



Audiology Department: Doctor of Audiology (AuD) Program

Essential Functions Policy for Admission, Retention, and Graduation

Introduction

The education of an audiologist requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of skills/attributes, and development of judgment through academic preparation and patient care experience in preparation for independent and appropriate decision-making required in audiology practice. The current practice of audiology emphasizes collaboration among audiologists (intraprofessional collaboration), with other allied health care professionals (interprofessional collaboration), as well as collaboration with the patient, the patient's family/caregivers, and other individuals who contribute to the overall management of patients.

Policy

The Doctor of Audiology (AuD) Program at Nova Southeastern University selects applicants who we believe have the ability to become competent audiologists. The audiology curriculum adheres to the standards and guidelines of the Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE) and the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology of the American Speech Language Hearing Association.

Within these guidelines, the AuD Program has the responsibility for the selection and evaluation of its students, the design, implementation and evaluation of its curriculum, and the determination of who should be awarded a degree. Admission, retention, and graduation decisions are based not only on satisfactory academic achievement, but also on the student's ability to perform essential functions, skills, and abilities ensuring that candidates possess the necessary attributes required for graduation, licensure, and entry-level professional practice.

The AuD Program has a responsibility to the public to assure that its graduates can become fully competent and caring audiologists, capable of providing benefit and committed to doing no harm. It is important that persons admitted and retained in the programs possess the intelligence, integrity, compassion, humanitarian concern, physical and emotional capacity, communication skills, and professionalism necessary to practice audiology. To this end, the AuD Program may dismiss a student who is unable to perform any of the essential functions, skills, and abilities, with or without a reasonable accommodation. Students are required to notify the program of any changes in their ability to perform the essential functions of AuD students. Academic or clinical faculty will notify students when they are not demonstrating proficiency in the essential functions. Students with disabilities may inquire about reasonable accommodations through the Office of Student Disabilities (<http://www.nova.edu/disabilityservices/>) and in accordance with the provisions of the NSU Student Handbook.

The AuD Program is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. The College of Health Care Sciences and the Audiology Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or veteran status.

Essential Function Requirements: Doctor of Audiology (AuD) Students

Essential functions, as distinguished from fund of knowledge standards, refer to those physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum, including clinical education and the development of professional attributes required of all students at graduation. The essential functions required by the curriculum are in the following areas: cognitive, affective and communication, and psychomotor. Audiology students must be able to perform each of these essential functions with or without a reasonable accommodation in order to fully participate in the program and successfully complete the requirements for the Doctor of Audiology degree.

Cognitive Functions

1. Comprehend, retain, and retrieve complex information from the liberal arts, basic sciences, mathematics, psychological, and clinical sciences and apply this information to professional course work.
2. Comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and integrate information from all program sources; written materials, demonstration, lectures, class discussions, laboratory practice sessions, internet-based resources, and real and simulated patients.
3. Apply information obtained from classroom, laboratory, internet-based sources and written materials to the examination, evaluation, interventions with, and referral of real and simulated patients.
4. Procure evidence-based information and apply it to the practice of audiology.
5. Critically analyze information taken from lectures, class discussion, written materials, research literature, laboratory, and patient demonstrations and other sources to develop and support the rationale for appropriate patient examinations, evaluations, and interventions both verbally and in writing.
6. Demonstrate management skills including planning, organizing, supervising, and delegating.
7. Develop and apply programs of prevention and health promotion in a variety of patient populations.
8. Participate in the process of scientific inquiry.
9. Document the elements of patient management using standards set forth by the profession and health care regulatory agencies.
10. Integrate reimbursement principles into decision making during the patient management process.

Affective and Communication Functions

1. Establish professional, empathic relationships with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, ages, and needs, based on mutual trust.

2. Recognize the impact and influence of lifestyle, socioeconomic class, culture, beliefs, race, and abilities on patients, caregivers, and colleagues.
3. Engage in respectful, non-judgmental interactions with individuals from various lifestyles, cultures, beliefs, races, socioeconomic classes, and abilities.
4. Develop and maintain effective, respectful working relationships with professional colleagues, peers, patients, families, and the general public.
5. Work effectively as part of intra-professional and inter-professional teams.
6. Utilize appropriate professional verbal, nonverbal and written communication with faculty, patients, families, colleagues and others.
7. Recognize the psychosocial impact of auditory and vestibular dysfunction on the patient and family; integrate patient and family needs into the evaluation and plan of care.
8. Apply teaching and learning theories and methods in the healthcare and community environments.
9. Meet externally imposed deadlines and time requirements, including punctuality for class, clinic, appointments, mandatory screenings, meetings, community activities, and submission of assignments or paperwork.
10. Effectively and consistently manage personal stress and the stress of others.
11. Effectively attend to people, information, and tasks in a complex, highly stimulating environment during an entire workday or work period.
12. Demonstrate responsibility for self-assessment and the development of a life-long plan for professional growth and development.
13. Practice in a safe, ethical, and legal manner, following guidelines for standard practice as established by federal, state, and local law, the University, clinical facilities, the American Academy of Audiology, the American Speech-Language Hearing Association and related professional organizations.
14. Accept responsibility for all actions, reactions, and inactions, integrating feedback in a non-defensive manner.
15. Respond to medical crisis and emergencies in a calm, safe, and professional manner.
16. Speak and write effectively in English to convey information to other individuals and groups.
17. Understand and interpret the verbal, non-verbal, and written communications of others and respond in an appropriate, professional manner.

Psychomotor Functions

1. Safely, reliably, and efficiently perform tasks that include the following physical requirements:
 - a. Ability to walk, bend, squat, stand and reach (all planes) constantly during a work day/shift.

- b. Visual acuity (near and distant) sufficient to evaluate, diagnose and monitor patient needs and to maintain accurate records, recognize people and provide directions.
 - c. Ability to speak, hear, touch and see sufficiently to understand and give directions.
 - d. Ability to push wheeled equipment through a facility and in the community.
 - e. Possess fine motor skills for legible and accurate documentation of reports, charting, scheduling, daily correspondence and presentations, performed either manually through the use of a writing implement, electronically through the use of keyboard/mouse or verbally through the use of dictation equipment.
 - f. Possess fine motor skills for effective and efficient handling of diagnostic or therapeutic equipment.
 - g. Ability to use both upper extremities for performing the aforementioned psychomotor tasks.
2. Demonstrate the ability to observe and practice universal precautions.
 3. Demonstrate the ability to perform CPR and emergency first aid.
 4. Safely and reliably read meters, dials, printouts, and computer screens.
 5. Demonstrate appropriate body mechanics and safety awareness with patients, caregivers, and classmates.
 6. Demonstrate appropriate reaction time in response to sudden or unexpected movements of patients.
 7. Recognize adverse reactions and respond appropriately.
 8. Attend clinical internships/externships in assigned locations that require driving or access to transportation.

**Statement of Understanding**

I certify that I have received, read, and understand the Nova Southeastern University Essential Functions Policy and requirements to be an AuD student. I agree to notify the Audiology Program if I am unable to perform these essential functions, and understand that the inability to perform these essential functions, with or without a reasonable accommodation, can result in withdrawal, delay in progress, or dismissal from the program.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

References

1. AASIG Technical Standards, Essential Functions Document. Section on Education, September 1998.
2. American Physical Therapy Association. Minimum Required Skills of Physical Therapist Graduates at Entry Level. BOD G11-05-20-449
3. Ingram, D. (1997). Opinions of Physical Therapy Program Directors on Essential Functions, *Physical Therapy*, 77(1): 37-45.
4. U.S. Department of Labor Physical Demand Characteristics of Work, Section 37.02 at http://www.acc.co.nz/PRD_EXT_CSMP/groups/external_providers/documents/guide/wcmz002335.pdf