

Eligibility Requirements and Essential Functions

*Adapted from a draft document of the
Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (2007)*

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. These skills enable a student to meet graduate and professional requirements as measured by state licensure and national certification. 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.

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. *
- 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.

MOTOR

A student must possess adequate motor skills to:

- Sustain necessary physical activity level in required classroom and clinical activities.*
- Respond quickly to provide a safe environment for clients in emergency situations including fire, choking, etc.*
- Access transportation to clinical and academic placements.*
- Participate in classroom and clinical activities for the defined workday.*
- Efficiently manipulate 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 problems, reason, and make sound clinical judgments in patient assessment, diagnostic and therapeutic plan 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 of vision, hearing, tactile, and smell 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 and balance disorders; swallowing; social interaction; and cognition 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.
- 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.*
- 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 and university and federal privacy policies.*
- Maintain general good physical and mental health and self care in order not to jeopardize 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.

Essential Functions Statement

**ALL STUDENTS - PLEASE SIGN THE STATEMENT BELOW
and return it along with your application packet**

I declare that I have read and understand the attached description of Eligibility Requirements and Essential Functions. I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards, I may be dismissed from the program.

Signature of Applicant

Date

ALERT TO NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS

A high level of English language proficiency is critical for clinical work as a speech-language pathologist. Satisfactory performance on the TOEFL does not, in and of itself, imply that one can meet this minimum standard. Please understand that if you are unable to meet this standard, you may be dismissed from the program. If you have any questions in this regard, you can contact the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (713-743-2897) to request an interview to help determine whether or not you should be concerned.

RESOURCES FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

To request disability related accommodations that may be necessary in order to satisfy the requirements of this program, students must contact the University of Houston Center for Students with DisABILITIES.

Justin Dart, Jr. Center for Students with DisABILITIES
CSD Building #568, Room #110
University of Houston
Houston, Texas 77204-3022

Phone: (713) 743-5400
TDD: (713) 749-1527
Fax: (713) 743-5396
Email: uhcsd@uh.edu
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