

## **APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION SYSTEMS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATORS: MIAMI UNIVERSITY**

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### **Introduction**

The speech-language pathology and audiology program at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio began in 1955. Initially a bachelor's degree was offered in speech pathology. Currently a master's degree can be obtained in either speech-language pathology or audiology. The initial training program was included in the College of Arts and Science in the Department of Communication. Currently the program remains in the College of Arts and Science, but became an autonomous department, referred to as the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology (SPA), in July 2000. The faculty in 1955 consisted of one speech pathologist and one audiologist. The faculty has grown to nine speech-language pathologists and two audiologists. Ten of the 11 professionals are academic faculty and one is an unclassified professional staff. Eight of the 11 professionals hold doctoral degrees and 3 hold master's degrees. The training program consists of approximately 165 undergraduate and 40 graduate students.

Since the program's inception all the faculty members have held academic positions. Therefore, every faculty person taught academic classes and supervised students in clinical practicum. This profile remained until July 2000 when an academic position was converted to an unclassified professional staff position with a 12-month contract. This position was designated for a speech-language pathologist. Therefore, at this time, there are a minimal number of clinical education hours in speech-language pathology that are performed by academic faculty. The primary clinical educator for speech-language pathology is the unclassified professional staff individual.

### **Rationale for Unclassified Professional Staff**

Miami University's promotion and tenure system specifies that academic faculty must have the terminal degree in their field of study. Furthermore, promotion and tenure decisions are based upon performance in three areas: teaching, scholarship, and service. The dilemma in clinical education is that many clinical educators have not pursued a research degree. Therefore, they do not hold the doctorate and have minimal time in their schedules to be actively involved in research. The academic faculty who hold the doctorate and provide clinical education need designated time for research. Prior to the appointment of the unclassified professional staff, research time was not included in the academic load. This made promotion a challenge for the academic faculty.

The typical academic position is a nine-month contract that includes several weeks of non-teaching, interspersed throughout that time period. This does not allow for the provision of continuous clinical services. In order to accommodate these services, it is necessary to employ full-time clinical educators with 12-month contracts.

### **Unclassified Professional Staff Position**

To qualify for the unclassified professional staff position, the individual must have at least a master's degree in speech-language pathology or audiology and a minimum of four years clinical experience. The professional is appointed by a majority vote of the faculty. This position has no academic rank; therefore, promotion and tenure are not options. However, this classification does allow the individual to have teaching privileges (maximum six academic hours per semester) and voting privileges within the academic faculty meetings. The contract is an annual, renewable 12-month contract, for a full-time position consisting of 40 hours per week. The professional is evaluated by the department's program chair. Teaching evaluations are included in the annual review. In addition to the benefits listed below, the individual has the same

monies allocated for professional travel, if presenting a paper at a conference, as those designated for academic faculty. Furthermore, faculty development workshops offered on campus, such as learning technology, are available to the unclassified professional staff.

The current caseload for the unclassified professional staff is approximately 25 patients per week, plus off-campus screenings and adult daycare support groups. Additional on-campus clinical support is provided by contracts with outside agencies that send professionals to perform clinical services for patients and for students. Academic faculty may be responsible for additional clinical education hours during the semester depending on the faculty member's teaching and research assignments. An academic faculty member manages the extern placements and provides the necessary supervision for graduate students.

### **Unclassified Professional Staff Benefits**

The benefit package, paid by the university and included with this position, is equivalent to 28% of the negotiated salary. The benefit services for a full-time (40 hour per week) unclassified staff include the following:

- Medical and Dental Insurance
- Retirement Benefits (Can Choose Either Program)
  - (University contributes a percentage in addition to employee contribution)
  - Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio
  - Alternative Retirement Plan
- Vacation Benefits
  - Vacation Accrued = 22 days, plus 10 holidays per contract year  
(Accrue a maximum of 40 days)
- Sick Leave Benefits
  - 15 days of sick leave per contract year

- Absence due to illness, pregnancy, exposure to contagious disease, family health situations requiring attendance of the employee, health care appointments, or death in the immediate family.
  - Individuals with prior Ohio Public Service may be eligible to transfer unused sick leave from their prior public employer to Miami University.
- Tuition Fee Waiver
    - May enroll for undergraduate or graduate courses without paying the Instructional Fee or Out-of-State Tuition.
    - Must pay the General Fee and other special fees or charges.
    - After completion of three continuous years of full-time Miami University employment, the fee waiver benefit is extended to cover the spouse and dependent children.
  - Tax-Deferred Annuities (403B Plan)
  - Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance
  - Group Life Insurance
    - Two times the employee's annual contract salary with a minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$500,000.
    - Reductions occur at age 60 years and continue at each succeeding age, to a minimum of \$5,000 until retirement.
  - Flexible Spending Account Program
    - Individual may deposit pre-taxed funds through payroll deduction into an account and make withdrawals to reimburse for eligible medical and dependent care expenses.