



**Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology**

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**ESSENTIAL SKILLS**

**DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY AND AUDIOLOGY  
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY,  
POST BACHELOR'S,  
AND  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY**

In addition to the academic requirements for admission, applicants for the SLP program must possess and be able to demonstrate the skills, attributes, and qualities set forth below, without unreasonable dependence on technology or intermediaries. The following Essential Functions are consistent with the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association clinical skill performance guidelines. All essential functions are introduced and coached within SLP coursework and practicum. If you are uncertain about your abilities to meet these technical standards, please consult the SLP Department Chair to discuss your individual situation.

**Physical health: The student must:**

1. Possess the physical health and stamina needed to carry out the SLP Program.
2. Must be able to continuously sit/stand for several hours.
3. Participate in professional responsibilities/activities for up to four-hour blocks of time with one or two breaks.
4. Move independently to, from, and in the work setting.
5. Provide for one's own personal hygiene.
6. Manipulate screening/diagnostic materials, including completion of screening/evaluation protocols.
7. Effectively implement necessary treatment plan appropriate for client, including fire, choking, etc., and in application of universal precautions.
8. Visually monitor client responses and materials.
9. Make accurate judgments about speech and/or acoustic signals.

**Intellectual skills: The student must:**

1. Demonstrate the mental capacity to learn and assimilate professional information, including the ability to read and comprehend professional literature and reports.
2. Solve clinical problems through critical analysis.
3. Seek relevant case information, synthesize, and apply concepts and information from various sources and disciplines.
4. Write discipline-specific papers and clinical reports in English.
5. Speak standard American English intelligibly, including the ability to model English phonemes.
6. Analyze, synthesize, and interpret ideas and concepts in academic and diagnostic/treatment settings.
7. Maintain attention and concentration for sufficient time to complete clinical activities for up to four-hour blocks of time with one or two breaks.
8. Schedule and prioritize activities, and provide documentation in a timely manner.
9. Comply with administrative, legal, and regulatory policies.

**Motor skills: The student must:**

1. Have sufficient use of motor skills to carry out all necessary clinical procedures, both those involved in learning the fundamental sciences and those required in the clinical environment.
2. Participate in relevant educational exercises and to extract information from written sources.
3. Provide therapeutic services to patients of all ages and both genders in all clinical situations.
4. Use a computer keyboard to operate clinical and laboratory equipment.
5. Transport themselves to all clinical and academic placements.

**Communication: The student must:**

1. Have sufficient use of speech, hearing and vision, and the English language to communicate effectively with patients, faculty, staff, peers, and other health care professionals in both oral and written form, e.g. therapy plans, progress notes, diagnostic reports, telecommunications.
2. Communicate in a succinct yet comprehensive manner and in settings which time available may be limited.
3. Assess and effectively communicate all relevant information including the significance of non-verbal responses.
4. Assess incoming information to allow for appropriate, well-focused follow-up inquiry.
5. Listen responsively and empathetically to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity to potential cultural differences.
6. Express his or her ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback.

**Sensory abilities: The student must:**

1. Have the ability to master information presented in course work in the form of lectures, written materials, and projected images.
2. Acquire the information presented through demonstrations and experiences in the clinical training portion of the program.
3. Observe a patient accurately, at a distance and close at hand, and observe and appreciate non-verbal communication and manual signs when performing clinical assessments and treatment activities.
4. Take a case history and perform a visual examination of various oral and cranio-facial structures (i.e. ear, throat, oral cavity, skull, etc.).
5. Perform all required examination and treatment protocols using instruments and tools necessary for accurate, efficient, and timely completion of such activities.

**Behavior qualities: The student must:**

1. Possess emotional health sufficient to carry out the tasks above, must have good judgment, and must behave in a professional, reliable, mature, and responsible manner.
2. Manage the use of time and be able to systematize actions in order to complete professional and technical tasks with realistic constraints.
3. Adapt, possessing sufficient flexibility to function in new and stressful environments.
4. Evaluate her/his own performance and be forthright about errors, accept constructive criticism, and look for ways to improve academic and clinical performance.
5. Show respect for individuals of different age, ethnic background, religion, and/or sexual orientation.
6. Exhibit professional behavior by conforming to appropriate standards of dress, appearance, language and public behavior.
7. Uphold the Code of Ethics of the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Code of Academic Conduct of Southern University and A & M College.

Each student must continue to meet all of the **Essential Skills** set forth above. A student may be denied permission to continue in the SLP Program at Southern University and A & M College, should the student fail at any time to demonstrate all of the required **Essential Skills**.

\*My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and agree to maintain the requirements of the above **Essential Skills** for the successful completion of the SLP program.

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**Student's Signature**

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**Program Director's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**Department Chair's Signature**

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**Clinical Director's Signature**