**AMARILLO COLLEGE**

**SONOGRAPHY PROGRAM**

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**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021**

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**Introduction**

Congratulations on being accepted and welcome to the Amarillo College Sonography Program.

Over the course of 5 semesters, you as the student will learn and gain the experience needed to gain employment as an entry level sonography. This rigorous program requires a significant amount of time studying outside of the classroom as well as hands on time spent in the lab outside of scheduled class and clinical hours.

The Student Handbook that follows is provided as a guide to the development of professionalism and a policy manual applicable to each sonography major who is enrolled within the program.

The contents of the “Student Handbook” also describe the policies, regulations, and procedures which are currently in effect for the Amarillo College Sonography program. Amarillo College always reserves the right to make necessary changes in the “Student Handbook” at any time to reflect current Board of Regents policies, administrative regulations and procedures, and amendments imposed by Texas law. Also, changes in the “Student Handbook” may become necessary with the sole intent of improving the program. Should any change in policy and/or procedures become necessary, each student will be notified, in writing, of the change. Consequently, any change supersedes previous statements and the student will be required to abide by the change.

Program Description:

Each student who enrolls in the Amarillo College Sonography Program will be required to complete 5 semesters of didactic course and clinical coursework. This program will prepare you to enter the workforce as a sonographer. Sonographers work in a variety of healthcare settings, including hospitals, imaging centers, clinics, and doctors’ offices. Students who successfully complete all requirements of the program are eligible to apply to take the American Registry of Radiologic Technologies exam.

Program Purpose:

This 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 sonographer. The curriculum combines general academic and sonographic didactic and clinical courses which will enable each graduate to obtain a working knowledge in sonography as well as the development of professional and personal traits appropriate for working in a healthcare environment and life in general.

Program Mission:

The mission of the Amarillo College Sonography Program is to provide a comprehensive educational environment that will prepare the graduate to effectively engage in the daily challenges and responsibilities required of a competent and professional entry-level sonographer.

Program Goals:

* To prepare competent entry level general sonographers in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains
* To graduate students who can use critical thinking and problem solving skills
* To graduate students who demonstrates honesty, integrity, and caring
* To graduate students who demonstrate professional proficiency in skills
* To graduate students who provide quality patient care in the healthcare setting
* To graduate student who can accurately recognize and identify the sonographic appearance of normal and abnormal anatomic structures.
* To graduate student who demonstrate conduct as outlined in the SDMS “Code of Ethics”
* To graduate students who apply self-evaluation and life-long learning
* To graduate students who achieve a passing grade on the American Radiologic Technologists and/or American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers’ examinations

**Essential Functions**

DMS students must be able to meet the following physical and mental abilities for successful completion of the DMS program and to gain employment in the field of sonography. The following is a list of physical abilities for Health Care Occupations gathered by an outside resource for the Department of Labor and other federal agencies. Students must be able to meet the following criteria with or without assistive devices.

**Physical Abilities**

1. Strength and Endurance

a. Dynamic Strength – The ability to exert muscle force repeatedly or continuously over time (including walking, standing or being upright continuously for 8‐12 hours).

b. Stamina – The ability to exert yourself physically over long periods of time without getting winded or out of breath

c. Static Strength – The ability to exert maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects up to 75 lbs. Must be able to move ultrasound machine and equipment as well as transferring of patients.

d. Trunk Strength – The ability to use your abdominal and lower back muscles to support part of the body repeatedly or continuously over time without “giving out” or fatiguing

2. Movement/Control

a. Arm‐Hand Steadiness – The ability to keep your hand and arm steady while moving your arm or while holding your arm and hand in one position

b. Control Precision – The ability to quickly and repeatedly adjust the controls of a machine or transducer to exact positions

c. Dynamic Flexibility – The ability to quickly and repeatedly bend, stretch, twist or reach out with your body, arms, and/or legs

d. Extent Flexibility – The ability to bend, stretch, twist, or reach with your body, arms, and/or legs

e. Finger Dexterity – The ability to make precisely coordinated movements of the fingers of one or both hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble very small objects

f. Manual Dexterity – The ability to quickly move your hand, your hand together with your arm, or your two hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble objects

g. Multi‐limb Coordination – The ability to coordinate two or more limbs while sitting, standing or lying down.

h. Reaction Time – The ability to quickly respond to a signal when it appears

i. Speed of Limb Movement – The ability to quickly move arms and legs

3. Auditory

a. Auditory Attention – The ability to focus on a single source of sound in the presence of other distracting sounds.

b. Hearing Sensitivity – The ability to detect or tell the differences between sounds that vary in pitch and loudness

c. Sound Localization – The ability to tell the direction from which a sound originated

4. Visual

a. Near and Far Vision – The ability to see objects at both close range and at a distance

b. Visual Color Discrimination – The ability to match or detect differences between colors, including shades of color and brightness.

5. Communication

a. Oral Comprehension and Expression – The ability to listen to, understand and clearly communicate information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences. Must also be able to give and receive information over the phone

In addition students must be able to:

1. Must be stable emotionally, this type of work involves life and death situations
2. Must show honesty and integrity in all matters with peers, faculty, staff and patients
3. Must display compassion, empathy, and concern for others
4. Must demonstrate accountability, problem solving and listening skills at all times
5. Enjoy working with people and patient contact

**PROGRAM STANDARDS**

1. A criminal background check will be conducted on each applicant prior to the beginning of  
clinicals at the applicant’s expense.  Results of this report may prevent a student form  
attending clinical in some areas and from obtaining licensure.

2. Students must obtain American Heart Association CPR Certification for Health Care Providers.  A copy of the certificate must be kept on file in the student’s record.  The student must maintain a current CPR certificate throughout the program.  Failure to maintain CPR will prevent the student from participating in clinicals until proof of CPR is provided.  Absences will be recorded for any missed clinical.

3. Tuberculosis screen, MMR titers/immunizations, TDap immunizations, varicella titer/immunizations and influenza immunization are required.  Hepatitis B series is required before patient contact.

4. A second TB screen and influenza vaccination will be required before the student’s second year of the program.  If at any time you lapse on your vaccinations you will not be able to participate in clinical rotations until proof is provided.  Absences will be recorded for any missed clinical.

5. Honesty

6. Accountability: Student must take responsibility for his/her own decisions and actions.  This includes acts of commission (what the student chooses to do) and acts of omission (what the student chooses not to do).

7. Confidentiality: Respecting the privacy of others is a standard to which all sonography students must adhere.   All students will be required to sign the Student Confidentiality Statement located at the end of this handbook.

8. Professionalism:  Sonography students represent the College and the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program at all times and should therefore conduct themselves in a positive manner.  This includes being considerate and respectful of others and demonstrating self‐ respect.

9. Safety: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner in which they are free of risks and injury.  Clinical facilities are not responsible for personal safety of the student.

10. Responsibility: Reliability and trustworthiness are expected of sonography students.

11. Growth: Sonographers must continually learn and grow in order to maintain a competent practice.  The student must be committed to professional growth by self‐evaluation of performance, accepting educational feedback, and incorporating new learning into practice

**Pregnancy Policy**

If a student is or becomes pregnant during the program, she should notify the Program Director. The program will work with the student to plan successful completion of the program which will vary on a case by case basis depending on where in the program with student is.

Options include but are not limited to  
• Remain in the program without modification   
• Remain in the program with modification of clinical assignments   
• Withdrawal from the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program  
• Students will submit a statement from the physician stating that the student is cleared to continue on in the program.   
• Notification to clinical instructors of pregnancy.

If the student makes the decision to withdraw from the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program, they may be re-instated the following year as long as they continue to meet admission criteria of the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program. Student will need to reapply and readmission is only guaranteed the next year.

**Student Leave of Absence Policy**

Any student who may become seriously ill or injured to such an extent as to be prevented from attendance in the classroom and/or practicum setting for two or more consecutive weeks, will be required to submit a written physician's documentation of diagnosis, prognosis, and activity limitations to the course instructor. This documentation will be required BEFORE the student can be permitted to return to classes and/or practicum duty.

Based on the medical information and the individual circumstances concerning the student's status in the program, the instructor, in conjunction with the program director, will review the state of affairs 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 reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the student's medical needs; however, if the student cannot meet the required academic objectives for the specific semester within a given time period, credit cannot be given for the course.

**Discrimination Policy**

Amarillo College has an “open door” admissions policy that ensures all who can benefit from higher education have an opportunity to do so. The AC admission policy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability. This same non-discriminatory philosophy continues for students while they are enrolled at Amarillo College.

Any student who believes he or she has been shown discrimination by an instructor or other agent of Amarillo College may file a discrimination complaint through the college Deportment Officer or the Affirmative Action Officer of the college. In turn, the college will set in motion a series of “due process” steps to resolve the complaint. These steps are described in detail in the college General Catalog.

**Diagnostic Medical Sonography (A.A.S.) Degree Requirements**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Semester | Course | Credits |
| Fall 1 | Abdominopelvic Sonography DMSO-1441  Clinical DMSO-1260  Introduction to Sonography DMSO-1210  Basic Ultrasound Physics DMSO-1302 | 4  2  2  3  Total: 11 |
| Spring 1 | Sonography of Obstetrics/Gynecology DMSO-2405  Practicum DMSO-1266  Sonography of Abdominopelvic Pathology DMSO 2341  Doppler Physics DMSO 2341 | 4  2  3    3  Total: 12 |
| Summer | Sono/Superficial Structures DMSO-2353  Practicum DMSO-1267 | 3  2  Total: 5 |
| Fall 2 | Intro to Vascular Technology DSVT-1103  Practicum DMSO-2366  Sonography of High Risk Obstetrics DMSO 2242 | 1  3  2  Total: 6 |
| Sping 2 | Advanced Ultrasound & Review DMSO-2230  Practicum DMSO-2367 | 2  3  Total: 5 |

**Academic Dishonesty**

At Amarillo College, The policy and penalty for such conduct is provided in the General Catalog as follows:

“A high standard of conduct is expected of all students. It is assumed that obedience to the law, respect for properly constituted authority, personal honor, integrity and common sense will guide the actions of each member of the college community both in and out of the classroom. Any student who fails to perform according to expected standards may be disciplined.”

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in the sonography program. Dishonesty is not acceptable in this program or in your chosen profession. Plagiarism, cheating, falsifying competency records, or any other unethical conduct, will be cause for a final course grade of “F”, or even dismissal from the program without the ability to re-enroll at some later date.

**Program Grading Scale**

A=92-100

B=83-91

C=75-82

F=Below 75

A grade of "D" is not possible

All students must achieve a minimum of 75% to pass any course.  All courses must be completed with the minimum score in order for the student to progress to subsequent semesters.

It is each student’s responsibility to monitor their progress in each course. Any student having academic difficulty in an individual course should immediately seek assistance from the course instructor to set up remediation.

All class and clinical assignments are due on appointed dates at the designated time.   Failure to submit an assignment on time will result in a grade of “0” to be given for the assignment

**Academic Progression Requirement**

Students must attain at least a grade of “C” in each sonography course to progress in the sonography program.

If a course is not completed with a “C” or above the student must repeat the course the next semester it is offered.

A class can only be repeated once. If the class is repeated and still results in a grade below a “C” the student with be removed from the program without option to reapply.

**Academic Withdrawal and Dismissal**

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

The following steps are necessary when withdrawing from the program.

1. The student should meet with the Program Director to discuss the withdrawal process.   
  
2. The student should write a formal letter of resignation stating the reason for withdrawal. This letter will remain in his/her permanent file and will be considered in the event the student seeks readmission to the program at a later date.

3. The student will return any material that may be on loan.

4. The student will follow University guidelines for completing the withdrawal process, securing the appropriate signatures when necessary. If a student withdraws from a professional course, the student must withdraw from the program because the student will be out of program sequence.

DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

There are conditions that will necessitate consideration for dismissal from the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to meet academic standards.

2. Failure to demonstrate suitable progress in clinical practice.

3. Patterns of behavior jeopardizing patient safety and/or contract agreement with the clinical affiliate.

4. Patterns of behavior indicating an attitude of irresponsibility to self, patient, profession, or program

5. Physical or emotional conditions affecting ability to attain curricular objectives.

6. Falsification of any records or knowledge of such (i.e., time sheets, competency evaluations, etc.)

7. Dismissal by a clinical education center.

**READMISSION TO THE PROGRAM**

A student wishing to be readmitted to the program must make formal application to the college, if not currently enrolled and also the program. Readmission is granted on an individual basis, based on the student's previous records and the availability of space.

**Chain of Command**

Part of professionalism is being able to communicate with staff concerning any issue that may arise. Students should be aware that there is a proper chain of command when addressing policies/guidelines, personal issues in the classroom and/or clinic. The student is always encouraged to seek immediate resolution by directly engaging the party involved.

Clinical chain of command:

Clinical instructor

1. Clinical coordinator
2. Program Director

## Academic chain of command:

1. Class Instructor  
2. Department Chair/Program Director.   
3. Dean.  
4. Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Guidance and Counseling**.

Academic counseling can be initiated by faculty, clinical instructors, or students.

During registration periods, the student is expected to make an appointment with his/her advisor in order to reassess the student’s educational goals, academic progress to date, and to plan the next semester’s schedule of work.

Your program director will serve as your academic advisor

**Classroom and Laboratory Expectations**

Ultrasound equipment

The student will be responsible for the condition of the equipment that is entrusted to his/her care for educational purposes through proper use and maintenance.

1. No food or drink is allowed at the machine
2. After use machine is to be cleaned of any gel on keyboards, panels and transducers (including cords)
3. Place all dirty laundry in the hamper
4. Clean the transvaginal probe in the cidex and REMOVE it after 15 minutes

**Lab Rules:**

* No food or drink is allowed at the machine
* Clean the transducer with t-spray after each use
* Clean the cord and machine with wipes
* Be careful and respectful of all lab equipment. If something is damaged please notify your instructor immediately
* You are never allowed to diagnose or offer your opinion to any “patient” being scanned
* OB/GYN patients must sign a waiver BEFORE you can scan them
* ALARA- OB patients max 30 minutes, all others 60 minutes
* You are only allowed to scan on the machine during your scheduled time. If a machine is open, you are welcome to it
* If you cannot make your scheduled time please cancel you slot on FaceBook
* Patients are NOT allowed to film or take pictures during exam
* No one is allowed in the lab after 8pm
* If you open the lab put the key back IMMEDIATELY
* If you are the last one in the lab, please turn off the lights, machines, and lock the door

**Classroom/Laboratory Absence**

Due to classes only meeting once per week attendance is critical to your success. Students are expected to attend each class session, take quizzes, tests and the final exam on the scheduled dates unless an excused absence is obtained. This absence must be reported before class on the day of the absence.

Excused absences are:

(1) Extreme illness involving student or his/her immediate family (spouse, child, parent, grandparent or sibling)

(2) Death in the student's immediate family.

Any absence other than listed above is considered unexcused.

If you miss a class you are responsible for all announcements, subject matter, and assignments for each class.

Two absences per course is allowed per semester. After the second absence, the student will be docked 10% from his/her final point total for the course.

Students **may not** take more than one makeup quizzes and/or tests per course.  Make-up quizzes/exams are only given if the instructor is notified prior to class time, and the absence is excused.

If you need to make up a quiz/exam you must schedule to make up the exam before the next class day back or a grade of “0” will be recorded for the missed quiz/exam.

Quizzes and/or exams may not be taken early in any class. .

Students not turning assignments in on time due to absence must turn the assignment in on the first day back to class, the student will lose 5 points for every day it is late.

**Classroom/Laboratory Tardiness and/or Leaving Early**

Punctual attendance is expected for all class sessions. 3 tardies and/or leaving early will count as an absence. Any material missed will be the responsibility of the student to obtain from fellow students. Each tardy or early dismissal after the 3 will deduct 1% from the final overall grade for each occurrence.

**Severe Weather**

If Amarillo College campuses are closed because of inclement weather, an official announcement will be made through all local television stations and KGNC radio. The message will also be posted on the college website and the College’s main telephone number (806) 371-5000.

Morning closings will be announced by 6:30 a.m. The decision to close or change evening classes will be made by 3:00 p.m. If a decision to cancel classes or close a campus is made during the day, students will be notified through the media and website. If no announcement is made, the College is open as normally scheduled.

Some students must routinely commute to and from Amarillo from their hometowns over relatively large distances. If inclement weather is occurring at the student’s home location, but the college has not closed, the student may choose to remain at home to avoid a dangerous commute. In such cases, the student must use the standard call-in procedure and the program clinical coordinator will record the absence.

Any approved weather-related absence will **NOT** count toward the designated absence limit. If the college officially closes, these hours must not be made up. If the college is open but travel is limited for all or some, these hours must be made up.

**Student Employment**

Students may be employed by the ultrasound departments of our affiliates as student sonographer during their final semester of school. Students must realize that their first responsibility is the completion of their education. Clinical schedules must remain the same and you still must attend all of your classes. You **cannot** receive pay as an employee during clinical hours.

The following are guidelines for employment:

1. Students must inform the Program Director/Clinical Coordinator immediately of a job obtained at any of the program’s clinical affiliates.

2. It is expected that the student will continue to fulfill the requirements of the course.

3. No part of the student uniform may be worn while working.

4. Employment is to take place only at times outside of scheduled college classes, and clinical education hours.

5. Students will not be excused early or granted excused absences from class or clinical in order to work.

6. Scheduled PAID working hours cannot be substituted for required clinical education hours.

**Recording of Classroom Sessions Policy**

Amarillo College Sonography Program prohibits recording and transmission of activities (e.g., lectures, discussions) that occur as part of a classroom session by a student unless written permission from the course instructor has been obtained and all students in the course as well as any guest speakers have been informed that audio/video recording may occur. A recording is defined as a video or audio replication or photographic image recorded on devices, including, but not limited to, audio recorders, video recorders, cellular phones, digital cameras, MP3 players, computers, tablets, and other handheld devices that records images and/or sound. If a student is granted permission to record any portion of a classroom session, that student understands that the recording is for the sole use of the individual student and may not be reproduced, sold, posted online, or otherwise distributed. A student does not have permission to reproduce or post the information on any social media (e.g., YouTube, FaceBook, etc), or other public or private forum that would infringe on the privacy rights of others represented in the recording.

**Clinical Expectations and Policies**

Each student who enrolls in the Amarillo College Sonography Program will be required to complete a series of five practicum (clinical) courses, usually over a twenty-one month period. An additional twelve months is possible if a leave-of-absence is needed. Practicum (clinical) education is the integration of cognitive, psychomotor and affective behaviors through observation, direct and indirect assistance and performance of actual diagnostic radiologic procedures. Practicum education moves progressively from a passive mode of observation to a more active mode through the five practicum courses. The student will be expected to observe, assist in, and eventually perform unassisted medical diagnostic imaging procedures while working under the direct and indirect supervision of qualified sonographers.

Because the practicum courses take place within a live, working medical environment, education procedures, protocols, and rules must be in place and **strictly enforced** to ensure patient safety and a quality sonographic product. The following sections of this handbook describe these procedures, protocols, and rules. They are all necessary; they are all important. The student should become very familiar with all aspects of this handbook as quickly as possible to avoid any misunderstandings and/or errors that could lead to serious consequences.

**Professionalism**

Sonography students represent the Amarillo College Sonography Program at all times and should therefore conduct themselves in a positive, professional manner.  This includes but is not limited to, punctuality, being considerate and respectful of other people and their property. It also includes an appropriate respect for those in authority. It is expected that one conducts oneself in a manner that will not bring criticism to him/her, the program, or the school.

We request the student observe the following:

1. Honesty – Being truthful in communication with others.

2. Trustworthiness – Maintaining the confidentiality of patient information. The student must never communicate to the patient’s family or friends, or any other person, any information regarding the patient's condition, diagnosis or prognosis. 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 adjunct student supervisor, or a radiologist. A student who is found to be in violation of this confidentiality policy at any level will face severe disciplinary action that may include immediate dismissal from the program and possible legal action by the patient or the patient’s family.

Students shall not use any type of electronic device (i.e. phone, tablet, or other) to take a picture of a patients image(s). This type of situation can lead to a potential breach of confidentiality. Likewise, the student may NOT release or discuss, in public, any information contained in the patient's medical record.

3. Professional Demeanor – Being thoughtful and professional when interacting with patients and their families; striving to maintain composure under pressure or fatigue, professional stress or personal problems; maintaining a neat and clean appearance and dress in attire that is reasonable and accepted as professional to the patient population served.

4. Respect for the Rights of Others – Dealing with professional staff and members of the health team in a considerate manner and with cooperation; respecting all persons encountered in a professional capacity regardless of age, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, gender, sexual preference, socioeconomic status; respecting the rights of patients and their families to be informed and share in patient care decisions; respecting patients' modesty and privacy

Failure to conduct one’s self in a professional manner may result in dismissal from the DMS program.

**Program and Clinical Site Information**

Various hospitals, clinics and private physician offices have contracted with Amarillo College through the past thirty-eight years to provide their facilities (staff, equipment, and patients) for student learning at no monetary charge to the college or students. While the technologists are there to help in your education, their first and foremost responsibility is to the patient.

Each student will be assigned to two or more clinical sites each semester. Schedules will vary depending on the site. The student must understand that while assigned to a clinical affiliate, they are there as a guest and are required to conform to all of the affiliate/department rules and procedures. While on duty, students are expected to park in the designated areas for each affiliate.

The current clinical sites are listed below:

Amarillo Diagnostic Clinic 806-356-5587   
Amarillo Heart Group  
BSA Hospital  
Childress Regional Medical Center  
Golden Plain Hospital (Borger)  
Harrington Breast Center  
Memorial Hospital of Texas County (Guymon, OK)  
Northwest Texas Healthcare Systems  
Pampa Regional Medical Center

**Transportation**

Each student is responsible for transportation to his/her assigned clinical education center. Transportation and all costs incurred for travel to the clinical education centers is the sole responsibility of the student.

**Trajecsys**

Trajecsys is the clinical reporting system used in the sonography program. This is an additional fee of $150 per student for the entire length of the program. This will be how you clock in/out, log exams, receive your student evaluations and eventually competency exams.

**Documentation of Clinical Experience**

Students must log in when arriving and out when leaving the clinical site with Trajecsys. Students must alsodocument all clinical procedures they observed and assist with in the clinical setting. You must enter the exams into Trajecsys in a timely manner so that it can be validated by an affiliate sonographer authorized to make the validation.

**Any falsification of practicum time records will result in a final course grade of “F” for that practicum. A second offense will drop the student from the program with no option to re-enroll**

**Practicum (Clinical) Performance Evaluation**

At the conclusion of each practicum rotation, the student Sonographer will receive a written performance evaluation from the qualified Sonographer who supervised the student during the evaluation period. If there was more than one supervisor during the period, each supervisor may perform an independent performance evaluation. The evaluation and process will measure three aspects of learning.

1. Cognitive Learning – Cognitive learning generally refers to knowledge gained in the classroom through lecture and demonstrations of various concepts and to the background information needed to understand a concept. In general, cognitive learning precedes the other two aspects of learning.
2. Psychomotor Learning – Psychomotor learning is hands-on learning. This occurs in the energized campus laboratory and in the clinical environment. Successful psychomotor learning most always requires a certain level of cognitive learning.
3. Affective Learning – Affective learning involves attitudes, values, and feelings. Affective learning occurs in both the cognitive and psychomotor environments.

When the student receives the evaluation form from the supervisor, the student should review the comments of the supervisor and professionally discuss with him/her any items where a less than desirable response is evident so that any problem area can be corrected before the next evaluation.

**Clinical Competencies**

Students will perform competency-based testing to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competency level for each basic or entry-level procedure.

The ARRT, along with Amarillo College, prescribes a list of practicum competencies that must be successfully mastered before completion of the program. These are done in the clinical setting and in the lab. Comp sheets can be obtained at the bookstore.

**Attendance Policy for Clinical and Practicum Rotations**

It is the sole responsibility of each student to always be present at his/her assigned affiliate site on the days and times designated in the schedule. There can be no substitute for the role of clinical experience in the Sonography program educational plan. Therefore, **attendance and tardy policies are rigid and strictly enforced. These polices accurately reflect the attendance policies the student will face once in the workplace as an employee.**

Certainly, events happen in everyone’s life that will disrupt a daily schedule. If a student must be absent from a practicum duty day, he/she **MUST** notify the appropriate adjunct affiliate supervisor and the college Clinical Coordinator or director **PRIOR** to the scheduled time of duty. Failure to properly notify the adjunct affiliate supervisor and the college Clinical Coordinator/Program Director will result in a **REDUCTION** of the final semester grade by 10 points.

**The absence form located at the back of this book is to be used is an absence occurs in the clinical/practicum site. It is to be filled out and signed by all required persons. Must be turned in after made up day has occurred. If this is not signed and turned in it will be considered not made up and can result in failure of the clinical rotation.**

No more than **THREE** absences (an absence is defined as missing 4 or more hours in an 8 hour period) may be recorded during a fall or spring semester. No more than **TWO** absences may be recorded in a summer semester. After maximum absences have occurred, loss of points to the final semester grade will be accessed. Exceptions to this policy may be made only when the college Clinical Coordinator determines that a major or unavoidable disruption occurred in the life of the student that resulted in the multiple absences (e.g. a lengthy hospitalization). These exceptions are rare, but when they occur, they are handled on an individual basis and do not set precedence for future decisions of similar or like circumstances. The following grade penalties will apply for absences for each semester in which the absences occurred:

**1st Absence Over Limit**  10 point reduction from the

(4 in fall/spring, 3 in summer) semester practicum grade.

**2nd Absence Over Limit** An additional 10 point reduction (5 in fall/spring, 4 in summer) the semester practicum grade. (20 total points)

**3rd Absence Over Limit** Final Practicum course grade of (6 in fall/spring, 5 in summer) “F”

**Each Absence Not Made-up** Final Practicum course grade of (Regardless of fall/spring/summer) “F”

**ALL** absences during any practicum course must be made up. There are no “grace” or “free” days. Make up time for any absence must be scheduled, in writing, with the affiliate supervisor at clinical site and clinical absence form filled out for each day of absence. The make-up day must be performed before the end of the semester the absence occurred or progression to next semester or graduation might be delayed.

If a student schedules a make-up day and is then absent or tardy on that make-up day, the same absentee and tardy policy will apply as it did for original day missed. In other words, missing a make-up day will count as an absence in addition to the absence that was recorded on the original day missed. Doing make-up time before an absence **IS NOT PERMITTED** unless the arrangements have been made with the college Clinical Coordinator and the adjunct affiliate supervisor.

Students will not be required to attend practicum assignments during final exam weeks that occur at the conclusion of the fall and spring semesters. However, final exam weeks may be used for practicum make-up hours, if approved in advance by appropriate affiliate supervisor and college Clinical Coordinator.

Students will not be counted as absent or required to make-up practicum time missed while participating in an approved school function. The program director will make the final decision to determine which school functions are approved for practicum absences.

Being tardy to a practicum shift is unacceptable and will also result in serious consequences. A student is tardy when he/she arrives between five minutes and thirty minutes late to the start of a work shift. The specific sonography department clock will be the official timekeeper. If the student is tardy by more than thirty minutes, the student will be sent home and an absence will be recorded for the day.

Many students often work beyond their assigned times and in doing so accumulate extra duty time. Working extra time provides additional experience and is certainly encouraged and applauded by all concerned. However, extra duty time cannot be used to make-up future absence or tardy. Likewise, any extra time earned in one practicum course cannot be carried over into a succeeding practicum course.

The following grade penalties will result from tardies (per semester regardless of spring/fall/summer):

**3 Tardies**  Loss of 10 points from the final semester practicum grade.

**4 Tardies**  Loss of 5 additional points from final semester practicum grade.

(15 total points)

**5 Tardies** Loss of 5 additional points from final semester practicum grade.

(20 total points)

**6 Tardies** Final practicum course grade of “F”

**Failure to properly notify the appropriate affiliate supervisor and college clinical coordinator of absence or tardy prior to time of shift will result in a 10 point deduction off of final practicum grade.**

Obviously, these consequences are severe. Therefore, it is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that the student develop the habit of **ALWAYS** being at his/her designated clinical site 10-15 minutes **BEFORE** the start of the work shift as an assurance against tardiness.

Shift hours may vary depending on location and type of rotation. It is the student’s responsibility to know the assigned affiliate’s work hours.

**Student Code of Conduct**

In addition to maintaining a professional appearance, students are expected to maintain a high standard of conduct both on-duty and off-duty and follow the “*Code of Ethics for the Medical Sonographer”.* Students will be required to observe the following behavioral guidelines:

1. Cellphones and other electronic devices are **NOT** allowed on your body at any time during your clinical hours. Cellphones need to be silenced or turned off and put away. Phones may be used during breaks away from patient care areas. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate removal from your clinical rotation.
2. The student will **NOT** demonstrate unprofessional behavior, that is, making inappropriate comments or using inappropriate verbal or body language to patients, family or staff; gossip regarding patients, physicians, fellow students, or co-workers; discussion of clinical information (condition or prognosis) with patients or relatives (**all patient information is considered confidential and must be treated as such per HIPAA)**; consumption of food/drink in patient areas is prohibited and is a Joint Commission violation, etc.
   1. Be mindful of spoken and written comments about fellow students, sonographers, and clinical sites. Negative comments about a site or sonographer is not allowed.
3. The student must not add any clinical instructors to your social media account until you are no longer a student. In addition, you must not have any physical relationships with the clinical instructors.
4. The student will **NOT** demonstrate an unprofessional “appearance”. This includes offensive odors (perfume, bad breath, body odor, tobacco, etc.), hickeys, chewing gum, etc.
5. Students will not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or be in possession of drugs or alcohol while at a clinical site.
6. Students are not allowed to sleep during practicum hours.
7. The student will **NOT** falsify practicum records to include time logs, exam logs, etc. This be grounds for dismissal from the sonography program without option to re-enroll.
8. Receive help from a fellow student or sonographer while attempting a competency on a procedure.
9. Do portable exams without the presence of a sonographer.
10. Perform exams or obtain extra views of a procedure not ordered by a physician and/or not included in standard operating procedure for that clinical site.
11. Leave a procedure before it is completed
12. Image the wrong patient.
13. Perform the wrong exam on a patient.
14. Pick and choose which exams to perform.
15. The student will not make or receive personal telephone calls in lab or during a clinical shift except in case of an emergency.
16. At no time, will a student charge for an exam they perform or observe being performed either at the College Lab or at the clinical facility. The student is not qualified, registered, or diagnostically capable of providing a complete and accurate report of results from such exam without being signed off by a registered Sonographer and a report generated by a licensed physician. If the student is discovered to gain any monetary/compensatory payment, they will be immediately dropped from the program with no option to re-enroll.
17. Adherence to policies and procedures applicable at the designated affiliate.
    1. \*\*\*As a student, it is your responsibility to know what these policies are and what is expected of you. Failure to comply with your clinical site rules can result in immediate dismissal from your rotation.

**Any violation of the above rules will result in the student being sent home immediately or more severe consequences. Any time missed will have to be made up.**

**Willful failure to closely follow these aforementioned behavioral guidelines could result in the being written up and/or dismissal of the student from the Sonography program with no option to re-enroll at a later date.**

Should any affiliate refuses its facilities and services to any student, documentation supporting that decision must be provided to the program director. If the program director sustains the action and determines that the student has violated the Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography Code of Ethics and/or program policies as outlined in the handbook, the student will be refused admission back into that affiliate. The Code of Ethics can be found in the appendix of this handbook and can also be found at <http://www.sdms.org/about/codeofethics.asp> .

If a student is dropped by an affiliate for behavior deemed inappropriate, the student may be placed on clinical probation and required to meet with Sonography faculty to complete a process of remediation outlined by the program director.

### If a student is dropped by a second affiliate for behavior deemed inappropriate, documentation supporting that decision will be provided to the program director. If the program director sustains the action, the student will be dropped from the program with no option to re-enroll.

**Downtime in clinical sites**

There will be periods of time while on-duty when there are no imaging procedures to be performed in the assigned room. Such “free time” should be used as follows:

1. Take the initiative to see if someone else needs help in another room.
2. Stock supplies wherever necessary.
3. Clean the equipment as needed.
4. Practice sonography skills with another student or staff member.

Generally, practicum hours are primarily intended for development of psychomotor and affective skills. “Textbook studying” is at the preference of the clinical site. Learning is always expected.

**Breaks and Lunches**

Each student will normally be provided thirty minutes to take a meal break during a training shift. This break not only provides time to eat, but also provides a much needed pause in the daily stress of the work environment.

On occasion, a heavy workload in the department may prevent this break time. Otherwise, each student is expected to take a break. A student may not skip the break with the intention of leaving thirty minutes early at the end of the work shift. Likewise, this break period may **NOT** be counted to meet the weekly time requirement.

**Smoking Policy for Clinical Facilities**

Most clinical affiliate campuses are smoke free. Amarillo College will support whatever action is taken by the facility, if violations occur.

BSA and NWTH are tobacco free campuses. This policy will apply to students performing their clinical rotations at these hospitals. Students cannot use tobacco products on these campuses, including in an automobile parked on the campus. Likewise, students cannot smell of tobacco while on duty on any clinical campus.

1. Policy:

BSA and NWTH wishes to promote good health practices and to provide a safe and healthy environment, consistent with its Vision to make BSA and NWTH a great place for patients and customers and a great place for people to work.

BSA and NWTH are tobacco free organizations; as such, use of tobacco products in these physical plants, on these properties, or in vehicles on these properties is not permitted.

The following policy applies to all students practicing at BSA and NWTH:

1. Definitions:
2. Tobacco – any form of tobacco, whether for chewing or snuffing, or for smoking cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, or pipes.
3. Property – includes BSA and NWTH owned, partially owned, or leased physical property, buildings and land. Included in this definition are vehicles on BSA and NWTH property.
4. Guidelines:
5. All people are prohibited from using tobacco products on BSA and NWTH Property.
6. Since education regarding this policy is posted throughout the organization and appears on the BSA and NWTH web site on applications for employment, any student found using tobacco in violation of this policy will immediately be suspended from the facility.
7. Tobacco, smoking materials or related supplies may not be sold or distributed on BSA and NWTH Property.
8. Employees are responsible for monitoring compliance and enforcing the provisions of this policy.

**Criminal Background and Drug Screen**

Criminal background checks are done before clinical rotations start. Clinical sites have the right to decline the use of their site to any student due to criminal history.

Drug screening- While it is not the policy of Amarillo College to do drug screening on students, several clinical affiliates require a drug screening. You could be asked to submit to a random drug screen or an initial screening before your clinical duty can occur. It is expected that each student will comply with the policy of each clinical site.

**Communication**

Communication is the means of sending and receiving messages through symbols, words, signs, and gestures. Quality health care is centered on good communication. All members of the health team must communicate clearly and effectively with their patients, peers, physicians, and administration.

Any miscommunication, whether major or minor, will almost always have a negative impact on the healthcare of the patient. The student Sonographer will be faced daily with receiving, interpreting, and carrying out directions from the medical staff and from the college instructors, and should, therefore, quickly learn to listen carefully and respond appropriately. If in doubt about a particular instruction, STOP and ask questions BEFORE proceeding. And remember, when a question is needed, avoid asking the question within the hearing range of the patient.

Students will also be called upon to offer words of consolation and reassurance to patients and their family members and friends. One must be careful to not give false reassurance to a patient or family member or friend in an attempt to make the person “feel better”. Likewise, you should also never give medical or personal advice or offer your opinion concerning any patient comment (even during “small talk” discussions). Likewise, never disagree with a patient and certainly never demand an explanation from the patient.

Of course, communications may be spoken or may be nonverbal. The observant Sonographer can learn a great deal about a patient through good interpretation of body language. Nonverbal communication may repeat or stress a spoken message (e.g. a patient whose body language confirms he is in severe pain). Nonverbal communication may also contradict a verbal message (e.g. a patient complains of severe pain but smiles, moves about easily and seems to enjoy the sonography experience). And, nonverbal communication may totally substitute for the spoken word (e.g. a patient whose facial expressions indicate severe pain when a body part is moved but the patient has said nothing).

When giving instructions to the patient, the student must learn to speak slowly and in a language that the patient can understand. Be simple and direct with instructions. After an instruction has been given, determine if the patient understands the instruction before proceeding. A rehearsal may be needed BEFORE proceeding.

While in the program, students may be rotated to several different clinical sites. It is imperative that the student understands that different departments have different protocols. It is inappropriate for the students to make comments, especially negative comments about other agencies or personnel from other clinical affiliates. The students are expected to communicate in a clear and professional manner at all times. This includes treating the clinical instructors and sonographers with respect. Profanity or suggestive language will not be tolerated in any clinical setting or in the program laboratory. The student is to not make any derogatory comments or make personal opinions known publicly about any clinical site, sonographer, or fellow classmate.

**Patient Rights**

When a patient presents for a sonography examination, he/she has legal rights as a consumer of healthcare. The student Sonographer must quickly learn the nature of those rights and be fully prepared to ensure that they are all observed.

1. The patient has the right to refuse any medical treatment or procedure.

If a patient refuses to have a sonographic examination, the student should never attempt to change the patient’s mind and most certainly should never proceed on with the procedure. Instead, discontinue with the procedure immediately and inform the supervising Sonographer.

1. The patient has the right to physical privacy and to confidential treatment of his/her records.

The student Sonographer should make every effort to keep the anatomy of the patient covered, to have the door to the room closed, and to ask permission of the patient for any person not involved in the procedure (e.g. another student) to be present.

Any information received from the patient, any procedure performed, and any test result must remain confidential within the applicable statutes.

1. The patient has the right to be transferred to another medical facility for care at his/her request, and his/her records must be made available to those who will be involved in his/her care at the new facility.
2. The patient has the right to know the names and professional qualifications of those who treat him/her. If the treatment is experimental, the patient must be informed of this, and he has the right to refuse such treatment.

The student Sonographer should always introduce yourself upon meeting the patient for the first time and should inform the patient of the “student” status.

1. If the patient must have some type of follow-up care after leaving the radiology department, it is the responsibility of the Sonographer or physician to explain fully to the patient the nature of the follow-up care.
2. The patient has the right to examine all financial charges presented to him/her regardless of how these charges are to be paid.
3. The patient has the right to an interpreter if he/she does not understand English.
4. The patient has the right to be informed of all clinic rules and regulations that will apply to his/her conduct as a patient in that clinic.

**Dress Code**

Each student will be expected to arrive for clinical/lab duty presenting a professional appearance. The following are guidelines to follow but the student may be asked to adhere to any requests of changes made by the facility, sonographers, or faculty. Each facility may have different specifics in their dress code the student will be required to conform to as well as the college’s requirements.

1. Students are to wear dark gray scrubs which is clean & neatly pressed. They may have a small piping of an additional color along hem. No patterns or large area of additional color is allowed. Verify your required clothing prior to showing up the first day of clinicals.
2. An AC patch must be worn on the left sleeve of the scrub top
3. Wearing an approved nametag with an ID picture. The name badge is to be placed in the upper portion of the scrub top. Do place stickers/pins on the badge.
4. A uniform jacket/lab coat can be purchased to wear at clinical sites. Only grey, white, or black is allowed. These can be purchased at uniform stores. No other jackets, coats, hoodies, etc. can be worn. Long-sleeve shirts can be worn underneath scrub tops. Shirts must be plain white, grey, or black and cannot have any print on them.
5. Women sonography students are required to wear a bra under their scrub top.
6. Wearing hair up and out of the face and shoulders. Hair should be clean, tidy, and of a natural hair color. If a wig is worn, it must be of natural hair color and must not be distracting or cause more attention to the head than normal.
7. No wearing perfumes, colognes, lotions, or other products that could cause an overwhelming scent.
8. Fingernails will be natural, clean, and kept short. ¼” beyond the fingernail is acceptable. Applied or false nails are not allowed and are a Joint Commission violation. Applied/false nails pose a possible threat to patients as they can harbor microorganisms. If nails are polished, there must be no chips. No stickers, gems, or other attached décor is allowed on the nails.
9. No facial piercings in lab/clinicals. No more than 2 ear piercings and these should be studs, not dangle or loops. No gauges in ears larger than a pencil eraser. No tongue piercings. These should be removed prior to reporting for clinicals/lab.
10. All tattoos must be covered by clothing, bandages, make-up, etc., but does not cause additional attention to the area. These should be covered prior to arriving for clinicals/lab.
11. Scrubs may not be “low riders”, or short tops. Tops must fall below the waist line of pants, and pants must be worn at the waist. Scrubs may not be rolled down, or pushed below the waist. Scrubs must touch the top of shoes.

1. No open toed shoes allowed in lab/clinicals. Must have non-slip soles.
2. Make-up will be natural, not overdone, and simple.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Please refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities publication of Amarillo College. This document is online at [www.actx.edu](http://www.actx.edu). These policies apply to practicum assignments as well as to on campus activities.

**Accidents**

Any accident that may occur during a practicum rotation resulting in patient or personal injury and/or damage to the equipment must be reported immediately to the adjunct clinical instructor and to the faculty clinical coordinator. The student will be required to follow the proper procedure for documenting the incident on the proper form(s) at the time that the incident occurred. A report must be filed with the clinical coordinator the same day as the accident if the accident was not life threatening. Due to each student having to carry his or her own medical insurance, Amarillo College is not financially responsible for injury at a clinical site.

**Amarillo College Sonography Program**

**CLINICAL ABSENCE FORM**

**(This form to be filled out for each clinical absence)**

Student:

Course: Date:

Clinical Site:

**Date of Absence:**

**Date of Make-up:**

Clinical Instructor Signature Date

**REASON:**

Student Signature Date

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Clinical Coordinator/Director Signature Date

**Sonography Program Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand of the Sonography Program “Student Handbook”. I agree to comply with each regulation stated herein and I understand that I may be withdrawn from the clinical site and the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program if I violate any agency or college regulations. 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 any revision(s).

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Student signature date

**Amarillo College Diagnostic Medical Sonography**

Sonography is a field with limited positions available in each facility. I understand that I may have to move outside of Amarillo, Texas to find employment after graduation. Successful completion of this program does not guarantee me employment.

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

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Program Director Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Amarillo College Diagnostic Medical Sonography**

I acknowledge that I am required to rotate through all clinical sites, including out of town sites, evening/nights, and weekend shifts. I understand that I am responsible for providing my own transportation to my clinical location (s) and any travel and/or parking expenses. I am aware that while I am in the program, I am required to attend classes and clinical days weekly. I agree that I can and will be placed in any clinical site at any time during the semester.

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

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**AMARILLO COLLEGE**

**Sonography Program**

**STATEMENT OF PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is the duty owed by every imaging professional, including students, to protect the privacy of all patient information. Every imaging professional has a clear ethical and legal obligation to keep medical and personal information about patients in the strictest confidence. The imaging professional must maintain strict confidentiality of all patient demographic and medical-related information and any other “personal” information that a patient might disclose to the imaging professional during the course of a procedure. Disclosure of such information is permitted only when mandated by a legal statute, or when there is a duty to warn third parties, or when there is some special circumstance surrounding a specific pathologic condition that needs to be communicated. A specific disclosure is also permitted when the patient has authorized that specific disclosure via a signed consent. Breach of this duty to hold patient information in the strictest confidence, may cause liability for the imaging professional, and the imaging facility. If a student is involved in a breach of patient confidence, Amarillo College and its faculty will also be liable

As a student enrolled in the Amarillo College Sonography program, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this “STATEMENT OF PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY.” I agree to always provide a standard of patient care that includes the patient’s right to the strictest confidentiality of all personal and medical information unless such disclosure is mandated by one or more of the criteria listed in the statement.

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Student Signature Date

**Code of Ethics for the Profession of Diagnostic Medical Sonography**

*Re-approved by SDMS Board of Directors, effective 02/08/2017  
(originally approved by SDMS Board of Directors, December 6, 2006)*

**PREAMBLE**

The goal of this code of ethics is to promote excellence in patient care by fostering responsibility and accountability among diagnostic medical sonographers. In so doing, the integrity of the profession of diagnostic medical sonography will be maintained.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To create and encourage an environment where professional and ethical issues are discussed and addressed.
2. To help the individual diagnostic medical sonographer identify ethical issues.
3. To provide guidelines for individual diagnostic medical sonographers regarding ethical behavior.

**PRINCIPLES**

**Principle I: In order to promote patient well-being, the diagnostic medical sonographer shall:**

A. Provide information to the patient about the purpose of the sonography procedure and respond to the patient's questions and concerns.

B. Respect the patient's autonomy and the right to refuse the procedure.

C. Recognize the patient's individuality and provide care in a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory manner.

D. Promote the privacy, dignity and comfort of the patient by thoroughly explaining the examination, patient positioning and implementing proper draping techniques.

E. Maintain confidentiality of acquired patient information, and follow national patient privacy regulations as required by the "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)."

F. Promote patient safety during the provision of sonography procedures and while the patient is in the care of the diagnostic medical sonographer.

**Principle II: To promote the highest level of competent practice, diagnostic medical sonographers shall:**

​  
A. Obtain appropriate diagnostic medical sonography education and clinical skills to ensure competence.

B. Achieve and maintain specialty specific sonography credentials. Sonography credentials must be awarded by a national sonography credentialing body that is accredited by a national organization which accredits credentialing bodies, i.e., the[National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/ncca) or the [International Organization for Standardization (ISO](http://www.iso.org/iso/home)).

C. Uphold professional standards by adhering to defined technical protocols and diagnostic criteria established by peer review.

D. Acknowledge personal and legal limits, practice within the defined [scope of practice](http://www.sdms.org/about/who-we-are/scope-of-practice), and assume responsibility for his/her actions.

E. Maintain continued competence through lifelong learning, which includes continuing education, acquisition of specialty specific credentials and recredentialing.

F. Perform medically indicated ultrasound studies, ordered by a licensed physician or their designated health care provider.

G. Protect patients and/or study subjects by adhering to oversight and approval of investigational procedures, including documented informed consent.

H. Refrain from the use of any substances that may alter judgment or skill and thereby compromise patient care.

I. Be accountable and participate in regular assessment and review of equipment, procedures, protocols, and results. This can be accomplished through facility accreditation.

**Principle III: To promote professional integrity and public trust, the diagnostic medical sonographer shall:**

​  
A. Be truthful and promote appropriate communications with patients and colleagues.

B. Respect the rights of patients, colleagues and yourself.

C. Avoid conflicts of interest and situations that exploit others or misrepresent information.

D. Accurately represent his/her experience, education and credentialing.

E. Promote equitable access to care.

F. Collaborate with professional colleagues to create an environment that promotes communication and respect.

G. Communicate and collaborate with others to promote ethical practice.

H. Engage in ethical billing practices.

I. Engage only in legal arrangements in the medical industry.

J. Report deviations from the Code of Ethics to institutional leadership for internal sanctions, local intervention and/or criminal prosecution. The Code of Ethics can serve as a valuable tool to develop local policies and procedures.

**HIPAA**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 mandates significant changes in the legal and regulatory environments governing the provision of health benefits, the delivery and payment of healthcare services, and the security and confidentiality of individually identifiable, protected health information.

HIPAA makes it easier for individuals and small businesses to get and keep health insurance. To reduce the cost of health insurance, HIPAA also includes an administrative simplification section to encourage electronic transactions. Due to the electronic transactions, HIPAA also has a host of regulations to assure the security and privacy of electronically stored medical data. The regulations set standards for electronic transactions, the privacy of all medical records and all identifiable health information and the security of electronically stored information.

To be HIPAA compliant, all healthcare practices (public and private) must implement procedures to provide patients access to their medical information including providing copies at their request, an ability to make amendments their records, and accountings of any and all disclosures made of their medical information for any use other than treatment, payment, and firm operations. Each practice must notify each patient of these rights with a "Notice of Privacy Practices." This notice must include the patient's rights, the practice's HIPAA policies, and the address of where to complain. Fines, penalties and possible jail time can be imposed for non-compliance.