

Qualifications

Clinical settings can produce high-stress. Students are subordinate to physicians and technologists and must maintain a professional attitude. You must accept constructive criticism and adapt to stressful situations without losing emotional control. You must be flexible to changing situations.

Diagnostic medical sonography can be a demanding job physically. The sonographer must be able to reach, stretch, lift, and hold patients. During certain exams or procedures, sonographers may have to stand for long periods of time. Exams are done in low lighting, so the ability to see in a dimly lit room is essential. In addition, differentiation of various sounds in a patient or lab room is critical to any medical professional.

If you want to pursue this profession, you must:

- First be sensitive to the needs of patients who may have serious physical ailments.
- Work well as a member of a health-care team.
- Have superior communication skills necessary to deal with other members of the health care team, your patients, and their families.
- Have the ability to pay close attention to detail and to follow instructions carefully.
- Have an interest in science, the physical equipment you would use to produce ultrasound images, and acquiring computer skills that are required for modern medical imaging.

In addition, the *Summary Report for Diagnostic Medical Sonography* (www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2032.00) produced by the United States Department of Labor in their *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (www.oalj.dol.gov/libdot.htm) lists skill requirements and abilities, including:

- Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language.
- Active listening- giving full attention to what others are saying, taking time to understand the points being made.
- Near vision- the ability to see details at close range (within a few feet).
- Oral comprehension- the ability to listen and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- Problem sensitivity- the ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong.
- Control precision- the ability to quickly and repeatedly adjust the controls of a machine or a vehicle to exact positions.
- Speech clarity- the ability to speak clearly so others can understand you.
- Speech recognition- the ability to identify and understand the speech of another person.
- Written expression- the ability to communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
- Interacting with computers- using computers and computer systems including hardware and software.
- Communicating with others- providing information to supervisors, co-workers, and subordinates by telephone, in written form, e-mail, or in person.

- Handling and moving objects- using hands and arms in handling, installing, positioning, and moving materials, and manipulating things.
- Performing general physical activities- performing physical activities that require considerable use of your arms and legs and moving your whole body, such as climbing, lifting, balancing, walking, stooping, and handling materials.
- Dependability- job requires being reliable, responsible, and dependable, and fulfilling obligations.
- Integrity- job requires being honest and ethical.
- Cooperation- job requires being pleasant with others displaying a good-natured, cooperative attitude.
- Self control- job requires maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger and avoiding aggressive behavior even in very difficult situations.
- Concern for others- job requires being sensitive to others needs and feelings.
- Initiative- job requires a willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges.
- Stress tolerance- job requires accepting criticism and dealing calmly and effectively with high stress situations.
- Adaptability/flexibility- job requires being open to change and to considerable variety in the workplace.
- Persistence- job requires persistence in the face of obstacles.

It follows that graduates must have the skills and physical ability to function in a broad variety of clinical situations. Therefore, all students admitted to the program must meet certain physical abilities and expectations. Students with disabilities may, after consultation with Student Support Services, receive reasonable accommodations to meet established performance standards. It is the student's responsibility to notify instructors so that accommodations may be considered. If accommodations for that student are unrealistic or extraordinary to meet required goals of the program, the student will be counseled as to other professional interests. Student Support Services in concert with the clinical site (per affiliation agreements) will make a final determination of the student's capability to meet program goals in the light of appropriate accommodations, keeping patient care and safety in mind at all times.

Once selected into the program:

- Students must have a physical examination to confirm they can perform the physical requirements needed by a sonographer.
- Our clinical affiliates are now requiring criminal background checks, which if positive, would prohibit a student to gain the required clinical experiences. Applicants with felony and/or misdemeanor convictions or other ethical misconduct as deemed by the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonographers may result in the inability to take any/all registries. If you have concerns or questions about this, please call the ARDMS at 301-738-8401 or 1-800-541-9754.