

# **AMARILLO COLLEGE-RADIATION THERAPY STUDENT HANDBOOK TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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**AMARILLO COLLEGE  
RADIATION THERAPY PROGRAM**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome to Amarillo College and to the Radiation Therapy Program!

We are very excited that you chose us to help guide you toward an allied health career. At AC the student always comes first and we promise to work very hard to ensure that you receive a quality education.

**PROGRAM PURPOSE**

This minimum two year (or 20 month, once enrolled in RADT classes) course of study at Amarillo College is designed to provide the opportunity for each student to obtain the basic “entry-level” skills and knowledge expected of a beginning staff radiation therapist. The curriculum combines technical and academic courses which will enable each graduate to gain a working knowledge in radiation therapy.

**PROGRAM HISTORY/ACCREDITATION**

The radiation therapy program graduated its first class in 1983 through a joint effort between the Harrington Cancer Center and Amarillo College. The program was initiated by Alan Burns, B.S.R.T.(R)(T), who served as the program's first Director. Throughout its history, the program was maintained accreditation through the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology.

**PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS**

The Radiation therapy program is a unique health care program providing a valuable resource for the community to educate personnel to treat cancer. In keeping with the mission of Amarillo College, the Radiation therapy program has a mission “To provide a comprehensive curriculum that will enable each graduate to perform the duties and responsibilities of an entry level radiation therapist.” Consequently, accomplishing this mission is measured and evaluated to the degree to which the program achieves the following goals:

1. Maintain programmatic accreditation through the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiological Technology (JRCERT) and adopt technical competency requirements equal to or in excess of American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) requirements.
2. Program graduates should be able to successfully write for and successfully complete the national certification examination given by the ARRT.

- 4 Rev. 2006
3. Students will be able to successfully complete the comprehensive program "Exit Examination" at the end of the curricular training. Graduates will go on to fill local/regional/national needs for certified radiation therapists.
4. The program will prepare the students for the clinical responsibilities of an entry-level radiation therapist.
5. The program will review its mission & goals annually
6. Program graduates and employers will describe satisfaction with the program.
7. The program will demonstrate adequate retention rates with students completing the program in a timely manner
8. The program will provide an educational environment that promotes (affective) communication skills, critical thinking/problem solving skills and lifelong learning.
9. The program will provide a curriculum that promotes cognitive competency with a curriculum that encompasses didactic subject matter required by JRCERT
10. The program will provide a curriculum that promotes psychomotor competence.

## **PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDES**

You have chosen a career in Allied Health, specifically in Radiation Therapy. The days, weeks, and months that lie ahead will surely prove to be a very different experience in your life. Radiation Therapy is a career charged with excitement, challenge, and responsibilities.

This Student Handbook has been prepared to help you assume these responsibilities as you begin the educational program. Let's begin by defining the term "**Allied Health Professional.**" The word "**Allied**" means to assist. "**Health**", of course, deals with ones well-being. And, a "**Professional**" is one who truly knows all aspects of the job being represented. An ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL is a highly skilled and knowledgeable person who assists the physician in helping the patient return to a wholesome life.

One important word to all allied health professionals is **Ethics**. Ethics is a state of conduct and behavior – a set of principles if you will – used to direct the daily activities of all persons. The ethical responsibilities associated with a career in health, at any level, make it necessary for those practicing in this domain to carefully consider all of the on-job as well as off-job activities.

You have chosen to become a "public servant" when you chose to enter a health career. As such, you must know and always remember that any public servant is subject to the scrutiny of the public at any time. It is absolutely imperative that you know immediately that your patient must always come first. The comments contained throughout this handbook were carefully prepared with that thought in mind. Some comments may seem harsh and some even immature for you personally. However, you should know that they are not intended to be personal or discriminatory to anyone. Furthermore, the contents of this handbook reflect the policies, regulations, and procedures which are currently in effect. The College always reserves the right to make necessary changes in the handbook at any time to reflect current Board

of Regents policies, administrative regulations and procedures, and amendments by state law. Also, changes sometimes occur with the sole intent to make the program “better” for all students.

## ***Radiation Therapist Code of Ethics***

Revised and adopted by the ASRT, July 1998

1. The radiation therapist advances the principal objective of the profession to provide services to humanity with full respect for the dignity of mankind.
2. The radiation therapist delivers patient care and service unrestricted by concerns of personal attributes or the nature of the disease or illness, and without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion or socioeconomic status.
3. The radiation therapist assesses situations; exercises care, discretion and judgment; assumes responsibility for professional decisions and acts in the best interest of the patient.
4. The radiation therapist adheres to the tenets and domains of the scope of practice for radiation therapists.
5. The radiation therapist actively engages in lifelong learning to maintain, improve, and enhance professional competence and knowledge.

We are always striving to maintain appropriate standards. You are requested to thoroughly study this document throughout since you will be responsible for “living” its contents each day while you remain in this educational program. Any question or comment about any statement in the handbook should be directed, in writing, to the Program Director.

You are beginning a new chapter in the story of your life. Your entry into the health care arena as a student radiation therapist is filled with more responsibility than you could ever imagine. At this early point in your new career, it is not possible for us to stress the importance of responsibility enough for you to fully realize its scope. Of course, as we have already stated, your greatest responsibility as a health professional is to your patients who are willing to place their lives in your caring hands.

As you read this particular section of the handbook, sit back and evaluate the circumstances and the possibilities of this exciting career. Why are you here? Are your motivations sincere or are they purely personal and only the means to earn the money necessary to sustain a comfortable lifestyle. Surely, everyone must earn a salary in order to put food on the table and clothes on the backs of those they love most. However, if that’s your sole driving force that brings you into this career, perhaps you should re-assess that commitment. Serving your fellow man as a health worker is more than just earning a salary. It is MUCH more than that!

Actually, in any job or profession, the worker will get out of the job no more than what is contributed. As a student radiation therapist, great demands of conduct, personality and attitudes will be made of you, by your patients, your teachers and by the other professional people with whom you come in daily

contact. If you study diligently and develop your professional skills to the best of your ability, and if you are devoted to your profession, you will be successful in that profession.

It is certainly not our intention to proselytize, however you should understand right away that from this day forward you will be doing serious, meaningful work. As such, you must develop an inner fortitude or drive to succeed and set for yourself a code of ethics that will be strong enough to sustain you as you mature professionally.

*One final comment, by way of an introduction, deserves some special attention at this time. While you are in this educational program, it is very important that you make every effort to be cooperative at all levels. Your first and closest associates will be your peers, those fellow students who occupy the desks around yours and share most of the same anxious feelings you are probably now experiencing. Your classroom, laboratory and on-job experiences, will – to some degree – be performed as a class. What one class member does will ultimately reflect on all other members. This includes strengths as well as weaknesses.*

*Each new class soon establishes its own identity based upon the attitudes and ideals of all its members. As a member in this class, it is your immediate responsibility to begin to work with your peers. You will no doubt discover some peers with attitudes and ideals which are far different from your own. Give them a chance; tolerate them if you must. Perhaps there are people who must tolerate you. Whenever there is discontentment or disharmony within the class structure, the goals of the entire group become jeopardized. It is no secret that the student who can discuss, demonstrate, debate, and share in a professional manner is the student who will learn and become successful. Also, to reach success from any educational program, the student must ask questions, listen, express opinions, correct mistakes, and respect the opinions of others. Help each other whenever you can. Discuss your problems with each other. Express how you feel. Your progress should reflect the progress of the group. Take pride in it! Don't envy or harass the student who seems to learn easy. Instead, study harder yourself. A competitive atmosphere breeds success. Remember: **IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO DO YOUR BEST, THAN TO BE THE BEST.***

## **RADIATION THERAPY FACULTY**

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Faculty-Radiography program, Radiation Safety Officer  
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Phone: 354-6099

We are all here to serve your educational needs. Please do not hesitate to call on us when necessary.

## **PRACTICUMS**

Much of your education will occur within courses taught in hospitals and clinics located in and around Amarillo. These courses are collectively called Practicums and there are **five** of them (one for each fall, each spring, and one summer semester for the next two academic years). All medical facilities that accept radiation therapy students are called “medial affiliates.” Each medical affiliate has contracted with Amarillo College to provide their staff and equipment at no cost to the college or to the students. These institutions are divided into two types according to our program accreditation criteria:

1. Primary Affiliates ("base hospitals")
  - A. Harrington Cancer Center, Amarillo TX
  - B. Joe Arrington Cancer Center (Lubbock)
  - C. University Medical Center-Southwest Cancer Center (Lubbock)

While enrolled in these **five** practicum courses, you will come into daily contact with patients who are in severe pain, who are very sick, and who may be emotionally extended to the point of extreme depression. It is at these times that you will need to draw deep into your own well of strengths, remain calm, and provide reassurance and comfort to those who need it most. You must ensure that nothing adds to their distress and at the same time make them feel that they can trust in you for help. You must always portray an image of confidence to others which is possible only if you first have confidence in yourself. When you have gained their trust, only then will they fully cooperate with you.

## **PROGRAM COMPLETION AWARDS**

Upon satisfactory completion of the TOTAL curriculum, and after meeting **ALL** other graduation requirements, the graduate will receive the Associate in Applied Science Degree (A.A.S.) from Amarillo College. After the degree has been earned, the graduate is eligible to take the American Registry of Radiologic Technologist (ARRT) certification examination in radiation therapy. After successful completion of this exam, the certified technologist may use the initials RT(T) (registered technologist in radiation therapy), after his or her name. In Texas, and other many other states, ARRT certification qualifies the person for a state license to practice radiation therapy.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

Amarillo College is an equal opportunity college. It is the policy of Amarillo College not to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, age, religion, or national origin in its radiation therapy program, related activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504, Title VI, and Age Discrimination Act of 1978. Amarillo College will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in the radiation therapy program.

## LENGTH OF THE PROGRAM

In order to complete the educational program, the student must be enrolled in the medical portion of the program (radiation therapy courses) a minimum of twenty-four months, including general education requirements (minimum 20 months once enrolled in “major” courses). Longer periods may be used, but anything less than 20 months is not possible unless the student is granted "Advanced Standing" status, or is given credit by experience.

Students who have completed the JRCERT accredited or equivalent program in radiography or nursing may have an “advance standing” (aka “fast track”) which will allow them to complete the program in [16 months \(4 semesters\)](#).

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible for graduation from the radiation therapy program at Amarillo College, the student must fulfill each of the following requirements:

1. Complete ALL required courses contained in the curriculum as listed in the college General Catalog. In addition to this document and the Student Clinical Handbook, the student should also consult the college General Catalog and the Students Rights and Responsibilities documents for more complete information about Amarillo College policies and procedures. *A copy of the Students Rights and Responsibilities document is available through the Office of the Dean of Students, and should be mailed to each new student shortly after first enrollment in the program.* THE STUDENT IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDERSTANDING AND ABIDING BY THE INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THESE DOCUMENTS.
2. Earn a minimum grade of "C" in any course contained in the curriculum ("B" in Practicum courses). A grade of "D" does not count towards graduation in any course.
3. Have an over-all Amarillo College Grade Point Average (GPA) not less than a 2.00 ("C" average). This GPA will include ALL courses ever taken at Amarillo College.
4. Discharge all financial obligations to Amarillo College.
5. Make a formal application for graduation at the appropriate time.

Note: If a student applies for graduation and does not complete the program within that fiscal year (August), the graduation application becomes null-and-void and all graduation fees are forfeited. In such case, the student must re-apply at the next opportunity.

## SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Each student is expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress at all times during the educational experience. Satisfactory Progress is defined as a GPA of not less than 2.00. Any student who fails to make a semester GPA of at least 2.0 will be placed on ACADEMIC PROBATION. To be removed from academic probation, a student must earn a minimum GPA of 2.0 at the conclusion of the next semester. If the GPA is less than 2.0, the student will be placed on ACADEMIC SUSPENSION. A student on academic suspension will be suspended from Amarillo College during the next full semester (summer school terms do not count toward fulfilling suspension requirements). If a radiation therapy major fails to earn a final passing grade in any RADR or RADT course within two attempts, that student may not continue in the program. **In other words, a student may only repeat a class (for ANY reason) ONCE!** Also, if a radiation therapy major fails to earn a final passing grade in any three different RADR or RADT courses, that student will be withdrawn from the program.

Advising and Counseling services are available for all students and prospective students in the ACcess Center (371-5440) located on the first floor of the Lynn Library Learning Center on the Washington Street Campus or, for the student can contact [Susan McClure](#), counselor for West Campus (354-6007) for counseling services. Professional counselors are available to help individuals evaluate academic, personal and career options/concerns.

The ACcess Center exists to help students succeed in college. The center offers both development courses and support services to help students bridge gaps between entry level skills (e.g. how to approach studying, how to approach taking notes, how to approach exams, etc.) and college coursework.

Counseling regarding student progress or other student matters may also be sought from the Program Director.

## DISCIPLINARY SUSPENSION OR DISMISSAL

A high standard of conduct is expected of all students. It is assumed that personal honor, integrity, and common sense will guide the actions of each radiation therapy student at all times, both in and out of the classroom/lab/clinic. Any student who does not perform according to these expected standards shall expect no special considerations when they are discovered. Students who are found to be dishonest during any RADR or RADT course, in any way, shall automatically receive a final course grade of 'F' for that course. If a second offense occurs, the student will not be permitted to continue in the program. If the situation warrants, the student may be permanently suspended from Amarillo College. A complete Student Code of Conduct is printed in the Amarillo College Student Rights and Responsibilities document. *A copy of this document is available through the Office of the Dean of Students.*

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A student who has a grievance concerning a course should appeal **FIRST** to the course instructor. Every effort should be made to settle the problem at this level. However, if the student is not satisfied with the decision of the instructor, an appeal should be made to the Program Director, the Chairman of the Division of Allied Health, the Dean of Instruction, and the President, IN THAT ORDER.

## **AFTER SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT**

At Amarillo College, there are no specific regulations or procedures for students who wish to work while attending school. However, in no case can a student expect a course instructor to permit absences or late arrivals to class/lab/clinic due to employment schedules or other job-related difficulties. Also, due to the technical nature of this medical program, students are urged to seriously consider possible consequences of too many employment hours. Of course, the number of permissible hours will vary with the abilities of each student. If you must work while in school, it will be your responsibility to make a realistic choice between work hours and a reasonable chance to be successful in the educational program. As a universal guide to success, it has been found that most students will need to study at least two hours out-of-class for each hour in-class per week. [Also note that during many Lubbock rotations, the student may not return back to Amarillo until 6:00-6:30 pm.](#)

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Amarillo College offers a wide variety of scholarships, loans and grants through the financial aid office (371-5310). The size and amount of scholarships varies. Application forms for Allied Health Scholarship forms are available in the Allied Health Division Office.

## **CLASS SCHEDULES**

All RADR and RADT courses will be offered on weekdays only. Times will vary. General Education and related courses are offered at various times, including weekends and evenings. Class schedules are published in the Amarillo College Class Schedule booklet prior to the start of each semester. Oftentimes, circumstances beyond our control occur which result in needed changes to these schedules. We apologize for any inconvenience that may arise due to any unpublished changes.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Students are expected to maintain high standards of conduct while enrolled in the radiation therapy program. The Code of Ethics for the Technologist and the Code of Ethics for Health Sciences Technology Division Students must be observed at all times.

Students need to familiarize themselves with the previously described Students Rights and Responsibilities document for more specific policies and procedures regarding student conduct.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

The faculty at Amarillo College realize that each student who attends AC is an adult and capable of deciding when to attend and when to miss a learning session. However, many years of experience as faculty also place them in a position to accurately predict the success or failure of a student due to poor attendance habits. Each Amarillo College faculty member has his or her own philosophies and specific policies relative to course attendance. At the beginning of each course, the instructor will provide the student with a course syllabus which includes an attendance/make-up policy. It is the responsibility of the student to closely adhere to that policy. Attendance policies for all Practicum courses are given in the Clinical Handbook.

## **GRADE REPORTS**

At the conclusion of each course, the student shall have access to some version of a grade report. Grade reports are only available on-line (through the WEB ADVISOR section of the college web site at [www.actx.edu](http://www.actx.edu)) or through transcripts. Grade reports are no longer mailed to students. There is no official mid-semester grade report.

## **PREGNANCY POLICY**

(This policy is further described from a radiation protection standpoint in the Student Clinical Handbook document)

The routine daily duties of the radiation therapist requires that he or she work in an environment where ionizing radiation (x-radiation) exposure is an ever-present danger. However, by strictly adhering to well established radiation protection safety precautions, it is an extremely rare circumstance where a radiation therapist has developed a health problem directly attributed to ionizing radiation exposure.

It is well documented that different people react differently to the same disease process (e.g. cancer). That concept is also true for the body's reactions to radiation exposure. Consider a sunburn where two people are exposed to the sun's ultraviolet radiation for the same amount of time under identical circumstances. Yet, each may experience a very different degree of burn from that exposure, simply because they are different people. Of course, many factors determine any health risk from excessive ionizing radiation exposure, like exposure to medical x-radiation. One such factor that is especially important to consider is the age of the person exposed. Again, it is well documented that the human organism is especially sensitive to radiation exposure and resulting damage during the time that the organism is developing in the womb of the mother. That being the case, the Amarillo College Radiation Therapy Program has in place a pregnancy policy to inform students of their options should they be pregnant at the time they begin the program or become pregnant prior to completion of the program.

**Policy Statement —**

“It is strongly recommended that a student avoid becoming pregnant while in the radiation therapy program to ensure radiation safety to any unborn embryo or fetus. If a pregnancy does occur, the radiation therapy student who is pregnant may choose to maintain her pregnancy status as personally confidential for as long as possible. Any student with an undisclosed pregnancy may still obtain fetal dose and related radiation safety information at any time from the college Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) without declaring her pregnancy status. However, a radiation therapy student who is pregnant is urged to consider her RSO’s responsibility for her safety and freely involve the RSO in all courses where ionizing radiation equipment is used. Amarillo College assumes no responsibility for providing specific fetal radiation dose precautions until the pregnant radiation therapy student openly declares her pregnancy status (in writing) to the RSO. That notice shall also include the expected date of delivery.

Once a pregnancy becomes known (voluntarily or otherwise), the student will be provided fetal dose information in accordance with NRC Guide 8.13. At that time, the student will be asked to sign a statement testifying that she has received the fetal dose information and that the RSO has been notified. The RSO will then take immediate action to also provide the student with a special fetal radiation monitoring device that shall be worn by the student, in the designated location, at all times while she is working around ionizing radiation equipment – either at an affiliated clinical site or in the college campus energized x-ray laboratory.

The student who is pregnant will have several options to consider regarding the duration of her educational program at Amarillo College:

1. She may remain in all program courses through program completion without any modification or interruption because of her pregnancy.
2. She may remain in all program courses and request special modifications related to the higher dose potential duties (e.g. simulation). The RSO will make the determinations for specific work area assignments during the pregnancy period and each case will be handled on an individual basis.
3. She may remain in didactic courses only, and take a temporary leave from those courses where she would be directly involved with the use of ionizing radiation equipment with the duration of leave not to exceed a period of time that will prevent program completion within the 36 month requirement as stated in the college General Catalog.
4. She may take a leave from all program coursework with the duration of leave not to exceed a period of time that will prevent program completion within the 36 month requirement as stated in the college General Catalog.

## **LONG TERM ILLNESS POLICY**

Any student who is ill, injured, disabled, or absent to such an extent as to be prevented from attendance in the classroom and/or practical setting for a period that exceeds one week (five college school days) will be required to submit a physician's note of diagnosis, prognosis, and activity limitations to his/her Instructor as soon as possible. Based on the medical information and the individual situation concerning the student's status in the Program, the Instructor, in conjunction with the Program Director, will review the situation and reach a decision as to the student's continued status in the Program.

If the student cannot meet the practical and/or didactic objectives required by the program, the student may be asked to apply for a “leave of absence,” or, if necessary, for re-admission to the program at a later date. Every effort will be made to accommodate the student's needs; however, if the student cannot meet the required practical/academic objectives for the specific semester within a given time period, credit cannot be given for the course. (note: there is a separate policy that relates to leave of absence with respect only to clinical courses that is described in the Student Clinical Handbook document)

## **RADIATION SAFETY POLICIES**

The radiation safety officer for Amarillo College is **Becky Burton**, radiography program faculty member, who is empowered with legal authority to enforce all radiation safety rules as set forth by State and Federal regulations.

A student is required to exercise correct radiation protection practices at all times. At no time may a student participate in a procedure while using unsafe protection practices.

Radiation Protection in the on-Campus Energized Imaging Laboratory:

The student must always adhere to practices which reduce radiation exposure to themselves and other personnel. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

No student is allowed to operate the equipment in labs on campus without having an instructor readily available for supervision.

Students are never allowed to radiograph each other. Phantoms and positioning devices are provided for laboratory experiments.

The student is required to wear his/her personnel monitor while attending practical / lab assignments.

The student must always adhere to practices which reduce radiation exposure to self and others to as little as reasonably achievable.(ALARA)

Any questionable practice must be reported to the faculty/supervisor immediately.

Radiation Monitoring Records:

All radiation monitoring records are kept at Amarillo College. Following review of the bi-monthly records by the “Radiation Safety Officer,” a copy of the report is given to the program faculty. Following faculty review, the report is posted in the Radiology lab (WCAH 145). It is the student's responsibility to review the report.

In the event that a student receives an excessive amount of radiation during a period (more than 400 mR), consultation with the Radiation Safety Officer and the student is required. Recommendations from the Radiation Safety Officer will be made and must be closely followed by the student. Personnel monitors are changed every two months with the exception of fetal badges which are changed monthly.

## THE PATIENT WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

All radiation therapy students will be assigned to train in several medical institutions. When you enter the actual medical environment, you will be expected to perform radiation therapy procedures on the patients based upon your skill level. At some point in the educational process, you will begin to perform the radiation therapy procedures with the unassisted supervision of the radiation therapist. These solo (unassisted) treatments are the only procedures that will count towards the completion of program clinical competencies and graduation. Some procedures will involve patients who have a communicable disease (e.g. hepatitis, tuberculosis, AIDS). You shall **NOT** attempt to perform any unassisted radiation therapy procedure on such patients until proper training methodology has been provided by the college faculty. Communicable disease training typically occurs early in the curriculum. After proper instruction has been completed, you will be expected to treat any patient with a communicable disease should one come your way. Any specific questions regarding a communicable diseases should be directed to the appropriate practical affiliates infection control department.

The Student Clinical Handbook includes policies for the student who has contracted a communicable illness.

## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

Universal precautions regarding blood and body fluids must be adhered to at all times. The following general guidelines should be followed:

Gloves are worn when ...

- ... touching any blood, body fluids, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin.
- ... handling items or surface soiled with blood or body fluids
- ... performing venipuncture and other vascular access procedures
- ... removing needles used to inject contrast media

Gowns or aprons should be worn if soiling of one's clothing is likely.

Hands or other skin surfaces must be washed immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids.

Try to prevent injuries caused by needles or sharps. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles should not be recapped, purposely bent or broken by hand. After use, needles scalpel blades, and other sharp items must be placed in a puncture-resistance ("sharps") container.

Wash hands before and after contact with any patient. **You can not wash your hands too much!**

## CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The staff radiation therapist and student radiation therapist have primary contact with a patient and/or his physician during a radiation therapy treatment. It is essential that the RT(T) and/or student communicate with the patient and/or physician in order to establish adequate history pertinent to the treatment and care of the patient. All information gained is considered confidential and must be treated as such. The student must never communicate to the patient information regarding the patient's condition or prognosis. At no time should a student release or discuss, in public, any information contained in the patient's medical record.

A student who is found to be in violation of this policy will face disciplinary action that may include immediate dismissal from the program and possible legal action by the patient or the family. More information with respect to confidentiality, universal precautions, etc. will be described very early in the program.

## SPECIAL WARNINGS

Through the years, students training in radiation therapy departments have been involved in incidents that can be traced to negligence. The "special warnings" which follow have all actually occurred to students. They are presented in this handbook to emphasize their reality so that they will not happen again.

1. **NEVER** treat the wrong patient. Always double-check the identity of your patient. Make this check yourself. Do not trust someone else to do this very important duty for you.
2. **NEVER** reveal the results of a treatment or treatment course to the patient, his family, or his friends. You are not qualified to practice medicine. Only a physician can legally do this.
3. **NEVER** transport a patient by allowing the patient to walk. Use a wheelchair or gurney (stretcher on wheels). Likewise, never change a transport order without proper permission (nurse on duty).
4. **NEVER** remove a patient from a traction device without first obtaining permission from a proper authority (nurse on duty).
5. **NEVER** leave the bedside of any patient without being certain that the right and left bed-rails are in the UPRIGHT position - regardless of circumstances.
6. **NEVER** adjust the intravenous drip infusion equipment or oxygen equipment without first obtaining permission from a proper authority (nurse on duty).
7. **NEVER** attempt to move a "difficult" patient alone. Get help! You should have one person for each 50 pounds of patient weight. (a class on "body mechanics" will be scheduled prior to the student entering clinical rotations)

8. **NEVER** disclose personal information about a patient, told to you in confidence, unless such a disclosure is important to the well-being of the patient. When in doubt, ask a faculty member, the department supervisor, or a radiologist.
9. **NEVER** permit an in-patient to return unattended to his or her room.
10. **NEVER** attempt a medical procedure on any patient when that patient refuses the procedure.
11. **NEVER** leave a patient alone who is experiencing a medical emergency. Call for help! You begin the appropriate treatment immediately
12. **NEVER** use a sterile item that you know or think has become contaminated.
13. **NEVER** leave a treatment incomplete. If you cannot complete the treatment, for whatever reason, you must properly notify your replacement regarding all that you have done and what remains to be done.
14. **NEVER** participate in an unethical procedure. If you are not sure of the ethics involved, seek advice from a respected third party.

## **COLLEGE CATALOG**

The Amarillo College catalog that is in effect at the time the student declares radiation therapy as your major is the catalog that shall apply until the program is completed. It is a non-official contract between Amarillo College and the student. Catalog revisions are occasionally necessary during the course of a catalog year. Information related to the changes and their necessity will be related to students, though such changes typically only impact students coming in for the next year.

If course revisions occur in a subsequent catalog before program completion, the student will have the option to assume the new requirements or remain with the old. Once a choice is made it is an all-or-none choice. For example, if the student chooses the new catalog year, ALL courses listed in the new catalog radiation therapy curriculum are now required for program completion – not just certain ones.

Each student is strongly advised to read **ALL** sections of the catalog that relate to the radiation therapy curriculum.

## **STUDENT SUPERVISION**

Students shall be directly supervised by an RT(T) at all times until such time that the student demonstrates competency in a given procedure. “Directly supervised” means that the RT(T) must remain with the student during the entire treatment.

After a student has demonstrated competency with a particular treatment, then, and only then, may the student be permitted to perform that treatment with indirect supervision.” Indirect supervision” means that the RT(T) must be readily available to give assistance if necessary. "Readily available" means that

the RT(T) is either in the room or at the console area while a treatment is being set up by the student. "Beam On" cannot be imitated without direct supervision by an RT(T)

## **PAY FOR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE**

Students enrolled in a practicum course shall **NOT** take the responsibility or place of qualified staff radiation therapists. Students enrolled in these courses shall **NOT** receive any monetary reimbursement for services rendered while on duty serving in the capacity as a student radiation therapist. Texas law forbids student radiation therapist to be employed as a "radiation therapist." Any student found to be in violation of this law will be immediately suspended from the program.

The Amarillo College Radiation Therapy Program fully supports the 'Texas Medical Radiologic Technologists Act'. Students should not be employed except under the guidelines and in compliance with this act! Failure to be in compliance with this act will result in the student's dismissal from the Radiation Therapy program.

## **HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Each student is required to sign the form found on the next page which acknowledges that the student has received a copy of this handbook. Furthermore, the signature acknowledges that the student agrees to abide by the present content of the handbook as well as any revisions that may be necessary prior to his/her graduation from the program, assuming that such revisions do not violate the college catalog under which the student is enrolled.

# RADIATION THERAPY PROGRAM

## STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Radiation Therapy Program Student Handbook and have read and now understand all sections of the document.

Further, I understand that it may become necessary for program officials to revise the contents of the Student Handbook prior to my completion of the program, In which case I agree to abide by the revisions.

---

student signature

date

*Remove this signed and dated form  
from the remainder of the handbook  
and present it to the Program Director  
for placement in your permanent file.*