



DMS STUDENT HANDBOOK



EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION FOR TODAY'S CAREERS

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CONTENTS

Contents	1
MISSION	4
VISION	4
CORE VALUES	4
Student Recognition Awards	5
Attendance	5
Attendance Policy	6
Tardiness & Leaving Early	6
Make-up Work and Exams	6
Quiz and Exam Policy	6
STUDENT EVALUATIONS	6
Evaluation Points	7
CRITERIA	7
EVALUATION OUTCOMES	7
Student Success Plan	7
Verbal	7
At-Risk	8
Probation	8
Dismissal	8
Remediation	8
Repeated Courses:	9
RULES AND REGULATIONS	9
Ethical Code of Conduct:	9
BAC House Rules:	9
Bullying	10
Anti-Bullying Statement	10
Definition	10
Cellphone/Personal Electronic/Digital Equipment in the Classroom Usage	11
Technology Policy	11

Student Email Accounts.....	11
Text Messaging.....	11
E-Learning Resources	11
Policies - General	12
Smoking.....	12
Exterior Doors	12
Parking	12
Fire Drills and Emergency Preparedness Procedures	12
Dress Code Policy.....	12
Notice of Modifications and/or Changes	13
General Programmatic Information	14
Program Mission Statement	14
Program Goal and Objectives.....	14
PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS	15
Objectives.....	15
Principles.....	15
Principle I: In order to promote patient well-being, the diagnostic medical sonographer shall:	15
Principle II: To promote the highest level of competent practice, diagnostic medical sonographers shall:.....	15
Principle III: To promote professional integrity and public trust, the diagnostic medical sonographer shall:.....	15
Student Professional Behavior Policy	16
Laboratory Policy.....	16
Pregnancy Policy.....	16
Volunteers for Educational Purposes	17
Description	17
Risks	17
Clinical Education	17
Clinical Rotation	17
Clinical Assignment Procedure	18
Clinical Attendance Policy	18
Clinical Time Make-Up Policy	18

Safe Environment19

Health Insurance.....19

Professional Organizations20

Student Handbook Acknowledgement.....21

MISSION

Exceptional Education for Today's Careers

VISION

Blake Austin College's mission is to provide each student a quality educational experience in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline, motivation, and excellence. Our hands-on approach supports the student from the introduction of training through the employment process. We are dedicated to providing educational programs that are relevant to current employment demands. Staff is challenged to administer to each individual and is receptive to their needs, ability, and capacity to learn. To do what is right for the right reason... to help a fellow human being succeed with confidence, respect, and dignity.

CORE VALUES

Integrity

Contribution to and Compassion for Human Welfare

A Focused Team

Risk Taking

Empowerment with Accountability

INTRODUCTION

This handbook was written by the faculty of the Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) program, with the assistance of the College administration, to inform students of the program's policies and procedures. The faculty will periodically review the policies, procedures, curriculum and any other information contained in this manual as necessary. The administration reserves the right to amend, supplement or rescind these policies at any time without prior notification. Any changes and/or additions will be distributed to the students in writing and will supersede previous policies and/or procedures.

The Blake Austin College (BAC) catalog, its supplements and the DMS program Student Handbook contain the policies and procedures of the institution and of the program. Due to the nature of the curriculum and the clinical expectations of the graduates, programmatic policies and procedures may be more stringent than those of the college.

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with all the information contained in the college catalog and the student handbook. The student, throughout the duration of the program, should retain these materials. Copies of revised policies, procedures and/or revised editions will be distributed when they become available.

All faculty and students have the responsibility of preserving the privacy, dignity, and safety of all individuals who are part of the program and must maintain confidentiality in all academic and clinical settings.

STUDENT LIFE

STUDENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

Throughout the student's life at BAC, faculty and staff may recognize students who exhibit the College's core value(s). This type of recognition will occur at round-up.

Students are also recognized for Perfect Attendance, President's List (GPA of 3.8 and higher), and/or Dean's List (GPA of 3.5 – 3.79) at the end of each course/semester. A student may receive the core value of the month award at the discretion of their instructor. The student(s) must meet the attendance policy requirements in order to be eligible for an award.

Upon successful completion of the program, students with an overall 100% attendance, not including make-up time, will be recognized at graduation. Students achieving a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.70 or higher and overall attendance of 95% or higher (not including make-up time) will be provided with an honor cord for graduation.

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Blake Austin College (BAC) must be able to confirm to potential employers that a student will be a reliable employee. Punctual attendance is required at all classes, clinical rotations, and externships. Attendance is an absolutely crucial part of the program and a requirement for graduation. Regular attendance is an obligation assumed by every student at the time of enrollment. Regular class attendance and being on time helps students develop good habits and attitudes necessary to compete in the job market. Attendance is monitored and recorded daily. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the College in advance if they will be absent or late. Employment opportunities are often optimized for a student who demonstrates reliability and punctuality.

All absences must be reported, and the student must call BAC at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the class start when the student will be absent or tardy. Failure to notify the College may result in disciplinary action. When calling in, students should provide their full name and program. Students are encouraged to schedule medical, dental, personal, or legal appointments outside of their scheduled school hours and should notify the school if they plan to be absent. Excessive instances and violations of the attendance policy can be grounds for dismissal.

Students who have been absent 14-consecutive calendar days, not including scheduled school holidays or breaks, will be dropped from the program.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to achieve 100% attendance per course. Absences equal to or in excess of 10% of the scheduled hours of any course, may lead to attendance probation or dismissal from the college. Any student that is absent for more than three consecutive days will be reassessed and recommended for appropriate action based on grade and performance. Students on attendance probation who have failed to meet the probationary terms and/or attendance requirement may be dismissed from the program.

Students who are tardy and/or have absences in their first week of the program may be cancelled from the program. All students must achieve 100% attendance in prerequisite classes to continue in the program. Absences equal to or in excess of 10% of the scheduled hours of any course, may lead to attendance probation or dismissal from the college.

Any additional hours missed that are more than the allotted hours above will result in dismissal from the program. Exception will be positive for COVID-19 and documentation will be required.

TARDINESS & LEAVING EARLY

Tardiness is deemed unprofessional behavior. Students must be present in class at the time of the scheduled class, at the beginning of class and after breaks. A student arriving after the scheduled class starting time, leaving before the scheduled ending time, returning late from break, or who is unprepared to begin class is considered tardy. They will receive a tardy or leave early on their attendance record. For every fourth tardy or left early, students will be placed on a success plan for attendance violation. In addition, continuous tardiness/attendance concerns may lead to failure of the course and/or dismissal from the program. Tardy students will be admitted into the classroom upon the discretion of the instructor.

MAKE-UP WORK AND EXAMS

Students are required to makeup all course work missed due to absenteeism. The instructor may assign additional work to be completed for each absence to meet the missed learning objectives. Students are responsible for getting missed assignments and arranging time with the instructor or designee for make-up work. A 10% deduction of the score will be applied to all makeup work.

QUIZ AND EXAM POLICY

Students must be present on the day of an assessment (exam or quiz) or the student will receive a zero. Assessments (exams or quiz) in any class cannot be made up if a student is absent on the day of the scheduled assessment (exam or quiz). If the absence is due to COVID, the student must present a positive printout of a COVID lab test result to the Program Director/Lead. Snapshots, pictures are not acceptable

Students will receive one attempt on all graded exams and quizzes. If a student does not pass a quiz and/or exam, the student will be placed on remediation. Please see the Student Success Plan section of the handbook.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Students are evaluated at certain points during their program of study. The purpose of these evaluation points is to ensure student success. Students who are receiving Veterans' benefits may not be on probation longer than two (2) evaluation point periods. If the probation is extended past the second evaluation period, the student will lose any future Veterans' funding for that enrollment.

Evaluations reflect up-to-date attendance and grades for the current course. The length of each program is:

- Diagnostic Medical Sonography: 10-week terms, 7 terms, 70 weeks program

EVALUATION POINTS

- Week 5 of every term

CRITERIA

The criteria are listed below for the students to meet at each evaluation point. The criteria are broken down per program.

- 90% attendance
- 75% current course grade

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

If the student does not meet any of the criteria listed for his/her program at the time of evaluation, the following steps will be implemented:

- Complete advisement, Student Success Plan
 - 1st offense: Verbal Warning
 - 2nd offense At-Risk status
 - 3rd offense: Probation status
 - 4rd offense: Dismissal from the program

If the student meets the criteria at the evaluation point, the student is taken off At-Risk/Probation status. Students may be dismissed prior to 4th offense if continued verbal and at-risk status per multiple terms.

STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

Student Success Plans are created to:

- 1) Identify problem areas that a student may be encountering, and
- 2) Take the necessary actions to correct the situation and promote student success.

Student Success Plans are also completed when a student violates any of the policies. The statuses for the Student Success Plan are:

1. Verbal
2. At Risk
3. Probation
4. Dismissal

VERBAL

In some circumstances, an instructor may deem that a student would benefit from specific verbal instruction aimed at correcting a problem/concern. In many instances, this may relate to conduct violations. Whenever an instructor gives a student verbal counseling, a note will be entered into the student's record so that other instructors and administrators are aware. In the vast majority of cases, verbal counseling is provided to ensure student success through identification of a problem and offering possible solutions rather than as a reprimand.

AT-RISK

Any time a student appears to be violating any of the policies; the student will be placed on “At-Risk” status. “At-Risk” status can extend from one course/session to another.

“At-Risk” status may occur, but is not limited to, the following reasons:

- Failure to meet attendance policy.
- Failure to attend mandatory lab: skills remediation; exam remediation; or make-up time.
- Failure to perform in a professional manner, code of conduct violation.
- Exam Score less than 75%.

Students will remain on “At-Risk” and attend remediation (if applicable) each week until the terms of the remediation have been met. Once the terms have been successfully met the student will be removed from “At-Risk”. The instructor or designee will review the student’s success, and both will sign in the appropriate areas. If the student fails to meet the terms of his/her “At-Risk”, the student may be placed on “Probation”.

PROBATION

Students who violate the attendance, academic, student conduct, performance Policies, or failed to meet the terms of their “At-Risk” status may be placed on Probation. Probation notifies staff and faculty that the student requires close monitoring in order to be successful. Probationary status can extend from one course/session to another.

- If the student fails to meet the terms of his/her “Probation”, the student may be dismissed from the program, or their “Probation” may be extended.

DISMISSAL

Dismissal occurs when the college determines that the student has not met or cannot satisfactorily meet the academic, attendance, conduct, or other performance policies of the program. A student may be dismissed for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Failure to meet attendance policy
- Failure to meet the terms of probation
- Failure to complete the program in 1.5 times the published length
- Failure to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements
- Failure to meet financial obligations
- Gross violation of the Student Code of Conduct; or Drug policy violation.
-

NOTE: A student may be dismissed from the program at any point in the success plan stages if there is gross misconduct or failure to comply with the terms of the success plan or BAC Policies.

REMEDIATION

Remediation is a time for additional instruction for any student that is in need of assistance in either theory or lab skills. It is not designed to be used as a one-on-one learning, but as an aide to provide the student with the tools to become successful. Students will be required to attend mandatory remediation if the student:

- Fails a skill in a skills-based course

- Requires remediation of a skill or clinical performance
- Exam scores less than 75%
- Is requested from an instructor if he/she feels that additional instruction is needed to ensure that a skill check-off is completed

Students may initiate the request with their instructor for remediation if the student feels the need for assistance in lab skills or understanding the theory.

REPEATED COURSES:

A student who earns less than 75% in a course in their program of study must repeat the course. When a course is repeated, the original grade will be replaced by “FR” and is designated as a repeat course. All repeated courses count as credit/hours attempted in the maximum time frame evaluation for SAP. If a student fails the same course twice, the student will be dismissed from the program. Any student who has failed a total of three courses in his/her program of study and/or does not meet the SAP requirements will be dismissed from the program.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

While on school grounds, all students shall conduct themselves in an appropriate adult manner and shall be prepared for class sober and attentive. Consideration and respect should be given to all people, including other students and staff. Inappropriate behavior resulting in a violation of this policy is grounds for suspension and/or dismissal.

ETHICAL CODE OF CONDUCT:

The student:

- Will abide by all local, state and federal laws
- Will present him/herself in a professional manner
- Will abide by the Student Code of Conduct; and
- Will abide by all school policies and procedures

Students found guilty of violating the Ethical Code of Conduct, committing academic dishonesty or plagiarism, or failing to meet the professional standards of the College shall be liable for sanctions up to and including dismissal from the College. An investigation of suspected violation will be conducted and will be presented to the student. The student will have the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing and/or in person. The position of the school may be to:

- Exonerate the student
- Issue a warning to the student
- Place the student on probation; or
- Dismiss the student from the College

Students will be informed in writing of the disciplinary action, as well as the conditions that must be met in order to remove the disciplinary status or complete the terms that must be met in order to continue enrollment.

BAC HOUSE RULES:

- No foul language and/or cursing in classrooms, halls or around the building area. Please do not loiter in the hallways.
- Please dispose of all trash in containers. This includes, but is not limited to; soft drink cans, candy wrappers, and lunch take out containers. A recycle can is located in the kitchen area. If trash is full, please inform staff. Clean up after yourselves whether in the restroom, break areas or around the building.
- There is no eating in the classrooms or drinking permitted. Drinks must have a sports top or cap (non-spill proof) that must be put away and used only in the designated areas during breaks.
- No children are allowed in the classrooms.

- Harassment of any form will not be tolerated on BAC campus. Harassment will result in immediate dismissal.
- No illegal or outside software or disks will be used, installed, or loaded onto any BAC computer unless BAC owns or has the licensing rights to the software.
- Any student who is assigned software for use in the classroom shall not copy, install, or use the software on any other computer.
- No equipment, books or software are to leave the building without prior consent and checkout procedures completed.

BULLYING

BAC believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy college environment. Educational institutions along with the community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance. BAC will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any staff, faculty, or student.

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

Bullying can foster a climate of fear and disrespect which seriously impairs the physical and psychological health of its victims and creates conditions that negatively affect the learning and working environment. BAC is committed to maintaining high standards for behaviors where every member of the College community conducts oneself in a manner which demonstrates proper regard for the rights and welfare of others. This Anti-Bullying statement, therefore, seeks to educate the College community about bullying, and to promote civility and respect among all its members, including the administration, faculty, staff, and students.

DEFINITION

Bullying is defined as the aggressive and hostile acts of an individual or group of individuals who are intended to humiliate, mentally or physically injure, intimidate, and/or control another individual or group of individuals.

Such aggressive and hostile acts can occur as a single, severe incident or repeated incidents, and may manifest itself in the following forms:

Physical Bullying includes direct physical contact such as hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, poking, and/or tripping another; assaulting or threatening, a physical assault; damaging a person's work area, personal property or personal product.

Verbal/Written Bullying includes ridiculing, insulting, or maligning a person, either verbally or in writing; verbal assaults, teasing, name calling, using abusive language, threatening, gossiping, derogatory, pressuring an individual into committing an act they choose not to do, belittling or offensive remarks to a person; and/or attempting to exploit an individual's known intellectual or physical vulnerabilities.

Nonverbal Bullying includes directing threatening gestures toward a person, an eye roll, a glare, making faces, sneering, laughing at a student's comment in the learning environment, a dismissive snort, smirking, or invading personal space after being asked to move or step away, undesirable hurtful social isolation or repeated manipulating behavior.

"Cyber bullying" is defined as bullying and individual using electronic form, including, but not limited to, the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, chat boxes, group texts or mobile phones.

BAC will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any employee of BAC or student. BAC expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the Program Director or designee. BAC employees who witness such acts will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Each complaint must be submitted on an incident report and/or email. Each complaint of bullying will be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on campus grounds, while traveling to and from campus or at a campus-sponsored activity, during lunch breaks, whether on or off campus, and during any campus-sponsored preceptorship.

Instructors shall discuss this policy with their students in a respectful way and assure them that they need not endure

any form of bullying. Students witnessing or experiencing bullying are strongly encouraged to report the incident immediately to the Program Director or Academic Director; such reporting will not reflect on the complainant or witness in any way. Students can rely on BAC employees to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner. If the complainant feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached, the student should contact the Campus Director. The college prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion with or without written warning.

CELLPHONE/PERSONAL ELECTRONIC/DIGITAL EQUIPMENT IN THE CLASSROOM USAGE

Personal electronic equipment such as recorders and phones are not to be used in the classrooms or clinical facilities. A success form will be issued if a student is in violation of the cellphone/personal electronic/digital equipment usage in the classroom. Use of other electronic/digital device (smart watches) or cellphone during an assessment (quiz or exam) will be subject to disciplinary action, possibly resulting in dismissal from the program.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

If portable devices are required in the classroom, use must be limited for instructional and learning only. Personal use during instructional time may result in student being sent home.

STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNTS

- @BACStudent.com emails (google accounts) will be provided for all students during the first two weeks of class.
- BAC Student emails will be the only email account used to communicate between instructor, staff, and students.
- The BAC Student email account will be utilized to connect with other eLearning resources.
- BAC Student emails will be used for Alumni to assist with job placement.
- BAC Student emails should be considered a professional email and used appropriately.

TEXT MESSAGING

BAC utilizes Text Messaging to share information with students, such as:

- Emergency school closures
- Schedule changes
- Urgent communication

E-LEARNING RESOURCES

BAC may utilize many diverse eLearning resources. Instructors will assist students with access, if applicable.

POLICIES - GENERAL

SMOKING

Smoking is **absolutely prohibited** in front of the College. This includes vapor and e-cigarettes. The smoking area is on the back side of the building. In accordance with California state law, no smoking is allowed within 20 feet of entry/exit doors. Students must practice good hygiene before returning to class after smoking.

EXTERIOR DOORS

The door are locked for safety reasons at night after students have arrived.

PARKING

Parking for students is located on the side of the building, front and back of the building. Students are encouraged to back in the back parking lot of the building. The college is not responsible for theft and/or damage to any vehicles and/or student property.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROCEDURES

Fire drills are scheduled to be conducted during scheduled class time. Emergency Exits and Campus Emergency Procedures are posted throughout the campus. Each student should familiarize themselves with these exits and procedures.

DRESS CODE POLICY

While attending classes on campus Students are expected to be in appropriate Blake Austin College attire such as a BAC t-shirt, BAC hoodie, etc. To complete the dress code students can wear blue jeans, or other appropriate pants. Students at externship are expected to dress in a BAC uniform. All clothing must be clean, wrinkle-free, not tight fitting, and odor free. The academic administration will assess as to neatness and cleanliness of wearing apparel and whether such apparel is appropriate, distracting, or in violation of health and safety rules. Students must always wear a campus-issued student ID badge card, above the waist and name with picture facing out, while on campus or at externship. Students will be advised to leave the campus and externship when not in appropriate attire and absences will be recorded for that class. Examples of inappropriate dress includes, but are not limited to, soiled shoes, colored "T" shirts, printed long-sleeved shirts, soiled shoelaces, multiple earrings, excessive jewelry, tongue or facial piercing, absence of College's identification name tag, etc.

1. BAC scrubs (no substitutions): appropriate length and fit. Student can wear long sleeve shirts in white or black (there should be no print on the sleeves). Uniform pants must be hemmed so they do not touch the ground and worn with the waistband at the waist. Uniform pants work such as hip-huggers or in a drop waist fashion, jogging type scrub pants are not allowed, and tight uniform pants are not allowed.
2. No sweaters, sweatshirts, hoodies, or non-nursing jackets at externship.
3. Students can purchase a black or white lab jacket can be worn with the college issued uniform.
4. Student ID badge must be worn and visible on the uniform.
5. Watch – with a second hand. No iPhone, android, fit bit, digital watch is allowed.
6. If clothing does not cover the tattoo, it must be covered with a plain neutral color sleeve, wrap, bandage or appropriate concealing makeup or per clinical site regulation.
7. Chewing gum or tobacco products are not permitted.
8. No headbands, caps, beanies, scarves, flowers in the hair, or hair bobbies allowed.
9. No tight-fitting clinical scrub shirt or pant.

10. Fingernails should be short and clean. No longer than ¼” beyond. Extremes in length are not permitted. **No artificial nails or wraps allowed.**
11. No nail polish of any color including neutral or clear.
12. No artificial eyelashes or eyelash extensions.
13. Jewelry:
 - a. An engagement ring and/or wedding ring is allowed
 - b. A watch with a second hand
 - c. No hoop or dangling earrings
 - d. Ear lobes that have be gauged/stretched must be covered
 - e. No tongue or other facial piercing jewelry allowed
 - f. Shoes and Socks –Mostly white or black leather shoes; clean white shoelaces, socks must be black or white. Footwear must be appropriate for the healthcare facility environment.
14. Hair – well groomed, contained, off the collar and face, no hair accessories. Ponytails and braids must be pinned up and off the collar. Long bangs must be pinned back so they do not fall into the face. Hairstyles and hair colors and other fashions or styles that are unconventional to the professional clinical environment are not allowed; appropriate headwear based on a student’s religious affiliation or health status is allowed with the permission of the facility so as not to impeded standard precautions of care and preventing infection.

Violating the dress code policy will result in a Success Plan being issued. If actions are not corrected the Disciplinary process will be followed which could lead to dismissal from the program. If a serious violation has occurred, this could lead to immediate dismissal from the program.

NOTICE OF MODIFICATIONS AND/OR CHANGES

The College reserves the right to modify or make changes in faculty, program offerings, software course(s), books and/or materials, equipment, facility location, class schedules and hours, locations of equipment, classrooms, policies and procedures, student location, and other areas as it deems necessary to improve the quality of education the school provides. Consideration will be given to existing demands; however, changes may and will occur as necessary. All courses are formulated to incorporate the subject matter of the curriculum to be delivered in the format developed by the College (i.e., Instructor-Led or Open-entry, self-paced). Each course is developed to allow for the capacity of the classroom and/or Instructor-to-Student ratio. Calendars are provided as a guideline for instructors and students alike as the curriculum layout and when it should be delivered based on normal class conditions. Calendars are not to govern, but to guide.

DMS PROGRAM

GENERAL PROGRAMMATIC INFORMATION

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the DMS Program at Blake Austin College is to graduate students with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors expected of an entry level general sonographer. A competent graduate should be able to meet the nationally accepted standards and requirements and to serve the needs of the community, patients, and employers.

PROGRAM GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program is to prepare competent entry-level general sonographers in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains.

DMS Program is designed to:

- prepare competent entry-level sonographers in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains for abdominal sonography-extended concentration.
- prepare competent entry-level sonographers in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains for the obstetrics and gynecology concentration

The goal is further defined by the following objectives:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the protocols, policies and procedures of the ultrasound laboratory.
- Recognize the normal sonography appearance of structures of the abdomen, the gravid and non-gravid pelvis and associated vasculature.
- Identify and evaluate gross anatomy and the anatomic relationships of structures of the abdominal and pelvic cavities in transverse, coronal, and sagittal planes.
- Perform measurements of sonography images and data.
- Apply basic concepts of acoustic physics.
- Demonstrate knowledge of principles of ultrasound instrumentation and operation.
- Recognize and identify the normal appearance and Doppler patterns of the structures of the abdomen, pelvis, peritoneal, and retroperitoneal structures.
- Recognize and identify disease processes and pathophysiologic findings.
- Recognize and identify normal and abnormal anatomic structures.
- Identify anatomic variants, normal and abnormal Doppler patterns.

DMS students are required to register and take two credentialing examinations, as a requirement for graduation.

1. The Sonographic Principles and Instrumentation (SPI) Examination, administered through the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS); and
2. The modality as administered by ARDMS. ARDMS are national credentialing agencies.
 - The tests' fees are included in the cost of the program.
 - In the event a student fails a registry examination, that student is responsible for the cost of the re-examination.
 - Time limit set for the examination is as follows:
 - ARDMS Sonographic Principles and Instrumentation (SPI) Examination--by completion of the program and completion of the Ultrasound Physics courses.
 - ARDMS specialty (abdomen or OB/GYN)—must be registered in order to be graduated.

[ARDMS-General-Prerequisites-ARDMS-Physician-Call-Out-2.pdf](#)

Students will be given two mock registry exams during the last term of the program. Students are required to pass each exam with an 80% or higher to meet the requirements of the program.

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

The goal of this code of ethics is to promote excellence in patient care by fostering responsibility and accountability among diagnostic medical sonographers. In so doing, the integrity of the profession of diagnostic medical sonography will be maintained.

Objectives

1. To create and encourage an environment where professional and ethical issues are discussed and addressed.
2. To help the individual diagnostic medical sonographer identify ethical issues.
3. To provide guidelines for individual diagnostic medical sonographers regarding ethical behavior.

PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE I: IN ORDER TO PROMOTE PATIENT WELL-BEING, THE DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHER SHALL:

1. Provide information to the patient about the purpose of the sonography procedure and respond to the patient's questions and concerns.
2. Respect the patient's autonomy and the right to refuse the procedure.
3. Recognize the patient's individuality and provide care in a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory manner.
4. Promote the privacy, dignity and comfort of the patient by thoroughly explaining the examination, patient positioning and implementing proper draping techniques.
5. Maintain confidentiality of acquired patient information and follow national patient privacy regulations as required by the "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)."
6. Promote patient safety during the provision of sonography procedures and while the patient is in the care of the diagnostic medical sonographer.

PRINCIPLE II: TO PROMOTE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF COMPETENT PRACTICE, DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHERS SHALL:

1. Obtain appropriate diagnostic medical sonography education and clinical skills to ensure competence.
2. Achieve and maintain specialty specific sonography credentials. Sonography credentials must be awarded by a national sonography credentialing body that is accredited by a national organization which accredits credentialing bodies [i.e., the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), www.noca.org].
3. Uphold professional standards by adhering to defined technical protocols and diagnostic criteria established by peer review.
4. Acknowledge personal and legal limits, practice within the defined scope of practice, and assume responsibility for his/her actions.
5. Maintain continued competence through lifelong learning, which includes continuing education, acquisition of specialty specific credentials and re-credentialing.
6. Perform medically indicated ultrasound studies, ordered by a licensed physician or their designated health care provider.
7. Protect patients and/or study subjects by adhering to oversight and approval of investigational procedures, including documented informed consent.
8. Refrain from the use of any substances that may alter judgment or skill and thereby compromise patient care.
9. Be accountable and participate in regular assessment and review of equipment, procedures, protocols, and results. This can be accomplished through facility accreditation.

PRINCIPLE III: TO PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY AND PUBLIC TRUST, THE DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHER SHALL:

1. Be truthful and promote appropriate communications with patients and colleagues.
2. Respect the rights of patients, colleagues and yourself.
3. Avoid conflicts of interest and situations that exploit others or misrepresent information.
4. Accurately represent his/her experience, education and credentialing.
5. Promote equitable access to care.
6. Collaborate with professional colleagues to create an environment that promotes communication and respect.

7. Communicate and collaborate with others to promote ethical practice.
8. Engage in ethical billing practices.
9. Engage only in legal arrangements in the medical industry.

Report deviations from the Code of Ethics to institutional leadership for internal sanctions, local intervention and/or criminal prosecution. The Code of Ethics can serve as a valuable tool to develop local policies and procedures (Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers, 2015). [Scope of Practice and Clinical Standards for the Diagnostic Medical Sonographer \(sdms.org\)](#)

STUDENT PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR POLICY

The DMS program has established a set of professional behaviors which will help the student develop their knowledge and skills for entry-level positions in the field.

- Adhere to the college policies and procedures as outlined in the college catalog.
- Adhere to the program policies and procedures as outlined in the DMS Program Student Handbook.
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the clinical education site when assigned.
- Punctuality is a demonstration of professional behavior. It is an expectation that students arrive to class/clinical affiliate on time. Part of the final grade in didactic courses may reflect this behavior.
- Demonstrate responsibility and accountability in all aspects of the educational process.
- Demonstrate appropriate communication, interaction and behavior toward other program students, faculty and clinical staff.
- Visitors may not accompany students to class or clinical education sites. This includes children, spouses, parents, friends, animals or other visitors.

The program reserves the right to withdraw the student at any time (without a behavioral warning), if the demonstrated inappropriate professional behavior is judged extreme.

LABORATORY POLICY

The sole purpose for laboratory scanning sessions is to provide students' hands-on clinical educational experience. The sessions are not intended to be used for any medical purpose, i.e., diagnosis, referral for treatment or counseling.

Outside volunteers may be used in the laboratory for additional scanning practice. Volunteers will be required to sign a waiver acknowledging they are aware of the purpose of the exam. All exams performed at the college are for educational purposes only, in order to provide students with "hands-on" experience. If an incidental finding is discovered by the student and/or instructor during the laboratory scanning sessions, the student/volunteer should be referred to their healthcare provider for diagnosis and follow up. Instructors are not permitted to engage in any discussion pertaining to personal medical matters.

PREGNANCY POLICY

The student may voluntarily notify the program director of her pregnancy. This notification should be in writing and include the following information:

- Student's name
- Expected date of birth
- Anticipated last date of attendance

Should the student choose to voluntarily declare her pregnancy and remain in the program, the student may continue to complete all programmatic requirements without modification. The student may also opt to withdraw from the program until delivery or such a time when the student is able to return. The student may apply for re-admission. Once paperwork is complete, the student will be permitted to re-enter the program only into the same course from which she withdrew. The program will not offer out of sequence course(s) to accommodate returning students. A student may also opt to not declare the pregnancy and continue in the program without modification.

VOLUNTEERS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

Blake Austin College often seeks volunteers to participate in classroom-based sonography studies to provide practical experience to students enrolled in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program. Volunteers are provided with a Volunteer Authorization and Release Form that must be reviewed and signed prior to participating in any scanning activity. To ensure that all volunteers are able to make informed decisions regarding participation, the form includes a description of the procedures that will be performed and includes information on the risks associated with ultrasound.

The College seeks to reduce the potential for harm by ensuring that all scanning on human subjects is supervised by faculty who are registered sonographers. Students are not allowed to begin scanning on a subject until cleared by a member of the sonography faculty who then remains present throughout the activity.

The College does not collect personally identifiable information on any volunteer who participates in the program. Scanning documents are stored on the hard drive of the ultrasound machine for one term and some pictures are stored in the student's academic file.

DESCRIPTION

Extensive research has verified the safety of ultrasound as a diagnostic procedure. No confirmed adverse biological effects on patients resulting from its usage have ever been reported. Although no hazard has been identified that would preclude the prudent and conservative use of diagnostic ultrasound in education and research, experience from normal diagnostic practice may or may not be relevant to extended exposure times and altered exposure conditions.

RISKS

Subjects will be exposed to intensities typical of exposure conditions used for normal diagnostic practice. These intensities will be less than 1 W/cm² (for focused ultrasound) which is the standard approved by the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine, October 1987.

CLINICAL EDUCATION

CLINICAL ROTATION

An integral part of the curriculum of the DMS program is the portion termed "Clinical Rotation". The Diagnostic Medical Sonography program provides four clinical rotations (10 weeks each) during the length of the program. The first two clinical rotation provides clinical training based on 16-hours a week. The second two clinical rotation provides training based on 24-hours a week. During this portion of the program, each student is assigned to a clinical education site/s. Each site has a clinical instructor, who provides instruction and evaluates students during their clinical rotation. A student's cooperation, behavior, attendance, clinical knowledge and skills are monitored and graded by clinical instructors, clinical coordinator and/or program faculty.

The clinical rotation experience provides an opportunity to apply theory learned in the classroom to a health care setting through practical hands-on experience. The clinical rotation experience is planned and supervised by the program's clinical coordinator, in partnership with the affiliate faculty (clinical instructor). Usually, the student spends the first few days at the clinical education center shadowing a credentialed sonographer to observe and learn the protocols and procedures specific to the site. Once the student acclimates to the new surroundings, specific tasks are assigned.

Students must successfully complete all the prerequisite courses to participate in the clinical rotation portion of the program. Students are responsible for all classroom information and laboratory skills covered in the curriculum up to the point of each clinical education course. Clinical competencies are assigned for each clinical rotation to ensure development of skills throughout the clinical education. Upon completion of the final clinical experience, students are expected to display the knowledge and skill level of an entry-level sonographer.

During each clinical rotation, proficiencies will be assigned to help the student progress in the program from observation to entry level competencies. Entry-level is the minimum level of competence a student is expected to achieve by the end of all didactic and clinical preparation prior to graduation and initial entry in the clinical setting as a sonography professional.

Progression toward each competency should begin immediately to allow enough time for the completion of all the required number of proficiencies for each rotation. It is the student's responsibility to attempt proficiencies in a timely manner and communicate with the clinical instructor. These proficiencies are designed to test the competency level of the student, as it relates to entry level competencies. The student's goal is to demonstrate competence in all of the performance objectives of a required proficiency. When all components are mastered, the student will receive an approval for that proficiency.

Progression in the program will be delayed in the event the student is unable to complete assigned proficiencies resulting in a failing grade for the clinical rotation.

The essential purpose of a clinical experience is to provide an opportunity to utilize skills in which a student is trained at a place and in an environment approximating the demands of an employment situation. A supervised clinical rotation cannot in any way be constructed to be employment and shall be considered a required course within the DMS program. The JRC- DMS accreditation committee states that "to emphasize the fact that clinical experience is an essential aspect of the educational program, the student shall not receive remuneration for services provided during extramural assignments." Therefore, REMUNERATION FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION ROTATIONS IS NOT PERMITTED.

CLINICAL ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURE

To make clinical rotations a positive educational experience, the DMS clinical coordinator assigns students to a site taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the sonographic needs of the student. The goal of the College is to provide a site which allows a student to successfully complete assigned proficiencies for each clinical rotation.

- Blake Austin College's clinical education centers may be located outside of the county and possibly the state where the campus is located. Students may be required to travel outside their local area, county or the state in which the campus is located in order to attend their clinical rotations. Students are responsible for making travel arrangements.
- Students are required to rotate to different sites and different shifts during the length of the program.
- The student must attend the assigned clinical education site.
- The program reserves the right to make assignment changes to expose students to a variety of care settings and sonographic procedures performed.

If students have questions regarding the procedure of assigning clinical sites, they should be discussed with the clinical coordinator or program director.

CLINICAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

To gain the knowledge and skills required for an entry-level position in sonography, students must be in attendance at their assigned clinical education site. Students are required to abide by the following:

- The program and college do not distinguish between unapproved or approved absence.
- Students must call the college and their assigned clinical education site to report that they will be absent for the day.
- All externship hours must be made up, before a final grade is submitted for the term.

CLINICAL TIME MAKE-UP POLICY

Students who are absent from their assigned clinical education site must make up any clinical time missed, as a requirement of the clinical rotation course. The clinical instructor at a student's assigned clinical education site and the program's clinical coordinator must approve all of the students' clinical make-up time. All clinical education time missed

due to absences must be made up before the end of that student's current clinical rotation course. The program defines a clinical week as Monday through Sunday.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

CLINICAL SITE INCIDENT REPORTING.

Should an exposure incident occur during a student's clinical rotation, the student should inform the clinical instructor at the site immediately and the clinical coordinator within 24-hours of the occurrence. The clinical coordinator will acquire all pertinent information to complete an incident report. Students must adhere to the medical facility's rules and guidelines regarding a work-related incident and may consult with the clinical coordinator and/or program director on additional action to be taken. Appropriate follow up will be initiated by the program director upon receipt of a written incident report.

EXPOSURE TO BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

The DMS program has developed a policy to limit a student's occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials, since any exposure could result in the transmission of these materials.

- Training: Basic information regarding blood borne pathogens and universal precautions is provided to all students in the program.
- Exposure-associated tasks for Diagnostic Medical Sonography students during clinical rotations:
 1. Patient hygiene/elimination,
 2. Vascular access,
 3. Environmental and equipment cleaning,
 4. Guidance for invasive procedures,
 5. Post procedure cleanup,
 6. Specimen collection,
 7. Specimen transport, and
 8. Waste/linens management.
- Precautions to prevent the acquisition of infection by students:
 1. Hands must be washed between every direct patient contact
 2. Non-sterile gloves must be used if contact with blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions are anticipated.
 3. Gloves must be changed between patients.
 4. Gown and facial protection must be worn when doing procedures which may cause splatter and/or aerosolization of body fluids.
 5. Disposable needles and syringes should be placed in rigid puncture resistant containers. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles should not be recapped, bent, or broken before disposal.
 - 6.

HEALTH INSURANCE

DMS students are required to have an active major medical health insurance policy. Accidents or illnesses may occur by coming in contact with the clinical and laboratory environment. Medical evaluation, treatment, and follow-up care are the financial responsibility of the student. Proof of current medical health insurance coverage is required by both BAC and clinical facilities; proof must be submitted and kept current for the duration of the program. The insurance may be provided through a parent's policy or purchased through the student's own carrier. When students purchase insurance, it is important to be aware that some insurance plans are primarily for wellness care and do not cover treatment and follow-up care after an illness/ incident; such policies are insufficient.

The college will provide liability insurance to cover the student in the event of any incidents not due to gross negligence on the part of the extern. The college does not provide routine personal health insurance. Injuries to students have occurred, and the treatment for such injuries can be costly. Expenses for such injuries are not covered by either the facility or the college insurance.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

AIUM

American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine
14750 Sweitzer Lane, Suite 100
Laurel, MD 20707-5906
(800) 638-5352
www.aium.org

SDMS

Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography
2745 Dallas Parkway, Suite 350
Dallas, TX 75093-8730
(800) 229-9506
www.sdms.org

SVT

Society of Vascular Technology
4601 Presidents Drive, Suite 260
Lanham, MD 20706-4831
(800) 788-8346
www.svt.net

Credentialing Agencies ARDMS

American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
1401 Rockville Pike, Suite 600
Rockville, MD 20852-1402
(800) 541-9754
www.ardms.org

ARRT

American Registry of Radiologic Technologists
1255 Northland Drive
St. Paul, MN 55120 (651) 687-0048
www.arrt.org



STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received the DMS Program Student Handbook. I am aware that I am responsible for reading the handbook and complying with the contents therein. I understand that a copy is available on Blake Austin College's website under Consumer Information, <https://www.blakeaustincollege.edu/student-services/consumer-information/>

Student Name

Student Signature

Date