

TECHNICAL STANDARDS:

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND CAPABILITIES ESSENTIAL FOR ADMISSION, PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION OF STUDENTS IN AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY UNC-CH DIVISION OF SPEECH AND HEARING SCIENCES

Introduction:

Earning a professional degree in audiology or speech-language pathology requires mastery of a coherent body of knowledge and skills. In order to render a wide spectrum of patient care in a variety of clinical situations, individuals must have skills and attributes in five areas: communication, motor, intellectual, sensory-observational and behavioral-social. These skills and attributes enable a student to meet graduate and professional requirements required for state licensure. Many skills may be learned during the course of graduate study. The starred items (*), however, are more inherent skills that should be present when a student begins the program. These skills and attributes are necessary throughout the entire program and students will be asked to affirm that, to their knowledge, they possess these skills and attributes with or without accommodations.

Communication Skills:

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate proficiently in both oral and written English language. (Language to be determined by program.)*
- 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 groups within the community or profession.
- 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

Students must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with patients, their families, and with other members of the health care team. This must include spoken communications, and non-verbal communications such as interpretation of facial expressions, affects, and body language. Mastery of both written and spoken English is required although applications from students with hearing and speech disabilities will be given full consideration. In such cases, use of a trained intermediary or other communications aide may be appropriate if this intermediary functions only as an information conduit and does not serve integrative or interpretive functions.

Motor Skills and Stamina:

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.).

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Intellectual-Cognitive Skills and Attributes:

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 plans and implementation.
- Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skills.
- Utilize detailed written and verbal instruction in order to make unique and dependent decisions.

It is expected that students be able to learn effectively through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to: classroom instruction, small group discussion, individual study of materials, preparation and presentation of written and oral reports, and use of computer based technology.

Sensory-Observational Skills and Attributes:

A student must possess adequate sensory skills of vision, hearing, tactile, and smell to:

- Identify normal and disordered hearing and balance, speech and language as appropriate within the student's area of study.
- Identify the need for alternative modalities of communication.
- Visualize and identify anatomic structures.
- 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.

Students must possess sufficient visual, auditory, tactile and motor abilities to allow him/her to gather data from written reference material, from oral presentations, by observing demonstrations and experiments, by studying various types of illustrations, by observing a patient and his/her environment, by observing clinical procedures performed by others, by reading and recording assessment outcomes and by performing a basic examination of a patient. Use of a trained intermediary or other communications aide may be appropriate if this intermediary functions only as an information conduit and does not serve integrative or interpretive functions.

Behavioral, Attitudinal, Social Skills and Attributes:

Because the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology are governed by ethical principles and by state and federal laws, students must have the capacity to learn, and understand these values and laws and to perform within their guidelines.

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 professional Codes 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.

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TECHNICAL STANDARDS CONTINUED

- Accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and respond by modification of behaviors.
- Dress appropriately and professionally.

The ability to participate collaboratively and flexibly as a professional team member is essential. Students must display emotional health in spite of stressful work, changing environments, and clinical uncertainties. The student must be able to modify behavior in response to constructive criticism. He/she must be open to examining personal attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes (which may negatively affect patient care and professional relationships). He/she must exhibit behavior and intellectual functioning which does not differ from acceptable standards. In the event of deteriorating emotional function, it is essential that students be willing to acknowledge the disability and/or accept professional help before the condition poses danger to self, patients, and/or colleagues.

Statement of Affirmation:

I have read Technical Standards: Personal Attributes and Capabilities Essential for Admission, Promotion, and Graduation of Students in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. I further attest that I am able to meet these standards in the domains described (communication, motor, intellectual, sensory-observational, behavioral-social). I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the program if there is a change in my status relative to the Technical Standards.

Signature

Date

Name Printed

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