

DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY INFORMATION SESSION

NOVA | Northern Virginia
Community College

Students performing ultrasounds in the DMS Lab

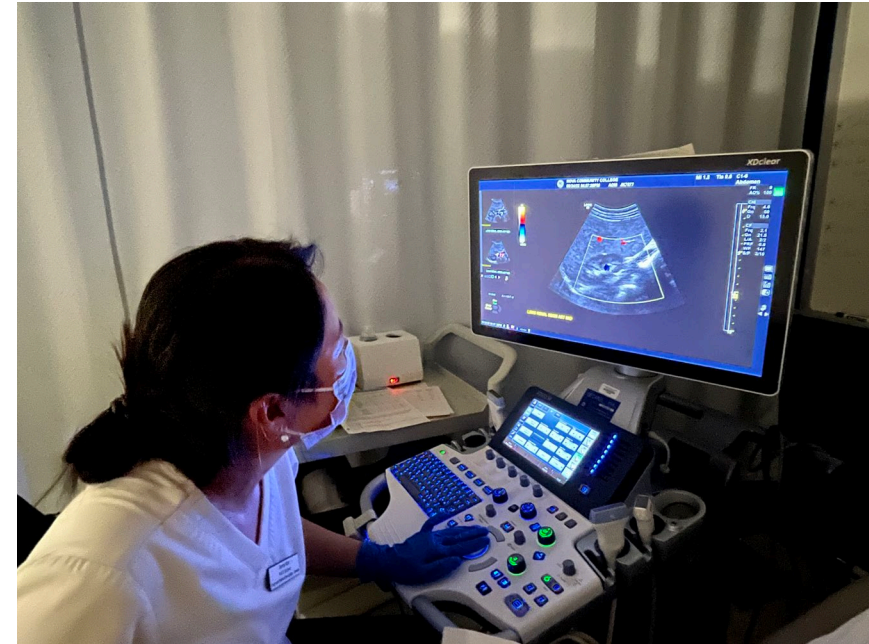
Last Updated: June 1, 2025



PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

- Application Period:** May 1 to May 15
- Admission Policy:** Competitive
- Program Location:** Medical Education Campus
Springfield, Virginia
- Program Size:** 32 students - 16 *OB/GYN*,
8 *Echocardiography*, 8 *Vascular*
- Program Length:** Approximately 16 months
- Program Starts:** Every August

**Medical Education Campus, Health Sciences Division
6699 Springfield Center Drive, Springfield, VA 22150**



DMS student adjusting an ultrasound image

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

NOVA's Diagnostic Medical Sonography programs are accredited 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 \(JRC-DMS\)](#).

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
9355 - 113th St. N, #7709, Seminole, FL 33775
(727) 210-2350 | www.caahep.org

Program completion data, registry exam pass rates, and job placement statistics are available under **Program Effectiveness** at the DMS program website.



Commission on Accreditation of
Allied Health Education Programs

CAAHEP Logo

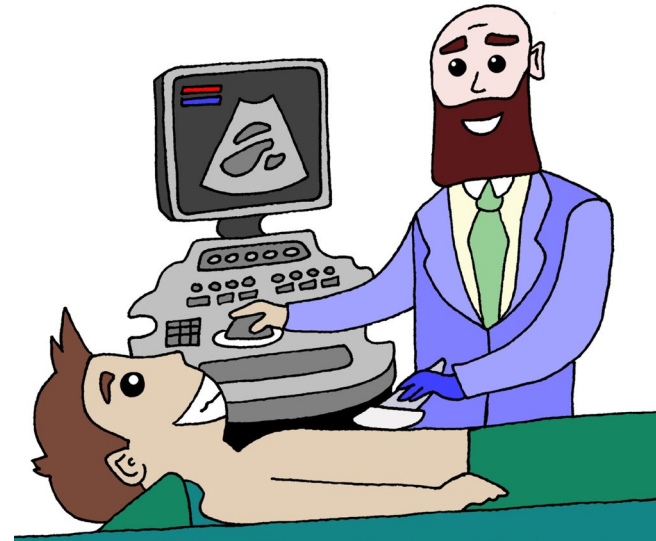
WHAT SONOGRAPHERS DO

Diagnostic Medical Sonographers perform ultrasounds, a medical imaging procedure that uses sound waves to obtain an image.

They may work in:

- Hospitals
- Outpatient Imaging Centers
- Private medical offices

www.bls.gov and Search
Diagnostic Medical Sonographer
for current local salary information



Sonographer performing an ultrasound on a patient

SONOGRAPHY SPECIALTIES

Obstetric and Gynecologic Sonographers

Specialize in transabdominal and transvaginal imaging of the female reproductive system. One of the well-known uses is examining a fetus to track the growth and health of the baby.

Abdominal Sonographers

Inspect a patient's abdominal cavity to help diagnose and treat conditions involving the gallbladder, bile ducts, kidneys, liver, pancreas, and spleen, and perform transrectal imaging of the male reproductive system.

Echocardiographers

Image the human heart by visualizing the contraction and relaxation of the moving structures of the valves and the heart wall.

Vascular Sonographers

Use sonography to study pathology of the arteries and veins. These vessels appear all over the human body and carry blood to organs and tissues.

IS THIS CAREER FOR ME?

Diagnostic Medical Sonographer Videos:

- **Jumpstart Your Sonography Career**
AIUMultrasound - www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9ry2htIE7E
- **Diagnostic Medical Sonographer Career Video**
CareerOneStop - www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyLfPP0UQWw
- **Ultrasound Career Pathways (Which Specialty Should I Choose?)**
Sonography Minutes - www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nLevelL285Y

HOW TO BECOME A SONOGRAPHER

- Apply to NOVA
- Complete the pre-application requirements
- Apply to the program during the application period

If accepted:

- Attend mandatory DMS Program Orientation
- Complete the clinical requirements
- Successfully complete the program and graduate
- Successfully pass the ARDMS registry exams



DMS faculty showing a MEC staff member how to use an ultrasound probe

APPLY TO NOVA

Apply to NOVA at www.nvcc.edu

- Select the current semester so you can enroll in classes after applying
- Select the **Health Sciences Associate of Science** degree to complete prerequisites
- Students are placed in the Sonography major after program acceptance
- Reapply to the college if it has been more than 3 semesters since you enrolled in classes
- Academic Calendar: www.nvcc.edu/academics/calendar

COMPLETE PRE-APPLICATION REQs

- Complete the pre-application requirements by enrolling in available classes on the Student Information System (SIS)
- Prerequisites may be taken at any campus they are offered including NOVA Online
- Students may request transfer credit evaluation from the NOVA College Records Office to see if outside classes may be transferred towards the program
- High-school students may be eligible to complete requirements while still finishing high school
- P+ grades earned during the pandemic are the equivalent of a C grade and are not accepted
- **How to Enroll in Classes on SIS:** www.nvcc.edu/admissions/register
- **Schedule of Classes:** www.nvcc.edu/academics/schedule
- **HS Dual Enrollment Procedures:** www.nvcc.edu/admissions/dual-enrollment



GPA PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

Minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA

- Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher at NOVA
- If the student doesn't have a GPA at NOVA, then the GPA from the most recent school is evaluated
- Cumulative GPA is only reviewed to make sure the minimum GPA has been met and is not used to rank eligible candidates

SDV PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

SDV 101 Orientation to Healthcare - 1 credit, B or better grade

- Class must be completed or transferred to NOVA prior to application
- SDV 100 or 101 is required in the first semester for all degree placed students
- The Diagnostic Medical Sonography program will also accept the following:
 - * *SDV 100 College Success Skills – 1 credit, B or better grade*
 - * *SDV ABLE exam with score of 38 or higher taken at NOVA Testing Center*
- SDV can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the NOVA College Records Office through the Transfer Credit Evaluation Process for students with a previous associate, baccalaureate, or higher degree from an accredited United States institution of higher education

ENG PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

ENG 111 College Composition I - 3 credits, B or better grade

- Class must be completed or transferred to NOVA prior to application
- The Diagnostic Medical Sonography program will also accept the following:
 - * *ENG 112 – 3 credits, B or better grade*
 - * *200-level ENG Literature class – 3 credits, B or better grade*
 - * *College Composition CLEP Exam; minimum score of 59 for required B grade*
 - * *English Language International Baccalaureate (IB) Exam; minimum score of 5 for required B grade*
 - * *English Language Advanced Placement (AP) Exam; minimum score of 4 for required B grade*

MTH PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

MTH 161 Precalculus I – 3 credits, B or better grade

- Class must be completed or transferred to NOVA prior to application
- The Diagnostic Medical Sonography program will also accept the following:
 - * *MTH 161 with MDE 61 Learning Support for Precalculus – 6 credits, B or better grade*
 - * *Any MTH course higher than MTH 161 – 3 to 5 credits, B or better grade*
 - * *Precalculus CLEP Exam; minimum score of 61 for required B grade*
 - * *Mathematics Standard Lvl Intl Baccalaureate (IB) Exam; minimum score of 5 for required B grade; score of 6 for A grade*
 - * *Precalculus Advanced Placement (AP) Exam; minimum score of 4 for required B grade; score of 5 for A grade*

DMS PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

DMS 100 Orientation to the Sonography Profession - 1 credit *B or better grade and within past 5 years*

- Class must be completed prior to application
- Offered at the Medical Education Campus in the Fall, Spring, & Summer semesters
- Early registration is highly recommended since classes fill quickly
- Summer and Fall sections of DMS 100 will use a SIS waitlist
- **Some Spring sections of DMS 100 will require Department Consent.** These sections are reserved for applicants applying in May. See the Class Note on SIS. Applicants must be finished with all other requirements or be enrolled in final requirements which will be verified by the DMS Department.

To request DMS 100 registration for a Spring section that requires Dept Consent

If Spring registration has officially opened, send an email to DiagnosticImaging@nvcc.edu with your name, Student ID # 0000000, Class DMS 100 & desired section number. Early requests sent before midnight of the first day of open Spring registration will not be accepted.

BIO PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

BIO 141 Human Anatomy & Physiology I - 4 credits
B or better grade and within past 5 years

BIO 142 Human Anatomy & Physiology II - 4 credits
B or better grade and within past 5 years

- Both classes must be completed or transferred to NOVA prior to application
- The 5-year time limit goes by the semester the class was completed
(if class was taken in fall, it would expire 5 years later at the end of fall semester)
- Science classes that expire in spring of the current application cycle are okay for application
(if class was taken in spring 2021, it is okay for May 2026 application)

PHY PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

PHY 100 Elements of Physics - 4 credits

B or better grade and within past 5 years

- Class must be completed or transferred to NOVA prior to application
- The 5-year time limit goes by the semester the class was completed
(if class was taken in fall, it would expire 5 years later at the end of fall semester)
- Science classes that expire in spring of the current application cycle are okay for application
(if class was taken in spring 2021, it is okay for May 2026 application)
- The Diagnostic Medical Sonography program will also accept the following:
 - * *PHY 101, PHY 201, PHY 202, PHY 241, or PHY 242 with B or better grade and within past 5 years*
 - * *Physics International Baccalaureate (IB) Exam; minimum score of 5 for required B grade; score of 6 for A grade*
 - * *Physics Advanced Placement (AP) Exam; minimum score of 4 for required B grade; score of 5 for A grade*

TEAS PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

- Test for Essential Academic Skills (TEAS)
- Required for all applicants regardless of prior education or degree
- Only 3 allowed attempts in January to December calendar year
- Scores are good for 3 years
- Must have score of 70 or higher in English, Math, Reading, and Science
- Sonography looks at highest scores in each subject from all attempts
- TEAS preparation website available for MEC applicants

How to Sign Up, Print Scores, and More Information:

www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/teas-test.html



Transcript for _____

Production: Northern VA CC (Springfield) Program Type: Allied Health

Assessment Name	Score	Level	Required Standard
ATI TEAS - Reading & Math	83.7%	Pass	80%
ATI TEAS - Reading	83.0%	Pass	77%
ATI TEAS - Math	80.0%	Pass	67%
ATI TEAS - Science	81.0%	Pass	69%
ATI TEAS - English and Language Usage	83.3%	Pass	80%

Transcript for: **Jane Doe**

Institution: NVCC Medical Education Center Program Type: ASN

Assessment Name	Score	Level	Required Standard
ATI TEAS - Reading & Math	83.7%	Pass	80%
ATI TEAS - Reading	83.0%	Pass	77%
ATI TEAS - Math	80.0%	Pass	67%
ATI TEAS - Science	81.0%	Pass	69%
ATI TEAS - English and Language Usage	83.3%	Pass	80%

Correct and incorrect formats of TEAS Scores

TRANSFER CREDIT EVALUATION

- Request evaluation through the [NOVA College Records Office](#)
- All applicable credits must be posted before applying to the program
- Military transcripts are evaluated by the [Office of Military and Veteran Services](#)
- International transcripts must first be evaluated by an international evaluation agency
- Evaluations may take 8 to 12 weeks – request it early
- Applicants must verify that all transfer credits or exam scores equal the required minimum B grade
- The CRO may award transfer credit for classes or exam scores equivalent to B minus or C grades, but these do not meet the program’s minimum B grade requirement and are not accepted
- Applications with evaluations submitted at the deadline may be rejected for missing requirements

Evaluation Procedures

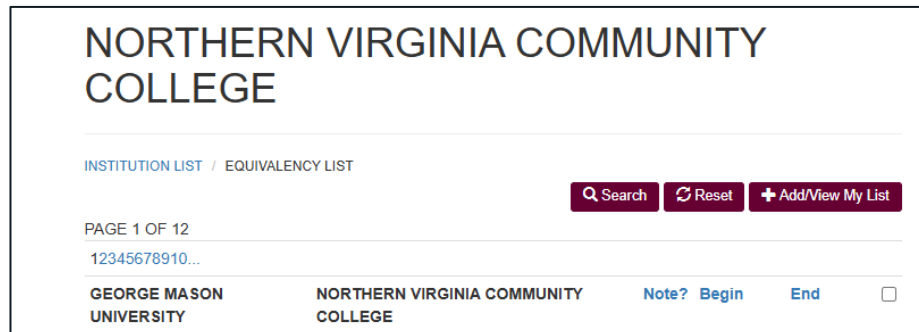
www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/transcript-evaluation.html

TRANSFER DATABASE

Waiting for an evaluation? Check the NOVA Transfer Database to see if your college or university is already listed

www.nvcc.edu/about/offices/college-records-office/transfer-credit-evaluation.html

- Click on Transfer Evaluation System
- Find your college or university (listed alphabetically)
- Scroll through the list of classes to see if your previous class is listed and how it will transfer to NOVA



Screenshot of the NOVA Transfer Database showing George Mason University classes and how they transfer to NOVA

IMPORTANT EVALUATION REMINDERS

- Having a previous class evaluated via the [Course Prerequisite Waiver Form 125-041](#) is for registration only and does not award transfer credit
- To start a transcript evaluation, students must submit official transcripts to the CRO with a [Transfer Credit Evaluation Request Form 125-049](#)
- The Transfer Database is continuously updated so students may still request evaluation if their institution or class is not already listed
- Applicants must verify that any transfer credit being used for application meets the B or better grade requirement
- **For classes transferred as EEE**, students need to email meccounseling@nvcc.edu at least 10 business days prior to application to request a course substitution for the class to be considered. Copies of the course sub may be attached to the HSN application to show the requirement has been evaluated to be equivalent.

GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSES

- Students may complete the general education classes from the Sonography major before applying but they are not required
- Students with financial aid should be aware that taking the courses early may reduce the amount of aid awarded while completing the program
- HLT 141 Medical Terminology, 1 credit – C or better grade
(may also sub HLT 143, HIM 111, or the HLT 141 ABLE Exam - score of 70 or higher)
- HLT 220 Concepts of Disease, 3 credits – C or better grade
- PSY (psychology) elective, 3 credits – C or better grade
- Humanities/fine arts elective, 3 credits – C or better grade
- See the [College Catalog](#) for a list of accepted psychology and humanities/fine arts electives

DOMICILE ADMISSION POLICY

The Sonography program can only accept a limited number of applicants each year dependent on the number of clinical sites that are available for students. All students who have met the required prerequisites may apply to the program. However, international, and out-of-state students should note the NOVA Admission Policy for Limited Enrollment Programs.

“Due to limited laboratory, classroom and/or clinical space, certain Health Sciences and Nursing programs have restricted enrollment. As stated in the NOVA catalog, Health Sciences and Nursing students are accepted on either a competitive or a first-come/first-served basis with priority given to:

1. Legal residents domiciled in the cities and counties supporting the College
2. Other Virginia legal residents
3. Out-of-state applicants
4. International students requiring Form I-20

Category 1 may include areas in which clinical affiliates have contractual agreements with NOVA or students from other VCCS service areas whose community college does not offer the specific program.”

This policy is established by the Virginia Community College System and is stated in section 6.0.5 Admission Priorities of the VCCS Policy Manual.

In-state Tuition Eligibility: www.nvcc.edu/admissions/tuition/in-state.html



TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Technical Standards are a group of minimal physical and cognitive abilities as well as sufficient mental and emotional stability to confirm that students are able to complete the entire course of study, participate fully in all aspects of training, and be deployable as competent Health Sciences and Nursing students, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Review the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Technical Standards:

www.nvcc.edu/dist/files/sites/academics/programs/dms/technical-standards.pdf

PREVIOUS ULTRASOUND EXPERIENCE

To ensure patient safety, international applicants with previous ultrasound experience, or students looking to transfer from another Sonography program should note the following:

- The DMS Department does not have the ability to evaluate previous ultrasound experience, or existing clinical knowledge and patient care skills from outside Sonography classes
- Sonography transcripts will be evaluated for DMS 100 credit only – no other classes will be transferred
- Students must meet all prerequisites, apply, and be competitively admitted the same as all other applicants
- There are no exceptions for the 5-year time limit for BIO 141, BIO 142, and PHY 100
- If accepted, students must complete the entire NOVA Sonography program

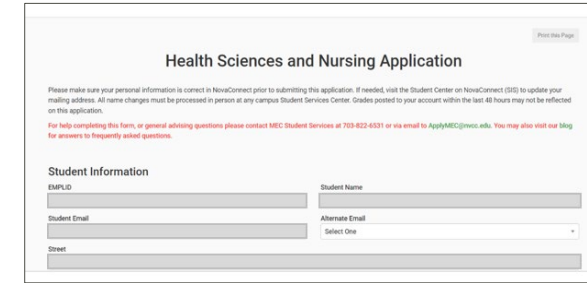
To request evaluation of a previous Sonography class for DMS 100 credit

- First request general education evaluation with the NOVA College Records Office
- International transcripts must be evaluated by an accepted international evaluation agency
- Once your transcript or international evaluation is officially received by the CRO, you may email DiagnosticImaging@nvcc.edu to request evaluation for DMS 100

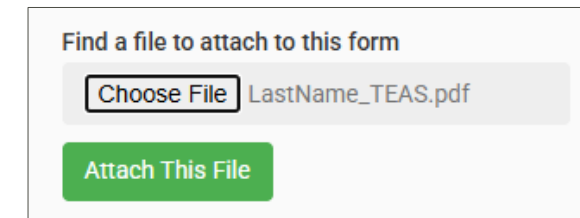
HOW TO APPLY

- Apply between May 1 to May 15 after meeting all requirements
- Submit a **Health Sciences and Nursing Application**
- You **MUST** attach your TEAS scores using the Attachments section on the HSN application
- Make sure TEAS scores are in the correct format
(Do not submit your ATI Transcript; it does not show the scores)
- A specialty selection submenu will appear on the application after selecting the DMS Program
- Check every specialization you are applying to
- Use the Comments field to indicate your order of preference for each specialty if applying to more than one
- Example: Adult Cardiac first choice, Vascular second choice, OB/Gyn third choice
- Students may only be accepted to one specialty

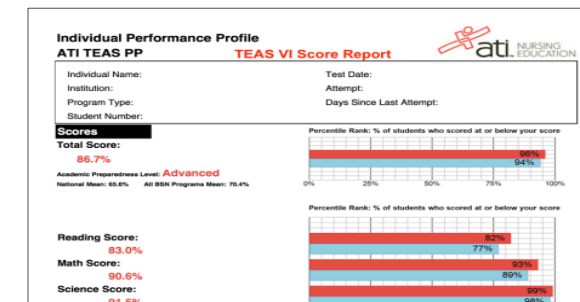
www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/application.html



Health Sciences & Nursing Application



Attachments section on HSN Application



Correct format of TEAS Scores

AFTER APPLICATION

- Check your VCCS email for a confirmation
- Click on the View Application button on the confirmation if you need to add missing attachments
- Check your VCCS email frequently and respond promptly if you are contacted for missing information
- Allow 4-6 weeks after the deadline for notifications
- All applicants will be notified of a final admission decision via their VCCS student email from DiagnosticImaging@nvcc.edu

View more FAQs about the HSN application process:

www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/faq.html



Dear [Student_FirstName] [Student_LastName],
[Program] - [Term]

Your application has been submitted. Please allow approximately 8 weeks after the [Program] deadline to receive a notification of your application status. Check your VCCS ([Student_Email]) student email account frequently for updates.

You can check the status of your application or attach additional documents by clicking the green "View Application" button below. Please do not submit multiple inquiries checking your status as doing so will cause delays in processing all program applications.

Sincerely,
MEC Application Team
Student Services

[View Application](#)

Confirmation email received after HSN app submission

COMPETITIVE ADMISSION

Meeting the minimum application requirements does not guarantee acceptance

- The program accepts 32 students (*16 OB/GYN, 8 Echocardiography, and 8 Vascular*)
- Past 5 Years Number of Applications: 2021: 113 | 2022: 54 | 2023: 70 | 2024: 48 | 2025: 74
- How eligible applicants are ranked:
 - * *Final grades in BIO 141, BIO 142, PHY 100, MTH 161, and DMS 100 (better grades = more points)*
 - * *TEAS scores in English, Math, Reading, and Science (higher scores = more points)*
- The number, quality of applicants, and individual TEAS scores can vary widely from year to year
- Focus on earning A grades in the ranking courses for the best chance of acceptance
- Previous medical experience, resumes, recommendation letters, and the date within the application period an application was submitted are not considered for admission; eligible candidates are numerically scored and ranked by the competitive admission criteria

DMS PROGRAM ORIENTATION

Accepted students will receive an email with instructions on how to:

- immediately order a required background check and drug screen (approx. \$160)
- attend the mandatory Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program Orientation held in July
- complete a physical, AHA BLS Healthcare Provider CPR, and other clinical requirements by the start of the program

[NOVA Health Sciences Physical Form 125-007](#)



DMS student scanning a fellow student in the Sonography lab

DMS PROGRAM

- Full-time, 16-month program including one 10-week summer semester
- Daytime program held Monday to Friday
- Cannot be completed online or on a part-time basis
- Lectures & labs are held at the Medical Education Campus in Springfield, Virginia
- Clinicals are completed at different sites in the Northern Virginia/DC metro area
- Students should work 20 hours or less during the program
- Employment and personal obligations must be flexible and scheduled around classes



DMS students working with a phantom in the Simulation Lab at the MEC

DMS PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Semesters 1 and 2

15-weeks in August to December and January to May

- Lectures and Labs: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in-person at MEC
- Preclinicals (1st 6 weeks): Mondays and Fridays - Preclinical activities on Zoom & at MEC
- Clinicals (beginning October): Mondays and Fridays at assigned clinical site

Students take their SPI Physics certification exam

Semester 3

10-weeks in May to July

- Lectures and Labs: Tuesdays and Thursdays in-person at MEC
- Clinicals: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at assigned clinical site

Semester 4

15-weeks in August to December

- Lectures and Labs: Tuesdays and Thursdays in-person at MEC
- Clinicals: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at assigned clinical site

Students graduate in December and take their DMS specialty certification exam

DMS PROGRAM GRADING SCALE

To avoid poor patient care and possible patient injury, the Diagnostic Medical Sonography grading system may be different than other courses taken at NOVA.

Students must earn a minimum grade of C in every DMS course to advance each semester

Grading Scale for all DMS Courses

93.50 – 100 = A grade

86.50 – 93.49 = B grade

79.50 – 86.49 = C grade (minimum required to pass course)

69.50 – 79.49 = D grade

00.00 – 69.49 = F grade

DMS PROGRAM CLINICALS AND LABS

- Possible exposure to infectious diseases, terminally ill and combative patients, vomit, urine, feces, blood or other hazards
- Have ability to communicate with empathy to sick patients and family members that may be upset
- Have ability to professionally handle insults, insensitive or inappropriate comments, and other possible rude behavior from patients or family members
- Be prepared to learn hands-on positioning and work with classmates and patients of different backgrounds, beliefs, religions, or genders
- Clinical locations are assigned; students must be able and willing to travel to any assigned site



Echo students studying anatomy of a pig heart in the DMS lab

DMS PROGRAM EXPENSES

All dollar amounts are estimates and exact costs may vary. Additional expenses not listed here may be required. Tuition rates are subject to change by action of the State Board of Community Colleges. See the NOVA Financial Aid website at www.nvcc.edu/admissions/financialaid for scholarships, grants, and other aid availability.

- College tuition
OB/Gyn program: **Program credits times current rates = approximate total tuition**
72 credits x approx. \$224/credit hour = \$16,128
Echo and Vascular programs: 68 credits x approx. \$224/credit hour = \$15,232
- TEAS Preadmission Test: \$65
- Lab supplies: \$20
- Textbooks: \$500 - \$700
- Clinical Uniform: \$125
- Background check & drug screen: Approximately \$160 first-year, paid at acceptance to program
Approximately \$80 second-year, paid at beginning of Summer semester
- AHA BLS Healthcare Professional CPR: Cost varies by training site
- Physical exam with immunizations/titers: Cost varies by insurance
- Clinical Evaluation System: Approximately \$150, paid at DMS Orientation
- Ergonomics Safety Training: Approximately \$150, paid at DMS Orientation
- Parking/travel expenses: Cost varies by clinical site
- ARDMS registry exam fees: Physics \$250, paid at beginning of Semester 3
Specialty \$250, paid at end of program

ARDMS EXAM ELIGIBILITY

- ARDMS requires full and advance disclosure of criminal convictions and has their own ethics requirements
- Applicants with prior convictions may request a Pre-Application Review from ARDMS to determine exam eligibility | www.ardms.org
- Students may review the Health Sciences and Nursing Background Check and Drug Screen policies for the program at:

www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/requirements.html

GRADUATION AND LICENSURE

Graduates earn an Associate in Applied Science degree (AAS) in Sonography from NOVA

Abdominal & OB/GYN Graduates

- Take the ARDMS Abdomen (AB) and Obstetrics & Gynecology (OB/GYN) exams or the ARRT Sonography credentialing exam
- Earn RDMS (AB, OB/GYN) or RT (S) credentials

Vascular Graduates

- Take the ARDMS or the CCI credentialing exam
- Earn RVT or RVS credentials

Adult Cardiac Graduates

- Take the ARDMS or the CCI credentialing exam
- Earn RDCS or RCS credentials
- OB/Gyn and Echo students have an Intro to Vascular class in their last semester
- Vascular students have an Intro to General Sonography class in their last semester
- These are specialty introduction classes only; graduates may receive opportunities from their employer to fully cross-train and qualify for certification in additional specialties after gaining local employment
- Continuing education training is available through SDMS.org and AIUM.org

INFORMATION SESSION CODE

- Record this code in the Information Session Code field on the Health Sciences and Nursing Application
- Type the code EXACTLY as written
- No spaces and no capital letters

dmsdoppler



DMS student scanning a fellow student in the Sonography lab

ACADEMIC ADVISING



Medical Education Campus

Email, chat, live Zoom video conference,
or in-person academic advising

College Advising Contacts and Hours:
www.nvcc.edu/student-resources/advising