Thank you for your interest in Volunteer State Community College’s Diagnostic Medical Sonography program. In order to apply to this program, you must meet the following criteria:

**DEGREE REQUIREMENT**

To be considered for admission to the sonography program, applicants must graduate high school with a regular diploma or higher. High school certificates of attendance, special diplomas, or the like are not sufficient for admission to this technical certificate program.

Applicants must also meet the general admission requirements for the College and **ONE** of the following degree requirements to be considered a valid applicant to the DMS program:

### Associate of Applied Science Degree

Successful completion of a nationally recognized and regionally accredited two-year Associate of Applied Science Degree in an Allied Health area that is patient care related with clinical rotations (i.e., Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Care Program, Nursing, Occupational/Physical Therapist Assistant, Ophthalmic Technician Program, Sleep Diagnostic Technology, Medical Laboratory Technology, Medical Assisting, Dental Assisting or Emergency Medical Services). There are dozens of degrees that will qualify for admission to the program. Please contact an advisor if you have questions about your degree pathway.

### Bachelor’s Degree

Successful completion of a bachelor degree program from a regionally accredited college or university.

### 3+1 pre-DMS Degree from MTSU

Successful completion of the 3+1 pre-Diagnostic Medical Sonography Degree program from Middle Tennessee State University.

**PREREQUISITE COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to meeting the degree requirement, applicants must complete **ALL** of the following prerequisite courses or their equivalent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VSCC COURSE NUMBER</th>
<th>COURSE DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CREDIT HOURS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 2010</td>
<td>Human Anatomy and Physiology I</td>
<td>at least 4 credit hours w/lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 2020</td>
<td>Human Anatomy and Physiology II</td>
<td>at least 4 credit hours w/lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHC 115</td>
<td>Medical Terminology</td>
<td>at least 3 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYS 1030</td>
<td>Survey of Physics</td>
<td>at least 4 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 1130, MATH 1530, or a higher math</td>
<td>College Algebra, Introductory Statistics, or a higher math</td>
<td>at least 3 credit hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Updated 02/02/2021**
**APPLICATION PACKET**

Once the degree and prerequisite course requirements are met, all of the following must be included in your application packet to the program:

1. Submit application to Volunteer State Community College ([https://www.volstate.edu/admissions/apply](https://www.volstate.edu/admissions/apply)).
2. Submit application to the DMS program ([https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/application](https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/application)).
   *Applications are accepted once per year from Jan 1st - May 1st for the cohort beginning in the Fall.*
3. Send all official transcripts to Vol State’s Office of Admissions.
4. In addition to sending the Office of Admission your official transcripts, submit an additional official copy of all college transcripts with your application packet to the DMS program.
   * If you are submitting a transcript from a foreign country you must also submit a translation and interpretation of all transcripts. Contact the Office of Admissions for more information.
5. Submit a completed DMS Application Summary form with your application packet ([https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms](https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms)).
6. Provide documented evidence of a minimum of 16 hours of observation in a general ultrasound department with a registered sonographer using the VSCC DMS observation hours form ([https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms](https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms)) with your application packet.
   These observation hours **MUST** be performed within 12-months of the application date and included in your application packet.
   * Only general ultrasound department observations will be accepted. Dedicated echocardiography, vascular clinics, and entertainment ultrasound business are not acceptable and will NOT meet the observation requirement.
   * Due to the limited observation hour opportunities, we’ve created an alternative option to meeting this requirement. See the “Alternative Observation Hour Requirement” form on our website: [https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms](https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms).
7. Submit at least two letters of recommendation in sealed envelopes using VSCC DMS reference letter form ([https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms](https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms)) with your application packet.
   *Reference letters will also be accepted if mailed directly from the reference to the address below.
8. Submit a resume or curriculum vitae with your application packet.

**Send ALL required application materials listed above in ONE ENVELOPE between January 1st and May 1st to:**

Edward Carlton  
Volunteer State Community College  
Wallace Health Sciences Complex – South, S-231  
1480 Nashville Pike  
Gallatin, TN 37066

*Typically, a minimum of a 3.0 GPA is needed to be considered a competitive candidate.*
**SELECTION & NOTIFICATION PROCESS**

1. The DMS Program admits one class annually with courses beginning during the fall term. The deadline for application submission is May 1st of any year. The applicant pool varies from year-to-year; however, we typically receive 70-100 applicants and accept the most qualified applicants based on a competitive admission format.

2. Up to 16 students will be offered a position in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program cohort each year.

3. A selection committee will review applications and make recommendations on selections. These selections are based on a point total calculated from the application materials.

4. Interviews (if conducted) are typically held in late May or early June.

5. Following acceptance into the DMS program, students must respond in writing to accept the position and confirm their intent to enroll. Accepted applicants who fail to respond will forfeit their place in the cohort.

6. Upon acceptance into the program, students must submit documentation of a passing score on a mandatory background check and drug screening. Selected applicants are not determined to have a secured seat in the DMS program until the background check AND drug screening have been passed and accepted by the college and the Program Director.

*In an effort to comply with the recommendations of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the majority of the major healthcare facilities and agencies utilized by the College for clinical training require that each student undergo a background check and a urine drug screening. Students seeking enrollment in this program must provide evidence of a passing score on a background check and a 10-panel urine drug screen prior to official acceptance/enrollment into their respective program. Either the failure to provide the required results by the due date or the receipt of anything other than a passing score will deem a student ineligible for enrollment in this program. The background check and urine drug screen are performed at the student’s expense. Specific details regarding the background check and urine drug screen are given to students after conditional acceptance into the program has been earned.

** In order to provide the most comprehensive experience available to our students and protect patients in our clinical sites, our clinical affiliates require document of vaccinations to hepatitis B, varicella, measles, mumps, and rubella. In addition to these vaccinations, our clinical affiliates require an annual tuberculous screening and influenza shot.

***Volunteer State Community College practices and supports nondiscriminatory recruitment, admission, and employment practices.
TECHNICAL & PHYSICAL STANDARDS

In order to perform the duties of a diagnostic medical sonographer an individual must be able to:

1. Push and pull wheelchairs with a seated patient.
2. Lean over to lock wheelchair and lift footrests.
3. Push, pull, lock, and unlock stretchers and beds with resting patients.
4. Maneuver equipment around patient beds and through hallways in hospitals and surgical suites.
5. Verbally instruct patient in a clear, concise, easily understandable manner.
7. Visually assess sonographic images.
8. Interact professionally with patients, co-workers, visitors, and hospital staff.
9. Read and comprehend written communications (i.e. charts, exam requisitions, medical records, etc.).
10. Provide written communication to medical and technical staff.
11. Demonstrate manual dexterity in handling of items such as, syringes, needles, sterile items and transducers.
12. Ability to ascend and descend stairways in case of fire or absence of elevator.
13. Descend to the floor, resting on knees for performing chest compressions.
14. Use extended arms and force of shoulders and upper back to compress chest 2 inches.
15. Respond appropriately to sounds (i.e. patient voice and movements, at a normal conversational volume).
16. Respond appropriately to equipment signals such as sound, light, and color.
17. Manipulate mechanical and patient care equipment simultaneously, i.e. dials, switches, push buttons, keyboards, transducer, and blood pressure equipment.
18. Perform all of these physical standards for a prolonged period without breaks, e.g., typical shifts of eight to twelve hours.
19. Demonstrate adequate visual acuity to differentiate among the subtle shades of greys and colors used in diagnostic medical sonography.

* If you are unable to meet any of these minimum standards please inform the program director promptly so that accommodations can attempt to be made available.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need a degree in order to apply to this program?
Essentially yes. You will need at least an associate degree in a health science field or a bachelor degree in any field. The other option would be completing MTSUs 3+1 program. In addition to the degree requirement, all applicants will need to complete all of the prerequisite courses.

Will Vol State accept my Bachelor's Degree and/or transfer credits?
This is answered on a case-by-case basis. Most degrees from an accredited institutions will transfer. Please call the Vol State admissions office at 615-230-3688 for more information about specific institutions or specific degrees.

Can I still be taking prerequisite courses and still apply to the program?
Yes, we allow up to one prerequisite course to be taken in the summer term of the application year, pending approval from the DMS program director. Conditional admittance into the program might be based on earning a specific letter grade in that course.

How do I know if my patient care allied health degree is an accepted program?
Call Vol State admissions office at 615-230-3688 to see if VSCC accepts degrees/credits from your school or program.

Where can I do my observation hours?
You may do observation hours at any general ultrasound department in any hospital, clinic, or medical center you choose. It is your responsibility for setting up these appointments. Call the hospital and ask to speak with the lead sonographer, they should be able to assist you. Once you have completed your observation, documentation from the registered Sonographer you observed with is required. Use the form available on the VSCC DMS website (https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/dms/forms). Take this form with you when you’re doing your observation for the registered sonographer to complete.

When does the program start?
The program follows the college calendar and begins during the fall term.

Is it feasible to work while in the program?
This program is an intense 16-month program. Students are in class and clinical 5 days per week with a combined total of about 40 hours per week. It is not recommended students’ work more than 15 hours per week while enrolled in the DMS program.

Where are the clinical affiliates located?
The program uses over 40 hospitals, clinics, and medical groups throughout Middle Tennessee and Southern Kentucky. Travel may be required in excess of 100-mile radius from Volunteer State’s main campus in Gallatin.

Can you tell me more about Clinical training?
Clinical sites are assigned by the Program Director and Clinical Coordinator. The learning opportunities of each clinical site are of primary importance when clinical assignments are being made. Proximity to home is not considered. Students do not choose their site and are discouraged from actively canvassing new sites. Students may suggest a site to the clinical coordinator who will then investigate any potential opportunities.

Who should write my letters of recommendation?
Previous/current employers, co-workers, instructors, mentors, teachers, and/or friends can be excellent references. (Not Mom and Dad, we know they think you’re great!).
Does working in the health care environment count towards the pre-requisites?
No, even though work experience is extremely valuable, it does not substitute for the prerequisite course requirements. For example: working as an LPN for six years does not equate to graduating from a programmatically accredited nursing program.

What financial aid is available?
Financial aid is extremely situational and is best answered on an individual basis by our Financial Aid office, 615-230-3456. Several opportunities will be made available for scholarships and grants while enrolled in the program.

Can you send me more information?
All of the information we might send is located on our web site. Please visit www.volstate.edu/dms or contact the program director, 615-230-3339, for specific questions about the program or the profession.

What about background checks and drug screens?
Students seeking enrollment in this program must provide evidence of a passing score on a background check and a 10-panel urine drug screen prior to official acceptance/enrollment into the program. Either the failure to provide the required results by the due date or the receipt of anything other than a passing score will make a student ineligible for enrollment in this program. The background check and urine drug screens are performed at the student’s expense. Specific details regarding the background check and urine drug screen are given to students after conditional acceptance into the program is granted.

What vaccinations do I need?
In order to provide the most comprehensive experience available to our students and protect the patients in our clinical sites, our clinical affiliates require documentation of vaccinations to hepatitis B, varicella, measles, mumps, and rubella. In addition to these vaccinations, our clinical sites require an annual tuberculous screening and influenza shot.

Please read the entire this entire packet and if you have further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Edward Carlton, MSRS, RDMS, RVT
Director of Diagnostic Medical Sonography
Volunteer State Community College
edward.carlton@volstate.edu
615-230-3339