



NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

A MEMBER OF THE Touro College and University System

School of Health Sciences and Practice

and INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Essential Functions in Clinical Speech-Language Pathology

Approved by Department of SLP on May 2017

Essential Functions - Overview

The Department of Speech-Language Pathology at New York Medical College prepares skilled clinicians who are committed to evidence-based and ethical practice in the delivery of speech-language and swallowing services in healthcare facilities and other professional settings. The curriculum is focused on an integration of research and clinical applications across academic and clinical coursework. The department supports and initiates the development of inter-professional practice skills within the college and in community-based settings. The department promotes clinical excellence in the community through service activities and continuing professional education opportunities. The department affirms its commitment that graduates meet the standards for clinical certification through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Toward this end, graduate students must demonstrate essential functions for the education and practice of speech-language pathology.

The Department is committed to assisting qualified students with disabilities through reasonable means and accommodations to complete the Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology. Students who need accommodations to meet the essential functions of speech-language pathology should contact the Office of Academic Supports. It serves as a resource to students at the College and is the designee to evaluate and process all applications from students seeking appropriate and reasonable accommodation by the College. Information about the Office of Academic Supports is available to interested individuals at <https://www.nymc.edu/school-of-medicine-som/advising-and-mentorship/academic-support/>.

"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 experiences. The starred items (), however, are skills that are most inherent and should be present when a student begins the program."*

Source: Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders, 2007

Essential Function Domain 1 - Communication

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- ✓ Communicate proficiently in both spoken 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.

Essential Function Domain 2 - 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, chocking, 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 protocols 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.).

Essential Function Domain 3 – 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 judgements 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 independent decisions.

Essential Function Domain 4 – 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 area 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 discriminate anatomic structures and imaging findings (e.g., 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.

Essential Function Domain 5 – 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.