

DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Once all general required courses are taken, what is the length of the DMS program?

A. Each year we admit a new class in August. There are three separate pathways. The abdomen/vascular and cardiovascular pathways are both 17 months (4 semesters). The obstetrics & gynecology pathway is 12 months (3 semesters).

Q. How much does the entire program cost?

A. The cost varies based on the cost of tuition and the chosen pathway. A breakdown is available for each pathway on the DMS program website under the **Estimated Program Costs** tab. This is an estimated cost of tuition, fees, books, uniforms, and a few other miscellaneous costs.

Q. When can I apply?

A. We accept applications each year beginning March 1. The deadline each year is June 1. Our applications are online, so they have to be in by end of day June 1.

Q. Can I take some of the DMS classes online?

A. On campus class attendance is a necessity in this program. There is an online component, but students will be on campus or in clinic most Mondays - Fridays, with some exception at the beginning of each semester.

Q. How many students are admitted into the program each year?

A. There are approximately 75 – 150 applicants each year, and we award admittance to the top 50 once GPA and ACT is calculated for each applicant. There is a detailed explanation of ranking and tie-breakers in the catalog and on the website under Diagnostic Medical Sonography.

Q. How do I increase my chances of getting into the program?

A. GPA (for general education courses) and ACT score are critical in determining admittance into the DMS program. The GPA (from general education courses) is multiplied by 9.0 to determine a weighted GPA. That number is then added to the Composite ACT score. The total number places each student into a ranking system with other applicants. The higher the GPA and ACT score, the greater the probability that a student may be accepted into the program.

Q. If I already have a degree, do I still need to take the ACT?

A. Yes. The ACT score is used in determining application ranking into the program. All applicants must provide documentation of an ACT score. An SAT score will also be acceptable and converted into the corresponding ACT score for ranking purposes.

Q. Can the general required courses be taken at any other college?

A. Yes. Wallace State Community College in Hanceville has linkage programs with many other colleges in the state. This linkage relationship guarantees the transfer of certain specified courses. Even if your college is not part of our linkage program or may be out of state, courses are still transferable as long as they are equivalent to our courses. Information on course equivalency and transfer may be obtained by contacting the Admissions office at 256.352.8238. You will be required to submit an official transcript and course descriptions (from your institution's college catalog).

Q. I have taken several of the general required courses but that was many years ago. Will these courses still be accepted?

A. Four general required courses (MTH 100, BIO 201, BIO 202, and physics) must have been taken within 7 years of admittance into the program. If it has been longer than 7 years, those courses must be retaken.

Q. Will taking the general required courses at WSCC increase chances of being accepted into the DMS program?

A. No. Whether a student takes the general education courses at WSCC will not increase the chance of being accepted into the DMS program.

Q. If I don't have all the general required courses completed, can I still apply for the program?

A. All general education courses must be complete prior to the application deadline, June 1. The only exception is that you will be permitted to take your physics and BIO 202 courses in the summer of the year you are applying to enter. However, if you have these courses complete prior to the deadline, you will receive 0.5 additional points for each on your ranking score.

Q. Are applicants required to complete observation hours? If so, who schedules those hours?

A. Yes. All applicants are required to submit at least 4 observation hours (see Observation Form on website). It is the applicant's responsibility to schedule those hours with a sonography department. DMS program personnel recommend observation in a hospital setting because this often gives applicants a chance to see a wide variety of sonography procedures. However, observation can be done at an imaging center, doctor's office, etc.

Q. Will obtaining more observation hours increase the chance of being accepted into the DMS program?

A. No. These hours are required so applicants have a chance to observe sonography procedures and many of the duties required of a sonographer.

Q. I noticed that proof of a current CPR certification is required. Will any CPR card be accepted?

A. No. Proof of active/current AHA approved CPR (Healthcare Provider) certification is required. The CPR card must have “Healthcare Provider” or BLS printed on the card. It must be cognitive and hands-on (online CPR certification will NOT be accepted). DMS program personnel recommends EMS 100 or the continuing education course in the workforce training to fulfill this requirement. Both of these options’ schedule is located in the course schedule each semester. This course schedule is available online or in print at Lion Central in the Bailey building.

Q. How often do the DMS classes meet?

A. It varies semester to semester. In the beginning you will be on campus approximately three days out of the week and the other two days of the week you will be in clinicals. Towards the end of the program you will be in class approximately one day a week and in clinicals the other four. You should prepare to devote Monday – Friday 8 hour days to the program. This does not include study time at home.

Q. Can I still have a job while in the program?

A. You can have a job. Having said that, your schedule will be restricted due to the rigorous classroom and clinicals schedule. Many students find it beneficial to use evenings and weekends to study the content presented in class to maintain the required 75 average to stay in the program. However, you will not be able to work a full-time, first-shift job during weekdays.

Q. Where are DMS clinical sites located and how is clinical site placement determined?

A. Clinical sites are located throughout Alabama and lower Tennessee. Whenever possible, clinical rotations may be scheduled close to home. However, sites near the student’s home may not provide the necessary variety of exams for graduation. In those instances, a student will be required to travel in order to meet all requirements.

Q. Do I have to decide what pathway I want to be in before applying?

A. No. There is one application for the sonography program. Once applicants are ranked, the highest rank gets first choice. We then go down the list of applicants awarding their preference. Once a pathway is full, students are offered their next choice until all students are placed. If you are not placed in your first choice, please know that you are still learning ultrasound. Many students find a love for the specialty they are placed in throughout the program even though they thought they would prefer another.