

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS regarding the NUCLEAR MEDICINE CONCENTRATION in the Radiation and Imaging Sciences BAS degree.

Why should I be interested in this degree?

The field of nuclear medicine is becoming more complex all the time. Nuclear medicine technologists are being expected to perform CT imaging in conjunction with PET, and PET/MRI scanners are now entering the market. We are expected to know about departmental accreditation and image management systems. This degree includes classes that are directly relevant to the practice of nuclear medicine and are taught at a level commensurate with the expectations of the workplace.

Why is a bachelor's degree important?

The Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging -Technologist Section has for several years advocated the bachelor's degree as the proper entry-level education for nuclear medicine technologists. While the SNMMI-TS does not have the power to require this change, it has encouraged associate degree programs to affiliate with bachelor's institutions. In the future, it will be more and more likely that the people you are competing with for jobs will have a bachelor's degree.

I have an associate degree in nuclear medicine technology. How will this concentration help me?

It will build on your nuclear medicine background, providing the academic grounding for the nuclear cardiology technologist (NCT) and PET advanced-specialty exams offered by the NMTCB. It includes courses in CT and MRI instrumentation and procedures, and also a clinical practicum in CT, allowing you to earn CT competencies that can count toward eligibility to take the ARRT(CT) exam. And last but not least, classes in radiology management topics and in economics, philosophy, math, and communications will provide you with a well-rounded education to become a leader in your department.

I have a certificate from a hospital-based program. Am I eligible to enter this program?

Washington state law limits the number of credits earned based on prior learning to 45. Based on having your RT(N) or CNMT credential, you may apply for 45 credits. Each credit is charged at 40% of the current tuition and fee rate. You do need to have the 25 credits of general education prerequisites documented by college transcripts. That leaves 20 credits to be covered by other college-level courses you've taken. Jennifer Prekeges, program chair for the Bellevue College nuclear medicine technology program, or the program manager for the Radiation and Imaging Sciences program, will be happy to help figure out where you stand.

I'm a nuclear medicine tech but I have also been certified in CT. What will I do about the CT course and clinical practicum?

The fact that you have passed a national certification exam in CT indicates that you have achieved the objectives for RAIT 310 and 311. So you would apply for credit for prior learning to receive credit for those 15 credits. Each credit is charged at 40% of the current tuition and fee rate.

I work all day – how can I participate in these classes?

All of the classes in this degree are offered either in the evening or online. Evening classes meet once a week for three hours, and if you are more than 50 miles from the main BC campus you can join those classes via computer. We have staff that will help you to figure out the logistics of this option.

How long will it take to earn this degree?

That is entirely up to you. We expect that most students will take one class per quarter, in which case the degree would take about 4 years. But we've found that as students become more comfortable with the expectations, they increase to two or even three classes per quarter. The average student completes the Radiation and Imaging Sciences BAS degree about 3 years after starting. There is no time limit on earning the degree, and your credits don't "expire" at any point.

I'm not ready to commit to the degree yet, but I'd like to take some classes. Is this allowed?

Absolutely. For most classes, an entry code is all you need. Call Carmina Cruz at (425) 564-2316 to get one. You can apply the credits you've earned to the bachelor's degree when you are ready to do so. Even if you're not officially matriculated into the degree program, we're always happy to advise you in regard to sequencing of courses.