

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

Georgia Southern University
Armstrong Campus
Communication Sciences and Disorders Program

The attached essential functions are provided to inform students of the skills required to perform the duties of a speech-language pathologist. Persons interested in applying for admission to the communication sciences and disorders programs should review this document to develop a better understanding of the cognitive skills, physical abilities and behavioral characteristics necessary to successfully complete the program and work as a speech-language pathologist. Please read Appendix A and Appendix B of this document carefully and use these documents to assess your ability to complete such duties with or without accommodations. The University complies with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of **1973** and the Americans with Disabilities Act of **1990**. Therefore, the University will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities who are otherwise qualified.

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- I have read and understand the essential functions of the Communication Sciences and Disorders program and possess the ability to successfully complete the program. Should I need reasonable accommodations I will contact the office of Disability Services at Georgia Southern University to determine what accommodations are available and to obtain official documentation detailing my accommodations. *I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards I may be dismissed from the graduate program.*

Name (print) _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix A

All potential and enrolled students in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Program must meet intellectual, physical, and social competencies required to provide safe client care

Sensory/Observational Skills Specific to Speech-Language Pathology

- Recognize disorders of speech fluency.
- Recognize abnormal articulation.
- Recognize abnormal voice, resonance, and respiration characteristics.
- Recognize oral and written language disorders in the areas of semantics, pragmatics, syntax, morphology, and phonology.
- Recognize signs of hearing disorders.
- Recognize signs of swallowing disorders.
- Recognize signs of cognitive disorders.
- Recognize signs of abnormal social interaction related to communication disorders.
- Identify and use alternative modalities of communication (e.g., sign language or assistive devices).

General Sensory/Observational Skills

Adequate tactile sensation

- Feel and determine movement (e.g., conduct manual laryngeal exam for swallowing function)
- Detect temperature (e.g., skin, food/drink)

Adequate sense of smell

- Detect odors from client (e.g., foul smelling breath, bodily functions)
- Detect smoke
- Detect gases or noxious smells

Adequate vision

- Visualize anatomic structures.
- Discriminate findings on radiographic images, videofluorographic images, and other imaging tests
- See objects up to 20 inches away (e.g., information on a computer screen, facial symmetry, structures of the oral cavity)
- See objects up to 20 feet away (e.g., client in a room)
- See objects more than 20 feet away (e.g., client at end of hall)
- Use depth perception
- Use peripheral vision

- Discriminate text, numbers, tables and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.
- Distinguish color e.g.. color codes on supplies, charts, bed, lasers, examine images, computer plans, computer screens
- Distinguish color intensity (e.g., flushed skin, skin paleness)
- Vision adequate for walking independently in a building.

Adequate hearing

- Hear normal speaking level sounds (e.g.- person-to-person report)
- Hearing differences in acoustic properties of phonemes
- Hear faint voices
- Hear faint body sounds (e.g., respiration, stridor)
- Hear auditory alarms (e.g., monitors, fire alarms, call bells)

Intellectual/Cognitive Abilities

- Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, and apply 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 planning, and therapeutic planning.
- Identify and communicate the limits of their knowledge to others when appropriate.
- Follow detailed written and verbal instruction.
- Identify cause-effect relationships
- Plan/control activities for others
- Sequence information
- Transfer knowledge from one situation to another
- Process information
- Evaluate outcomes
- Prioritize tasks
- Use Short-term/ long-term memory

Arithmetic Competence

- Read and understand columns of writing (flow sheet, charts)
- Read digital displays (Read audiograms, spectrograms, spectrums, waveforms pitch contours, energy contours)
- Make and Read graphs (e.g., behavioral response data sheets)
- Tell time
- Measure time (e.g., count duration of contractions, etc.)
- Calculate percentages and basic statistics

- Count rates (e.g., drips/minute, pulse)
- Read measurement marks (e.g., nasometer)
- Add, subtract, multiply, and/or divide whole numbers
- Compute fractions (e.g., medication dosages)
- Use a calculator
- Write numbers in records

Interpersonal Skills

- Interact professionally and appropriately with others
- Negotiate interpersonal conflict
- Respect differences in clients
- Establish rapport with clients
- Establish rapport with co-workers

Communication Skills

- Communicate proficiently in both oral and written English.
- Possess reading and writing skills sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.
- Communicate professionally and intelligibly with patients, colleagues, other healthcare professionals, and community or professional groups.
- Demonstrate sensitivity, confidentiality, tact, and respect when speaking with patients, peers, faculty, staff, and various other professionals.
- Communicate professionally and legibly on patient documentation, reports, and scholarly papers required as part of course work.
- Perceive non-verbal communication.
- Teach (e.g., client/family about health care)
- Explain procedures
- Give oral reports (e.g., report on client's condition to others)
- Speak on the telephone
- Direct activities of others
- Convey information through writing (e.g., progress notes, initial exams, discharge exams)

Behavioral and Social Abilities

- Demonstrate adequate time management skills.
- Demonstrate adequate stress management skills.
- Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability.

- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and accountability.
- Demonstrate resourcefulness and imagination.
- Demonstrate a commitment to work cooperatively with others.
- Display mature, empathic, and effective relationships with patients.
- Exhibit compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, and motivation.
- Recognize and show respect for individuals with disabilities and for individuals of different ages, genders, race, religions, sexual orientation, and cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Adapt to changing and demanding environments while maintaining his/her emotional health.
- Manage the use of time effectively and systematize actions to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic time constraints.
- Accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and if necessary, respond by modification of behavior.
- Conduct oneself in an ethical and legal manner, upholding the ASHA Code of Ethics, the AASU Student Honor Code, and university and federal privacy policies.
- Maintain general good health and self-care in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical settings.
- Maintain general good health and self-care in order to demonstrate the ability to provide continuity of care to clients

Physical Strength and Endurance

- Exert 100 lbs. of force occasionally, 50 lbs. frequently, and 25 lbs. of force regularly
- Support 25 pounds of weight (e.g., ambulate client)
- Lift at least 25 pounds (e.g., pick up a child, transfer client)
- Move light objects weighing up to 10 pounds (e.g., IV poles)
- Implement self-defense strategies in accordance with hospital procedures.
- Conduct CPR and/or other emergency procedures (e.g. use a fire extinguisher)
- Carry equipment/supplies
- Move from one physical location to another (classroom to classroom, hospital room to hospital room, etc.)
- Sustain repetitive movements (e.g., CPR)
- Sustain necessary physical stamina to complete a 40 hour per week work schedule.

Mobility

- Walk
- Twist
- Bend
- Stoop/squat
- Move quickly (e.g., response to an emergency)
- Climb (e.g.. ladders/stools/stairs)

- Crawl

Gross Motor Skills

- Move within confined spaces
- Sit and maintain balance
- Maintain balance in a variety of postures. (stand, sit squat)
- Reach above shoulders (e.g., shelves, client support)
- Reach below waist (e.g., reach supplies, assist/support pediatric clients, plug electrical appliance into wall outlets)
- Walk with clients to and from therapy location
- Manipulate testing and treatment materials.
- Manipulate patient utilized equipment (e.g. prostheses, bed controls, wheelchairs, etc.).
- Use a computer keyboard to operate diagnostic equipment and instrumentation
- Provide general and emergency treatment to patients according to clinical placement policy.
- Access transportation to all clinical and academic placements.
- Perform moderately taxing continuous physical work to include prolonged sitting and/or standing.

Fine Motor Skills

- Demonstrate adequate manual dexterity to perform procedures including but not limited to oral mechanism examinations.
- Pick up objects with hands
- Grasp small objects with hands (e.g., IV tubing, pencil, hearing aid)
- Write with pen or pencil
- Key/type (e-g. use a computer, AAC speech device)
- Pinch/pick or otherwise work with fingers (e.g., manipulate a syringe, eyedropper, etc.,)
- Twist (e.g., turn objects/knobs using hands, valve for tracheostomy)

Emotional Stability

- Establish therapeutic boundaries
- Provide client with emotional support
- Adapt to changing environment/stress
- Deal with the unexpected (e.g., patient/client condition change, etc.)
- Focus attention on task
- Monitor own emotions
- Perform multiple responsibilities concurrently
- Handle strong emotions (e.g., grief)

Appendix B

Skills, Standards, and Examples of Potential Activities in Each Area

	Standard	Examples of Activities
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Sensory / Observational (S/O) Skills Related to SLP	S/O skills needed for clinical practice	Recognize disorders of speech fluency. Recognize abnormal articulation. Recognize signs of hearing disorders
Intellectual / Cognitive Abilities	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	Transfer knowledge from one situation to another. Process information, evaluate outcomes, problem-solve and prioritize. Use long and short term memory, identify cause-effect relationships. Plan activities for others. Synthesize knowledge and skills.
Interpersonal	Interpersonal skills sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.	Negotiate interpersonal conflict. Respect cultural diversity in clients. Establish rapport with clients and co-workers.
Communication	Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form as measured by the course instructors and clinical supervisors.	Explain health conditions, diagnostic and treatment procedures and initiate health teaching. Interpret and document client responses to health status. Convey information through written and oral reports.
Mobility	Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room, maneuver in small spaces, and maintain physical endurance for repetitive movements and demands of the work shift.	Move within confined spaces. Sit or stand and maintain balance. Reach above shoulders and below waist. Twist, bend, stoop, crawl, climb on stool or stairs, and move quickly in response to potential emergencies. Use upper & lower body strength. Squeeze with hands and fingers. Walk short distances and climb up and down stairs.

Motor Skills	Gross and fine motor skills sufficient to provide safe and effective procedures	Grasp small objects with hands. Manipulate small objects with fingers. Write with a pen. Operate equipment such as audiometers and acoustic instrumentation Type on a computer keyboard.
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.	Hear normal and faint voices. Able to receive spoken communication when not able to read lips. Hear auditory alarms such as monitors, fire alarms, and call bells.

Visual Skills	Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary for safe client care. Corrected or uncorrected visual skills for reading and writing textbooks, letters, and professional documentation.	Visualize objects from 20 inches to 20 feet away. Use depth perception and peripheral vision. Distinguish colors and color intensity. Read and understand written documents. Read and understand audiograms. Vision adequate for walking independently in a building
Emotional Stability	Emotional stability sufficient to tolerate rapidly changing conditions and environmental stress.	Establish therapeutic interpersonal boundaries. Provide clients with emotional support. Adapt to changing environment and stress. Deal with the unexpected. Focus attention on task. Perform multiple tasks concurrently. Handle strong emotions.
Tactile Sensation	Tactile ability to perform manipulation of objects and materials.	Feel and determine movement (conduct manual exams). Detect temperature. Detect environmental temperature.
Sense of Smell (Olfactory)	Sense of smell is required to perform clinical duties and maintain safety in the clinic.	Detect odors from client. Detect smoke, gasses or noxious smells.

Arithmetic Competence	Ability to perform basic arithmetic functions.	Read, understand and make graphs and charts. Tell and measure time. Calculate percentages. Count Rates. Add, subtract, multiply, and divide. Compute fractions. Use a calculator.
Behavioral and Social Abilities	Professionalism in social and behavioral aspects.	Demonstrate time and stress management skills. Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability. Show honesty and integrity. Display mature, empathetic and effective relationships with patients.
Physical Strength and Endurance	Physical requirements for possibly strenuous activity encountered during SLP work.	Exert 100 lbs. of force occasionally, 50 lbs. frequently, and 25lb. of force regularly. Support 25 lbs. of weight. Conduct CPR or other emergency procedures. Carry equipment/supplies. Sustain necessary physical stamina to complete a 40 hour per week work schedule