

BSC Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Program FAQs

When does the DMS program start?

- The DMS Program is four consecutive semesters that begins each Fall semester.

When can I apply to the DMS Program?

- The DMS Program application window is open March 1st – May 1st, 2021.

How many students are accepted?

- The number of students accepted into the DMS Program is determined by the number of clinical sites available and may vary from year to year.

What is the TEAS?

- The Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) administered by Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) is a standardized, timed, computer-based exam designed to assess the general academic preparedness of students interested in applying to the BSC DMS Program. It measures knowledge in basic essential skills in the academic content areas of Reading, Mathematics, Science, and English.

Why is the TEAS test being used?

- The DMS Program is highly selective due to the limited amount of positions available. The TEAS is being utilized to help evaluate the students' academic readiness as part of the application process. The DMS program requires the following TEAS scores: **≥ 62 in Math and ≥ 73 in Reading**. The Science and English components do not factor into the applicant requirements. It is recommended students verify that all DMS application requirements are met before attempting to take the TEAS exam.

What can I do to increase my chances of being accepted into the DMS Program?

- Maximize your academic performance (overall and prerequisite GPA's).
- Prior allied health degree (Associates, Bachelor's Degree or higher).
- Complete Certified Nursing Assistant training (not required but recommended)
- Prior completion of Certified Nurse Assistant, EMT-Basic, Paramedic, Licensed Vocational Nurse, Registered Nurse, Radiologic Technologist, Nuclear Medicine Technologist, Respiratory Therapist, Surgical Technologist, or similar health training.

If I am accepted into the DMS Program, what other requirements are necessary?

- Acceptance in the DMS Program is provisional based on the student submitting to and passing a background check, drug test, and submitting the required immunization records (\$153 student expense).
- All students must hold the **American Heart Association – Basic Life Support (Healthcare Provider)** CPR certification prior to the Fall DMS Program start. The student must be re-certified by taking and passing a refresher course if the certification expires while enrolled in the DMS Program. Students are required to provide proof of current CPR certification through the CastleBranch compliance tracker.

Can I attend part time?

- It is possible to complete prerequisite courses on a part-time schedule. The DMS Program is a *full-time* program only. All Diagnostic Medical Sonography courses must be taken in sequence.

Is there a waiting list admission into the DMS Program?

- There is not a waiting list for the BSC DMS Program. The applicant pool is evaluated on an annual basis. Any applicant who is not offered a position and wishes to be considered the following year must reapply.

What if I have been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony?

- It is the sole responsibility of the student to investigate how this will affect their ability to earn certification credentials prior to and during the DMS Program.
- Eligibility to take national certification examinations administered by the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS) and/or the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) is determined by the credentialing body.
- Both the ARDMS and ARRT provide a pre-application review for individuals who wish to determine the impact of a previous criminal matter or disciplinary matters on their eligibility to sit for certification examinations.

Can I work while attending this program?

- Due to the demands of the full-time 40 hours per week clinical ultrasound internship, student employment may be challenging while in the DMS Program. If a student deems it necessary to be employed outside of the program it is expected that work schedules will be arranged to not impact negatively on the student's clinical training. Students will not be excused from class or clinical assignments for personal work schedules.

Are any of the DMS courses offered online?

- Several of the prerequisite courses have online options.
- Introduction to Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS 101) is an 8-week online course offered yearly during the Spring semester to all BSC students. Students interested in applying to the DMS Program must successfully complete this course with a grade of "C" or better to apply to the DMS Program.
- Students will have the option of attending classroom lecture DMS courses (DMS 102, DMS 104, DMS 105, DMS 210, DMS 211) on campus at BSC or via distance learning synchronously through the interactive video network. Enrollment is dependent on acceptance into the DMS Program.
- Students are required to be on campus at BSC for Clinical Ultrasound Lab I (DMS 106) and Clinical Ultrasound Lab II (DMS 212) hands-on scanning labs. Enrollment is dependent on acceptance into the DMS Program.
- The final two semesters of the DMS Program are a seven-month clinical ultrasound internship at a third-party clinical affiliate requiring 40 hours a week full time in person attendance. Enrollment is dependent on acceptance into the DMS Program.

When are classes held?

- Classes and clinical ultrasound scanning lab for the DMS Program are held during daytime hours (8:00 am – 4:00 pm). Students are either in class or clinical ultrasound scanning lab five days a week (Monday through Friday).
- Clinical internship shifts are 8 hours, excluding lunch. The Clinical Instructor designated at each affiliate is responsible for setting the student's clinical schedule times. Students are to complete 34-40 hours of scanning each week.

Does the DMS Program go through the summer?

- Yes. The DMS Program is four consecutive semesters. The Clinical Ultrasound Internship begins during the summer / third semester of the DMS Program.

What kind of degree will I be awarded when I graduate?

- You will earn an Associate in Applied Science degree in Diagnostic Medical Sonography.

How do I earn an American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) credential?

- To earn the Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer (RDMS) credential, you must pass the Sonography Principles & Instrumentation (SPI) examination and a corresponding specialty examination within a five-year period. The BSC Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program prepares students to take the following ARDMS examinations: Sonography Principles & Instrumentation (SPI), Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN), and Abdomen (AB).

Is the BSC Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program accredited?

- The Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program is brand new at BSC and is not currently accredited. Bismarck State College is accredited through the Higher Learning Commission.

What does it mean to be a graduate of a non-accredited DMS program?

- Students are able to take the Sonography Principles & Instrumentation (SPI) Examination through the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) upon completion of the Ultrasound Physics (DMS 105) course.
- Students have the following options to become ARDMS board eligible to take the corresponding specialty (ABD, OB/GYN) examination(s) to earn a Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer (RDMS) credential:
 - Students must work full-time in the field for 12 months after graduation to gain clinical ultrasound experience before they are ARDMS board eligible.
 - Students can take the American Registry of Radiologic Technology Sonography board. This is an all-encompassing board (abdomen, obstetrics/gynecology, vascular, small parts, and physics). Upon passing the ARRT Sonography examination, students can sit for the ARDMS specialty examination(s) under Prerequisite 5 of the [ARDMS General Prerequisites](#).
- ARDMS candidates are required to pass both the SPI examination and a corresponding specialty examination within five years of each other.

What is the salary range for a Diagnostic Medical Sonographer?

- According to the [Bureau of Labor and Statistics](#), the median pay for a Diagnostic Medical Sonographers is \$68,750 per year or \$33.05 per hour and is dependent on geographic area, experience and specialty.

Is Diagnostic Medical Sonography a safe profession?

- Interactions with patients in a health care system involve inherent risks to both the patient and the sonographer, including, but not limited to, communicable diseases. Sonographers are expected to implement standard precautions and appropriate barrier protections while providing patient care. Part of the DMS Program training will include learning universal precautions, such as how to protect yourself in a situation where contact with blood, or body fluids, is probable.
- The [Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography](#) cites up to 90% of sonographers experience symptoms of Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WRMSDs)*. WRMSDs can affect the sonographer's hands, wrists, arms, shoulders, necks, and back. The importance and implementation of ergonomic best practices in the sonography profession is a core component of the DMS Program curriculum.

* Evans K, Roll S, Baker J. Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WRMSD) Among Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographers and Vascular Technologists: A Representative Sample. Journal of Diagnostic Medical Sonography 2009;25(6):287-299. rev 4/2021