
SPHR 473	Perspectives on Disability	4	SS
SPHR 480	Sociocultural Aspects of Communication	4	SS
SPHR 485	Bilingualism & Communication Disorders	4	SS
SPHR 487	Hearing Sciences	4	SCI
SPHR 488	Clinical Audiology	4	SS
SPHR 489	Aural Rehabilitation	4	SS
SPHR 491	Principles of Behavior Analysis: Clinical Applications	4	SS
SPHR 495	Neurogenic Communication Disorders	4	SS
SPHR 496	Introduction To Clinical Management	4	SS

Table 3. Descriptions of four courses that we request to change to SCI distribution due to their strongly scientific content and perspective.

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description
SpHr 371	Anatomy and Physiology of Speech and Swallowing	A study of the anatomy and physiology of the respiratory, phonatory, and articulatory systems for speech, with applications to speech disorders. The physiology of swallowing and swallowing disorders is also covered.
SpHr 370	Phonetics and Acoustics	A study of sounds used in speech, their acoustic properties, and their transcription utilizing the IPA; description of sounds, their symbolic nature, their production, and physical and psychological problems involved in their perception. The acoustical bases of speech and hearing will also be addressed.
SpHr 461	Neurology of Speech and Hearing	A course specifically designed for speech and hearing majors to provide a study in-depth of the neurology of the speech and hearing mechanisms with special attention given to the major deviations affecting verbal communication.
SpHr 487	Hearing Sciences	Introductory course in audiology emphasizing basic acoustics and psychoacoustics, anatomy and physiology of the ear, hearing measurement, and types and causes of hearing impairment.

The rationale and evidence offered as support for this request are compelling. In particular:

Across the United States, SPHR departments are typically grouped with either social (& behavioral) science, natural science, or professional or medical colleges. It is unusual for them to be grouped with humanities/arts & letters as is currently the case at PSU.

1. Arts & letters is not a strong match with the faculty research and clinical interests in the department, which include medical, neurolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and educational foci.
2. Our course offerings contain some courses that are properly considered biophysical, with course content drawing from the biological sciences and genetics. Other courses are better situated in the social sciences. Better matching our course designations to our course content will align SPHR with other departments at PSU like Anthropology, Systems Science, and Geography, that require two different designations depending on the level of biophysical science content in each course.
3. The current mischaracterization of SPHR as arts & letters is undercutting our ability to market our courses to students in other departments. The proposed changes will make our courses more accessible and appealing to students in other departments and will therefore advance Provost Jeffords's recent recommendations for our department.
4. Students who register for SCI-designated courses will now be aware of the scientific content of the courses in advance, and will be awarded science distribution credits for the courses in their transcripts.

CLAS supports the proposal (see attached memo from Dean Rosenstiel) to designate Speech and Hearing Sciences courses as Social Science and Science courses for the purposes of academic distribution requirements.

We hope that the ARC will agree that the rationale and evidence supporting this request are compelling, and will approve the petition. Thank you for your consideration.



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DATE: October 14, 2022

TO: Academic Requirement Committee

FROM: Matthew Carlson 
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

RE: Academic Distribution for Speech & Hearing Sciences (SPHR) Courses

CLAS supports the attached proposal to designate four SPHR courses as Science courses and the remaining SPHR courses as Social Science courses for the purposes of academic distribution requirements.

The rationale and evidence offered as support for this request is compelling. CLAS would like to highlight the following:

- The SPHR courses and course content seem to have more similarities with Social Sciences departments than Humanities. Other universities tend to designate SPHR as either a Science or a Social Science.
- SPHR faculty and research are also more aligned with the social science fields. SPHR is one of the few departments that has faculty in the Clinical Professor ranks, which following the PSU P&T Guidelines is for individuals who are licensed or certified professionals or practitioners recognized within professional fields. Further, the P&T guidelines group the Clinical Professor ranks with the Professor of Practice ranks. The only other PSU units that have faculty in these ranks are Social Work and Education which are considered social science fields.
- SPHR has partnerships with OHSU which supports the data that this field is viewed as a Science or Social Science. The name of the department – Speech & Hearing Sciences – also reiterates this is a science-based discipline.

We hope the ARC will agree and approve the petition. Thank you for your consideration.