

Washington University in St. Louis
School of Medicine
Program in Audiology and Communication Sciences

Eligibility Requirements and Essential Functions:
Doctor of Audiology (AuD)

Introduction

The Program in Audiology and Communication Sciences (PACS) at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis attempts to select applicants to the AuD program who have the capacity to become highly competent audiologists. As an accredited program, the AuD program adheres to the standards and guidelines of the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and other governing agencies and institutions. Within these guidelines, PACS has the freedom and ultimate responsibility for selecting and evaluating its students; designing, implementing, and evaluating its curriculum; and determining who is qualified to receive the degree. Admission, matriculation, and retention decisions are based not only on satisfactory academic, research, and clinical performance, but also on other factors, which serve to ensure that the candidate can complete the essential functions required for graduation from the program and clinical practice. These attributes represent skills directly related to clinical requirements, as well as personal and interpersonal skills required for professional interactions in clinical practice.

Policy

The Essential Functions fall into five broad categories:

1. Communication
2. Motor
3. Intellectual-cognitive
4. Sensory-observational
5. Behavioral-social

Many of these skills can be learned and developed during the course of the graduate program through coursework and clinical experience. The items indicated by an asterisk (*), however, are skills that are more inherent and should be present when a student begins the program. Failure to meet or maintain the Essential Functions may result in action against the student, including, but not limited to dismissal from the program.

1) Communication

A student must possess adequate skills to:

- a) Communicate proficiently English, both in oral and written forms. Students with a communication disorder and/or accents or non-standard dialects that negatively impact their ability to communicate effectively and provide clear speech and/or language models may be required to address the identified area. [Students whose first language is not English will be required to achieve a minimum score of 100 on the TOEFL prior to matriculation.]*
- b) Possess reading and writing skills sufficient to meet academic, research, and clinical demands.*
- c) Perceive and demonstrate appropriate non-verbal communication for culture and context.*
- d) Modify communication style to meet the communication needs of clients, caregivers and other persons served.*
- e) Communicate professionally, intelligibly, legibly, accurately, and appropriately, both in verbal and written form.
- f) Convey information with relevance and cultural sensitivity.

2) Motor

A student must possess adequate motor skills to:

- a) Sustain necessary physical activity level in required academic, research, and clinical activities. *
- b) Respond quickly to provide a safe environment for clients in emergency situations including fire, weather hazards, choking, etc. and in the application of universal precautions.*
- c) Access transportation to assigned and required academic, research, and clinical activities.*
- d) Access technology required for academic, research, and clinical activities.*
- e) Participate in academic (including classroom) and clinical activities for the defined workday.*
- f) Efficiently manipulate testing and treatment environment, supplies and materials, and equipment in a safe manner without violation of testing protocol and with best therapeutic practice.*
- g) Access technology related to academic, research, and clinical requirements of the program.

3) Intellectual-cognitive

A student must possess adequate intellectual and cognitive skills to:

- a) Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, infer, evaluate, and apply written and verbal information sufficient to meet academic, research, and clinical demands.*
- b) Identify significant findings from history, evaluation, and data to formulate appropriate diagnoses and treatment plans.
- c) Solve problems, reason, and make sound clinical judgments in patient assessment and treatment.*
- d) Maintain attention to task necessary to effectively participate in the academic, research, and clinical requirements of the program.*
- e) Modify treatment and instruction to meet client's needs.
- f) 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.

4) Sensory-observational

A student must possess adequate sensory skills of vision, hearing, touch, and smell that, with or without appropriate and reasonable accommodation (as determined by the program), allow patient-centered care to occur without disruption. These skills must allow the student to:

- a) Visually and/or auditorily identify normal and disordered speech, language, hearing, balance, and social interaction related to communication.
- b) Provide appropriate model of desired speech and language targets.
- c) Visualize, identify, and palpate anatomic structures.
- d) Discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.
- e) Visualize and discriminate imaging findings.
- f) Identify and discriminate findings on imaging studies.
- g) Recognize and adjust when a client and/or client's family does or does not understand the clinician's written and or verbal communication.
- h) Identify, discriminate, and document a client's spoken responses accurately.
- i) Accurately monitor through both visual and auditory modalities, equipment displays and controls, including those of hearing instruments, used for assessment and treatment of clients.
- j) Identify the need for alternative modalities of communication.

5) Social-behavioral

A student must possess adequate social and behavioral attributes to:

- a) Display mature, empathetic and effective professional relationships by exhibiting compassion, integrity, and concern for others.*
- b) Recognize and show respect for all individuals without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity or expression, veteran status, disability, or cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.*
- c) Conduct oneself in an ethical and legal manner, upholding the ASHA Code of Ethics and university and federal privacy policies.*
- d) Maintain the emotional health required to exercise good judgement, and to safely carry out academic and clinical responsibilities in a timely manner.
- e) 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.*
- f) Dress appropriately and professionally and maintain appropriate personal hygiene. As required, follow required dress codes for clinical placements.
- g) Demonstrate professionalism in interactions and communications in all academic, research, and clinical settings.
- h) Adapt to changing and demanding environments (which includes maintaining both professional demeanor and emotional health).
- i) Manage the use of time effectively to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic time constraints.
- j) Actively seek out and accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and modify behaviors accordingly.
- k) Conduct oneself in an ethical and legal manner, in accordance with the professional code of ethics, applicable standards and regulations (to include HIPAA and FERPA), and applicable policies and procedures.

Washington University encourages and gives full consideration to all applicants for admission, financial aid and employment. The university does not discriminate in access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information. Inquiries about compliance should be addressed to the university's Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, Washington University, CB 1184, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130. The School of Medicine is committed to recruiting, enrolling and educating a diverse student body.