

Radiography Program: Frequently Asked Questions & General Information

1. Q *Is the program “accredited”?*

A The Radiography Program at Northwestern Memorial Hospital is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 2850, Chicago, IL 60606-3182 (312) 704-5300, e-mail: mail@jrcert.org

The JRCERT promotes excellence in education and elevates quality and safety of patient care through the accreditation of educational programs in radiography, radiation therapy, magnetic resonance, and medical dosimetry. The JRCERT is the only agency recognized by the United States Department of Education for the accreditation of traditional and distance delivery educational programs in radiography, radiation therapy, magnetic resonance, and medical dosimetry. For more information, visit www.jrcert.org

2. Q *Will I be eligible to take the national certification examination in radiography (ARRT)?*

A Students successfully completing all courses, clinical requirements, and program graduation requirements are eligible, provided they meet all published ARRT eligibility and ethics criteria. For a complete listing of eligibility criteria and ethics requirements, visit www.arrt.org. Program graduation requirements can be found at clinicalschools.nm.org.

3. Q *Are there any part-time enrollment options, weekends and / or evenings?*

A This is a traditional program in the sense that classes and clinical are scheduled Monday-through-Friday. Many of the examinations required for competency evaluation are performed only during daytime hours. Senior students also complete a 3-week evening trauma rotation (2:00 – 10:30PM). Due to available levels of supervision, no clinical rotation assignments are scheduled on weekends, holidays, or during 3rd shift (after 11 PM).

4. Q *What is the difference between an “academic affiliate” student and a “non-affiliate” student?*

A Academic affiliate students complete the first two years of their education at an accredited university and then apply to the program during the selection process. Those accepted will complete the same courses and clinical assignments as those not enrolling through an affiliated university, and will receive a certificate of completion from the program at graduation. The affiliate university will award a 4-year degree. Currently, the program is affiliated with the University of St. Francis in Joliet, IL, Lewis University in Romeoville, IL, Roosevelt University in Chicago, IL, and Benedictine University in Lisle, IL. For more information about the B.S. Degree in Radiography, visit www.stfrancis.edu, www.lewisu.edu, www.roosevelt.edu, and <http://www.ben.edu>.

Accepted students not enrolling through an affiliate university will graduate with a certificate of completion. Beginning in 2015, the American Registry of Radiologic Technologist (ARRT) requires all examinees to possess an Associate’s Degree (or higher) to be eligible for examination. Therefore, only applicants completing an Associate’s Degree (or higher) by the time of program enrollment, or those applying through one of the academic affiliates, will be considered for program enrollment.

5 Q *How long is the program?*

A The radiography program is 21-months long and begins each year in late September. You can view the academic calendar at: clinicalschools.nm.org, under the *School of Radiography* tab.

6 Q *How can I obtain program effectiveness data?*

A Program effectiveness data is published on the JRCERT website www.jrcert.org. This information includes in-field employment, program completion rate, and ARRT 1st attempt pass rates. This information can also be found on the program's web page clinicalschools.nm.org, under the *School of Radiography* tab.

7 Q *How can I get more information about the program?*

A Visit our program webpage at clinicalschools.nm.org. Click on the "School of Radiography".

8 Q *Where can I learn more about the profession of radiography?*

A Visit the American Society of Radiologic Technologists' website at www.asrt.org. The ASRT is the national professional organization for the imaging sciences. The Annual Wage & Salary Survey can also be found on the ASRT website.

<u>Application, Pre-requisites & Selection Process</u>

9 Q *What courses do I need to take so that I can apply?*

- A**
- **Human Anatomy & Physiology** (minimum of 2 semesters) **
 - **College Algebra or Statistics:** minimum 3 cr.**
 - **Medical Terminology****
 - **Written Communication:** minimum 3 cr.
 - **Oral Communication** - minimum 3 cr.

** Completed within 7 years of application.

All pre-requisite courses must be completed with a grade of "C" or higher, from an accredited college or university no later than August 31st of the application year. Final acceptance is contingent upon successful completion of all prerequisite courses.

Non-affiliate students must have earned an Associate's Degree or higher by August 31st of the application year. An official transcript showing degree conferred will be required as proof.

Remedial-level coursework does not satisfy program pre-requisite course requirements.

10 Q *Where can I take pre-requisite courses? Does the program offer preference for those completed at certain colleges or universities?*

A Pre-requisite courses may be completed at any regionally-accredited college or university. The program does not offer preference for any particular institution.

11 Q *How can I tell if a course I took was college-level or not?*

A All colleges and universities have a course numbering system. Each course number has a prefix corresponding to a department (such as ENG 101, which would represent a course offered by the English Department).

Generally, courses that are college-level are either 100-series or higher (sometimes 1000-series or higher depending on the school). Course numbers beginning with a zero are usually remedial-level courses.

- For example, MTH 212 would represent a college-level math course, while MTH 098 would indicate a remedial-level math course.

Remedial courses are not recognized as meeting program pre-requisite requirements.

12 Q *I have completed courses at a foreign college or university. What is the process for considering foreign credits?*

A Applicants must have transcripts from institutions outside of the United States evaluated by the Educational Credentials Evaluators, Inc. (ECE) prior to application. The evaluation must be submitted no later than the application deadline.

Additionally, applicants whose native language is not English, or have ESL courses on their US transcripts, must submit official [TOEFL](#) scores no later than the application deadline. Information about the TOEFL Exam can be found at clinicalschools.nm.org > for prospective students > application and admissions process.

13 Q *If I'm not sure I've met a pre-requisite course requirement, what should I do?*

A You should have official transcripts sent to the academic registrar for evaluation. The registrar's contact information can be found on the program's website. This should be done well in advance of the application deadline to allow sufficient time for evaluation and, when necessary, completion of any remaining courses.

14 Q *When can I apply? What is the typical timeline for the application and selection process?*

A Most applications begin arriving in October of each year, and continue until the application deadline of February 1st. However, applications are accepted year-round, and all applicants are encouraged to apply early. This allows ample time to obtain any additional documentation that may be needed and to facilitate the interview process.

15 Q *Are all applicants interviewed?*

A **No.** The actual number selected for an interview will depend on the number of program applicants and each applicant's qualifications, including academic history. The admissions committee considers all aspects of an individual's application and offers interview appointments to the **most-qualified** applicants. **Applying does not guarantee a panel interview.**

16 Q *Why are only 10 students accepted each year?*

A Each program has a maximum number of students it can accept. This number is based on the number of available clinical rotation sites and student capacity at each. This ensures appropriate levels of student supervision and clinical experiences. Currently, the program uses Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Northwestern Lakeview Radiology, NM River North Immediate Care Center, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Comer Children's Hospital at the University of Chicago Medical Center, Lurie Children's Hospital, and Central DuPage Hospital as clinical sites.

17 Q *How are students selected? What criteria are considered?*

A Many factors are considered during the selection process, with points awarded for each. These include grades in pre-requisite courses, cumulative GPA (tabulated from all colleges attended), math and science GPAs, application essay and references, previous educational experience, panel interview scores, and whether an applicant has any medical experience. The 10 highest-ranking at the end of the process are offered slots, along with 4 alternates designated in order of final ranking.

18 Q *How can I improve my chances of being selected?*

A Grades play a significant role in the selection process. If a student earns a "C" in any of the pre-requisite courses, they are strongly urged to re-take that course. The program will award points based on the higher grade of both attempts. Additional ways of improving selection chances include obtaining healthcare experience, either through paid employment or volunteer experiences, and completion of an academic degree.

19 Q *Does the program have a wait list?*

A **No.** The program uses a competitive selection process, which ensures that only the most-qualified are chosen. A competitive selection process provides all applicants an equal chance.

20 Q *I previously applied and was not selected. Do I receive preference if I reapply?*

A **No.** You must re-apply and compete with all other applicants for that year.

21 Q *I have attended another radiography program. Does the program accept transfer credits?*

A Courses completed at other radiography programs are not recognized by this program. Students must complete all courses within the radiography curriculum in our program.

22 Q *How can I get more information about the application and selection process?*

A Visit our website at clinicalschools.nm.org. If you still have questions after reviewing the website, contact the academic registrar at (312) 926-6609.

Tuition and Finances

23 Q *Is financial aid available? What payment options are available?*

A Northwestern Memorial Hospital does not administer Title IV federal financial aid. However, students currently enrolled through affiliate universities may be eligible for financial aid through their respective school's financial aid department.

If necessary, Northwestern Memorial Hospital offers a payment plan to non-affiliate students, which allows tuition charges to be paid in three installments. To participate, students must contact the Registrar prior to the tuition due date.

- The student will make an initial payment of 50% of the total charges due by the 15th of the month preceding the month in which classes begin (August 15th).
- The remaining balance is paid in two equal installments due on the 15th of the month for the following two months (September 15th and October 15th).

Additional information about the Northwestern Memorial Hospital payment plan may be obtained by contacting the Registrar's Office at (312) 926-6609.

24 Q *Besides tuition, what other expenses are associated with program enrollment?*

A Visit our website at clinicalschools.nm.org. A summary can be found under the "For Prospective Students" tab. An itemized listing can be obtained upon request. Tuition and fees are subject to change.

Once I enroll

25 Q *What does a typical weekly schedule look like?*

A The first 6-months of the program (first 2 academic quarters) are the most rigorous. Students should expect classes 3 days a week, and clinical 2 days each week. As the program progresses, this changes to 1 or 2 days of class and 3 or 4 days of clinical for the remaining quarters.

Classes, labs, and clinical are scheduled between the hours of 7:30 AM and 4:30 PM. In addition, all seniors complete a 3-week trauma rotation at NMH between the hours of 2:00 PM and 10:30 PM. In accordance with JRCERT accreditation standards, students are not permitted to invest more than 40 hours per week, or 10 hours per day, in combined program activities.

26 Q *Can I work while I am enrolled?*

A To maintain good health and to be successful in the program, it is recommended that students not be employed. If part-time employment is necessary, it cannot interfere with the responsibilities of class, clinical and laboratory attendance. Class and clinical rotation assignments will not be adjusted to meet individual work schedules.

Employed students must accept responsibility for maintaining satisfactory attendance, and academic and clinical performance while meeting established program standards.

27 Q *Where do students complete clinical rotation assignments?*

A All students rotate through Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Northwestern Lakeview Radiology, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Comer Children's Hospital at the University of Chicago Medical Center, Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago and Outpatient Center in Lincoln Park, and Central DuPage Hospital. Students rotate through all clinical sites and are responsible for providing their own transportation.

28 Q *Is radiography a "safe" profession?*

A Yes! With proper safety precautions, and sound professional judgment, radiography is a safe profession. For further information, visit: www.asrt.org and www.ncrp.org

29 Q *How is my radiation exposure monitored?*

A Students wear a radiation monitoring badge (dosimeter) at all times during clinical assignment. The badges are processed quarterly, and reports of exposure are generated. Students sign and date the reports to indicate they have been informed of any exposure.

30 Q *What happens if I become pregnant during my enrollment?*

A Disclosure of pregnancy is voluntary. Following a disclosure, an additional radiation badge will be issued to monitor fetal exposure. A safe working environment will be coordinated by the program director, clinical coordinator, and radiation safety officer.

Options for student continuance in the program may include, but are not limited to:

- An altered rotation schedule
- Enrollment in only the didactic portion of the program until after delivery
- Continuation without any alterations to rotation schedules or program activities.

Each pregnancy disclosure will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Ultimately, the enrollment option will depend on documentation from the student's obstetrician and the student's decision. Furthermore, any declared pregnant student may revoke her declaration at any time (undeclare). Any time missed due to delivery must be made up at the end of the program.

31 Q *What is the minimum grade requirement for all program courses?*

A For all didactic and clinical courses, the following grading scale is used:

A: 94-100%

B: 84-93.9%

C: 75-83.9%

D: 65-74.9%

F: below 65%

Students must maintain a final course average of "C" (75% or higher) in all didactic and clinical courses to remain in the program. Students earning less than a 75% "C" in any course will be dismissed.

32 Q *Do I need internet access once I am enrolled?*

A Yes. Email is one of the primary means of communication between program officials and students. Communication often includes course assignments, handouts, announcements and important updates. The program currently offers 2 courses in a hybrid format, requiring some online work outside of class. The number of online and hybrid courses is expected to increase in the near future.

Incidentally, all correspondence related to the application process are sent electronically, including interview appointments and final applicant status.

<u>Graduation and Beyond</u>

33 Q *Once I complete the program, how do I become “certified”?*

A Those completing all graduation requirements, and meeting eligibility requirements published by the ARRT, can take the national certification examination (aka. “the Registry Exam”). A complete listing of exam eligibility requirements can be found at www.arrt.org.

34 Q *What career options are available once I graduate?*

A There are many different career paths available to entry-level radiographers. Radiographers work in a variety of settings including hospitals, diagnostic centers, doctor's offices, clinics and orthopedic practices. Radiographers can also cross-train in CT, MRI, mammography, interventional radiography, and many other areas. Advanced career options in education, administration and research are also possible.

35 Q *What is the job and salary outlook for radiographers?*

A According to the US Department of Labor, radiography as a profession is expected to grow at a rate “faster than average”. The ASRT also publishes information about job and salary surveys (www.asrt.org).

Additional Links:

- The American Registry of Radiologic Technologists www.arrt.org
- The American Society of Radiologic Technology www.asrt.org
- The Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology www.jrcert.org
- The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics www.bls.gov
- Northwestern Memorial Hospital www.nmh.org