

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO CSD/SLP STUDENTS

Congratulations! You have met the preliminary eligibility requirements for acceptance into the Communication Sciences and Disorders or Speech-Language Pathology program. Enclosed is the “**Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions**” form, which is designed to validate your ability to meet the **cognitive, affective and psychomotor requirements** of the curriculum. Your acceptance into the program is based, in part, upon receipt of this signed form.

The Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) accredits professional training programs and requires that program graduates be qualified to deliver entry-level clinical services. Accredited programs must provide evidence that their graduates have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary for the Certificate of Clinical Competence and possess the professional dispositions, behaviors and essential functions for clinical practice. The competencies outlined in this document are those recommended by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Essential competencies include the ability to meet the cognitive, affective and psychomotor requirements of the curriculum. Examples of tasks related to these essential competencies include the following:

- Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, and apply information to meet curricular and clinical demands.
- Manipulate equipment for the purpose of assessment and treatment (e.g. medical equipment, Alternative Augmentative Communication devices, hearing aids) in a safe manner.
- Display mature, empathic, and effective relationships with clients and faculty/staff while maintaining professional boundaries.
- Discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments and tests.
- Participate in classroom and clinical activities for the defined workday.
- Recognize disorders of speech, language, voice, swallowing, pragmatics and cognition.
- Communicate professionally, intelligibly, and appropriately.
- Possess reading and writing skills sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.

These are mandatory for admission to, retention in, and completion of the undergraduate and master’s training program. The CSD/SLP programs are committed to providing access to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. However, the programs are unable to make accommodations that impose an undue burden, present a threat to the health or safety of the individual or others, or fundamentally alter the nature of the academic or clinical curriculum.

These Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions are developmental, meaning you are not necessarily expected to demonstrate these immediately. However, as you move through the program and receive instruction and education on these skills, you are expected to gradually become proficient in these professional competencies. For graduate students, the starred professional dispositions and behaviors (*) are particularly relevant and should be present from admission through completion of the program.

Please review the required Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions very carefully. Then complete the form and return it within the next fourteen (14) days. You must return the completed form before a final determination can be made regarding your admission to the program.

If the program has any concerns or questions about information included on your form, you will receive a follow-up communication addressing the issues raised and indicating the status of your tentative admission.

Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions Form
Appalachian State University
Communication Sciences and Disorders (B.S.) &
Speech-Language Pathology (M.S.) Programs

You are expected to progress from awareness and understanding to demonstrating, mastering and integrating the following Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions. These are required for successful progression through the undergraduate and graduate programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders and Speech Language Pathology.

1. ***Professionalism:** The ability to maintain appropriate hygiene, dress, and demeanor and to follow departmental policies and procedures.
2. ***Collaboration:** The willingness and ability to work together with students, faculty and clients.
3. ***Honesty/Integrity:** The ability to demonstrate moral excellence and trustworthiness. Also see University Policy 401.1 at http://policy.appstate.edu/Code_of_Student_Conduct
4. ***Respect:** The ability to demonstrate consideration and regard for self and others regardless of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, or religious affiliation. The University's EEO statement specifies non-discrimination on the basis of "race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity and expression, political affiliation, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information or sexual orientation." Also see University Policy 602.1 at http://policy.appstate.edu/Equal_Opportunity
5. ***Reverence for Learning:** Be able to demonstrate reverence for knowledge, experience, and being prepared for academic and clinical responsibilities.
6. ***Emotional Maturity:** The ability to control emotions by exhibiting appropriate social behavior in the classroom and clinic and during other departmental activities and interactions.
7. ***Flexibility:** The willingness to accept and adapt to change. The student is expected to have the flexibility to function effectively under stress; that is, the individual is expected to be able to learn to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many clients.
8. **Sensory/observational/modeling skills:** The ability to recognize typical and disordered fluency, articulation, voice, resonance, respiration, oral and written language, hearing and balance, swallowing, cognition and social interactions related to communication. Also, the ability to model target behaviors related to voice, articulation, fluency, and resonance.
9. ***Communication skills:** The ability to demonstrate social awareness and the communication skills (including written, verbal and nonverbal) necessary for establishing rapport with clients, conducting clinical sessions, counseling clients and interacting with colleagues, faculty, and other professionals.
10. ***Motor-coordination skills:** The ability to perform the physical activities and examinations necessary to make diagnoses, manipulate and use necessary equipment without violating testing protocol and with best therapeutic practice. Sustain necessary physical activity required for classroom and clinical activities. Be responsible for transportation to clinical and academic placements.

My signature indicates that I have read and understand the Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions necessary for the profession. If I feel I need reasonable accommodations in order to demonstrate these dispositions, behaviors and functions, I am aware that I can contact the Office of Disability Resources to discuss this by phone, 828-262-3056 or email, odr@appstate.edu.

Name _____

Date _____

Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions Policy

Appalachian State University Communication Sciences and Disorders (B.S.) & Speech-Language Pathology (M.S.) Programs

A. Statement of Policy

The Communications Sciences and Disorders (CSD) and Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) programs prepare undergraduate and graduate students for clinical practice as speech-language pathologists. Speech-language pathologists provide diagnostic and therapy services to infants, children, and adults with speech, language, hearing, swallowing and cognitive communication disorders. Undergraduate and graduate students in CSD/SLP must have the intellectual and academic capabilities sufficient to meet the curricular demands of the programs, be proficient in oral and written English, and possess certain dispositions, behaviors and essential functions that are expected of professionals engaged in clinical practice.

B. Required Professional Dispositions, Behaviors, and Essential Functions

The Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) accredits professional training programs and requires that program graduates be qualified to deliver entry-level clinical services. Accredited programs must provide evidence that their graduates have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary for the Certificate of Clinical Competence and possess the professional dispositions, behaviors and essential functions for clinical practice.

CSD/SLP students are expected to progress from awareness and understanding to demonstrating, mastering and integrating the following Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions. These are required for successful progression through the undergraduate and graduate programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders and Speech Language Pathology.

1. **Professionalism:** The ability to maintain appropriate hygiene, dress, and demeanor and to follow departmental policies and procedures.
2. **Collaboration:** The willingness and ability to work together with students, faculty and clients.
3. **Honesty/Integrity:** The ability to demonstrate moral excellence and trustworthiness. Also see University Policy 401.1 at http://policy.appstate.edu/Code_of_Student_Conduct
4. **Respect:** The ability to demonstrate consideration and regard for self and others regardless of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, or religious affiliation. The University's EEO statement specifies non-discrimination on the basis of "race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity and expression, political affiliation, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information or sexual orientation." Also see University Policy 602.1 at http://policy.appstate.edu/Equal_Opportunity
5. **Reverence for Learning:** Be able to demonstrate reverence for knowledge, experience, and being prepared for academic and clinical responsibilities.
6. **Emotional Maturity:** The ability to control emotions by exhibiting appropriate social behavior in the classroom and clinic and during other departmental activities and interactions.
7. **Flexibility:** The willingness to accept and adapt to change. The student is expected to have the flexibility to function effectively under stress; that is, the individual is expected to be able to learn to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many clients.

8. **Sensory/observational/modeling skills:** The ability to recognize typical and disordered fluency, articulation, voice, resonance, respiration, oral and written language, hearing and balance, swallowing, cognition and social interactions related to communication. Also, the ability to model target behaviors related to voice, articulation, fluency, and resonance.
9. **Communication skills:** The ability to demonstrate social awareness and the communication skills (including written, verbal and nonverbal) necessary for establishing rapport with clients, conducting clinical sessions, counseling clients and interacting with colleagues, faculty, and other professionals.
10. **Motor-coordination skills:** The ability to perform the physical activities and examinations necessary to make diagnoses, manipulate and use necessary equipment without violating testing protocol and with best therapeutic practice. Sustain necessary physical activity required for classroom and clinical activities. Be responsible for transportation to clinical and academic placements.

C. Accessibility of Programs to Qualified Individuals with Disabilities

Consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Appalachian State University that no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any university program, service or activity. In accordance with Section 504 and the ADA, all applicants for the CSD/SLP program must be qualified individuals who are able to meet the essential competency requirements of the program, with or without reasonable accommodations.

The CSD/SLP programs are committed to providing access to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. However, the programs are unable to make accommodations that impose an undue burden, present a threat to the health or safety of the individual or others, or fundamentally alter the nature of the academic or clinical curriculum.

D. Distribution of Policy

1. The Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions Policy (“the Policy”) will be posted on the CSD/SLP website.
2. The Policy will be distributed to all applicants seeking admission to the undergraduate and Master’s CSD/SLP programs. Applicants must complete a form attesting to information required by the CSD/SLP programs before a final decision regarding admission can be made. In the event of unusual circumstances that prevent a candidate for admission from signing the form prior to arriving on campus, the form must be signed before classes begin. Signed copies will be maintained in each student’s advising file.
3. The Policy will be provided to all CSD/SLP students on admission to the major/program and again if concerns arise. All students will be required to complete a form attesting to information required by the CSD/SLP programs in order to be retained in the program. Signed copies will be maintained for each student.
4. The Policy will be provided to students, faculty members, or others as necessary if concerns arise regarding a student’s compliance with the dispositions, behaviors, and essential functions set forth in the Policy.

E. Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions Reports/Reviews

1. Any faculty member or any other person supervising or evaluating any aspect of a student's CSD/SLP program who has concerns about a student's compliance with this Policy will address the concern(s) with the student and complete a Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions Report ("PDBEF Report" or "Report"). The PDBEF Report shall be provided to the student and to the Chair of the Department.
 - a. "Faculty member" as used in this Policy means all individuals defined as Faculty in the Appalachian State University *Faculty Handbook*. For purposes of this Policy, the term "Faculty members" includes clinical educators who hold appointments in the CSD/SLP programs.
 - b. "Departmental Faculty member" as used in this Policy means any Faculty member with teaching responsibilities in the CSD/SLP programs.
 - c. Individuals supervising or evaluating an aspect of a student's CSD/SLP program may include, but are not limited to, external supervisors of internships, practicum experiences, or any similar activity for which CSD/SLP credit is given.
2. In the case of minor concerns, the Faculty member or other person supervising or evaluating the student may attempt to resolve the concerns informally.
 - a. At a minimum, the Faculty member or other supervisor/evaluator will meet with the student in person to discuss the concern.
 - b. An informal resolution will include written documentation of the concern and resolution, and may include the student's voluntary, signed agreement to take certain steps to address the concern.
 - c. If a student requests a reasonable accommodation in order to satisfy the required Professional Disposition, Behaviors, and Essential Functions, the student will be referred to the Office of Disability Resources (ODR). If ODR determines that reasonable accommodations should be approved, University and student records will be updated as appropriate to reflect that determination.
 - d. A copy of the informal resolution documentation will be provided to the Department Chair.
 - e. If the Faculty member or other supervisor/evaluator and the student are not able to resolve the concerns informally, or if the Department Chair, upon receipt of the PDBEF Report, determines that consideration by the Program Faculty is appropriate, the Department Chair will convene a meeting of the CSD/SLP Faculty as outlined below.
3. If the Chair convenes a meeting of the CSD/SLP Faculty to consider a PDBEF Report (see Section E.2.e above), the following procedures will govern.
 - a. The Chair will convene the meeting as promptly as is reasonably possible.
 - i. If the Chair initiates a review by preparing a PDBEF Report or if there is another conflict of interest, another CSD/SLP Faculty member will be designated to chair the review meeting. The term "Chair" as used in these procedures shall refer to the Department Chair or another CSD/SLP Faculty member designated to chair the review meeting.
 - ii. The Chair will notify the student of the meeting via email. Unless unusual circumstances require otherwise, the student will be provided notice at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. The notice to the student will include the following:
 1. Date, time, and location of the meeting.
 2. A copy of the PDBEF Report.

3. A copy of this Policy.
4. A statement that the student's rights include, among other things, the student's right to speak on his or her own behalf, the right to be accompanied by a non-attorney support person, the right to present information, and the right to ask others (but not an attorney) to speak on the student's behalf.
- b. The Chair will preside over the meeting and is responsible for ensuring an orderly, fair, and efficient process to consider the Report. The formal rules of evidence do not apply and the Chair may decide whether testimony and/or documents would help the program faculty and the Chair to reach a considered, informed resolution.
- c. The student may be accompanied by a support person. The support person may not be an attorney or be called upon to provide factual information at the hearing. The support person shall not be permitted to speak or to take any active role in the meeting. The student must provide the name of the support person to the Chair at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
- d. The faculty member who prepared the Report will present the concerns and the student will have an opportunity to speak on his or her behalf. Faculty members (including the Chair) may ask questions of the Report author and the student.
- e. If the Chair believes it would be helpful to a fair consideration of the concerns, the Chair may request or permit other individuals to speak and/or present information at this meeting. The Report author and the student also will have an opportunity to ask questions of such individuals. An individual who presents information pursuant to this section may not also serve as a support person.
- f. After the presentation of testimony and documents is complete, the student (and, if applicable, the student's support person) will be excused.
- g. If the student has been notified of the meeting but refuses to or does not attend, the meeting will be conducted in the student's absence.
4. The CSD/SLP Program Faculty will consider the report and all information presented at the meeting to determine whether the concerns raised in the PDBEF Report have merit.
 - a. The Chair may be present for deliberations to observe and hear first-hand the impressions and thinking of faculty members.
 - b. The Chair shall not be present when the CSD/SLP Program Faculty prepares its recommendations.
 - c. The CSD/SLP Program Faculty will submit its recommendation(s) in writing to the Chair indicating the faculty's assessment and any recommended consequences.
 - d. The CSD/SLP Program Faculty ordinarily will provide its written recommendation to the Chair within three business days following the meeting, although that time may be extended if required by unusual circumstances.
5. Consequences for violations of the required Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - a. A lower course and/or clinic grade.
 - b. Delayed admission into required courses and clinical experiences.
 - c. Repetition of a course activity or clinical activity.
 - d. Delayed placement in external practicum sites.
 - e. Removal from an external practicum site.
 - f. Referral for counseling.

- g. Speech, language, voice, resonance, articulation and pragmatics therapy.
 - h. Other skill-building activities.
 - i. Other actions deemed appropriate by the departmental faculty.
 - j. Dismissal from the program.
6. Upon receipt of the CSD/SLP Program Faculty's written recommendation, the Chair will consider all relevant information, determine whether the student has violated the Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions and, if so, decide what consequences are appropriate. The Chair will communicate this decision to the student via email, ordinarily within 10 business days following receipt of the program faculty's recommendation. That time period may be extended based on extenuating circumstances.

F. Appeal of Chair's Decision of Professional Dispositions, Behaviors and Essential Functions Report

A student who is dissatisfied with the Chair's decision following a Professional Dispositions and Essential Functions Report may appeal as outlined below.

1. The student must submit any appeal by email to the Dean of the Beaver College of Health Sciences, with a copy to the Chair, within 10 business days of the date on which the Chair's decision was emailed to the student.
2. The appeal should state the basis for the appeal (e.g., procedures required by this policy were not followed, fundamental unfairness of the decision).
3. The Dean may consider any information deemed appropriate to reaching a considered and fair decision on the appeal. In so doing, the Dean shall bear in mind the Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) standards for the CSD/SLP program, including but not limited to CAA standard 1.4:

CAA Standard 1.4: The program's faculty has authority and responsibility for the program. The institution must indicate by its administrative structure that the program's faculty is recognized as a body that can initiate, implement and evaluate decisions affecting all aspects of the professional education program, including curriculum.

Accordingly, in considering the student's appeal, the Dean shall give deference to the Chair's decision consistent with CAA Standard 1.4.

4. The Dean shall communicate his or decision via email to the student, with a copy to the Department Chair.

G. Recordkeeping and Access to Records

- a. The Department Chair will maintain records of concerns, PDBEF Reports, Report review meetings, and appeals in each student's records.
- b. Copies of Professional Dispositions and Essential Functions Reports and any related decisions or documentation (including appeals) will be available for review by supervisors working for or on behalf of CSD/SLP and other professional personnel as needed.

H. CSD/SLP Students Remain Subject to Other Policies, Regulations, and Laws

In addition to satisfying the Professional Dispositions, Behaviors, and Essential Functions set forth in this policy, all CSD/SLP students remain subject to all other academic standards established by the CSD/SLP Programs; as well as to all policies, regulations, and laws applicable to all Appalachian State University students, including but not limited to the University's Code of Student Conduct and Code of Academic Integrity.