



UnityPoint Health
Des Moines

School of Radiologic Technology

Frequently Asked Questions

NOTE: Applicants should review information on the program's website often as changes in curriculum, costs, etc. do occur.

1. What is our Mission?

To educate students in the art and science of radiologic technology and to provide support for students to help them become competent and caring healthcare providers.

2. What is our Philosophy?

UnityPoint Health-Des Moines is committed to its educational program in radiologic technology. The School of Radiologic Technology contributes to UnityPoint Health-Des Moines' primary goal of providing the best healthcare to patients. Students will be exposed to all phases of radiologic technology. This will ensure the delivery of quality service when meeting the needs of the patients and institutions they serve.

3. What are our goals?

At the end of this program, each student should be able to:

- 1. Practice as an entry-level radiographer*
- 2. Integrate critical thinking and problem solving abilities into clinical practice*
- 3. Communicate effectively in the clinical arena*
- 4. Demonstrate and evaluate professional development*
- 5. Meet the needs of the community*

4. Is the program accredited?

Yes, our program is fully accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology. The JRCERT is directly responsible to the Department of Education in Washington, D.C. In 2007 our program received the maximum accreditation term of 8 years. Our next accreditation visit is in 2015. You can access the JRCERT at www.jrcert.org

5. Is the faculty qualified? We believe our program faculty is among the best in the nation!

***Matthew Millard**, Program Director, is a graduate of our program and has been in the field of radiology for 26 years with 17 of those years in education. He holds a Bachelor degree in Radiologic Imaging from Clarkson University, a Master's degree in Training and Development from University of St. Francis, and is ARRT registered in both Radiography and Computed*

Tomography (CT). He has had extensive clinical experience in general radiology, CT, MRI, Cardiac Catheterization, and Special Procedures. Mr. Millard is an accreditation site visitor for the JRCERT.

Daniel Van Horn, Clinical Coordinator, is also a graduate of our program and was a Clinical Instructor for the program for 3 years before he stepped up as Clinical Coordinator in January of 2011. He has extensive experience with hands on patient care with emphasis in surgical, trauma, and mobile radiographic procedures.

Physicians & Clinical Staff – many of our clinical staff have graduated from our program and been here over 5 years. They understand school policies and strive to provide an exceptional clinical education for our students. Administration – our program has the full support of the UnityPoint Health – Des Moines administration.

6. What is the difference between a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor degree program?

There is *NO* difference in the radiology course content between these types of programs. All JRCERT accredited radiology programs are mandated to comply with the American Society of Radiologic Technologists national curriculum. This curriculum is available at www.asrt.org You may see different course titles on curriculums, but the content must be taught.

There is *NO* difference in the national board examination that you take upon completing a JRCERT accredited program. The board examination is given by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists. Information on the ARRT is available at www.arrt.org.

Certificate programs generally offer more clinical hours due to not having to offer the liberal arts and sciences courses while students attend. Our program has over 2300 clinical hours during the two year program – this is time you spend in the clinical areas learning from radiographers while taking care of patients.

Our program has articulation agreements with:

- Des Moines Area Community College allowing students to obtain an Associate of General Studies Degree.
- St. Joseph's College of Maine allowing students to obtain either an Associate of Science or a Bachelor of Science Degree in Radiologic Science Administration .
- North Dakota State University allowing students in their Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Science Degree complete a 2-Year Internship.

7. When does the program start?

We enroll a new class annually in July. We only start once/year.

8. How long is the program?

The program is 24 consecutive months. We begin a new class annually in July.

9. What is the application deadline?

January 15th

10. What is the admission process?

Completed files are reviewed annually in January. A completed file has all required official transcripts and other information. Admission requirements are located in the “Catalog” found on the website at www.unitypont.org/desmoines/radtech. Files are reviewed and points are given in various categories (i.e., course grades, GPA, work experience, etc.). You can request a copy of the “point system” document by emailing Matthew Millard at matthew.millard@unitypoint.org.

11. Are there pre-requisites that have to be completed before applying?

Yes, we require 25 liberal arts and sciences credits prior to enrollment. The required courses can be found in our Catalog located on the website at www.unitypoint.org/desmoine/radtech. Be sure to click on the link to the RT program and then scroll down the page until you find the link to the catalog – the admission requirements are on p. 5.

12. Do the pre-requisite courses need to be completed before I can be accepted?

Yes, these courses must be completed at an accredited college with a grade of “C” or above (not a C-). **Preference is given to applicants who have completed all the courses by the application due date of January 15th.**

If a student has only one or two courses to complete the semester prior to the desired entrance date, he/she may be granted “conditional” acceptance. Courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or above (not C-) or the position will be rescinded.

13. Is there an Interview process?

Yes, after scoring of all applicants the top 20 applicants will be asked to come in for an Interview. Interview Scores will be added to Applicant Score Sheet. The Top 10 Overall Scores will be offered positions in the program., attendance at an **Information Session** is also required. Check the website for more information on these sessions.

14. Is there a waiting list?

Alternates are chosen each year and, if an opening is not available, they are placed in the pool of applicants for the following year’s class. The number of alternates varies depending on the applicant pool.

15. How many student do you accept?

Our current class capacity is 10; however, enrollment is determined by available clinical sites and may be more or less than 10 in any given year. Students are encouraged to apply to several programs as all programs have limited capacity due to availability of clinical sites. Not all programs require as many pre-requisites as our program. You can access information on all Iowa programs at www.isrt.org

16. How many students usually apply each year?

The number varies, we usually have 40 – 50 applicants each year.

17. What is the tuition?

Tuition costs can be found on the website at www.unitypoint.org/desmoines/radtech. Click on the link to the RT program, then at that site, scroll down and open the “catalog” link – tuition costs are listed there. Tuition may change from one academic year to the next – students are informed in advance of any tuition changes.

18. Is financial aid available?

Yes, we have financial aid available like other colleges (Pell Grant, Subsidized, Unsubsidized, etc.) based on whether the student qualifies under government regulations. You may contact our financial aid director at lynette.vandonselaar@unitypoint.org

19. What is the schedule while in school?

37.5 - 40 hours/week on campus

*1st Year in Program: Monday, Tuesday, & Friday – clinical - 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday – class from 7:30 am until around 3:30 pm
Thursday – class - 7:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. and then labs from 10:30 am until around 3:30 pm*

*2nd Year in Program: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday – clinical - 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Tuesday – class from 7:30 a.m. until around 3:30 p.m.
Thursday – clinical from 7:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. and then class – 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.*

20. Does the schedule ever vary?

Some clinical rotations involve different hours (i.e., 8:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m.; 3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.).Beginning the second semester of the program, students do perform clinical rotations on evening shifts – these are scheduled by semester and students have their schedule at the beginning of the semester. At no time do students spend more than 40 hrs/week in class/clinical assignments. Students need to be aware that they are expected to comply with the clinical schedule and have reliable transportation to clinical sites.

21. Where will I do clinical rotations?

*Iowa Methodist Medical Center – Central Iowa’s only Level I Trauma Center
Iowa Lutheran Hospital & Methodist West Hospitals - Mid-size community hospitals
East Des Moines Family Care Center - A family practice clinic
Iowa Radiology – 2 sites Outpatient Diagnostic Clinics
You will have the opportunity to rotate through general radiography, CT, MRI, Radiation Therapy, Ultrasound, and Nuclear Medicine.*

22. Can I work while in school?

We have no authority over whether you work during the hours outside of school; however, we don’t recommend over 20 hrs/week due to the rigor of the program. Some

students are able to work more hours, but school schedules and requirements are not changed due to outside work or family commitments.

23. Are jobs available for students while in the program?

There are opportunities for students to work in our radiology department when not on school time. Information is provided once accepted into the program. Other positions throughout the UPH-DM healthcare system may also be available and can be accessed through the website at www.unitypoint.org

24. What are the patients like?

You need to be aware that you will deal with very sick patients, of all ages. You will come in contact with all types of body fluids as well as surgical and trauma situations. You will learn to start IVs and will work with needles. We teach you how to protect yourself from radiation and from patient situations.

25. How am I supervised?

You will be supervised by program faculty, radiologists, and registered radiologic technologists – many of our staff technologists graduated from our program.

26. What happens when I graduate?

*When you graduate, you may apply to sit for the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) National Board Examination to become registered in the profession. You will then be qualified to put the initials R.T.(R) after your name and work anywhere in the U.S. and some other countries. **Beginning January 2015, the ARRT began requiring those sitting for the examination to have completed a minimum of an Associate's Degree.** Some states also require licensure and may require additional testing (i.e., FL and CA). To work in IA, you must pass the ARRT national board examination – no further testing is required. 100% of our graduates who have pursued ARRT registration have passed the National Board Examination with 96% of them passing on their 1st attempt. Information on the exam can be found at www.arrt.org.*

27. What's the future of radiologic technology? Are there jobs?

Right now, the job market in this area is tight; however, as baby boomers retire over the next few years, jobs will become more available and there continue to be jobs available across the country. Our program has seen a 94% job placement rate for our graduates over the past 5 years.

Medical Imaging is one of the fastest growth areas in healthcare. Opportunities to advance your skills are readily available and can make you more marketable.

For example – graduates can go on to the following types of programs:

Cardiac Catheterization

Computed Tomography (CT) – our program offers this advanced certification

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Mammography

Medical School

*Nuclear Medicine
Physician Assistant
Radiation Therapy
Radiologist
Special Procedures
Ultrasound*

28. Job Shadowing

Due to patient confidentiality concerns, job shadowing at UnityPoint Health-Des Moines' Radiology Department is no longer available. If you can find an institution that will let you shadow a technologist, we highly encourage you to do this – however, not shadowing will not affect your application to the program.

Always feel free to contact Matthew J. Millard at: matthew.millard@unitypoint.org