

## **Important Message from the Chairs/Directors of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Programs at Ontario Universities**

Dear Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists,

Do you have lasting memories of a clinical supervisor from when you were a student? Years after students obtained their professional degrees they remember the names of the audiologists or speech-language pathologists who supervised them and the influential learning experiences that occurred during their placements – experiences that shaped them as professionals.

As representatives of the Ontario university programs in audiology and speech-language pathology, we are extremely grateful for our partnerships with clinicians who work in private practices, hospitals, school boards, rehabilitation/treatment centres, and other sites. The contribution of clinical supervisors is highly valued and central to our programs, ensuring our students' development of clinical competencies. However, we are experiencing increasing difficulties finding enough placements for our students. This is a concerning trend. Each academic year, the three Ontario audiology and speech-language pathology programs require approximately 876 clinical placements (350 U Ottawa + 291 U of T + 235 UWO) to meet the learning needs of our 270 students (n=70 at U Ottawa, n=90 at U of T, n=110 students at UWO).

In the interest of the public and our professions, we encourage you to consider student supervision in 2011-2012 and the coming academic years. Our goal is to increase the proportion of practicing audiologists and speech-language pathologists who supervise our students. If you have already supervised students in the past, please accept our thanks. If you have not acted as a supervisor recently or at all, we ask you to consider taking on a student. As an audiologist or speech-language pathologist, you can be an integral partner in our education teams and can help educate our future colleagues to become competent professionals.

The benefits of accepting a student for a placement are many. The experience of mentoring adds to your own professional development; it supports your practice and allows you to influence the future of audiology and speech-language pathology. There are numerous opportunities to develop your knowledge and skills in supervision and practice, and to learn from students about new research and evidenced-based practice. Students can collaborate with you to develop education materials to meet the learning needs of your clients and other stakeholders, of other audiologists and speech-language pathologists, and of other members of your team. The university programs can provide assistance in your role as a supervisor, through ongoing support and education, and resources such as the Preceptor Education Program ([www.preceptor.ca](http://www.preceptor.ca)).

Preparing the next generation of audiologists and speech-language pathologists cannot happen without the involvement and commitment of clinicians such as you. The clinical learning experiences you provide in your workplace are vital to the continuing success of our students and programs, and to the future of our professions.

### **CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?**

We encourage you to contact a representative of our Ontario university programs in audiology or speech-language pathology to start or to renew your participation in the clinical education of our students and our future colleagues. After all, none of us would be an audiologist or a speech-language pathologist today, if our predecessors had not offered us clinical placements!

With best regards,



Ann Sutton, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Interim Director  
Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Program  
School of Rehabilitation Sciences  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
University of Ottawa  
613-562-5800 (8064)



Luigi Girolametto, PhD  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Speech-Language Pathology  
University of Toronto  
Toronto ON M5G 1V7  
416-978-3353



J.B. Orange, PhD  
Associate Professor and Director  
School of Communication Sciences and Disorders  
University of Western Ontario  
519-661-2111 Ext 88227  
<http://www.uwo.ca/fhs/csd/index.html>

