

Essential Functions

The Program in Audiology, as part of the School of Medicine, Department of Otolaryngology-HNS and Communicative Sciences and Disorders, University of Louisville, is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. The University, School, and Program do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or disability. When requested, the University will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified students with properly certified disabilities. The faculty and professional staff have responsibility for the welfare of students in the section and for the patients the students treat during their graduate program. To meet this responsibility, the Program has established academic standards and minimum essential functions (defined here) that must be demonstrated by students with or without reasonable accommodations in order to participate in the program and to complete it successfully. Students with conditions that may require accommodations will be referred to the Office of Diversity (OD) for a determination of whether the condition is a disability as defined by applicable laws, and for determination of what accommodations are reasonable. Whenever possible, reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities to enable them to meet these standards and ensure that they are not denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination.

The University of Louisville Audiology program endeavors to select applicants who have the ability to become highly competent audiologists. As an accredited Audiology program, the University of Louisville curriculum in Audiology adheres to the standards and guidelines of the Council of Academic Accreditation in Audiology. Within these guidelines, the University of Louisville Audiology Program 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 essential functions, which serve to ensure that the candidate can complete the essential functions of the program required for graduation.

The Department has a responsibility to the public that its graduates can become fully competent and caring audiologists, capable of doing benefit and not harm. Thus, it is important that persons admitted possess the intelligence, integrity, compassion, humanitarian concern, and physical and emotional capacity necessary to practice audiology.

In order to acquire the knowledge and skills requisite to the practice of audiology 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, intellectual-cognitive, sensory-observational, and behavioral-social. 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. Failure to meet or maintain the Essential Functions may result in action against the student, including, but not limited to dismissal from the program.

A. COMMUNICATION

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate proficiently in both oral 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.
- The University of Louisville requires that applicants whose first language is not English, and who earned their college degree(s) from an institution in another country, provide evidence of English proficiency as part of the application process. The test used by the University to show proficiency is the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The internet based TOEFL is made up of four scales: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Included in the table below is a guide which interprets scores in each of these subscales. There are two criteria for passing the TOEFL as set by the University of Louisville and the Division of Communicative Disorders. Both of these criteria must be achieved for admission.
 - 1) The University of Louisville requires a total test score of at least 79.
 - 2) The Division of Communicative Disorders requires that subscales be equal to or greater than the values listed below. These values represent the midpoint of the Intermediate or Fair ranges specified by Educational Testing Service (ETS).

a. Reading	18
b. Listening	18
c. Speaking	21
d. Writing	20

B. 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, 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, hearing aids, etc.) in a safe manner.
- Access technology for clinical management (i.e. billing, charting, etc.).

C. 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 judgments 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.

D. SENSORY / OBSERVATIONAL

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

- Visually and auditorily identify normal and disordered (communication, hearing and balance disorders, social interaction related to communication).
- 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 and adjust when a client and/or client's family does or does not understand the clinician's written and/or verbal communication.
- Identify and discriminate a client's spoken responses.
- Accurately monitor through both visual and auditory modalities, equipment displays and controls, including those of hearing instruments, used for assessment and treatment of patients.

E. 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 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.

The University of Louisville 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 accommodations should request disability accommodation from the University Disability Resource Center <http://louisville.edu/disability>