



ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Requirements for Admission and Continuance Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology Program Adopted Fall 2021

OVERVIEW

The Essential Functions specific to Speech-Language Pathologists as recommended by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (2007) are established as the abilities considered essential for professionals entering the field of speech-language pathology. In order to acquire the knowledge and skills requisite to the practice of speech-language pathology to function in a broad variety of clinical situations, and to render a wide spectrum of patient care, individuals must have skills and attributes in five areas: **communication, motor, intellectual-cognitive, sensory-observational, and behavioral-social.** Many of these skills can be learned and developed during the course of the graduate program through coursework and clinical experience. The starred items (*), however, are skills that are more inherent and should be present when a student begins the program. A graduate student in speech-language pathology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette that cannot complete the basic requirements when provided reasonable accommodations and/or modifications is considered unqualified for employment as a speech-language pathologist and can justifiably not be admitted or may be dismissed from the speech-language pathology graduate program.

COMMUNICATION

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- * Communicate proficiently in both oral and written English language.
 - * Possess reading and writing skills sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.
 - * Perceive and demonstrate appropriate non-verbal communication for culture and context.
 - * Modify communication style to meet the communication needs of clients, caregivers, and other persons served.
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- Communicate professionally and intelligibly with patients, colleagues, other healthcare professionals, and community or professional groups.
 - Communicate professionally, effectively, and legibly on patient documentation, reports, and scholarly papers required as a part of course work and professional practice.

- Convey information accurately with relevance and cultural sensitivity and cultural humility.
- Discriminate correct production of and model Standard American English phonemes, vocabulary, grammatical forms, and prosodic patterns (consistent with current ASHA position statement on English Language Proficiency).

PHYSICAL/MOTOR

A student must possess adequate motor skills to:

- * Sustain necessary physical activity level in required classroom and clinical activities appropriate for the context.
 - * Respond quickly to provide a safe environment for clients in emergency situations including fire, choking, etc. (responding quickly may include notifying supervisors/others).
 - * Access transportation to clinical and academic placements.
 - * Participate in classroom and clinical activities for the defined workday.
- Efficiently manipulate classroom, laboratory, testing and treatment environment and materials without violation of testing protocol and with best therapeutic practice.
 - Manipulate patient-utilized equipment (e.g. durable medical equipment to include AAC devices, hearing aids, etc) in a safe manner.
 - Access technology for clinical management (i.e. billing, charting, therapy programs, etc.)

INTELLECTUAL / COGNITIVE

A student must possess adequate intellectual and cognitive skills to:

- * Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, infer, evaluate and apply written and verbal information sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.
- Identify significant findings from history, evaluation, and data to formulate a diagnosis and develop a treatment plan.
 - Solve academic and clinical problems through critical analysis, reason, and make sound clinical judgments in patient assessment, diagnostic and therapeutic planning and implementation.
 - Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skill to appropriate professional level and be able to identify and utilize resources in order to increase knowledge.
 - Utilize detailed written and verbal instruction in order to make unique and dependent decisions.

SENSORY/OBSERVATIONAL

A student must possess adequate sensory skills to:

- Visually and auditorily identify normal and disordered (fluency, articulation, voice, resonance, respiration characteristics, oral and written language in the areas of semantics, pragmatics, syntax, morphology and phonology, hearing, swallowing cognition, and social interaction related to communication).
- Identify the need for alternative modalities of communication.
- Visualize and identify anatomic structures.
- Visualize and discriminate imaging findings.
- Identify and discriminate findings on imaging studies (MBSS, FEES, etc).
- Discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.
- Recognize when a client's family does or does not understand the clinician's written and or verbal communication.

BEHAVIORAL/ SOCIAL

A student must possess adequate behavioral and social attributes to:

- * Display mature empathetic and effective professional relationships by exhibiting compassion, integrity, and concern for others in academic and clinical contexts
- * Recognize and show respect for individuals with disabilities and for individuals of different ages, genders, race, religions, sexual orientation, and cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- * Conduct oneself in an ethical and legal manner, upholding the ASHA Code of Ethics as well as university, state, and federal privacy policies.
- * Maintain general good physical and mental health and self-care in order to safeguard the health and safety of self and others in the academic and clinical setting.
- Adapt to changing and demanding environments (which includes maintaining both professional demeanor and emotional health).
- Manage the use of time effectively to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic time constraints.
- Accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and respond by modification of behaviors.
- Dress appropriately and professionally.

Office of Disability Services

The CODI Department is committed to assisting qualified students with disabilities through reasonable means and accommodations to complete the Master's degree and clinical qualifications in Speech-Language Pathology. Students who need accommodations to meet the essential functions of speech-language pathology should contact the Office of Disability Services for UL Lafayette. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at UL Lafayette is dedicated to ensuring nondiscrimination and equal access to all programs, services, and activities for qualified students with disabilities. Information about the Office of Disability Services is available to interested individuals at <https://disability.louisiana.edu/>