ANNUAL REPORT
2013
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

Submitted by:
Shari R. Baum, Ph.D.
Acting Director

June 2014

Unit Overview
The School of Communication Sciences and Disorders (SCSD) is an inter-disciplinary, research-intensive teaching unit focused on human communication and its disorders. Our teaching and research missions are in line with those of the Faculty of Medicine and the University at large, focused on fundamental and applied research and education in cognitive and behavioural neurosciences, multilingualism, and clinically-relevant investigations in communication disorders. The SCSD has numerous links to other units both within the Faculty of Medicine and across the University.

In 2013, the SCSD celebrated its 50th anniversary with a number of highly successful activities, including hosting an International Conference on Multilingualism: Linguistic Challenges & Neurocognitive Mechanisms, and showcasing the School's research and educational activities through an Open House.

Research and publications
All tenure-track faculty members in the School hold national and/or provincial funding, and are members of the interdisciplinary Centre for Research on Brain, Language, & Music. Active collaborations exist with researchers in several McGill departments—Neurology, Psychiatry, Otolaryngology, Physical & Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Educational and Counselling Psychology, Linguistics, and Music—as well as in leading universities and research centres around the world (e.g., Haskins Laboratories, USA; Max Planck Institute, Germany).

Research highlights of 2013:

- SCSD faculty members successfully competed for major operating grants from federal, provincial, and international funding sources, acting as principal or co-investigator on **6 new grants valued at over $1.0 million in new operating funds** (listed below); continuing grants totaled more than $6.0 million
- Among the 9.5 tenure-track professors in the School, three faculty members (Baum, Pell, Steinhauer) held **research chairs** through the JMP/WDS or CRC programs, and one additional faculty member (Nadig) was nominated for a CRC Tier II award in Spring 2014;
- During the reference period, **SCSD faculty members published 27 chapters and refereed articles in leading international journals**. A large number of articles were also in press during the latter part of 2013.
  A full list of scholarly works published in 2013 is posted at:
  http://www.mcgill.ca/scsd/research/publications

- The 2nd annual SCSD Research Day held in November 2013 was well attended and provided a broad overview of the research activities within the school.

- Several SCSD faculty members gave **invited keynote addresses and/or workshops** to scientific or professional audiences on the international stage. For example, Dr. Elin Thordardottir gave invited talks in the Netherlands and Israel, Dr. Steinhauer gave an invited presentation at the Max Planck Institute in the Netherlands, and Dr. Rvachew was invited to present her work to numerous audiences in the US and Canada. SCSD faculty members participated and served **key leadership roles in the *Centre for Research on Brain, Language, and Music*,** with SCSD faculty member Dr. Vincent Gracco as its current Director.

NEW GRANTS AWARDED IN 2013

1. Awardee: C. Boliek (PI), **V. Gracco,** D. Robin, P. Fox, J. Watt, C. Beaulieu, C. Lebel, C. Fox, R. Patel
Source: Cerebral Palsy International Research Foundation
Title: Neural correlates of intensive voice treatment effects on children with cerebral palsy
Value: $98,560, 2013-2014
2. Awardee: **S.Baum** (PI), **V. Gracco**, D. Klein, N. Phillips, & D. Titone
Source: FRQSC – Soutien aux equips de recherche
Title: Multilinguisme: les defies et les impacts cognitifs et socio-culturels
Value: $326,920, 2013-2017
3. Awardee: **M.Pell** (PI)
Source: SSHRC Insight Grants
Title: Cross-language studies of vocal emotion communication
Value: $205,460, 2013-2017
4. Awardee: **L.Polka** (PI), **M.Pell**, **S.Rvachew**, L.Ménard
Source: NSERC - RTI
Title: Integrated multi-measure speech research station
Value: $52,242, 2013-2014
5. Awardee : **K.Steinhauer** (PI), P. Royle
Source: SSHRC Insight Grants
Title: Re-evaluating the termporal dynamics of syntactic online processing : Towards an ecologically valid model
Value: $482,335, 2013-2018
6. Awardee: **K.Steinhauer** (PI), **L.Gonnerman**
Source: SSHRC Connection Grants
Title: International Conference on Multilingualism : Linguistic Challenges and Neurocognitive Mechanisms
Value: $25,000, 2013-2014

Teaching and learning (graduate) – 2013 Highlights

A total of 25 students graduated with the MSc (Applied) degree with specialization in Speech-Language Pathology,one student wasgranted the M.Sc. (thesis) degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders, and two students were awarded Ph.D. degrees. (**100% graduation rate**);

Demand for our professional training program (M.Sc.A.) remains extremely high, rendering this one of the most selective graduate programs at McGill. In 2013, we received 378 applications for 28 available slots. Students in our September 2013 cohort had a mean entering CGPA of 3.67/4.0;

Our PhD program continued to grow. There are now 25 students registered in our PhD program (68% international), retaining our status as the largest program of its kind in Canada and the choice of international students who seek training in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

SCSD faculty members co-operated extensively in teaching with other McGill departments. Six SCSD faculty members (Gonnerman, Nadig, Polka, Rvachew, Steinhauer, Elin Thordardottir) provided instruction and/or doctoral research supervision as members of the inter-disciplinary Language Acquisition Program, in collaboration with Linguistics, Psychology, and Integrated Studies in Education. Three SCSD faculty members (Baum, Gracco, Pell,) supervised graduate students enrolled in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience. SCSD faculty members also (co) supervised McGill undergraduate/graduate students in Psychology, Linguistics, Cognitive Science and Neuroscience. Moreover, faculty members provided instruction in other programs locally (Gonnerman, Elin Thordardottir) and throughout the world, including in France & Italy (Steinhauer) and in Iceland, Poland, and the Netherlands (Elin Thordardottir).

Cyclical Unit Review
Following a cyclical unit review in Fall 2013, the School has responded to a number of recommendations of the review committee. With regard to improved physical facilities, the School is slated to move into new facilities in June of 2014. This should address a number of the issues raised in the report, including improved environment for research and teaching, as well as common space for the M. Sc. (A) students. The committee also suggested a simplification of the doctoral student committee structures, which our Graduate Program Director is addressing in conjunction with the Research Committee of the School. One additional recommendation related to increased collaboration with other units within the Faculty of Medicine, focused on clinically-oriented research. With the recruitment of a new faculty member (who will arrive in August 2014), with a cross-appointment in Otolaryngology and a membership in the Department of Biomedical Engineering, additional collaborations will undoubtedly develop naturally.

Involvement in the community – 2013 Highlights

Academic and Professional Leadership:
- SCSD faculty provided academic leadership in our field both nationally and internationally. Eight faculty members (Baum, Gonnerman, Gracco, Pell, Polka, Rvachew, Steinhauer, Thordardottir) served as journal Editors or on Editorial Boards of major journals in our field in 2013, and Drs. Baum, Gonnerman and Gracco served on Review panels for CIHR, the National Science Foundation and NSERC, respectively;
- Dr. Steinhauer organized an international conference on "Multilingualism: Linguistic Challenges and Neurocognitive Mechanisms" in honour of the School's 50th anniversary celebration in Montreal (October 2013);
- As Director of the Centre for Research on Brain, Language, and Music, Dr. Gracco organized events designed for the Montreal research community and for the general public, including the *Distinguished Lecture Series* for researchers in the Montreal community;
- Dr. Elin Thordardottir/Dr. Pell served on the Comité de la formation of the *Ordre des orthophonistes et audiologistes du Québec* ;
- Dr Linda Polka served on the organizing committe for the *International Congress of Acoustics* held in Montreal in June 2013.

Outreach programs:
- Under the supervision of S. Vaillancourt, **SCSD students worked with Speech-Language Pathologists in Montreal School boards** to provide an 8-week intensive intervention program for children with phonological (speech sound) disorders;
- Under the supervision of K. Root , the SCSD continued a successful partnership with the *Association québecoise des personnes aphasiques* to provide **free clinical services in Speech-Language Pathology for more than 60 English-speaking Montrealers who live with aphasia**, an acquired impairment that affects language (e.g., following a stroke).
- Organized by S. Vaillancourt, **SCSD students** provided hearing screenings to a large number of students in elementary schools in Montreal, as well as on campus at McGill; organized and supervised by Dr. Polka, SCSD students also conducted (for the first time) educational sessions with grade 5 & 6 students on "Healthy listening practices";
- Under the supervision of K. Root, **SCSD students** participated in the Ometz Summer Camp, providing services to children with multiple handicaps;
- The School disseminated information on the nature of communication disorders, professional services, and clinical training and student research initiatives at the School through its *Speaking of Language* newsletter. This newsletter is written by SCSD students in consultation with Dr. Rvachew and distributed to the wider SCSD and Montreal clinical communities. Details may be found at: http://www.mcgill.ca/scsd/newsletter.

Milestones
- Drs. Vincent Gracco and Susan Rvachew were promoted to the rank of Professor.
- Drs. Laura Gonnerman and Aparna Nadig were granted tenure and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor.

- Dr. Shari Baum completed a term as Associate Dean, Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies and, effective January 2014, began a term as Associate Dean, Research, in the Faculty of Medicine.
- The search for a new faculty member was completed. Dr. Nicole Li will join the SCSD in August 2014.

Honours, awards, and prizes
- In April 2013, Dr. Baum was reappointed as a James McGill Professor (2013-2020) for her research on the neural substrates of speech and language processing;
- Dr. Aparna Nadig was the recipient of the Faculty of Medicine Prize for Research in a School for Health Professions

Consulting activities

Name	Private Sector # days	Public Sector # days	Other (off-site teaching)	Total
Nadig, A.		.5		.5
Polka, L.		3		3
Root, K.		1		1
Thordardottir, E.			Univ. of Iceland; 2 wks	10
Vaillancourt, S.		3		3
				17.5