

Northern Kentucky University  
College of Health and Human Services  
School of Allied Health

Radiation Therapy  
Program

Student Handbook  
2024-2025



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## Mission, Philosophy and Goals

### University Mission

As a public comprehensive university located in a major metropolitan area, Northern Kentucky University

3. Students will demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills.  
Student Learning Outcomes:
  - A. Students will interpret patient positioning shifts in treatment delivery.
  - B. Students will perform dosimetry calculations for specific treatments.
  
4. Students will demonstrate professionalism.  
Student Learning Outcomes:
  - A. Students will demonstrate ethical decision making.
  - B. Students will formulate a professional development plan.

These goals support the University's mission to offer preparatory programs in career and selected professional fields, such as Radiation Therapy. Through related program aa a p2t9 (m)6.9 (i)-4.6 (e)9.3 (s)8 11 (a).



## Classroom Instruction

The classroom component of the program provides a sound foundation of theory and basic knowledge on which clinical skills will be built. Topics covered by courses include study in: clinical practice, imaging, introductory law, medical terminology, orientation to radiation therapy, pathophysiology, principles of radiation therapy, quality management, radiation biology, radiation protection, patient care, radiation physics, research methods, sectional anatomy, treatment planning and magnetic resonance.

## Laboratory Instruction

The development of clinical skills is initiated in the laboratory. RTT 214 Radiation Therapy Simulation is a lab-based orientation to radiation onity ma0 Tc 02 (t)2.3 (eo,1.2 (mu)ls)2.7( R)8.9 (a)3.4 (d)15.8 (ia)14.3 (s)8.6 (r)-4 6.7

- The Program Director shall participate in budget planning.
- The Program Director shall maintain current knowledge of the professional discipline and educational methodologies through continuing professional development.
- The Program Director shall assume the leadership role in the continued development of the program.

## Job Description for Program Director

### Qualifications

- Holds at a minimum a master's degree.
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- Develops, revises, and enforces program's policies and procedures indiscriminately and consistently.
- Represents the program's interests to the Director, College, NKU and the community.
- Actively participates in leadership of program and larger unit.
- Provides input to the Director regarding faculty evaluation and development needs.
- Utilizes collaborative conflict resolution, keeps the Director up to date on program issues, enrollment.
- Fulfills responsibilities of full-time faculty to include teaching and advising.

### Terms of Appointment

- Program directors will be chosen through an interview process.
- Program directors will be full-time.

### Responsibilities for the Clinical Coordinator

- The Clinical Coordinator shall correlate clinical education with didactic education.
- The Clinical Coordinator shall evaluate students.
- The Clinical Coordinator shall participate in didactic and/or clinical instruction.
- The Clinical Coordinator shall support the program director to help assure effective program operation.
- The Clinical Coordinator shall coordinate clinical education and evaluates its effectiveness.
- The Clinical Coordinator shall participate in the assessment process.
- The Clinical Coordinator shall cooperate with the program director in periodic review

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## 2.0 Academic Responsibilities and Standards

### 2.1 Textbooks

- 2.11 Each student is responsible for purchasing the required textbooks before the second meeting of the class.
- 2.12 Because the same textbook may be used again in later courses, it is strongly recommended that, before selling books, a student consult the Radiation Therapy faculty who will be teaching future courses.

### 2.2 Assignments

- 2.21 Each student is responsible for completing all reading, written, and oral assignments made by the faculty.
- 2.22 If a student is absent from class for any reason, he or she is still responsible for the material discussed and assigned in class.
- 2.23 Extension on due dates for assigned material may be granted at the instructor's discretion.

### 2.3 Classroom Etiquette

- 2.31 Each student is responsible for learning the content of any course in which he/she

it is necessary that a student be reached by phone, the School of Allied Health office phone number (859.572.5476) should be used.

- 2.42 **At no time should students wear, carry or use cell phones or other electronic devices during their hours of clinical practicum, including clinical classes held by NKU faculty.** Their use during work hours and in work areas is prohibited as it is unprofessional and a potential cause of HIPAA violations. Cell







### Transportation:

Each student is responsible for furnishing transportation to his/her assigned hospital. The approximate cost for travel during seven terms is approximately \$1000.00.

### Insurance:

Students must provide proof of health insurance.

### Program Fees:

Each term will have a \$50.00 fee assessed to cover the cost of radiation dosimetry service. In addition, some University courses assess a laboratory fee to cover the costs of materials used. The student is responsible for all of the Trajecsys fees of \$200.00. See Canvas RTP.org course for details.

### Criminal Background Check and/or Drug Screen:

Required background checks and drug screening costs must be covered by the student and completed prior to each academic year.

### CPR Training:

Each student is required to be certified in adult, child, and infant CPR.

## 9) TB

Students failing to submit documentation as required will be prohibited from starting or continuing their clinical experience.

- 4.12 To comply with hospital requirements, a two-step test for tuberculosis (TB) must be done prior to clinical. Annual testing is a one-step process for remaining clinical rotation. The student is responsible for submitting documentation of annual appropriate TB screening. A TB Blood Test can also be accepted. A student enrolled at the University can receive the two-step TB test for a small fee through Health, Counseling & Student Wellness (UC 440), (859) 572-5650. Failure to submit documentation as required will result in clinical suspension.
- 4.13 The student is responsible for notifying the Office of Disability Programs and Services (SU 309), (859) 572-5282, of any limiting disability or condition requiring accommodations.

## 4.2 Technical Abilities

Radiation Therapy involves direct patient care and requires the application of knowledge in the skillful performance of technical functions. Programmatic guidelines demand the following abilities:

- 1) Sufficient visual acuity to assess skin tone changes detectable in cyanotic or flushed skin, detect color shades/tones such as shades of gray seen on radiographs, evaluate radiographs for quality, and read printed words in textbooks and on medical equipment.
- 2) Sufficient hearing to communicate with patients and other members of the health care team, monitor patients via audio monitors, hear background sounds during equipment operations, and respond to the audible sounds of the equipment.
- 3) Sufficient gross and fine motor coordination to manipulate equipment and accessories, lift a minimum of 30 pounds, and to stoop, bend or promptly assist patients who become unstable.
- 4) Satisfactory physical strength and endurance to move immobile patients to or from a stretcher or wheelchair to the treatment table, work with arms extended overhead (approximately 80 inches from the floor), carry 20-25 pounds while

Student Wellness office (UC 440), (859) 572-5650. Neither the University nor affiliated medical facilities provide such coverage for students. Annual documentation of insurance coverage is required.

#### 4.4 Temporary Disability

4.41 If a student incurs a temporary disability, **it is the student's responsibility to report the disability to the director of the Radiation Therapy Program.**

Temporary disability is defined as pregnancy, broken bones, back injuries, communicable diseases or any other injury or condition that could temporarily prevent the student from safely participating in lab or clinical coursework or could endanger the patients or other members of the program. Documentation from the student's physician will be necessary in the case of a temporary disability.

4.42 If a student incurs a temporary disability, the director will work with program faculty to make every reasonable effort to accommodate the student. For disabilities of short duration, the director and the student may attempt to reschedule the education missed. For disabilities of longer duration, where rescheduling is not possible, the student may need to withdraw from the program and re-enter the following year.

4.43 Any student returning to classes following a temporary disability must s tinmio6ud24.7 ()-4c7 (l)6 f rthe( tTJ-0h)2 (6 (h)29 (g 1.2 (co)12n2.6 (a)11.2 (k)2 (e (t)11sa)1158 (t)-2.6 (b(y)2 ( ) (so)12.9(m)-2.6 (

A second dosimeter will not be given to any student who may be pregnant but has not declared the pregnancy in writing. Although the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP) recommendation limits the pregnant radiation worker to 500 mR for the embryo/fetus, the Radiation Therapy Program limits the dose to 250 mR because students are not in radiation areas on a full-time basis.

- 4.53 **Counseling for Informed Decision.** The declared pregnant student is encouraged to schedule an appointment with the program director to discuss biological risks associated with exposure to radiation, the precautions and procedures to minimize exposure, the regulations she is expected to observe, and cumulative radiation records. If the established radiation safety procedures are practiced, it is highly unlikely that a student radiation therapist will exceed 250 mR. Based on past radiation monitoring reports, students' dosimeter readings are normally well below this limit on an annual basis when they are scheduled in all areas. The program director may make recommendations to the student and clinical coordinator regarding clinical education assignments to minimize fetal dose, such as clinical reassignment or a leave of absence, the student may also choose to continue the program without modifications.
- 4.54 **Option for Student Continuance in the Program Without Modification.** As mentioned in 4.53, student may decide to continue in the program without modification.
- 4.55 **Option For Written Withdrawal of Declaration of Pregnancy.** Student has the right to withdraw their declaration of pregnancy.

## 5.0 Exposure to Infectious Disease Policy

Any student, through the course of clinical education, who is contaminated through air, blood or other body fluids that are potentially infectious must:

1. Follow the hospital's procedure for reporting the incident.
2. Notify the clinical preceptor at the site.
3. Notify the program director and/or clinical coordinator.
4. Follow prescribed treatment at his/her own cost.

For further information regarding infectious diseases students can access the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/training/index.html> and/or the NKU websites for infectious disease:

2. Radiation monitoring record
3. Attendance and clinical rotation records
4. Clinical competency records

Records may not be removed from the program office. Confidentiality of student records both on campus and at the clinical sites is maintained according to the Federal Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) through the use of locked file cabinets or other locked boxes.

### 6.1 Right to Inspect Records

Under FERPA, students have the right to inspect and review any and all official records, files and data pertaining to them (with specific exceptions, a list of which may be obtained from the Registrar).

Students who want to challenge the contents of their records should contact the Dean of Students, or follow the procedure outlined in the “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities” on the Student Affairs website

<https://inside.nku.edu/registrar/StudentResources/ferpa.html>

## 7.0 Student Counseling

Several types of counseling/assistance are available to Radiation Therapy students.

### 7.1 Academic Counseling

The purpose of academic counseling is to promote, assist, and maintain superior student performance. During a scheduled advising appointment, the academic advisor will review the student's performance and behavior and make appropriate recommendations.

Feedback given in counseling may be used to identify areas of strength and weakness in student performance or behavior.

### 7.2 Behavior Record

The Behavior Record Form is used to document positive or negative student performance. The form may be used by clinical personnel, faculty, or other students to record incidents that may be either positive or negative. All Behavior Record Forms will be kept in the student's file. Positive records will be used in writing letters of reference. Negative records may be used to substantiate behavior before taking disciplinary action.

### 7.3 Student Services

There are several offices on campus that provide student services, such as the Offices of Health, Counseling & Student Wellness (University Center 440), Disability Programs and Services (SU 309), and Career Services (UC 225). The staff in these offices seek to help students develop appropriate academic, career, and life goals, and to assist them in maximizing their academic, social and emotional potential. Programs offered include: health services, special programs, counseling and testing services, career services and peer support groups. Other university and student services are identified in the *NKU Undergraduate Catalog*.

## 8.0 Disciplinary Action

Students in the program are expected to adhere to program and hospital policies. Failure to adhere to such policies will result in the following disciplinary actions:

1. Verbal reprimand/student conference.

2. Faculty/student conference, documented by a written reprimand in the form of a Corrective Action Plan.
3. Dismissal from the program following failure to complete Corrective Action Plan.

It should be noted that some situations may be serious enough to require immediate stern disciplinary measures, resulting in immediate dismissal from the program.

## 8.1 Corrective Action Plan

The Corrective Action Plan includes a description of the incident or behavior, steps to be taken to correct the behavior, timetable for completing the plan, and consequences for

failure to complete the plan. The plan will be submitted to the faculty and the student. Failure to complete the plan will result in dismissal from the program.



5. Patterns of behavior jeopardizing patient safety, individual or group progress and/or contract agreement with the clinical affiliate.
6. Patterns of behavior indicating an attitude of irresponsibility to self, patient, profession or University.
7. Endangering program or clinical site personnel, fellow students, patients or public.
8. Serious violations of clinical site rules and regulations.
9. Negligence with regard to radiation protection.
10. Misuse of dosimeter or a pattern of excessive dosimeter readings that are unexplainable.
11. Cheating, forgery, and/or plagiarism, including falsification of records.
12. Unethical behavior, including lying and misrepresentation.
13. Violation of confidentiality policies.
14. Harassment, sexual or otherwise, towards patients, clinical staff, other students, faculty, or anyone else involved with the program.
15. Unacceptable criminal background check or drug screening.

#### 11.1 Process for Dismissal Consideration:

1. The student's performance records will be reviewed by the Allied Health School Director, program director, the NKU faculty, the clinical coordinator, and/or the appropriate clinical preceptor, as appropriate.
2. A recommendation will be made in writing and discussed with the student and will become part of the student's permanent record. Any student wishing to appeal may follow the appeal process found on the Dean of Students website.

## 12.0 Readmission to the Program

A student wishing to be readmitted to the program must make formal application to the program. Readmission must occur within one year of program dismissal or withdrawal; readmission is not guaranteed, but is granted on an individual basis, based on the student's previous records and the availability of clinical placement. The program must be completed within four years of initial enrollment in the professional component. A student who does not complete the program within four years must reapply and complete the competitive admissions process. If readmitted, all radiation therapy courses must be repeated. Students dismissed for ethical violations, or for a second time, will not be eligible for readmission for a period of five years from the date of dismissal. Exceptions to this policy may be made on an individual basis.

## 13.0 Recognition of Student Achievement

### 13.1 Student Awards

Each year, awards are given to graduating students who have demonstrated outstanding clinical performance and scholastic achievement. Awards presented may include

## 15.2 State Licensure

Many states require licensure to work as a radiation therapist. A student who performs radiation therapy procedures as part of his/her educational program is exempt from licensure requirements by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the States of Ohio and Indiana. It is the responsibility of any student or graduate seeking employment to contact the appropriate agency to apply for a license. Since the program maintains clinical affiliations with hospitals in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, the following information is provided:

### 15.21 Kentucky Radiation Therapy Licensure

A graduate radiation therapist who delivers radiation to human patients must be licensed by the Kentucky Board of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (KBMIRT). There are two types of licenses that pertain to graduate radiation therapist.

1. **Temporary license.** Issued to an individual who has completed an appropriate educational program, allowing him/her to perform radiation therapist procedures while awaiting examination results. The temporary license will expire on the last day of the month one year following issuance and is not renewable. At that time, application must be made for a radiation therapy license.
2. **Radiation Therapy License.** Issued to a graduate of an appropriate education program who successfully passed the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists examination; this license allows him/her to perform all radiation therapy procedures. All applications for a radiation therapy license will be filed with the Kentucky Board of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy at <http://KBMIRT.KY.gov>



- 18.3 No exposure will be made on human subjects. Intentional exposure of another person will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Accidental exposure of another person will result in a written warning and the student will be subject to corrective action. (See 8.1)
- 18.4 Failure to use appropriate radiation safety procedures may result in immediate suspension and/or dismissal from the program.

## 19.0 Procedures for Proper Care and Maintenance of Equipment

The student should translate attitudes about caring for personally owned expensive equipment to the equipment in the workplace. A piece of diagnostic CT equipment may cost in excess of \$100,000. Students may be liable for repair costs incurred by their negligence.

### POLICIES & PROCEDURES – Clinical Coursework

The Radiation Therapy Program at Northern Kentucky University is affiliated with a variety of hospitals and office practices to provide suitable facilities for all phases of education in radiation therapy. The program maintains an affiliation agreement with each clinical education setting that defines each party's separate and joint responsibilities. All "hands-on" experience at the hospitals is provided in clinical courses called radiation therapy practica. Students spend two 8-hour days each week working with patients in the radiation therapy department at one of the hospitals. The practica offers the students extensive experience in an actual radiation therapy department and are designed to train professionals who are competent to perform all entry level radiation therapy procedures.

In addition, practica experience helps students develop and practice professional work habits and appropriate interpersonal relationships with other members of the health-care team and with patients. While at the hospital/outpatient oncology department, students are directly supervised at 5(t)oripiu2

OHC Fairfield	31 miles
UC Health	
UC Health University Hospital	15 miles
UC Health West Chester Hospital	33 miles
The Christ Hospital	
Main Campus	12 miles
Montgomery Campus	23 miles
Saint Elizabeth Medical Center	10 miles
Tri-Health	
Good Samaritan	13 miles
Kenwood	19 miles
Thomas Center	23 miles
Bethesda Butler Hospital	35 miles
Good Samaritan Western Ridge Hospital	22 miles
Dayton Physicians Network	
Miami Valley Hospital South	55 miles
Atrium Medical Center	41 miles

## 20.1 Clinical Assignments

While in the program, each student is assigned to all clinical sites. Students' clinical assignments may be changed at any time during the first year for extenuating circumstances i.e. new equipment installation. Students will be assigned to a different clinical site for their second and third professional years.

## 20.2 Scheduling of Clinical Coursework

The clinical practica parallel the University schedule during the fall and spring semesters and during the two five-week summer sessions.

During the regular semester, clinical practicum hours will typically be from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Clinical hours are scheduled by the clinical coordinator and are not flexible. That is, students may not clock in early and leave early. If an office closes early, students may be permitted to leave the site early, but they must contact the clinical instructor prior to leaving via email and mark on Trajecsys.

## 20.3 Radiation Therapy Assignments

Radiation Therapy assignments will be made by the NKU clinical coordinator no later than the beginning of each semester and may be changed only by the NKU clinical faculty.

## 20.4 Lunch and Break Scheduling

Students are required to follow the department policies regarding breaks and lunch periods. Some departments may take morning and afternoon breaks with a shorter lunch period (30 minutes), while other departments may not take breaks, but take a longer lunch period (maximum 45 minutes). Students should see the clinical preceptors at each site for specific lunch and break protocols. Lunches and breaks will be assigned by department

leaders or clinical preceptors. All students are required to remain at their clinical sites during the lunch period. Cafeterias and/or break rooms are available at each facility.

If there is a **need** for an exception to this policy, the student must get approval from the clinical preceptor prior to leaving the site. Students using Trajecsyst must clock out and back in using TIME EXCEPTION on Trajecsyst.

## 20.5 Clinical Classes

While we are currently holding clinical classes at our designated clinical sites, there is a possibility that this could change based on circumstances out of our control

## 21.6 Unexcused Absences

Each unexcused absence will result in final clinical course grade reduced by a full letter grade. It is considered an unexcused absence for any of the following reasons: Failure to notify the clinical site supervisor and clinical coordinator before the start of the shift and failure to make up absences as scheduled. Clinical suspension for any reason as part of a Corrective Action Plan.

## 21.7 Severe Weather

The University has a severe weather policy. If NKU is closed, all clinical practica are canceled also. Any clinical time missed due to severe weather when NKU is not closed







its own policy regarding reproduction of images, students assigned to that site are required to follow the policy.

## 24.0 Health and Safety Standards

### 24.1 Illness

- 24.11 If the student is too ill to attend clinical practicum, the radiation therapy department and NKU's clinical coordinator must be notified as soon as possible prior to the scheduled starting time.
- 24.12 A student is expected to use good judgment in determining whether or not to attend clinical practicum because of illness. The clinical preceptor/supervisor has the authority to dismiss a student from the clinical site if the student's illness might compromise patient care. The program's regular attendance policy will apply to these situations.
- 24.13 A student who has a communicable disease may be restricted from working with high-risk patients. Examples of common communicable diseases include herpes simplex (fever blisters), hepatitis, cold, and flu. If a student has a suspected communicable disease, he/she should contact the clinical coordinator, clinical preceptor, or the floor supervisor before the start of the shift. Changes in the student clinical assignment may be required. Protective measures that may be taken include:
1. The student may be required to use reverse isolation techniques while working with non-high-risk patients.
  2. The student may be suspended from clinical coursework until he or she is no longer contagious as documented by a physician if necessary.

Students may also request more information at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/training/index.html>

### 24.2 Injury

If a student becomes injured in the course of assigned clinical duties, the student must report the injury to the supervising technologist and follow established clinical site guidelines for treatment. The student is responsible for the cost of any treatment provided. Any injury, however minor, that occurs while at the hospital must be reported to the supervising radiation therapist. This rule is designed to protect both the student and the institution by ensuring that appropriate treatment is given.

### 24.3 Drug Screening and Substance Abuse

All students admitted to the radiation therapy program must successfully pass a drug screening test before beginning the program's curriculum. All students will also be required to complete a drug screening test prior to the start of the 2nd professional year of the program. Radiation Therapy students dismissed from the program due to failing the drug test will be ineligible for readmission to the program for a period of five years (see 12.0 – Readmission to the Program).

When there is probable cause to believe that a student is unable to perform clinical/laboratory activities as assigned with reasonable skill and safety to patients or equipment due to use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals or any other substance which could result in mental or physical impairment, the student may be suspended from the program pending evaluation of the incident by the program director. The clinical



all time missed. The time missed will be considered excused and will count toward total make-up time, but not toward absence points.

4.



## Occupational Dose Limits For Adults

Annual Occupational Dose Limits for Adults (902 KAR 100:019)	
Body Location	Dose (Annual)
Total Effective Dose Equivalent (TEDE)	0.05 Sv (5 Rem)
Dose to the skin of the whole body or any extremity*	0.5 Sv (50 Rem)
Dose to lens of the eyes	0.15 Sv (15 Rem)



27.4 The student abuses the dress code policies.

27.5 The student engages in unprofessional behavior, including dishonesty.

Other reasons for temporary suspension include but are not limited to: insubordination and improper radiation safety practices. For any student dismissed from a clinical education center, there is no guarantee of reassignment to another clinical site.

In this case, the student would be dismissed from the program. Appeals to such action shall be conducted in accordance with NKU's "Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities".

2. **Procedure Evaluation:** After documenting didactic or clinical competency, the student may be assessed for clinical competency by performing the procedure on a patient. At that time, he/she will notify the radiation therapist. The radiation therapist will evaluate the student's performance during the procedure and complete and sign the competency form on Trajecsys, verifying the student performed the procedure. Once a student initiates a competency evaluation, he/she must complete the process of evaluation and submit.

## 29.1 Initial Competency Evaluation Procedure



