

ASHA Requirement for 25 Hours of Observation

The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) requires all clinical students to obtain 25 hours of observation as part of their clinical training. It is optimal for graduate students to obtain these 25 hours prior to entering clinic officially; however, they must be completed prior to the end of the first practicum. These hours should represent a variety of clinical disorder types and client ages. Following are the guidelines we use at the NAU Speech and Hearing Clinic for completing observation hours.

1. Forms:

- a. **Diagnostic Observation Form**: This form is used when observing any type of assessment or evaluation.
- b. **Therapy Observation Form**: This form is used when observing all treatment sessions

Note: Save the two types of observation forms (Diagnostic and Therapy) on a word processing program so that they can be printed out and used as forms or filled out and printed for the final reports to be turned in.

- c. **Log sheet**: Record every observation you have conducted on this form.

2. Other Materials

Name Tag: You will need a name tag for (1) use as an observation card when observing in the clinic and (2) identification when you are observing off campus

such as at schools and clinics. (materials for a plastic name tag and lanyard can be purchased at any office supply store (e.g. Staples, Office Max). The name tag should have the following identifying information:

Northern Arizona University

Your Name

Student Observer

Dept. of Communication Sci. & Dis.

3. Observing in the NAU Speech and Hearing Clinic.

Observation of Speech or Language Therapeutic Services. Check the therapy schedule posted in the Clinic Office (Room 327) for possible sessions to observe. Sharon Feist is the clinic secretary.

Observation of Audiology Services. You may also observe audiology hours (on and off-campus) with Michael Skelton. There is a sign-up sheet in the clinic office for audiology observation as well. See Sharon to sign up.

4. Conducting Your Observations

Diagnostic or Therapy Session

A. Find a clinic session you wish to observe. Sharon Feist, Clinic Secretary, (Room 327) maintains a magnetic board of the assessment and treatment sessions. Please come into the clinic office to personally view the schedule.

B. Select the corresponding form (Diagnostic or Therapy) for the type of observation you will be conducting.

C. Arrive 10 minutes early to the session. Place your NAU Student Observer name tag on the clinic table for the student clinician to see. This informs the clinician that s/he will be observed and will need to sign your observation forms after her client has left the clinic.

D. Take notes for your observation report on your form. You may comment on:

1. The clinician's ability to establish and maintain rapport. Does the clinician appear to have a good relationship with the client? Is there a suitable friendly greeting and interpersonal exchange? Is rapport maintained throughout the clinical session?
2. The clinician's effectiveness in pacing/timing the session. Is the session timing fast enough to keep the client engaged and slow enough to ensure a good success rate? Are there smooth transitions between activities that take the client's needs into account? What are your examples?
3. Response rate. Is the client achieving a good success rate? A rule of thumb for clinical effectiveness is as follows : A correct response rate of less than 50% indicates that the goals are too difficult for the client. Correct responses at a rate of 50 - 79% indicate that the clinical session is difficult enough to be challenging, yet the goal is still appropriate since mastery has not been achieved. To determine the specific success rate, take a 5 minute segment and calculate the correct response rate with the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of correct responses}}{\text{Number of response attempts or opportunities}} = \text{rate of correct responses}$$

4. Preparation. Is the clinician prepared for the clinical session? Does s/he

organized have the materials organized for easy access and flow. Is s/he yet relaxed in the presentation of the tasks and activities.

5. Activities/Materials. Are the activities at an appropriate interest and difficulty level for the client? Pictures designed for children are very different than those that appeal to adults. Are the materials appealing and geared to the client?
6. Behavior Management. Is the clinician able to skillfully manage a client who is inattentive or uncooperative?
7. Suggestions. Indicate how this clinical session could have been improved. If you were the clinician for the next session, how would you do things differently.
8. What have you learned from observing this clinical session?

5. Clinic Rules of Behavior While Observing.

A. No more than 4 observers are allowed **per clinic session** in the observation room at the NAU Speech and Hearing Clinic. There are *no exceptions* to this rule. If there are simultaneous clinic sessions going on in the child language room as well as Clinic Rooms A and B, *there is potential for 12 observers in the central observation room* as it has windows to all three therapy rooms. This situation is unlikely, nonetheless possible and allowable.

B. Make sure that a parent has a front row seat to observe his/her child. If you are seated in front of the observation window, offer your seat to the parent. This is part of family centered practice.

C. Dress professionally while observing in any setting.

6. Your observation experiences should be as diversified as possible. Therefore, it is best to observe clinical sessions covering *all disorder types* and *ages across the lifespan*. We recommend having observation experience with each disorder type and each age group.

The disorder/therapy types are:

- 1) articulation/phonology
- 2) fluency
3. voice and resonance
- 4.) receptive and expressive language
- 5.) hearing

- 6.) swallowing
- 7.) cognitive aspects of communication
- 8.) social aspects of communication
- 9) communication modalities (including oral, manual, augmentative, and alternative communication techniques and assistive technologies)

The age categories are:

- 0 - 5 years old: infants, toddlers, preschoolers
- 6 - 18 years old: elementary, secondary schoolage
- 18 - 59 years old: adult
- 60+ - geriatric

7. Seek out high-quality observation experiences. While it *can* be useful to observe novice student clinicians, it is often more valuable to observe practicing certified professionals who are managing typical caseloads in their work settings. Therefore, we encourage you to conduct the majority of your observations at Off-Campus Sites. Use the Roster of Cooperating Clinicians (in this packet) to locate speech-language pathologists who welcome NAU student observers.
8. Make sure that each observation report includes (1) the site of your observation (2) the length of time of your observation and (3) the ASHA and certification number of your supervisor *if you are observing a session outside of the NAU Clinic*.
9. Take handwritten notes on a report form while you are observing. The notes must be understandable to you as you will use these notes to type up your final report. *Have the clinician sign this handwritten draft*. Use this handwritten draft to type up a final report. Use a standard narrative format that details of your observation experience. Maintain a copy of the final reports on your computer.
10. Each report you turn in will consist of the typed final **copy stapled on top of the Handwritten Draft (with *the clinician's signature*)**.
11. Keep a current log of the sessions you have observed. There should be one report per line on the log sheet. Turn in the log with your observations when you have accumulated the total 25 hours of observation.