What is Diagnostic Medical Sonography?

Diagnostic medical sonography uses high frequency sound waves (ultrasound) to produce visual images of organs, tissues, or blood flow inside the body. Sonographers provide direct patient care by performing diagnostic tests, and may work in hospitals, private doctor’s offices, specialty clinics, or laboratories. Graduates of our DMS program will sit for the ARDMS Sonographic Principles and Instrumentation exam. Learn more about the career at www.sdms.org. GTC’s sonography program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.CAAHEP.org) upon the recommendation of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS).

Length of Program

5 semesters (not including prerequisite courses); Program courses must be taken in sequence within the prescribed time frame.

Semester Program Begins

Fall Semester; Full time; Day classes only.

General Admission Application Process

1. Apply to Gwinnett Technical College at www.gwinnetttech.edu/apply, submit all transcripts from high school and previous college work, and take the COMPASS test if required (You must be accepted into Gwinnett Tech prior to applying to a program of study.)
2. Applicants are initially accepted into the Healthcare Science Certificate program while completing the required prerequisite courses.

Program Application Process

1. All applicants are required to submit a program packets forms are available online at http://www.gwinnetttech.edu/enrollment/forms-documents/.
2. For Fall 2016 semester admission, the program application, resume and all prerequisites must be completed by May 20th, 2017.

Prerequisite Courses

All of the following must be taken PRIOR to applying to the program:
- Composition and Rhetoric-ENGL 1101,
- College Algebra-MATH 1111 or MATH 1113 - Precalculus
- Conceptual Physics and Lab- PHYS 1110 and PHYS 1110L**,
- Anatomy and Physiology I with Lab-BIOL 2113 and BIOL 2113L*,
- Anatomy and Physiology II with Lab-BIOL 2114 and BIOL 2114L*

Additional Required Courses

One of the following:
- Introduction to Humanities-HUMN 1101,
- Art Appreciation-ARTS 1101, Music Appreciation-MUSC 1101 or American Literature-ENGL 2130

All of the following:
- Introduction to Psychology-PSYC 1101
- Statistics-MATH 1127

Program Deadlines

For Fall 2017 semester admission, application file, volunteer hours and prerequisites must be completed by May 20, 2017.

Competitive Admissions

1. Candidates are scored and ranked based on: prerequisite courses GPA on all attempts, optional volunteer patient hours in the DMS lab, and select courses: ALHS 1090. Interviews will be scheduled for the top 30-40 candidates based on the points system.
2. To schedule volunteer lab hours, please call (678)226-6404. Volunteer points will be good for two application periods and must be completed by application deadline. If the student is not selected during that time frame, volunteer hours must be repeated.

Program Costs & Requirements

Uniform scrubs, shoes, books; liability insurance; criminal background check and drug screening; immunizations for hospital clinical; exam fees for certification. More costs may be added as the program is developed.

For more information, contact:

Tavia Thurmond, Program Support Specialist for Health Information Systems
tthurmond@gwinnetttech.edu 678-226-6404

Everyone is welcome to attend our Information Session held on the 1st Saturday of each month* at 9:00 a.m. in Building 200, Room 104

*There will NOT be an Information Session in January*

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Diagnostic Medical Sonography

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Nature of the Work

Sonographers use special equipment to direct high frequency sound waves into areas of the patient’s body. Sonographers operate the equipment, which collects reflected echoes and forms an image that may be videotaped, transmitted, or photographed for interpretation and diagnosis by a physician. Viewing the screen during the scan, sonographers look for subtle visual cues that contrast healthy areas with unhealthy ones. They decide whether the images are satisfactory for diagnostic purposes and select which ones to store and show to the physician. In addition to working directly with patients, diagnostic medical sonographers keep patient records and adjust and maintain equipment. They also may prepare work schedules, evaluate equipment purchases, or manage a sonography or diagnostic imaging department.

Work Environment

Sonographers typically work in healthcare facilities that pass stringent national cleanliness requirements. They work with diagnostic ultrasound imaging systems in darkened rooms, but they may also perform procedures at the bedside and during surgical procedures. Sonographers may be on their feet for long periods of time and may have to lift or turn disabled patients. Full-time sonographers work 40 hours a week, and many facilities now employ full-time sonographers for night and weekend hours. Some sonographers are on-call for emergency procedures and must be ready to report to work on short notice.

Employment

Diagnostic medical sonographers held about 53,700 jobs nationally in 2012. About 59 percent of all sonographer jobs were in public and private hospitals. The remaining jobs were typically in offices of physicians, medical and diagnostic laboratories, and outpatient care centers. Employment of diagnostic medical sonographers is expected to increase by about 44 percent from 2012 to 2020. The demand for certified sonographers is due to the increased variety of sonographic exams and the number of sonographers that will retire.

Earnings

The median annual wage nationally of diagnostic medical sonographers was $64,380 in 2012. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $44,900, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $88,490. Median annual wages of diagnostic medical sonographers in 2012 were $64,560 in offices of physicians and $64,440 in hospitals.

Research the Career
