



**MSU Denver MS SLP Program  
Essential Functions**

The Master of Science Program in Speech-Language Pathology at the Metropolitan State University of Denver adheres to the standards and guidelines of the Council on Academic Accreditation in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (CAA) of the American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA). Within these guidelines, the program has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating its students; designing, implementing, and evaluating its curriculum; and determining who has earned the MS SLP degree. Further, the Department has a responsibility to the public that its graduates become competent and caring speech-language pathologists, capable of doing benefit and not harm.

The MS SLP program will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability. Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with the [Access Center](#) upon enrollment. [MSU Denver's Access Center](#) is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

In 2007, the Council on Academic Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD), identified needed skills and attributes (essential functions) of competent professionals across five areas: communication; motor; intellectual-cognitive; sensory-observational; and behavioral-social. The stated intent of identifying essential functions was to educate students about the roles and responsibilities of the discipline as well as provide academic programs with a framework of objective standards and requirements.

Our department has a responsibility to the public to train ethically responsible and competent clinicians who can function in a variety of clinical situations and render a wide spectrum of client care. Throughout their program of study, students are expected to demonstrate (with or without accommodations) the following essential functions in order to acquire the knowledge and skills requisite to the entry-level practice of speech-language pathology.

Potential students are encouraged to reach out to the MS SLP Program Director to discuss questions and/or concerns regarding these essential functions.

#### COMMUNICATION

A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate proficiently in both oral and written English.
- 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.



### **MOTOR**

A student must possess adequate motor skills to:

- Sustain necessary physical activity level in required classroom and clinical activities for the defined workday.
- Respond quickly to provide a safe environment for clients in emergency situations including fire or choking, and in the application of universal precautions.
- Access transportation to clinical and academic placements.
- Use materials/instrumentation necessary for clinical assessment and intervention activities.
- Provide for or direct one's own personal hygiene.
- Navigate patient/client care environments and be able to move between settings such as the classroom, health care facility, educational, or community settings.
- Access technology for clinical management (i.e., billing, charting, therapy programs, etc.).

### **INTELLECTUAL-COGNITIVE**

A student must possess adequate intellectual and cognitive skills to:

- Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, infer, critically evaluate and apply written and verbal information sufficient to meet curricular and clinical demands.
- Maintain attention and concentration for sufficient time to complete clinical activities for up to four-hour blocks of time with one or two breaks.
- Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skill.
- Critically evaluate one's own performance and be flexible toward change to promote professional and clinical process.
- Accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and respond by modification of behaviors.

### **SENSORY-OBSERVATIONAL**

A student must possess adequate sensory and observational skills to:

- Observe demonstrations and learn from experiences in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical situations.
- Visually and auditorily monitor client responses and use of materials.

### **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.
- Recognize the need to learn and apply legal and ethical behavior in all academic and clinical settings.
- Maintain physical, emotional, and mental health required for effective use of intellectual abilities, prompt completion of responsibilities, and development of appropriate relationships with clients and colleagues.
- Maintain composure and emotional stability in demanding situations.
- Adapt to changing environments and situations.
- Understand and respect authority.
- Maintain appropriate classroom and work-place behavior, including punctuality and regular attendance
- Accept appropriate suggestions and constructive criticism and respond by modifications of behaviors.
- Comply with administrative, legal and regulatory policies in the classroom and clinic.