Program Objectives

The course of study is designed to provide instruction in general, cardiac, and vascular sonography. The program offers two distinct learning tracks:

- General / vascular option
- Cardiac / vascular option

The school prepares students for the challenging responsibilities of the profession and provides participants the opportunity to acquire a working knowledge of the field. Students are taught to deal with the ever-increasing complexities of modern sonographic equipment and procedures while maintaining the best possible level of patient care. As the program graduates enter the workforce, their presence helps to meet the community’s need for qualified and competent sonographers.

Curriculum Overview

The curriculum consists of both academic and clinical components and is based on twenty-one months of full-time study. Academic and clinical instruction is held Monday – Friday. Approximate hours are 7:30 – 4:00 daily. The program is divided into five semesters. Semester one, two, four and five are sixteen weeks. Semester three is twelve weeks. Comprehensive professional development is included during the program entirety to enhance knowledge and understanding of the field of sonography. During semester five the student will demonstrate professional development by successful completion of program capstone assignments.

Our curriculum is based on the Standards and Guidelines for an Accredited Educational Program for the Diagnostic Medical Sonographer (2011) as established by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS).

The faculty presents the curriculum through formal lecture, laboratory and clinical applications to enhance the learning experience. Written and practical tests are administered at defined intervals. A syllabus that outlines course goals, requirements and lecture schedule is distributed at the beginning of each course. The preparation of Case Study projects is a regularly scheduled program requirement.

Clinical Education Overview

A thorough understanding of the theoretical as well as the clinical aspect of diagnostic medical sonography are essential to the training of a sonographer and directly affects the quality of patient care. Clinical education is a major component of the educational program. The student’s clinical rotations provide a strong background in the various applications of ultrasound. The student is required to prove competence by performing examinations in the clinical setting. The didactic portion of the educational program is designed to allow the student to develop a progressive understanding of the cognitive components needed to ensure a quality exam.
Before a student can prove competency in any exam he/she will have completed the following:

- Didactic coursework
- Participated in formal laboratory practice sessions
- Completed all mandatory test outs and/or proficiencies

After successful completion of these prerequisites, the student is allowed to attempt to prove competency. The faculty and qualified sonographers (see Qualified Clinical Testers Policy) supervise the students in the clinical setting.

Facilities
Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center School of Diagnostic Medical Sonography has several clinical affiliate facilities. The school assigns students to these facilities on a rotational basis during the course of the program. Clinical education is divided into five (5) semesters.

Schedule of Academic And Clinical Hours
The school schedules all classes (clinical or academic) during normal business hours. Class attendance is mandatory. Students spend an average of 16 hours in didactic education a week and approximately 24 hours in clinical education. No student is scheduled for more than a total of forty (40) hours per week. The program supervisor schedules clinical hours, clinical rotations, academic classes, scan labs, and special guest lectures.

General Guidelines
Clinical rotations are designed to provide equitable clinical opportunity to all program participants. For that reason, students will not be exempt from clinical assignments nor can assignments be changed without written approval of the program supervisor.

While in the clinical setting, students are responsible for performing all duties assigned by their supervising sonographer. Students must keep in mind that they are a guest of the affiliate and therefore must demonstrate the basic courtesies expected of a visitor.

Grading Standard
The student must achieve a minimum letter grade of C in all academic courses and each component of clinical education in order to earn course credits and remain in good standing.

Failure to achieve the school standard of C will lead to disciplinary action, which may include termination from the program (see unsatisfactory coursework and disciplinary action policies).

Grading Scale
All students are on probation during Semester 1. Failure of any academic course or any component of clinical education will result in dismissal from the program.

All academic and clinical grades, with the exception of physics, are determined as a numeric value and transferred to a letter grade.
The numeric, letter and descriptive relationships are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeric Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 - 95</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 – 90</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89 – 85</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 85</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory (F level)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The level and pace of the coursework for Ultrasound Physics and Instrumentation merits identification as advanced coursework and as such the following grading scale is used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeric Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 - 90</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-80</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-70</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory (F level)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduation Criteria

The following criteria must be met/achieved by the student:

1. Complete all didactic courses with a letter grade of “C” or better.
2. Complete all components of clinical education with a letter grade of “C” or better.
3. Complete required exit outcomes /competencies to the satisfaction of the program faculty.
4. Register for and complete the Sonography Principles and Instrumentation Exam (SPI), Vascular Technology (VT) and 1 other corresponding specialty exams offered through the ARDMS.
5. All tuition and fees are paid in full.
6. All library materials are returned.
7. All missed time is made up.

Upon successful fulfillment of these criteria, graduating students receive a certificate from ASLMC School of Diagnostic Medical Sonography. University students receive a diploma from their respective college/university.

Approximately sixty (60) days prior to graduation, students in good standing are eligible to register for examinations given by the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS).