

DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Seton Hall University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity to all qualified students, including individuals with disabilities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and applicable state law, qualified students may meet the program's technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

Technical standards describe the essential outcomes and competencies required for participation in the academic and clinical components of the Speech-Language Pathology program in congruence with the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology standards. These standards are not intended to exclude individuals with disabilities or prescribe a single method by which a task must be performed. Students may demonstrate competence through alternative methods, assistive technology, and/or approved accommodations.

Requests for reasonable accommodations are evaluated through the University's Disability Support Services office using an individualized, interactive process.

Essential Competency Areas:

1. Information Access, Observation, and Data Acquisition

Students must be able to obtain, interpret, and integrate information necessary for academic learning and clinical practice. Information may be presented in a variety of formats, including spoken language, written materials, digital media, visual demonstrations, simulations, and interactions with clients.

Students must be able to:

- Access and interpret relevant information using appropriate sensory modalities and/or assistive technologies;
- Participate in classroom, laboratory, and clinical learning activities;
- Demonstrate accurate observation and analysis of client performance and clinical data.

Observation and information gathering may be accomplished through alternative or adaptive methods, including technological supports, where appropriate.

2. Communication Competence

Effective communication is essential for professional practice in speech-language pathology. Students must be able to communicate in ways that are understandable, respectful, and consistent with professional standards.

Students must be able to:

- Exchange information with faculty, supervisors, peers, clients, other professionals, and caregivers;
- Produce and comprehend written, spoken, and nonverbal communication in English at a level consistent with graduate-level study and professional documentation requirements;
- Adapt communication methods to diverse cultural, linguistic, developmental, intellectual, and social contexts;

- Use alternative or augmentative communication methods, interpreters, or assistive technologies when appropriate and approved as accommodations.

Communication expectations focus on the effectiveness and clarity of information exchange, not on a specific mode or method of delivery.

3. Cognitive, Analytical, and Ethical Reasoning

Students must demonstrate the ability to engage in graduate-level learning and clinical decision-making, including:

- Critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and problem solving;
- Integration and application of theoretical and evidence-based knowledge;
- Interpretation of quantitative and qualitative information;
- Ethical and professional judgment consistent with the standards of the speech-language pathology profession;
- Understanding and applying legal, ethical, and professional guidelines;
- Engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation of one's existing knowledge, skills, and learning needs.
- Provide counseling and education to clients, caregivers, and other relevant stakeholders.

Competencies may be demonstrated through varied learning and assessment methods.

4. Motor and Clinical Practice Skills

Students must be able to participate safely and effectively in clinical and laboratory activities required by the program.

Students must be able to:

- Perform or direct clinical tasks and therapeutic activities;
- Use clinical instruments, materials, and technology;
- Establish and maintain safety for themselves and others in clinical environments.

These functions may be accomplished through adaptive techniques, modified equipment, or other reasonable accommodations, provided that essential educational objectives and safety standards are met.

5. Professional Behavior and Interpersonal Effectiveness

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors that support learning and clinical practice, including:

- Respectful and collaborative interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds;
- Accepting and applying feedback offered through supervisor mentorship and self-reflection;
- Ability to establish and maintain professional relationships with clients, families, peers, and colleagues;
- Adaptability and responsible management of academic and clinical responsibilities.

Professional standards focus on observable conduct and performance, not personality traits or subjective character attributes.

6. Resilience, Workload Management, and Adaptability

Graduate education and clinical practice may involve changing schedules, complex tasks, and emotionally meaningful interactions. Students should demonstrate the capacity to:

- Manage and complete academic and clinical responsibilities with appropriate supports;
- Respond to evolving clinical situations using sound judgment;
- Make dynamic adjustments to service delivery in real time based on client performance and needs.
- Utilize available resources, including accommodations or wellness supports, when needed.

The program recognizes that students may use disability-related supports or strategies to meet these expectations.

7. Professional Responsibility and Program Participation

Students must be able to:

- Comply with university, program, and clinical site policies;
- Meet attendance and participation requirements;
- Complete required trainings (e.g., safety procedures, infection control) consistent with program and clinical site expectations;
- Participate in assessments and examinations associated with the curriculum, including written, oral, or practical assessments, using approved accommodations when applicable.
- Participate in the evaluation and treatment planning processes, including written, oral, or practical assessments, using approved accommodations when applicable.

Transportation or logistical access may be addressed through reasonable accommodation discussions where appropriate.

Additional Competencies Specific to Speech-Language Pathology

Students must be able to participate in assessment and intervention activities and demonstrate the ability to:

- Gather and interpret clinical information using appropriate tools and supports;
- Provide or guide therapeutic activities consistent with professional standards;
- Use sensory, motor, technological, or collaborative methods to achieve accurate clinical outcomes.

These competencies may be achieved through varied modalities, assistive technologies, or other approved accommodations.

Accommodations and Disability Support

Applicants and enrolled students who have a disability as defined by applicable law may request reasonable accommodations through Disability Support Services (DSS).

- Students who believe they can meet the SLP program's essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation are encouraged to apply.
- DSS will evaluate documentation to determine whether a student has a qualifying disability under Section 504 and the ADA.
- In collaboration with the student and the SLP program, the University will determine whether requested accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.
- Reasonable accommodations will not be provided if they would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, compromise essential learning outcomes, or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of patients, students, or others.

All determinations are made on an individualized, interactive basis in accordance with applicable law.

Adopted – 5/10/2026