

Essential Functions

The Essential Functions set forth in this document by the Department of Speech and Hearing Science establish the requirements that are necessary for students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Speech and Hearing Science with an emphasis in Speech-Language Pathology (MA-SLP) and the Doctor of Audiology (AuD) programs to acquire the knowledge, skills, competencies and values of an entry-level speech-language pathologist or audiologist. They are also required to meet the standards for the eligibility requirements for state licensure, Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, and/or professional certification, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the American Board of Audiology (ABA).

The MA-SLP and AuD degrees are designed to prepare students to enter the profession as a generalist with knowledge, skills, values, and the ability to perform successfully all the required functions associated with the role of an entry-level speech-language pathologist or audiologist. **Following admission into these Department of Speech and Hearing Science programs, students are required to verify that they understand and meet these Essential Functions with or without accommodations.** Reasonable accommodations in meeting the Essential Functions are provided to students who validate their need through the University's Office of Student Life Disability Services. A student acknowledges his/her/their ability to meet these essential functions by using the Essential Functions Certification Statement.

The following essential function requirements must be met by all students upon acceptance into the programs in order to enroll in and complete these Department of Speech and Hearing Science degrees. **In the event that a student is unable or becomes unable to fulfill these requirements with or without reasonable accommodation, the student cannot enroll or remain enrolled in the programs.**

To successfully perform the essential functions of the Department of Speech and Hearing Science degree programs and for the practice of speech-language pathology or audiology, an individual must possess specific skills and abilities in the following areas:

- a. The student must demonstrate appropriate conduct in an ethical, professional, and legal manner as represented by the Code of Ethics as stated by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the American Academy of Audiology. The student must meet department and university expectations, as defined in the Graduate Handbook Vol. I and II, for academic and clinical performance and integrity.
- b. The student must work respectfully with individuals with disabilities and for persons who vary across age, dialect and language background, ethnic background, race, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, and/or sexual orientation, in classroom, clinic and placements
- c. The student must participate actively in all demonstrations and laboratory exercises in the academic and clinical curricula. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Completed submissions of assigned classwork
 2. Completed submissions of clinical documentation (lesson plans, reports, notes, etc.) according to instructions and expected due dates/times with any adjustments to those dates discussed in advance with your clinical supervisor.
 3. The student must independently and effectively use visual, auditory, and tactile senses to accurately gather information regarding client behaviors and responses throughout

assessment and intervention activities.

- d. The student must communicate effectively with diverse supervisors, clients, and peers to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and assess verbal and non-verbal communications. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Demonstrate respect for linguistic differences
 2. Demonstrate that they recognize there is a difference between a dialect difference and a speech disorder in accordance with *ASHA*'s Position Statement (<https://www.asha.org/policy/ps1998-00117/>) and a willingness to learn what distinguishes the two;
 3. Also in accordance with the *ASHA* Position Statement (<https://www.asha.org/policy/ps1998-00117/>), demonstrate the willingness to model target phoneme, grammatical feature, or other aspects of speech and language that relate to an individual's specific difficulty in their preferred dialect and be willing to learn how to do this effectively;
- e. The student must communicate effectively across a variety of professional contexts (including clinical interviews and examinations, telehealth, electronic and telephone communication, written reports, consultation with professional colleagues, professional presentations) at a level consistent with professional practice. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Demonstrate command of professional communication in both verbal and written form, which reflects the nature of professional clinical relationships;
 2. Respond to clinical feedback in either verbal or written form within the prescribed/ requested time frame;
 3. Demonstrate implementation of feedback;
 4. Demonstrate ability to receive, respond, value, organize, and apply information to complete curricular and clinical requirements;
 5. Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skill, and identify and utilize resources in order to increase knowledge.
- f. The student must accurately, safely and efficiently utilize materials/equipment used for assessment and treatment of clients. The student must also accurately record and document results of such use.
- g. The student must demonstrate the ability to effectively perform required clinical skills that typically require coordination, gross and fine muscular movement, equilibrium, and use of the senses including but not limited to evaluation of the outer ear and speech mechanism. For example, otoscopy, ear impressions, manipulation of hearing devices, oral mechanism exams, and swallowing protocols.
- h. The student must be able to maintain necessary physical activity level in required classroom and clinical interactions that is consistent with professional standards of conduct in employment, including but not limited to participating fully in a client evaluation or treatment sessions lasting at least 60 minutes.
- i. The student must be properly immunized for the protection of clients and in compliance with current health standards and must comply with universal precautions.

- j. The student must demonstrate the ability to abide by professional standards of conduct, as defined by ASHA and AAA, across clinical assignments and challenging contexts, including periods of stress and emergency situations. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Inform academic/clinical personnel of needs if/when health, personal life experiences, or other events impact clinical or academic performance, whether temporary or ongoing;
 - 2. Adapt to changing and demanding classroom, laboratory and clinical environments.

- k. The student must exercise sound judgment for decision-making in the classroom, lab, and clinical situations. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Demonstrate knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to meet curricular and clinical demands;
 - 2. Document/report sources for clinical decision-making;
 - 3. Demonstrate self-reflection regarding variables contributing to decision-making.
 - 4. Recognize potentially hazardous situations and proceed in a manner to minimize risk of injury to those in the area.

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