

RWC lays out first technical bachelor's program

Stephanie L. Smith | Posted: Wednesday, January 26, 2005 12:00 am

The Department of Allied Health at Raymond Walters College expanded its radiation science programs for this school year with the launch of a new bachelor's degree program.

The Radiation Science Technology program joins two associate degree and several professional certificate program offerings by the department.

The bachelor's program is an outgrowth of those associate's tracks, according to Tracy Herrmann, associate professor in radiologic technology and chairwoman of the Allied Health department. In fact, completion of one of them or its equivalent is a requirement of the bachelor's program.

She said the four-year degree is designed to allow students to pursue a leadership position in the field or to get training in a more specialized field. So far, enrollment in the new track is 12.

"We haven't done a big marketing push," Herrmann said.

Radiation science programs train students in using various forms of radiation in medicine. Its most common applications - which mirror the two associate degree programs the department already offered - are in imaging, in which pictures of the body's internal structures are taken, and used particularly in cancer treatments.

The University of Cincinnati has offered programs in the field since 1987, Herrmann said. First based at the College of Medicine, they were moved to Raymond Walters College in 1999 when the Science and Allied Health Building opened on the Blue Ash campus.

The new degree offers five concentrations of either one year or two:

* **Sectional Imaging:** This one-year concentration focuses on Computed Tomography (CT) technology. The technology uses X-rays to take pictures of a series of cross-section "slices" of patients to aid their diagnosis.



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The Radiation Science degree program at Raymond Walters gives it an advantage over other local schools such as Xavier and Northern Kentucky University that only offer associate's degrees.

- * **Professional Practice:** Also a one-year concentration, this track focuses on supervisory and instructional skills. It was designed to boost such careers as clinical supervisors and classroom instructors.
- * **Medical Dosimetry:** This two-year concentration, for radiation therapy students only, features beefed up requirements in physics, anatomy and radiobiology. It trains students in such areas as calculating and generating radiation doses as part of an oncologist's treatment plan.
- * **Radiation Technology:** The current associate's program remains a two-year concentration.
- * **Radiation Therapy:** The current associate's program also remains a two-year concentration.

Like its associate degree predecessors, the bachelor's program is heavy with clinical experience. Herrmann said students will be working full-time as technologists and taking classes in the evening. Many regional hospitals already host co-operative education through the associate programs, including University, Christ, Good Samaritan and Jewish hospitals in Cincinnati, St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Edgewood, Ky., and Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton, Ohio.

Though other area institutions - Xavier University and Northern Kentucky University, for example - offer similar radiation science associate's programs, the bachelor's program puts UC ahead of its Greater Cincinnati rivals.

Cincinnati State offers an associate degree program and certificates in imaging technology, but none involves radiology.

In Clifton, UC's College of Allied Health Sciences offers a bachelor's degree in Advanced Medical Imaging Technology. Herrmann said that the program ""deals with ultrasounds, MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] and nuclear medicine.""

She added that the program is more of a pre-med degree and has more rigorous science and math requirements, including 15 hours of biology.

Students who have not taken courses in radiologic technology or radiation therapy must first complete one of these two-year programs.

Up to 60 transfer credits can be given to students who have taken equivalent courses taken at accredited universities, and a rolling admissions policy allows students to begin in Fall, Winter or Spring quarters.