



# BE THE BEST!

## Radiation Therapy Student Handbook



[www.mitchelltech.edu](http://www.mitchelltech.edu)



**Student Handbook  
2024-2025**

Revised 8-2024

**Radiation Therapy Program Director**  
Paula Freeman M.S. Ed, R.T. (R) (T)

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## Welcome to the MTC Radiation Therapy Program

Mitchell Technical College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The Radiation Therapy program is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT). The Standards for an accredited educational program can be found at <https://www.jrcert.org/accreditation-information/accreditation-standards-2021/>

The Radiation Therapy program presents a unique clinical and didactic challenge to students. This includes a combination of classroom study and clinical rotations for practical application. Students will attend courses on MTC's campus the first semester of the program. For the subsequent two semesters, the student will be assigned to a radiation therapy facility to complete their clinical experience. Each student will be assigned to two (2) locations. This requires students to relocate at their own expense to the community where the assigned facility is located.

Students who successfully complete the curriculum may be eligible to take the national certification and registration examination offered by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT). Successful program completion does not guarantee eligibility to take this examination since the ARRT reviews the applications and determines examination eligibility.

Questions regarding eligibility should be directed to the ARRT (arrt.org). It is the responsibility of the student to apply for the certification examination. Applications can take up to 30 days to process.

For more specific information, refer to the Program Description in the "Curriculum" portion of the handbook.

### Student Agreement

I have read the policies of the MTC Radiation Therapy Program, and I agree to adhere to the program policies described herein.

Program faculty has my permission to speak openly with prospective employers about my work habits when I list them as references.

**YES**       **NO**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\* **This form is to be placed in the student's file.**

# Mitchell Technical College Mission Documents

## **VISION STATEMENT:**

Mitchell Technical College will be an innovative leader in technical education and a valued partner in global workforce development, preparing students for career success and lifelong learning in an ever-changing world.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

It is the mission of Mitchell Technical College to provide skills for success in technical careers.

## **CORE VALUES:**

- o Learning: MTC provides high-quality Associate of Applied Science degree, diploma, and certificate programs which prepare students for successful careers.
- o Life Skills: MTC prepares graduates for lifelong learning by building skills in technology, communication, professionalism, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability.
- o Access: MTC provides educational services and quality training to students, alumni, businesses, and the community, both on campus and at a distance.
- o Innovation: MTC integrates state-of-the-art technologies, instructional methods, and facilities to deliver a high-quality, unique educational experience.
- o Excellence: MTC commits to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness through a system of assessment and continuous review.
- o Talent Investment: MTC recruits, develops, and invests in skilled, dedicated, and student-oriented faculty and staff.
- o Community: MTC builds student community through social and recreational activities, counseling support, and a student government structure administered through organized student services.
- o Diversity and Respect: MTC seeks and values a diverse population and responds to the unique needs of individuals, recognizing the dignity and worth of all people and fostering a climate of respect among its students, faculty, staff, and administrators.
- o Advocacy: MTC promotes the value of technical education through the development of relationships with stakeholders and activities that raise awareness of the institute's mission.
- o Equity: MTC strives to address gaps in achievement so that every student receives purposeful, ongoing support and programming to be successful throughout the college experience.

## **Radiation Therapy Program Mission Statement**

The mission of Mitchell Technical College is to provide skills for success in technical careers. It is the mission of the MTC Radiation Therapy program to develop and educate competent, compassionate, and professional entry-level radiation therapists through a strong commitment to didactic, clinical, and professional education.

## **Student Radiation Therapist Job Description**

### **1. Position:** *Student Radiation Therapist*

Responsible to: Program Director  
Clinical Preceptors  
Department Directors  
Staff

### **2. Job Responsibilities (supervised by staff therapist):**

- a. Responsible for safe operation of radiation therapy equipment for the sole purpose of cancer treatment
- b. Establishes and maintains positive interpersonal relationships
- c. Utilizes time in an efficient manner
- d. Demonstrates reliability and punctuality
- e. Adheres to policies of MTC and the program, as well as those of any clinical site
- f. Demonstrate appropriate judgment and decision-making
- g. Perform other duties as assigned

### **3. Essential Job Functions and Responsibilities (The Student Radiation Therapist will perform all of the following under the direct supervision of an ARRT registered Radiation Therapist.)**

- a. Assist in instruction and education of the patient regarding the course of treatment.
- b. Ensure proper positioning of patients for treatment using specifically designed immobilization devices.
- c. Understand and operate various imaging equipment
- d. Ensure that safety protocols are followed for patient, family, and staff
- e. Assist with the collection and maintenance of records as required by accreditation standards, licensing bodies, OSHA, quality assurance, and the law.

#### 4. Work Habits

- a. Students shall exhibit exemplary work habits worthy of the radiologic sciences.
- b. Accepts work assignments readily.
- c. Performs high quality work that is accurate, neat, and consistent.
- d. Works well under pressure.
- e. Provides timely, legible, and concise documentation of services on an ongoing basis or as requested by a supervisor.
- f. Takes care of equipment and work areas.
- g. Keeps current with all program and hospital or clinic policies / procedures.
- h. Follows body substance, isolation, and all infection control guidelines as designated by hospital policy (i.e. Universal precautions whenever deemed appropriate as well as other personal protective devices, as necessary.)
- i. Complies with all aspects of the OSHA blood borne standard protocol as designated by hospital or clinic policy.
- j. Readily adjusts to changes in methods, procedures, working conditions, etc.
- k. Observes school hours and observes time clock regulations.
- l. Attends all class functions and clinical rotations with a minimum of absences.

#### 5. Co-Worker / Patient Relations

- a. Students will constantly strive for a professional relationship with MTC, clinical sites, and patients.
- b. Establishes a rapport with co-workers, faculty, physicians, and/or other students and is generally a "team" player.
- c. Gives credit to fellow students or coworkers for their efforts and contributions.
- d. **Refrains from malicious gossip.**
- e. Is receptive to constructive suggestions offered by others.
- f. Shares responsibility, aids co-workers and patients by promptly responding to requests and needs.
- g. Conveys enthusiasm and sincerity.
- h. Projects an image of professionalism through appropriate attire and mannerisms.
- i. Wears proper identification.
- j. Addresses and acknowledges faculty, staff, physicians, and patients as appropriate.

#### 6. Essential Requirements

These requirements are aligned with the expectations of industry and are made available to facilitate a valid career choice by the student

##### Physical Demands and Working Conditions:

Heavy work requiring pushing, pulling, carrying, holding, lifting, and exerting up to 100 lbs. of force occasionally and/or up to 50 lbs. of force frequently and/or up to 20 lbs. of force constantly in order to move objects like the human body and equipment.



Good manual dexterity is necessary for dialing, filing, grasping, holding, turning, typing, reaching, sorting, and writing. Up to 90% of the schedule involves standing or walking. Due to the hazard of ionizing radiation exposure, standards and procedures must be followed as outlined in the Radiation Therapy Program Handbook.

Communication requirements:

Fluency in written and spoken English is essential to ensure patient safety.

Environmental risks:

Individuals may be exposed to infectious disease, bloodborne pathogens, radiation exposure, physical hazards such as needle sticks or injuries sustained by moving or lifting patients, equipment, or materials. Radiation exposure is monitored throughout clinical training.

Sensory requirements:

Visual acuity, including color, depth perception, and field of vision, is required to review images, documents, and treatment plans. A color vision deficiency would be detrimental.

Students must be able to hear sufficiently in order to receive and comprehend orders/direction without visual cues. Certain environments disallow face to face communication (patient monitoring over closed circuit T.V.).

## **7. Continuing Education and Professional Development**

- a. Students shall make every attempt to better themselves professionally.
  - Consistently and regularly attends scheduled class.
  - Attends departmental meetings as required
  - Attends mandatory in-service sessions and campus events.
  - Demonstrating a commitment to the profession
  - Displaying honesty and integrity
  - Willingly completes special assignments in a quality fashion and a timely manner.

## **8. Professional Affiliations:**

Students are strongly encouraged to become a member or continue membership of the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT).

South Dakota Society of Radiologic Technologist memberships are optional but encouraged.

## 9. Learning Environment

### a. Hazards and Risks

Students may be exposed to:

- Infectious diseases and blood / body fluids when working with patients.
- Dust, odors, and other allergens
- Forms of ionizing radiation\*Students will be provided
- with the appropriate shielding equipment and personnel monitoring devices.

### b. Working Conditions

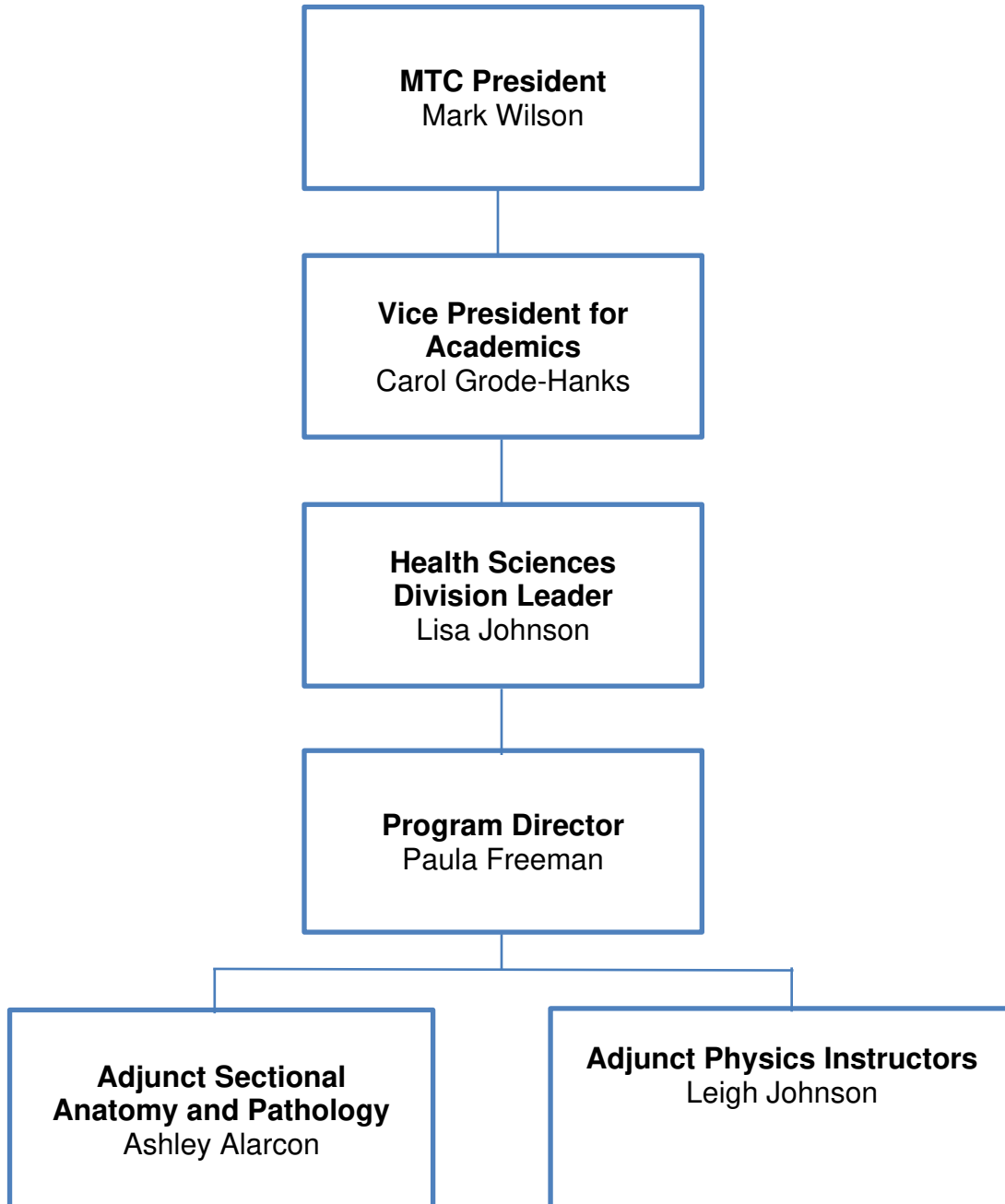
- Students will study and work in a clean, well-lit environment.
- May be required to deal with unpleasant environmental situations resulting from patient activity.

## 10. Other Responsibilities

- Uses care when working with program and clinical equipment and supplies.
- Conform to all patient confidentiality policies as outlined by HIPAA.
- Abide by the standards and rules of ethics as outlined by the profession.
- Treat patients and their families with respect, care, and compassion.
- Treat faculty, staff, and clinical personnel with respect.

**[ARRT Standards of Ethics for the Radiation Therapist](#)**

## Radiation Therapy Department Organizational Chart



## Organizations

### **The Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology**

The JRCERT promotes excellence in education and elevates the quality and safety of patient care through the accreditation of educational programs in radiography, radiation therapy, magnetic resonance, and medical dosimetry. The JRCERT Standards for an accredited educational program in radiation therapy are designed to promote academic excellence, patient safety, and quality healthcare. The Standards for an accredited educational program can be found at <https://www.jrcert.org/accreditation-information/accreditation-standards-2021/>

Address: 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 2850  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3182  
Phone: 312-704-5300  
Web: [www.jrcert.org](http://www.jrcert.org)

### **The American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT)**

The American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) is a professional membership organization representing the interests of radiographers, radiation therapy technologists, and nuclear medicine technologists according to the purpose and goals stated in the by-laws. The ASRT sponsors numerous educational programs for all ranks of technologists and holds an annual meeting with a wide range of professional continuing education offerings. The ASRT developed and publishes the *Curriculum Guide for Educational Programs in Radiologic Technology* and provides for periodic review of curricula in Radiation Therapy.

Address: 15000 Central Ave SE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87123  
Phone: 1-800-444-2778  
Web: [www.asrt.org](http://www.asrt.org)

### **The South Dakota State Society of Radiologic Technologists**

The South Dakota State Society of Radiologic Technologists (SDSRT) is South Dakota's affiliate society of the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT). The ASRT is the member society for all professionals in the Radiologic Sciences.

Web: [www.SDSRT.org](http://www.SDSRT.org)

## **The American Registry of Radiologic Technologists**

The American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) is the world's largest organization offering credentials in medical imaging, interventional procedures, and radiation therapy. The ARRT certify and register technologists in a range of disciplines by overseeing and administering education, ethics, and examination requirements to graduates of educational programs in six primary pathways: Radiography, Radiation Therapy, Nuclear Medicine Technology, Sonography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging, and Vascular Sonography. Post primary examinations are offered in the areas of Bone Densitometry, Breast Sonography, Cardiac Interventional Radiography, Computed Tomography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Mammography, Vascular Interventional Radiography, Vascular Sonography.

The ARRT is not involved in the accreditation process, however it does require evidence that candidates for certification are graduates of an accredited program. The ARRT maintains a registry of certified technologists in all disciplines of Radiologic Sciences.

Address: 1255 Northland Drive  
St Paul, Minnesota 55120

Phone: (651)-687-0048

Web: [www.arrt.org](http://www.arrt.org)

## **ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES**

## **Pre-training Health Assessment / Immunization**

The MTC Radiation Therapy Program requires a physical before entrance to the clinical portion of the program. However, the program suggests that all students review the essential requirements listed in the student job description.

The MTC Radiation Therapy Program requires certain immunizations before the student will be allowed to perform clinical rotations. These immunizations are required out of concern for student health and safety in the clinical setting.

Certain clinical sites may require mandatory drug testing. Students assigned to these sites will be required to participate at the student's expense.

The following immunization requirements must be met or in-process before the student will be allowed to enter the clinical setting.

1. PPD (Tuberculin Skin Tests) Students are required to complete the two-step procedure unless documentation of the results of a TB test completed during the previous 12 months is provided. If this documentation is provided, a one-step TB skin test will be sufficient.
2. A Measles (Rubeola) titer showing immunity.
3. A Mumps titer showing immunity
4. A Rubella titer showing immunity.
5. A Hepatitis titer showing immunity.
4. A record or history of chicken pox, or Varicella vaccine and Titer.
5. A record of Tdap vaccine within the last 10 years
6. Influenza vaccination completed by October 31 of the current year.
7. Optional: COVID-19 Vaccination - Written documentation of your COVID-19 vaccination(s). Documentation must include the vaccine manufacturer. One of the following is required
  - 1 Jansen (Johnson and Johnson) COVID vaccination; or
  - 2 Moderna (NIAID) COVID vaccinations; or
  - 2 Pfizer (BioNTech) COVID vaccinations

## **Estimated Program Costs**

Estimated program costs are available [online](#).

In addition, the student is responsible for additional costs:

1. Housing and moving expenses this includes relocation to clinical sites
2. Meals
3. Travel expenses to and from clinical sites and required campus visits
4. Accommodations and meals when returning to campus

## **Refund Policy**

Students who leave the program and desire a financial refund of tuition should refer to the MTC Student Handbook for details.

## **Financial Aid**

Students enrolled in the program will be eligible for financial aid on an individual basis. The student should fill out a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to determine what assistance is available. Any questions should be directed to the MTC Financial Aid Office.

## **Re-admission Process**

For a student to be re-admitted to the program after leaving, several requirements must be met:

1. The student must have withdrawn on their own accord and in good standing.
2. The student has not been withdrawn for more than one year. If this is the case, all technical courses must be repeated.
3. Students will be re-admitted only if there is a vacancy in the incoming class.
4. Applications of students who are withdrawn for more than one year will be considered with all other applications received for that year.



## **Transfer Students**

Transfer students are accepted at the discretion of the program director. Any prospective transfer student must meet the following criteria before being considered:

1. Must have attended a JRCERT accredited program with no more than 12 months lapse in attendance.
2. Prospect must meet the minimum admission requirements as set forth by the program.
3. The total time of training between the previous program and the MTC program shall be no less than 24 months.
4. The Program Director and the student must agree upon classes or clinical requirements necessary to complete the program.
5. Transcripts must be forwarded directly from the student's previous program of attendance.
6. The program director reserves the right to contact the student's past instructors for reference.

## **CURRICULUM**

## **Radiation Therapy Program Description**

The Radiation Therapy program utilizes didactic, laboratory and clinical education to prepare students to work as radiation therapists in cancer treatment centers and hospitals. Radiation therapists work under the direction of a radiation oncologist to treat patients with malignant diseases using ionizing radiation. Radiation therapists practice appropriate patient care, apply problem-solving and critical thinking skills, administer treatment protocols, and maintain patient records.

The program uses a combination of technical and general education courses to emphasize decision-making and critical thinking skills based upon a solid clinical foundation. Students will attend courses on MTC's campus the first semester of the program. For the subsequent two semesters, the student will be assigned to a radiation therapy facility to complete their clinical experience. Each student will be assigned to two (2) locations. This requires students to relocate, at their own expense, to the community where the assigned facility is located. Students will also complete online courses during their clinical semesters.

The curriculum is designed around The Professional Curriculum for Radiation Therapy as published by the ASRT. The curriculum is also designed to meet the standards of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT). The degree of Associate of Applied Science in Radiation Therapy will be awarded upon successful completion of the program.

Students who successfully complete the curriculum may be eligible to take the national certification and registration examination offered by the ARRT. Successful completion of this program does not guarantee the student is eligible to take this examination, since the ARRT reviews the applications and determines eligibility for the examination.

Questions regarding eligibility should be directed to the ARRT ([arrt.org](http://arrt.org)). It is the responsibility of the student to apply for the certification examination. Applications can take up to 30 days to process.

Once the ARRT certification exam has been successfully passed, the student becomes a registered therapist and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of that title.

## Faculty Roster

Radiation Therapy Program Director: Paula Freeman MS Ed, RT (R) (T)  
Adjunct Faculty Leigh Johnson M.S. CMD, R.T. (R) (T)  
Ashley Alarcon, RT(R)(CT)

### Clinical Site Preceptors

Abben Cancer Center	Sondra Brix RT (R) (T)
Avera Cancer Institute Marshall	Jenell Pringle RT (R) (T)
Avera Cancer Institute Mitchell	Katy Royston RT(R) (T)
Avera Cancer Institute Yankton	Julie Steffen RT (R) (T)
Avera Cancer Institute Pierre	Amber Mehlhaf RT (R) (T)
Avera Medical Group Radiation Oncology	Lisa Rockafellow RT (R) (T) Nichole Swan RT (R) (T)
Bismarck Cancer Center	Melissa Klein RT (R) (T)
Essentia Health Cancer Center	TBA
Greater Regional Medical Center	Katy Wiley
Heptner Cancer Center	Traci Waldrop RT(R)(T)
June E Nysten Cancer Center	Ashley Croatt RT (R) (T) Carol Hauser BSRT (R) (T)
Mary Greeley Medical Center	Susanne Briggs Kristy Lupp
Mercy Des Moines Downtown and Clive	TBA
Monument Health Cancer Care Institute	Tina Scott BSRT (R) (T)
Sanford Health Cancer Center	Ashlee Terpstra RT (R) (T)
Sanford Health Roger Maris Cancer Center	Kathleen Jalbert MBA, BSRT(T)
Sanford USD Medical Center	TBA
Trinity Health	Tanya Burke RT (R) (T)

## Department Committees

The MTC Radiation Therapy Program, in accordance with JRCERT standards, maintains two standing committees:

1. **Advisory Board** - Advisory boards are made up of representatives from industry and faculty members from the related program. Each program at Mitchell Technical College has an advisory board responsible for providing guidance on curriculum and programming, discussing employment trends and issues, and looking at future needs of the occupation.
2. **Assessment Committee**- The assessment committee analyzes student outcome data which allows the program to determine if it is meeting its mission, goals, and student learning outcomes. The assessment committee will meet at least annually and will document student outcome results and analysis.

## Program Outcomes and Course Outline

(Click to view)

[Radiation Therapy Program Outcomes](#)  
[Radiation Therapy Course Outline](#)

## Grading/Testing Policy

The program grading policy requires the student to attain a minimum “C” final grade for each RTH course to be eligible to take the ARRT National Registry Exam. In addition, students must complete all technical courses with a minimum grade of C (2.0) in order to graduate. Students who do not achieve a C (2.0) grade will be prevented from enrolling in the subsequent semester due to prerequisite requirements. Students are assigned a faculty advisor whom they will meet with at least once each semester to monitor progress

The following grading scale will be used for all “RTH” related courses:

A = 90% - 100%  
B = 80% - 89%  
C = 70% - 79%  
D = 60% - 69%  
F= Below 59%

Grades are issued at the end of each semester. The student may request a meeting with any departmental faculty to discuss grades.

## Missed/Make-up Work

Late assignments will be penalized 10% each day. Missed assignments due to illness will be accepted for full credit upon the student's return (within a time frame equal to the number of days missed). After that point, the late assignment policy will be enforced. If a student misses a quiz or test due to illness, they will be allowed to take a make-up test. Faculty reserves the right to handle cases on an individual basis. For all absences other than illness-related, assignments must be made up prior.

## Testing

Student testing will take place in the assigned classroom while on campus. Students who struggle with distractions during testing are encouraged to purchase noise-cancelling headphones **without** Bluetooth capabilities. Our goal is to mimic the ARRT testing environment in an effort to prepare students for that setting.

This is an excerpt from the ARRT site on what to expect on testing day:

*Expect to hear noises during your exam, such as typing, coughing, or people entering/leaving the exam room. If you think this will distract you, request earplugs or noise-reduction headphones at the test center.*

\*This does not apply to students who are receiving MTC approved disability services.

## Course Retakes

The student must complete **all** RTH courses with a minimum grade of "C" in order to graduate and be registry eligible. Students who do not complete an RTH course with a "C" minimum will be prevented from enrolling in the subsequent semester due to pre-requisite requirements. Students must meet all MTC general education requirements to receive an A.A.S. degree.

To maintain skills and competencies, students who wish to re-enter the program must successfully audit all technical courses from previous semesters prior to retaking a RTH class. A RTH course must successfully be completed within 2 attempts and within 3 years of initial enrollment in the program. Clinical placement will be determined when a clinical site is available. Students retaking courses are not guaranteed clinical placement.

## Unsatisfactory Progress

The MTC Radiation Therapy Program will make every attempt to assist students having problems whether they are clinical, didactic, personal, illness, etc.

Any student who does not meet the standards set forth in the handbook will be subject to disciplinary action (DA):

An instructor will assign the DA as one of three classes, depending on the nature of the infraction. DAs will affect the student's grade in whatever course the action applies to as outlined below:

**CLASS I:** Minor tardiness, minor clinical performance issues, uniform, etc.

1<sup>st</sup> DA – No grade penalty

2<sup>nd</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 5%

3<sup>rd</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 10%

4<sup>th</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 15%

**CLASS II:** Significant tardiness, moderate clinical performance issues, minor ethics issues, etc.

1<sup>st</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 5%

2<sup>nd</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 10%

3<sup>rd</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 15%

**CLASS III:** Truancy, theft, insubordination, HIPAA issues, major ethics issues such as cheating, etc.

1<sup>st</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 10%

2<sup>nd</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 15%

3<sup>rd</sup> DA – Grade reduction of 20%

Grade penalties are progressive by CLASS. For example, if a student receives two CLASS II DAs, they will be penalized 5% and 10% respectively. If the student then receives their first CLASS I DA, there will be no grade penalty.

**\*\*\*NOTE: IF A STUDENT REQUIRES DISCIPLINARY ACTION, THEY MAY BE REQUIRED TO REPORT TO THE MTC CAMPUS\*\*\***

## **Clinical Education and Rotations for Radiation Therapy**

Clinical rotations will be conducted at various sites throughout the region. The student will be assigned to a radiation therapy facility to complete their clinical experience. Each student will be assigned to two (2) locations. **This requires students to relocate at their own expense to the community where the assigned facility is located.**

Each student is assigned a specific shift Monday through Friday. Students are not allowed to be in their assigned clinical facility for more than 10 hours in one day or more than the weekly maximum number of hours stated in the clinical practicum syllabus. Hours exceeding these limitations must be voluntary on the student's part. Additionally, a minimum number of clinical hours must be completed each semester as outlined in the clinical practicum syllabus. If the student does not meet the minimum number of hours for the semester, the hours will be made up following completion of the program or upon faculty discretion. Students are required to utilize the Trajecsys clinical tracking system as directed.

When a student reaches the maximum number of clinical hours in their work week they are to be dismissed from the clinical setting. If a student works more than their maximum number of hours in one week, compensation time will be awarded to that student the following week.

**If a holiday falls during the work week, the student may not count the hours as clinical time.**

### **Direct Supervision Policy**

Radiation therapy procedures will be performed under the direct supervision of a qualified radiation therapist. The JRCERT defines direct supervision as student supervision by a qualified practitioner who:

- Is physically present during the conduct of the procedure
- Reviews the procedure in relation to the student's achievement
- Evaluates the condition of the patient in relation to the student's knowledge
- Reviews and approves the procedure and/or image.
- Students who are working on their skills in the treatment area or CT simulator, using a phantom patient such as a PIXY full body phantom, must be under the supervision of a qualified practitioner who is readily available.

**Supervision of students over closed-circuit monitors is strictly prohibited.**

NOTE:

The field of Radiation Therapy is one that requires close patient/caregiver contact. The student therapist needs to be aware that the art of accurate patient positioning requires the use of anatomical landmarks. Students will be instructed how to locate these landmarks, perhaps during a demonstration by faculty on another student. Program faculty assures the student that any contact between the instructor and the student during these sessions is strictly for medical instruction and for the benefit of the class.



## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## Attendance Policies

### Bereavement Leave:

Students who experience the loss of an immediate family member (parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, spouse, fiancé, mother-in-law, father-in-law) will be allowed 5 working days off. Students are not required to make up the hours missed, but coursework must be completed.

Students who experience the loss of a grandparent or grandchild will be granted 2 working days to attend funeral services. Students are not required to make up the hours missed, but coursework must be completed.

Students who experience the loss of loved ones other than those previously mentioned may take personal leave to attend funeral services. All arrangements must be made with the program director.

### Class / Clinical Attendance:

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Failure to attend classes will result in a reduction of course grade as follows: Radiation therapy students will be allowed two absences per course. However, unexcused absences will result in a Class I Disciplinary Action for failure to follow instructions. In the event of a third absence, the student will incur a 5% reduction in their overall grade for that course. For each absence following, the grade penalty increases by 5% (i.e., A fourth absence will result in an additional 10% reduction in the course grade, and so on.) The program faculty reserves the right to consider extenuating circumstances before imposing grade penalties.

Weather related cancellation or postponement of classes during the *fall semester* will be announced by MTC. However, students are encouraged to use their own best judgment when deciding whether to attempt travel to campus for class.

Weather related cancellation or postponement during clinical rotations will be announced by MTC for students in the Mitchell area. Students outside of the Mitchell area should monitor **post-secondary school** closings of their respective locations. For example, if a student is attending clinical in Rapid City, SD and the Rapid City **post-secondary schools** are closed, that student is excused from clinical. However, students are encouraged to use their own best judgment when deciding whether to attempt travel to a clinical rotation. **If the student makes the decision not to attend clinical rotations because of inclement weather, and area schools are not closed, the student will be assessed a personal day. The faculty reserves the right to assess inclement weather issues on a case-by-case basis.**

### **Holidays:**

Students will observe the same holiday schedule as Mitchell Technical College. Students are not allowed to be in a clinical setting when MTC is closed.

**Students may not count holiday hours as clinical time.** For example, during the week of Memorial Day, the student will still be required to work regularly required clinical hours.

### **Illness / Personal Leave:**

#### **CLASSROOM:**

Students are allowed 2 absences per course. It is expected that if a student will not be attending a class, they give the faculty a courtesy call (not email or text) prior to the start of class. This type of absence will be entered as "Excused" in the gradebook. If the student fails to call ahead, the absence will be considered "Unexcused"

#### **CLINICAL:**

Students will be allowed the equivalent of **5 clinical shifts** for personal leave to be used in the case of illness, emergency, or at the student's discretion. Personal leave may be requested in full or half-shift increments in Trajecsys. Students must make requests at least 48 hours before the requested time off. Faculty reserves the right to deny any requests.

1. If a student is unable to report for clinical rotation, for any reason, the student is required to inform the faculty and clinical personnel **prior** to the assigned shift.
2. Notification must be made by a phone call, not email, or text message. The student must call this phone number for faculty: 605-995-7162 or 605-999-9187; if the call is not answered a voicemail explaining the circumstances is required.
3. If a student does not have personal time left and misses clinicals for more than two days due to the same illness, a doctor's note will be required.
4. The student will be required to schedule make up days (post-graduation) for any time missed that exceeds their personal leave. Exceptions may be made for military obligations, long-term medical leave, etc. Students will not be allowed to make up hours on scheduled MTC holidays when the campus is closed.

5. **The use of personal leave the last 15 days of each semester is considered on a case-by-case basis only. Personal leave will not be approved to shorten program/semester length.**
6. Students who are diagnosed with a communicable disease are required to IMMEDIATELY inform program faculty and refrain from attending clinical rotations.

### **Accident and Communicable Disease Exposure**

MTC assumes no liability for injury, infection, or illness that may occur because of clinical experiences. Radiation therapy students may be required to submit a health care provider's release allowing the student to return to class/clinical experiences. Any radiation therapy student that suspects they have been in contact with a person with a communicable disease should report this to their preceptor or immediate supervisor in the clinical area. The student will also contact their physician. If the physician deems isolation or quarantine is needed, the student will be sent home. Isolation or quarantine measures will be addressed individually per case and as recommended by their private physician and under the advice of the South Dakota Department of Health. **Students are responsible for their own health costs.**

### **Interview / Reference Requests:**

Students will be allowed one clinical shift to attend interviews. The shift can be split into two half-shift increments. Proof of attendance will be required. This is a day intended for radiation therapy position interviews **ONLY**. It may also be used for academic orientation if a student is continuing their education.

Faculty will provide references only when an official request is made in writing (email) by the student.

### **Overtime:**

If the student is involved in a procedure and their scheduled shift is ending, it is most often unethical to leave the procedure. In these cases, students must notify the program director to arrange compensation time. A schedule will be arranged for the student to receive time back within the same week, if possible. Program faculty reserves the right to modify attendance policies on a case-by-case basis.

### **Tardiness:**

Tardiness is defined as reporting for training prior to the half-way point of the class or assigned clinical shift. Reporting later than this will result in truancy.

### Classroom:

Students who are late for a class will be given a tardy. The student is expected to notify faculty via phone call prior to the class start time. Students who fail to notify faculty will be subject to the Unsatisfactory Progress Policy.

### Clinical:

Students enrolled in the MTC Radiation Therapy Program are expected to report to their assigned shifts 5 minutes before the scheduled time. This allows the students to mentally and physically prepare themselves for the day's experience. Tardiness will not be tolerated. The program policy for tardiness follows the procedure as outlined in the Unsatisfactory Progress section.

Since the department utilizes a timeclock, review of those records will be the primary method to determine tardiness in the clinical setting. Students will be required to make up the amount of time they were late.

Exceptions to this rule may only be made if the student contacts program faculty and explains their situation. Any call must be made **prior** to the report time. Faculty reserves the right to determine the validity of multiple or repeated situations and to deal with them on a case-by-case basis.

### **Truancy:**

Truancy is defined as reporting to scheduled class or clinical shift after half-way point of the class or shift has passed without prior notification. The program policy for truancy follows the procedure as outlined in the Unsatisfactory Progress section.

## Pregnancy Policy

It is known that ionizing radiation is potentially harmful to a developing fetus. The MTC Radiation Therapy Program believes that it has the responsibility to protect pregnant students while maintaining their privacy. **It is the choice of the student whether to declare a pregnancy.** The student should keep in mind that declaring their pregnancy will enable faculty to better assist them with radiation safety and missed schoolwork. A declaration of pregnancy (see following page) and any leave of absence (LOA) request (if applicable) must be made in writing to the Program Director with the expected date of delivery stated.

The student has the option to withdraw their disclosure of pregnancy at any time; the withdrawal of declaration must be submitted to the program director in writing.

Students who have declared their pregnancy will be issued an extra dosimeter to be worn at waist level.

## MTC Radiation Therapy Program Declaration of Pregnancy

1. I will continue in the program without clinical modification.
  - Material that outlines the possible risks associated with continuation in the program as may be appropriate and specific to pregnancy, namely the NRC Regulatory Guide 8.13 would be provided. Review of the material by the faculty with the student would be available.
  - Compliance with departmental radiation safety policy would be expected.
  - Clinical time and all assignments missed for maternity leave would be made up according to the leave policy, and as scheduled by the faculty.
  
2. I will continue in the program with clinical modification as based on individual need.
  - All elements outlined in option # 1 would apply.
  - Clinical assignments could be adjusted on an individual basis.
  
3. I will withdraw from the program.
  - Applicable academic/clinical credit upon withdrawal would be awarded on an individual basis; determination of the credit awarded would be based on the individual student's academic/clinical achievement as described in the MTC catalog and student handbook. It would be possible for the student to withdraw and awarded NO credit.

I have read, and I understand the Pregnancy Policy. After careful consideration, I choose option \_\_\_\_\_. I understand that a counseling record will be placed in my file outlining specific details of the agreement between myself and the MTC Radiation Therapy Program.

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Signature

Date

Reviewed and revised: Oct 2013/Aug 2022

## School-Related Communication

Due to factors such as geographic separation and busy schedules, a great deal of information will be disseminated via email to the students' MTC address. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO REGULARLY CHECK THEIR EMAIL.**

Faculty will not tolerate excuses for students being uninformed. Students are expected to check their email at a MINIMUM of once each day for up-to-date school-related information.

### Cell Phone, Media Capable Devices, Social Media and General Internet Use

Personal cellular device use, and/or text messaging while in the classroom or clinical setting is strictly prohibited. This includes any media capable device, such as a smartwatch. Use of these devices is reserved for designated break periods and emergencies. Students are expected to store all digital devices with other personal items while in the clinical setting. Students performing clinical rotations are expected to use the phones of the facility for work related purposes only. Students are not to browse the internet or participate in personal social networking while participating in classroom activities or in the clinical setting and clocked in.

### MTECH Alert System

School-related emergencies and weather-related closings will be electronically dispersed via the MTECH Alert system. Instructions for subscribing to this service will be available to all students via [mitchelltech.edu](http://mitchelltech.edu). **Students should use their own best judgment regarding road conditions.** If the weather is threatening, students are not advised to jeopardize their safety by traveling in from outlying communities. Weather-related messages will also be broadcast on area radio stations. Please refer to "Class Attendance" for details regarding missed classes or clinical shifts due to inclement weather.

### Health Insurance Requirements

MTC does NOT carry health insurance on students. Health insurance is the responsibility of each student. **MTC encourages** each student to carry some type of health insurance. Injuries sustained while in class, lab, or in the clinical setting are the responsibility of the student. Students are responsible for their own medical expenses, whether due to an injury in a clinical facility or elsewhere or to an illness which requires treatment and follow-up care.



## **Chemical Misuse and Dependency**

MTC is a Drug-Free Workplace. The Radiation Therapy department follows the Drug and Alcohol Conduct Guidelines for Students found in the MTC Student Handbook. Because of the requirements for licensure approval and for the safety of the public, the Radiation Therapy Program student policy further refers to the use/misuse, possession of, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or drugs which impair judgment while attending class or clinical, or representing MTC in any manner, in any health care facility, school, institution, or other location. Clinical sites may require initial drug screening.

When an instructor, clinical preceptor, or administrator observes a student with behavior or appearance that is characteristic of alcohol or drug use, the student will be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing. Immediately after the suspicion of impairment is voiced and brought to the student's attention, they will be accompanied to a designated laboratory by an MTC representative such as faculty or a clinical preceptor. The student will be immediately suspended from school until test results are received. MTC is responsible for the cost of testing. If a student is in the clinical setting, a manager or site supervisor should contact the Radiation Therapy program director 605-995-7162 or the MTC Dean of Student Success at 605-995-7178.

If the results of the test(s) are positive, the student will meet with the Dean of Student Success or designee to determine disciplinary and treatment options that the student must follow to be reinstated into school (refer to MTC Student Handbook Drug and Alcohol Conduct Guidelines). The Radiation Therapy Program Director may recommend that the student be dismissed from the program. If the results of these tests indicate a negative drug screen for alcohol or other illegal substances or for non-prescribed legal substances, the student shall meet with the Program Director within twenty-four (24) hours of the test results to discuss the circumstances surrounding the impaired behavior and arrange for completion of any missed class work.

- If the indicator was the odor of alcohol, the student will be mandated to discontinue the use of whatever may have caused the alcohol-like odor before returning to class/clinical.
- If the indicator was behavioral, consideration must be given to a possible medical condition being responsible for the symptoms. A medical referral for evaluation may be indicated.

If a student refuses to submit to drug/alcohol testing, it will be considered a positive result and the student will be removed immediately from the class/clinical setting. Transport arrangements will be made, and the student will remain out of the class/clinical area until a decision regarding the issue is finalized.

### **ARRT Ethics Review**

Students are required to notify the ARRT of any ethics violations, including criminal charges and convictions. The ARRT will determine eligibility to apply for the certification exam. A fee may be charged by the ARRT for this process, which the student is

responsible for paying. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate an ARRT Ethics Review.

### **Smoking Policy**

Mitchell Technical College is tobacco and vape free in all buildings and vehicles. This includes all non-FDA regulated electronic nicotine delivery systems and devices. Tobacco, smoking, and vaping are prohibited except for the designated areas.

When the student is at a clinical site, they are to observe the smoking policies of that facility. Students will utilize posted smoking areas only during their lunch break or during breaks. Students should be aware that they are working in extremely sanitary environments. Cigarette smoke can remain in clothes for long periods of time and may become noticeable to staff and patients. If this becomes a problem, faculty reserves the right to request that a student refrain from smoking during clinical hours. NOTE: E-cigarettes are considered a form of smoking.

### **Complaint Resolution Policy**

Mitchell Technical College recognizes that there may be conditions that are in need of improvement and that students and others should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means can do much to maintain harmonious relationships between the College and the students, employees, and community.

MTC desires that all types of complaints be handled informally at the level closest to the origin of the complaint, but that channels be provided for filing official complaints when resolution is not achieved. MTC will follow approved policies and procedures for handling complaints. (Students wishing to file an official complaint or appeal with the College should refer to Policy MTC 1045. Students wishing to file a grievance alleging a violation of federal or state civil rights laws, rules, and regulations should refer to Policy MTC 1046.)

For all complaints, the first course of action must be to try to resolve the complaint directly with MTC through informal or formal processes. To formally file a complaint, submit the [Complaint Intake Form](#).

If the matter is not resolved through formal processes, individuals may choose to file a complaint at the state level.

Students who are South Dakota residents or who are attending courses on the Mitchell Tech campus may file unresolved complaints with the South Dakota Board of Technical Education. The BOTE office will only handle those complaints that concern educational programs or practices of technical colleges and that have exhausted the individual institution's formal process for complaints. The office does not handle anonymous complaints, nor does it intervene in matters concerning an individual's grades or examination results, as these are the prerogative of the college's faculty.

MTC is accredited by [The Higher Learning Commission](#). For complaints related to institutional practices that may not meet the Criteria for Accreditation established by The Higher Learning Commission, individuals should direct complaints to HLC.

Allegations about the Radiation Therapy program's failure to comply with program accreditation standards should be directed to [The Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology](#).

### **Withdrawal from the Program**

If a student chooses to withdraw, they must do so in writing to the Program Director. An exit interview is mandatory. The student must also fill out a withdrawal slip available at the Center for Student Success.

### **Dismissal from the Program**

Dismissal from the program may result from the following documented infractions:

1. Failure to comply with clinical site policies
2. Blood Alcohol Content greater than the legal limit during scheduled hours
3. Theft
4. Gross negligence or patient abuse in the clinical setting
5. Violation of HIPAA regulations
6. Unsafe practices in the clinical setting.

**NOTE:** Dismissal is not limited to the infractions above. Ultimately, the severity of an infraction and the resultant punishment is at the discretion of MTC, the Center for Student Success, and department faculty.

### **Record Maintenance / Student File**

The MTC Radiation Therapy Program shall maintain records on each student enrolled in the program. Mitchell Technical College maintains permanent academic records and transcripts. All transcript requests should be directed to the registrar according to the policy outlined in the MTC handbook.

## Evaluations

Evaluation tools are extremely important to continuing program improvement. The MTC Radiation Therapy Program utilizes several tools to track trends in all aspects of each program. These tools collect data which is analyzed each academic year.

**Didactic Courses** - The students will evaluate didactic courses as a means to facilitate program improvement.

**Students** - Radiation therapy students will be evaluated throughout clinical rotations. An electronic evaluation will be completed by a registered therapist. Evaluation forms may be accessed through Trajecsys reporting system.

**Clinical Sites** - Clinical sites will be evaluated by the students each semester. This will help identify issues with individual sites.

## Ethics

Students enrolled in the Radiation Therapy Program are expected to adhere to the ethical standards set forth by the ARRT. Radiologic science professionals have many responsibilities to coworkers, physicians, and especially patients. There is no practical way to compile a list of these responsibilities, but the general term "Ethics" refers to an overall professional attitude that is required of the field. The following is not an all-inclusive list of examples, but it may guide the student to realize that ethics can be defined as "common sense respect for those around you".

1. Students will address patients with respect.
2. Students will maintain the patient's modesty when performing procedures.
3. Students will respect the rules of patient confidentiality.
4. Students will not make personal problems burdensome to the patients or other personnel.
5. Students will refer to physicians by their title (i.e. Dr. Jones).

## **Radiation Safety / Protection**

The student shall not willfully expose themselves or any other person to x-rays unless such exposure is for diagnostic or therapeutic treatment. Students will be issued a personal dosimeter when they begin the program. Instructions for use and care of the device will be completed and the Dosimeter Agreement form will be signed and saved in the student file. As stated in the Agreement, the dosimeter must be worn whenever the student is at a clinical site.

Student radiation exposure is measured by Instadose™ personal dosimeters. The device should be worn on the collar. In case of pregnancy, a second dosimeter will be issued to be worn at waist level. In the event an accidental exposure occurs, the student must immediately notify the program director regarding the incident. The program director will discuss a plan of action for the event. If the badge is lost, damaged, or the student has any other concerns, he/she should contact the program director.

Monthly reports will be generated by the student and uploaded to the LMS as an assignment. Any report that exceeds 20 mrem in a 30-day period will be investigated by the program director. (NOTE: MTC uses 20 mrem as its action limit.)

- The allowed radiation occupational exposure for one year is 5 rem.
- Maximum dose to a fetus is .5 rem for the entire gestational period.
  
- Lost or damaged dosimeters will be replaced at the student's expense. The fee for replacement is \$110. Dosimeters must be returned in the same condition they were received. In the event of physical damage (ex: broken clip), the student will be required to replace the dosimeter.

## **MRI Safety Training & Screening Policy**

The MRI Safety Training & Screening Policy has been established for program students as all students have potential access to the magnetic resonance environment. This ensures that students are appropriately screened for magnetic wave or radiofrequency hazards. All Radiation Therapy Program students must complete the following:

- MRI Safety Training
- MRI Safety Training Quiz
- MRI Screening Form for Students
  - Completion of the screening tool will ensure that no contraindications exist which would put the student at risk while in the magnetic environment.

Students will receive the training materials, quiz, and screening form, in the first semester of the program. All requirements must be submitted to the program director prior to entering the clinical education setting. If there is a concern based on the screening tool, the student will be appropriately advised by faculty. Additionally, should any information change during the course of the program, the student must inform the program director in writing. Students are reminded: The MR magnet is ALWAYS ON, even if there is no patient being scanned in the room.

Before entering the MR environment, you must remove all metallic objects including hearing aids, dentures, partial plates, keys, cell phones, eyeglasses, hair pins, barrettes, jewelry, body piercing, watch, safety pins, paperclips, money clip, credit cards, bankcards, magnetic strip cards, coins, pens, nail clippers, tools, clothing with metal fasteners, and clothing with metallic threads.

Please consult the MRI Technologist or Radiologist if you have any questions or concerns BEFORE you enter the MRI suite.

*During clinical training, students should familiarize themselves with the facility's Magnetic ZONE policies (safe and unsafe areas).*

## Conferences/Seminars

On occasion, a class will attend conferences or other educational seminars. Students are expected to act responsibly and project a level of professionalism commensurate with the field. Students who act inappropriately, or do not attend the required events will be subject to disciplinary action. Faculty reserves the right to determine the severity of the infraction and consequent disciplinary action.

## Student Fundraising

Fundraising activities are used to help defray expenses to attend a national/regional conference. Fundraising is strictly on a volunteer basis and will be decided upon by the class. All fundraising activities must be approved through the faculty and MTC. A fundraising form is available from the Center for Student Success. Students will maintain an account with the Mitchell Technical College business office.

Monies from all fundraising activities, financial gifts to the class, etc., will first be used to pay for registration, transportation, and lodging. If a class fails to raise adequate funds to attend a **faculty approved** conference, then they will be responsible to come up with the remainder of the funds or pass the balance of their account to the next class.

## Uniforms and Appearance

The MTC Radiation Therapy Program uniform is representative of Mitchell Technical College and of the Radiologic Science Professions. Students are required to meet these standards in order to project a professional image to patients, faculty and clinical staff. **These guidelines apply whether the student is wearing the scrub uniform or casual clothing.**

### Grooming and Hygiene:

- Clean and neat appearance, not offensive and properly fitted
- Conservative use of cosmetics, colognes, perfumes
- Fingernails must be well trimmed. Artificial nails and colored nail polish are prohibited
- Conservative hair color and style; Hair that touches the student's shoulders must be pulled back; neutral headbands **no wider than 1 inch** may be worn.
- Limited accessories
- Visible body piercings and gauges are unacceptable
- Existing tattoos must be concealed or approved by faculty if not concealable
- Students must be well groomed and facial hair trimmed

## Uniforms

Radiation therapy students are required to wear scrubs that are grey or black in color. MTC faculty recommends Cherokee brand scrubs. The MTC Radiation Therapy Program Patch, available in the bookstore, must be sewn onto all scrub tops and lab jackets. The patch must be centered 1 inch below the shoulder seam on the left sleeve. Scrub pants must not drag on the floor or have a split seam greater than 1 inch. Low rise scrub pants are discouraged due to the nature of our job requirements (bending, reaching, kneeling, lifting, etc). Scrubs **WILL NOT** be worn in conjunction with casual clothes (i.e. sweatshirt over the top).

- Clean & unwrinkled
- Socks required
- Colored shoes are authorized, but must be subdued in nature (no neon, etc.). Shoes must be in good condition.
- Faculty reserves the right to require students to replace uniforms/footwear if they feel that it is inappropriate for reasons outside those covered in this handbook.
- Shirts worn under scrubs (may be long sleeve) must be tucked in with no visible print.

## Identification Badges

- ID badges should be accessible anytime the student is on campus.
- ID badges must be worn at all times while student is in the clinical or lab setting.
- Identification tags must be visible on the upper torso

## Casual Dress

- Casual dress will be allowed at certain times of the fall semester.
- Casual wear is defined as blue jeans or neutral pants and neutral shirt or MTC spirit wear.
- Unacceptable: Athletic wear, yoga pants, sweatpants, tight-fitting, low-cut, spaghetti straps, unwashed clothes, clothing with offensive logos.
- Personal hygiene rules apply.



## **Graduation Requirements**

To earn a Radiation Therapy AAS degree the student must meet the following requirements:

- All institutional requirements for an AAS degree as stated in the MTC catalog and student handbook.
- Satisfactory completion of all required didactic and clinical coursework.
- A minimum grade of “C” in all Radiation Therapy technical courses.
- All financial obligations with MTC have been met.
- All unexcused time has been made up.

## **Awards**

There are two awards presented to students who have achieved outstanding progress in the didactic and clinical portions of the program. These awards will be presented to the student on graduation day.

### **Highest Academic Achievement**

1. Maintains a full-time status throughout the program
2. Holds highest cumulative GPA for didactic aspect of the program
3. Meets all program and institutional obligations to graduate

### **Outstanding Clinical Performance**

1. Maintains a full-time status throughout of the program
2. Holds highest cumulative GPA for clinical aspect of the program
3. Meets all program and institutional obligations to graduate