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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Rev. 4/22/19

### PREREQUISITES

**Q**

**Is there any limit to the amount of time that has passed since I completed a particular prerequisite?**

**A**

No, there is no limit.

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**Q**

**Can I use a class I take online to fulfill the program prerequisites?**

**A**

Yes, as long as the college or university offering the course is accredited. Special Note: Because we require the Anatomy/Physiology course to include a lab, you must take an online lab in conjunction with your online Anatomy/Physiology course.

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**Q**

**Can I use classes I take at a private, for-profit or non-profit college or university (ex: University of Phoenix, National University, etc.) to fulfill the program prerequisites?**

**A**

Yes, as long as the college or university offering the course is accredited.

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**Q**

**Can I use classes taken in high school or adult school to fulfill the program prerequisites?**

**A**

No, you cannot use high school classes or adult school classes to fulfill prerequisites (with two exceptions). First exception: You can use an Advanced Placement (AP) high school class to fulfill a prerequisite if you have taken the AP test for that course and passed it with a grade of "3" or higher. Second exception: You can use an adult school class to fulfill the Medical Terminology prerequisite. If you have any questions, contact us for course approval.

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**Q**

**Can I use classes taken in another country to fulfill the program prerequisites?**

**A**

Maybe. Transcripts for courses taken in a country other than the United States must be reviewed by a foreign transcript evaluation service (such as the Educational Records Evaluation Service in Sacramento) to determine their American equivalencies before they can be submitted to us.

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**Q**

**Do the Anatomy and Physiology classes I take have to include labs? Can I take them as a combined class?**

**A**

Yes, they must include labs. And yes, you can take them as a combined class.

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**Q**

**If I take Anatomy and Physiology as a combined class, how many quarters or semesters must I complete?**

One quarter or semester is adequate.

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**Q**

**Which types of Physics classes can I take to fulfill the prerequisite?**

**A**

Generally, you can take Intro to Physics, General Physics, Conceptual Physics, Algebra-based Physics, and Calculus-based Physics. We will not accept Physics for Energy Science or Energy for Engineers. If you have any questions, contact us for course approval.

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**Q**

**Does the Physics class I take have to include a lab? Do I have to take more than one semester/quarter of Physics?**

**A**

No. Only the Anatomy and Physiology classes must include labs. One semester/quarter of Physics will suffice.

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**Q**

**Must all prerequisites be completed before I apply for the program?**

**A**

No. You can take prerequisite courses during the summer or fall prior to the beginning of your cohort, but they must be completed by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Please note on your application which prerequisite courses you are taking in the summer or fall and the date when they will be completed.

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**Q**

**Must I have completed a C.P.R. class before I apply for the program?**

**A**

No, but if you are accepted into the program, you must have completed a Basic Life Support Health Provider class before your cohort actually begins. The BLS class must be taken from the American Heart Association (not the American Red Cross).

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**Q**

**Which college majors would best prepare me for working in the field of Diagnostic Medical Sonography?**

**A**

The two best would be Biological Science and Health Science. Note: You will have no advantage in applying to our program having completed these particular majors.

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## APPLICATION & ACCEPTANCE

**Q**  
**A**

### **When can I submit my application? Do I have to submit it in person?**

For the 2021-22 cohort, you can submit your application between July 20<sup>th</sup> and August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Applications received before or after those dates will be rejected. You do not have to deliver your application in person; it can be mailed.

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**Q**  
**A**

### **When and where will the interviews be held? Do I have to appear in person?**

For the 2021-22 cohort, interviews will be scheduled by the DMSP staff between September 1-30, 2020. Interviews will be held in Fresno and applicants must appear in person (no exceptions).

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**Q**  
**A**

### **How many applications do you receive for a particular cohort? Of those, how many are finally accepted into the program? Is there a waiting list or lottery?**

On average, we receive approximately 60 valid applications for each cohort. Of those, we accept approximately 7-8 in the General Track and approximately 7-8 in the Cardiac Track. There is neither a waiting list nor a lottery. Every person who turns in a valid application will be interviewed on a level playing field. The highest-scoring applicants from the interviews will be accepted into the program.

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**Q**  
**A**

### **What grades must I have to qualify for the program?**

You must have a college cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.75 or higher (on a four point scale) to qualify for the program. In ADDITION, there are seven courses which **MUST** have been passed with a cumulative grade of 2.5 or higher, with no individual grade lower than 2.0.

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**Q**  
**A**

### **To what degree is my college cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) taken into consideration when I apply for the program?**

Every qualified applicant receives equal consideration regardless of their GPA.

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**Q**  
**A**

### **Are applicants with a health care background (education and/or experience) more highly regarded than those without a health care background?**

No. Every applicant who has completed the prerequisites will be interviewed and evaluated on a level playing field.

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**Q**  
**A**

### **Do I have to be an American citizen to apply for the program?**

You do not have to be an American citizen to apply for the program, but if you are not, you must have a valid green card. A visa (of any type) will not suffice.

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**Is there an English language proficiency requirement for foreign-born applicants?**



Yes. We require the completion of standardized testing in English language proficiency by any applicant who: 1) is currently living in a country (or a region of a country) where English is not the primary language, or 2) is currently residing legally in the United States but grew up in a country (or region of a country) where English is not the primary language. For complete details, refer to our current catalog.

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**Can I apply for the program if I have a misdemeanor or felony on my record?**



You can apply for the program if you have a misdemeanor on your record. A potential applicant with a felony on his/her record is disqualified.

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**Can I apply for BOTH the GENERAL track and the ADULT CARDIAC classes?**



Yes. Simply check the "Both" box on the DMSP Application. If you are accepted, we will TRY to place you in the program that was your first choice.

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**If I take the GENERAL track will I be able to work as an ADULT CARDIAC sonographer? If I take the ADULT CARDIAC track will I be able to work as a GENERAL sonographer?**



No (for both), not without a great deal of further training and certification.

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**Can I apply for the PEDIATRIC CARDIAC and VASCULAR tracks without first taking either the GENERAL or ADULT CARDIAC track?**



In most cases, the answer is no\*. Students in our GENERAL track can apply for the VASCULAR track (only) during the second semester of their initial training. Students in our ADULT CARDIAC track can apply for the PEDIATRIC CARDIAC (only) during the second semester of their initial training.

*\* A limited number of preceptorships in Pediatric Echocardiography are available for credentialed adult echocardiographers who have not graduated from our program. Acceptance is granted on a case-by-case basis. For more information, contact us via phone or email.*

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**How much does tuition cost?**



For Cohort #4 (2019-20), the cost of tuition (only) for either the General or Adult Cardiac track was \$22,950.00. The cost of tuition (only) for either the Pediatric Cardiac or Vascular track was \$3,000.00. Tuition costs for Cohort #5 (2021-22) have not yet been established.

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**What is the tuition payment schedule?**

**A** Tuition fees for the General or Adult Cardiac tracks are due in four equal payments: January, June, and October of the first year, and March of the second year. The \$3,000.00 fee for the Pediatric Cardiac or Vascular track is due at the beginning of class.

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## GENERAL

**Q** **Is there any financial assistance (loans, grants, scholarships, etc.) available to help cover program expenses?**

**A** We are not a Federal Student Aid (FSA) eligible educational institution. Therefore, our students cannot take advantage of its grant, loan, work study, and G.I. Bill programs. We cannot issue IRS Form 1098-T for obtaining education-related tax credits and our students do not qualify for the deferment of their previous student loans.

Participants in our DMS program must use their savings or personal loans from friends, relatives, and/or a lending institution to pay for their education. Knowing that this might be a daunting challenge for some of our applicants, we have worked diligently over the years at maintaining tuition costs which rank as some of the very lowest in the industry.

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**Q** **Can I have an outside job during the program?**

**A** During the first 18 weeks of the program, it is feasible for a well-disciplined student to manage a fulltime job. When clinicals begin at the end of the 18 weeks, we STRONGLY URGE students not to work more than 20 hours per week.

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**Q** **What days and times are classes and clinical experience held on?**

**A** Participants in our Adult Cardiac and General tracks attend classes either one or two nights a week (depending on the track and semester). Classes are never conducted on weekends. At the end of the first 18 weeks of the program, students participate in Clinical Experience four days a week. Generally, the Clinical Experience is conducted on weekdays from 8:00am to 3:30pm. However, in some cases, it may be necessary to schedule the Clinical Experience on evenings and/or weekends.

Participants in our Pediatric Cardiac or Vascular tracks attend class one night a week. Classes are never conducted on weekends. Students also participate in Clinical Experience four days a week. Generally, the Clinical Experience is conducted on weekdays from 8:00am to 3:30pm.

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**Q** **Which track, GENERAL or ADULT CARDIAC, offers the best employment opportunities?**

**A** At this time, there are relatively equal opportunities for employment in both tracks.

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**Q** **How much do Diagnostic Medical Sonographers earn?**

**A** According to the May, 2018, U.S. Bureau of Labor report on wages for sonographers:

National Median Pay:	\$35.51/Hour
National Mean Yearly Wage:	\$73,860/Year
California Mean Hourly Wage:	\$44.55 ( <i>Highest in the country</i> )

California Mean Yearly Wage: \$92,660.00 (*Highest in the country*)

National Number of Sonographers: 73,860

California Number of Sonographers: 6,770

For more information, consult our "B.P.P.E. Annual Report." A link to the report can be found on the Home Page of our website.

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### **Is the program licensed and accredited?**

Yes. All four of our DMSP tracks are licensed by California's Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) and nationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Education programs (CAAHEP). In addition, Community Regional Medical Center is accredited by The Joint Commission.

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### **What certificate or degree will I receive when I graduate from the program?**

Graduates receive a Diagnostic Medical Sonography Certificate from our program. They will also be fully qualified to take their licensing exam with the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS).

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### **What is CAAHEP?**

Our accrediting body, the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs (CAAHEP), regularly assesses the quality of institutions, programs and services, measuring them against agreed-upon standards and thereby assuring that they meet those standards. Accreditation helps to assure potential students that our school is a sound institution and has met standards in terms of administration, resources, faculty, and facilities. The standards by which our program is measured have generally been developed by the professionals involved in Diagnostic Medical Sonography and are intended to reflect what a person needs to know and be able to do to function successfully within our profession. [CAAHEP Website](#)

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### **What is the ARDMS?**

The American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) is the organization which administers examinations and awards credentials in the field of Diagnostic Medical Sonography. There are other groups which administer examinations and award credentials in the DMS field, but credentials received from the ARDMS are considered to be amongst the most universally accepted.<sup>1</sup> [ARDMS Website](#)

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### **How to I qualify to take my exams with the ARDMS?**

There are four primary ways you can qualify to sit for your ARDMS exams:

If you Graduate from a CAAHEP-Accredited Program (*A.R.D.M.S. Prerequisite #2*)<sup>2</sup>

- You will be eligible to take your ARDMS exam/s immediately following graduation.
- No additional education/experience is required.
- Note: The CRMC Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program is aligned with this prerequisite.

If you Graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Sonography (A.R.D.M.S. Prerequisite #3B)<sup>2</sup>

- You will be eligible to take your ARDMS exam/s immediately following graduation.
- No additional education/experience is required.

If you Graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in ANY subject (other than Sonography)

(A.R.D.M.S. Prerequisite #3A)<sup>2</sup>

- You will be eligible to take your ARDMS exam/s after being employed (paid) as an ultrasound sonographer in a clinical setting for one year (1680 hours).<sup>3</sup>
- No additional education/experience is required.

If you Graduate from a Single, Two-Year Allied Health Education Program that is Patient Related (A.R.D.M.S. Prerequisite #1)<sup>2</sup>

- Examples of such allied health occupations include, but are not limited to diagnostic medical sonographer, radiologic technologist (RT), registered nurse (RN), licensed vocational nurse, respiratory therapist, or occupational therapist.
- You will be eligible to take your ARDMS exam/s after completing the entire program and then being employed (paid) as an ultrasound sonographer in a clinical setting for one year (1680 hours). Any clinical hours that you received as part of your Allied Health Education Program cannot be used to fulfill the 1680 hour requirement.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many hospitals, clinics, physicians, etc. will only hire applicants who have credentials from the ARDMS.

<sup>2</sup> For more information: [ARDMS General Prerequisites](#)

<sup>3</sup> Experience has shown that it may be very difficult for a graduate from a non-CAAHEP-accredited program to find a hospital, clinic, or physician which/who is willing to dedicate the resources required to provide a high level of comprehensive clinical experience.

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