

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The Essential Functions set forth in this document by the Department of Speech and Hearing Science establish the essential functional 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 Functions 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 Academy of Audiology (AAA).

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.** Reasonable accommodations in meeting the Essential Functions are provided to students who validate their need through the University's Office for Disability Services. A student acknowledges his/her 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 Essential Functions with or without reasonable accommodation, the student cannot enroll or remain enrolled in the programs.**

To perform successfully 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 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.)
 3. Submissions presented according to posted due dates/times



- b. The student must independently and effectively use visual, auditory, and tactile senses to gather information regarding client behaviors and responses throughout assessment and intervention activities.
- c. The student must communicate effectively with clients in order 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 an accurate, fluent, working knowledge of Standard American English in both spoken and written forms
 - 2. Expected to use speech and language skills that reflect professionalism, which includes minimizing dialectal differences
 - 3. Speech and language skills of all students should reflect the nature of professional clinical relationships
- d. The student must communicate effectively across a variety of professional contexts (including clinical interviews and examinations, written reports, consultation with professional colleagues, professional presentations) at a level consistent with professional practice. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Respond to clinical feedback in either verbal or written form within the prescribed/requested time frame
 - 2. Demonstrate (attempts at) implementation of feedback
 - 3. Demonstrate ability to receive, respond, value, organize, and internalize information to complete curricular and clinical requirements.
 - 4. Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skill and identify and utilize resources in order to increase knowledge
- e. The student must accurately, safely, and efficiently manipulate and utilize, record, and document feedback from materials/equipment used for assessment and treatment of clients
- f. The student must adequately posture oneself and the client to conduct effective clinical services.
- g. The student must be able to maintain necessary physical activity level in required classroom and clinical interactions that is consistent with professional Functions of conduct in employment, including but not limited to participating fully in a client evaluation or treatment sessions lasting a minimum of 60 minutes.
- h. The student must be properly immunized for the protection of clients and in compliance with current health Functions and comply with universal precautions.
- i. The student must demonstrate the ability to abide by professional Functions 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.
- j. The student must exercise sound judgment for decision-making. This includes, but is not limited to:



1. Utilize written and verbal information sufficiently to comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, infer, evaluate, and apply written and verbal information sufficient so to meet curricular and clinical demands
 2. Demonstrate knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to meet curricular and clinical demands
 3. Document/report resources for clinical decision-making
 4. Demonstrate self-reflection regarding variables contributing to decision-making
- k. Prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis, treatment, and care of clients is required; abide by posted due dates; request adjustments in writing establish adjustments in advance with your clinical supervisor prior to due date.
- l. The student must demonstrate appropriate conduct in an ethical, professional, and legal manner and abide by the Code of Ethics as stated by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the American Academy of Audiology. Student must meet department and university expectations, as defined in the Graduate Handbook, Vol. I and II, for academic and clinical performance and integrity.
- m. The student must show respect for individuals with disabilities and for persons who vary across age, ethnic background, race, religion and/or sexual orientation.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCEMENT

1. Failure to meet Essential Functions may be documented by the following sources: faculty, supervisors, staff, fellow students, or clientele.
 - a) This may be based upon information such as, but not limited to, supervisor evaluations, grades, written incident reports that document date/time/place, written statements of individuals, or written witness accounts regarding the concern.
 - b) The information required will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
2. Graduate Studies Chairperson will be notified regarding the failure to meet essential functions. The Chairperson will meet with the reporting personnel within a timely fashion. Should the faculty representative and reporting personnel agree that a plan of action is appropriate, the plan will be developed. Should the student's failure to meet Essential Functions be deemed significantly egregious, faculty/staff will initiate procedures for the student to exit the SHS program.
3. A communication (e.g., memo, email, verbal) with the student will be provided from the appropriate faculty/staff member regarding the failure to meet Essential Functions. A subsequent conference to discuss the degree of the concern and the appropriate action will be held within a reasonable time frame with the student. Attendees at this meeting may include the Department Chairperson, Graduate Studies Chairperson, and the student's academic advisor and clinical advisor.



- a) As a result of the above conference, a plan of action will be developed by the student, with input from the attending faculty/staff.
 - b) The plan will be signed by the student and their academic advisor, indicating that the student agrees to the plan. Copies of the developed plan of action will be placed in the student's academic and clinic file, and, if involving accommodation decisions, submitted to the ADA coordinator's office. The student will be responsible for identifying resources that assist in completing this plan as well as provide documentation that he/she has initiated steps toward the success of this plan (within one week of composing the written plan). If the student does not comply or meet with success, he/she will be denied further enrollment in the program.
 - c) If the student disagrees with the plan of action, the student may file an appeal to Graduate Studies Chairperson. In cases involving a student with a disability, input from the Office of Disability Services and/or the ADA coordinator's office will be sought.
4. A follow up conference will be scheduled to determine adequacy of progress and subsequent course of action within a defined time frame, according to individual needs.
 5. If the plan has been successful, it will be considered achieved; written documentation will be filed in the student's academic and clinic file.
 6. If, after the plan is in effect, the student is non-compliant with the plan or is unable to complete the plan, the student will be denied further enrollment in the Department of Speech and Hearing Science degree programs.

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