



OBSERVATION FAQs

This document contains three sections. Part 1) is FAQs for students interested in Speech-Language Pathology, Part 2) is FAQs for students interested in Audiology, and Part 3) is a summary of the FAQ.

Part 1 - I want to become a Speech-Language Pathologist:

What is the minimum number of observation hours that I need to get in order to complete the requirement for my Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) in speech-language pathology (SLP)?

The ASHA 2014 Standard V-C for obtaining the CCC-SLP specifies that you must earn at least 25 clinical observation hours. While this is the minimum number of hours necessary for obtaining certification, some academic programs may require more than 25.

I heard that I can only observe assessment and treatment activities that have to do with speech and language disorders. Is this true?

Yes, the latest "Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology" (2007) is the document used to determine which activities students in speech-language pathology can observe for the purpose of applying the observation hours to the required number of 25. Activities which are approved for observation hours can be found under the "Professional Roles and Activities" section at <http://www.asha.org/policy/SP2007-00283/>. A list of the accepted clinical services for observation can be found on this website under the "Clinical Services" section.

Does this mean I can't count any hours from observing audiological evaluations? From observing a hearing aid evaluation?

Right. The Scope of Practice in Speech-Language Pathology (2007) does not include these activities as being provided by SLPs, hence they are not counted toward the 25 hours. It is unlikely that a HA evaluation would include a hearing screening. Troubleshooting hearing aids takes only a few minutes. Remember, credit for observation hours is recorded as 1.0 hours or quarter hours (i.e., .25 = 15 minutes; .50 = 30 minutes, and .75 = 45 minutes). You would need to observe many HA evaluations where troubleshooting is included in order to accumulate enough time to count the time spent as an observation hour (or part of.) If you observe a "Central Auditory Processing" evaluation AND an SLP is collaborating by conducting testing, treatment, consultation, etc. then you can count that portion under SLP observation.

How can I get observation hours counted?

In the Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences program, the current observation hours log enables you to code all the activities that are approved for observation hours for future SLPs.

I already finished my 25 hours of observation. Do I have to do more?

The 25 hours is regarded as a minimum. Your graduate program may require that you earn additional observation hours when you enter as an incoming student in speech-language pathology; be sure that you have the sufficient number of hours in the approved disorder areas.

What if I want to attend graduate school at UConn?

We will require that incoming students in SLP complete all 25 observation hours PRIOR to beginning their clinical assignments. The ASHA standards for the CCC-SLP specify that the 25 hours need to be earned and documented as part of the requirements for the CCC and can be earned in a variety of ways. Some programs will permit students to earn those 25 throughout the course of their graduate school enrollment, while others (such as ours) will require the observations prior to taking on the responsibility of client management. If you are presently an undergraduate in our program, we strongly urge that you complete all 25 hours of observation BEFORE you graduate.

What if I will be attending graduate school somewhere other than UConn?

Technically, after you graduate from UConn, you are no longer enrolled in our approved Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences program; the approval of the 25 hours must come from the time that you are enrolled. So, in other words, do not expect to be able to get the 25 hours verified by UConn if you do your observation hours in the summer following your graduation. At that point, you are the responsibility of the graduate program you will be attending, not the UConn undergraduate program and you should follow the procedures for observation that are in place through the graduate program you will be attending. We will NOT sign/approve observation hours once you graduate. Therefore, we strongly urge that you complete all 25 hours of observation BEFORE you graduate from UConn.

What are some of the ways that I can earn observation hours?

*Observation hours can be accumulated through direct observation in and out of the University of Connecticut Speech & Hearing Clinic. There are packets of information that explain the process for obtaining observation hours. (These packets are available through the Clinic Secretary in the lobby office.) It is important to note that observations must be conducted of SLPs and Audiologists who are **ASHA certified**. Students who wish to conduct off-site observations must provide the Director of Clinical Education of the UConn Speech and Hearing Clinic with required information about the observation site and provider **PRIOR** to the observation itself. Observation hours will not be awarded when the provider is not ASHA certified.*

Does watching a video count toward observation hours?

*Yes, as long as it is guided by someone with the CCC designation. And the topic of the video must be consistent with the disorder areas described above. The individual who guided your observation of the video must sign for those hours on your observation log. S/he **MUST** hold a current certificate of clinical competence.*

If I observe in a site off-campus, do I have to write up a summary of that?

Yes, but the summary should reflect on the entire observation. For example, if you observe in a school setting and you've watched 8 sessions, you need only to write up a summary of the 8, not individual summaries for each of them. Remember, you can only count observation hours spent in the areas noted above.

Part 2 - I want to become an Audiologist:

ASHA's standards for becoming an audiologist also changed and they became effective in 2014. There are NO requirements for observation hours for the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Audiology.

Hmmph, I already have observation hours and I'm going to graduate school to get my AuD. What do I do with those hours?

The faculty in the Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences B.A. program regards opportunities to gain insight into the professions of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology as very valuable in making decisions about career paths, in examining the seamless transition between academic information and clinical application, and in appreciating all of the components of successful clinical interactions. We enthusiastically encourage all students - decided and undecided about which career path to follow - to take advantage of the opportunities to observe a wide variety of clinical activities. It is through this experience that you will better understand your own goals for becoming a speech-language pathologist or audiologist.

So are you really telling me that, if I'm going to become an audiologist, I don't HAVE to get observation hours?

*That's right. But, as with the speech-language pathology course of study, individual programs may have other requirements and/or procedures as part of their curricula. For example, at the University of Connecticut, we **WILL** require observation hours for audiology students; as part of the AuD program) there will be a course specifically designated for obtaining observation hours in Audiology.*

Part 3 - Summary

*For **SLPs** - observation hours will only be counted for the areas approved by ASHA. You need to earn 25 as part of the standards for the CCC-SLP; overall you will need 375 hands-on clock hours and 25 observation hours when you apply for your ASHA certification. Coding procedures are in place here at UConn in order to approve only those observation hours that can be counted toward the 25. **You do not need 25 hours of observation to graduate from UConn.***

*For **Audiology** students - observation hours are not mandatory, they are voluntary, for your future certification from ASHA.*

A description of observation procedures and necessary forms – both on and off-campus - is available on this website. Please download a copy of the forms for documenting observation hours.