



DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH & HEARING SCIENCES

Core Functions Admission, Retention and Graduation Standards

INTRODUCTION

The graduate degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences is recognized as a broad degree requiring the acquisition of general knowledge and basic skills in all applicable domains of speech and hearing sciences. The education of speech-language pathologists requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of skills and development of judgment through patient care experience in preparation for independent and appropriate decisions required in practice. The current practices of speech-language pathology emphasize collaboration among speech-language pathologists, audiologists, other health care and education professionals, the patient/client, and the patient/client's family.

POLICY

As an accredited speech and hearing sciences program, the University of New Mexico curriculum in Speech and Hearing Sciences adheres to the standards and guidelines of the Council on Academic Accreditation in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Within these guidelines, the University of New Mexico Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating its students; designing, implementing, and evaluating its curriculum; and determining who should be awarded a degree. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on satisfactory academic achievement, but also on other factors that serve to ensure that the candidate can complete the core functions of the program required for graduation.

CORE FUNCTIONSⁱ

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 essential skills and attributes in five areas: communication, motor, sensory, intellectual-cognitive, interpersonal, and cultural responsiveness. These skills enable a student to meet graduate and professional requirements as measured by state and national credentialing agencies. Many of these skills can be learned and developed during the course of the graduate program through coursework and clinical experience.



A. COMMUNICATION

A student must possess adequate communication skills and must be able to communicate in a way that is understood by your clients/patients and others. Students are able to:

- Employ oral, written, auditory, and non-verbal communication at a level sufficient to meet academic and clinical competencies
- Adapt communication style to effectively interact with colleagues, clients, patients, caregivers, and invested parties of diverse backgrounds in various modes such as in person, over the phone, and in electronic format.

B. MOTOR

Clinical practice involves a variety of tasks that require manipulation of items and environments. A student must possess adequate motor skills to:

- Engage in physical activities at a level required to accurately implement classroom and clinical responsibilities (e.g., manipulating testing and therapeutic equipment and technology, client/patient equipment, and practice management technology) while retaining the integrity of the process.
- Respond in a manner that ensures the safety of clients and others

C. SENSORY

Clinicians use auditory, visual, tactile, and olfactory information to guide clinical practice. A student must possess adequate sensory skills of vision, hearing, tactile, and smell to:

- Access sensory information to differentiate functional and disordered auditory, oral, written, and visual communication
- Access sensory information to correctly differentiate anatomical structures and
- diagnostic imaging findings
- Access sensory information to correctly differentiate and discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests

D. INTELLECTUAL / COGNITIVE

Critical thinking, reasoning, and comprehension and retention of information are required in clinical practice. A student must possess adequate intellectual and cognitive skills to:



- Retain, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and apply auditory, written, and oral information at a level sufficient to meet curricular and clinical competencies
- Employ informed critical thinking and ethical reasoning to formulate a differential diagnosis and create, implement, and adjust evaluation and treatment plans as appropriate for the client/patient's needs
- Engage in ongoing self-reflection and evaluation of one's existing knowledge and skills
- Critically examine and apply evidence-based judgment in keeping with best practices for client/patient care

E. INTERPERSONAL

Clinicians must interact with a diverse community of individuals in a manner that is safe, ethical, and supportive. A student must possess adequate interpersonal skills to:

- Display compassion, respect, and concern for others during all academic and clinical interactions
- Adhere to all aspects of relevant professional codes of ethics, privacy, and information management policies
- Take personal responsibility for maintaining physical and mental health at a level that ensures safe, respectful, and successful participation in didactic and clinical activities

F. CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Clinicians have an obligation to practice in a manner responsive to individuals from different cultures, linguistic communities, social identities, beliefs, values, and worldviews. A student must possess cultural responsiveness skills to:

- Engage in ongoing learning about cultures and belief systems different from one's own and the impacts of these on healthcare and educational disparities to foster effective provision of services.
- Demonstrate the application of culturally responsive evidence-based decisions to guide clinical practice



The University of New Mexico is committed to providing access, equal opportunity, and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education, and employment for individuals with disabilities. Enrolled students who believe they have a disability for which they seek accommodation should request disability accommodation from Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) at (505) 277-3506 (Voice), (505) 277-3750 (FAX), or <http://as2.unm.edu>. ARC is located at Mesa Vista Hall, Room 2021 at the University of New Mexico.

By signing this, I certify that I have read and understand the “Core Functions of Speech and Hearing Sciences Education”; that I agree with its contents; that I am committed to the policies expressed therein; and that I may be advised to discontinue the program should I fail to demonstrate all of the Essential Functions despite reasonable accommodations and reasonable levels of support from the faculty.

Signature

Date

Return this document to:
Nicole Chauvet
Department Administrator
UNM Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences
1700 Lomas Blvd. NE, Ste. 1300
Albuquerque, NM 87106

[Reference: Adapted from the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders \(2007\)](#)