

RESPIRATORY THERAPY

Associate of Applied Science Degree

Respiratory Therapy is an allied health specialty encompassing the diagnosis, treatment, management and prevention of problems affecting the respiratory and cardiovascular system.

Respiratory Therapy practitioners work side-by-side with physicians, and other healthcare professionals in the hospital setting. They set up oxygen, perform pulmonary function testing, set up and maintain ventilators, administer respiratory drugs, and evaluate patient health status.

Respiratory therapy is a rapidly growing, people-oriented profession. The demand for practitioners is increasing in New Mexico and throughout the United States. While most graduates continue to find employment in hospitals, opportunities are opening up with medical equipment suppliers and agencies providing home health care to pulmonary patients.

The Respiratory Therapy program at Doña Ana Community College is a full-time program that leads to an associate of applied science degree. Through classroom instruction and laboratory practice, students develop the knowledge needed to care for patients. They acquire additional hands-on experience in the clinical setting at surrounding hospitals.

The curriculum and clinical hour content is based on the National Standard Curriculum from the American Association of Respiratory Therapy (AARC) and the national accrediting body, the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care.

Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)

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The Respiratory Therapy Program is also accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. The program is designed to prepare students to have mastered competency in assessing, diagnosing, and treating cardiopulmonary patients. After completing the program, graduates are eligible to sit for their national licensure certification and registry examinations.

Required Skills and Abilities

Students should be able to demonstrate good oral expression (speech clarity) and written comprehension, critical thinking skills, the ability to hear through a stethoscope or augmented listening device, and physical stamina (e.g., the ability to stand for long periods, manipulate respiratory therapy equipment, and move/lift patients and equipment up to 50 pounds, unassisted).

Program Admissions Criteria

Respiratory Therapy is a limited-entry program. The following items are among the criteria used in the selection of successful program applicants:

- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better
- Science GPA of 2.7 or better

- Completion of the following courses:

Prefix	Title	Credits
ENGL 1110G	Composition I ¹	4
CHEM 1120G	Introduction to Chemistry Lecture and Laboratory (non majors) ¹	4
AHS 120	Medical Terminology	3
MATH 1220G	College Algebra	3
BIOL 2310 & 2310L	Microbiology and Microbiology Lab ¹	4
BIOL 2210	Human Anatomy and Physiology I for the Health Sciences ¹	4
BIOL 2225	Human Anatomy and Physiology II ¹	4
PSYC 1110G or SOCI 1110G	Introduction to Psychology or Introduction to Sociology	3

A complete list is included in the application packet, available at the Respiratory Therapy program office in room DAHL-191; Phone: (575) 527-7607.

¹ Courses are identical to those offered at New Mexico State University Las Cruces (main) Campus.

Requirements to Participate in Clinical Practice

Clinical coursework is required for completion of this program. Upon admittance and throughout the program, students will be required to meet the requirements of each clinical site in order to complete the required coursework. Requirements include but are not limited to the following:

1. Background check and fingerprinting through the designated college affiliate (adverse findings may disqualify a student from continuing in the program)
2. Current CPR certification
3. Current TB test
4. Record of current tuberculin, rubella, tetanus, varicella, and Hepatitis B immunizations and titers.
5. Drug screening

NOTE: There are two established cut scores for the Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination. If a candidate achieves the lower cut score, (s)he will earn the CRT credential. If a candidate achieves the higher cut score, (s)he will earn the CRT credential **and** become eligible for the Clinical Simulation Examination (provided those eligibility requirements are met and the candidate is eligible to earn the RRT credential). The CRT and/or RRT credentials are used as the basis for the licensure.

Course Fees

In addition to tuition, a fee of \$120 is charged for each of the following courses:

Prefix	Title	Credits
RESP 110 L	Respiratory Therapy I Lab	2
RESP 120 L	Respiratory Therapy II Lab	2
RESP 230 L	Respiratory Therapy V Lab	2
RESP 240 L	Respiratory Therapy VI Lab	2