

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**NUCLEAR MEDICINE TECHNOLOGY ACCREDITATION REPORT**  
**AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Receive the Nuclear Medicine Technology accreditation report from the Carver College of Medicine and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics at the University of Iowa.

**Executive Summary:** The Bachelor of Science Program in Nuclear Medicine Technology and the Certificate of Completion in Nuclear Medicine Technology (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the standards defined by the accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. In November 2011, the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics was informed that the Nuclear Technology Program was granted continued accreditation for a period of three years; two deficiencies were noted that required a progress report by February 15, 2012. In April 2012, the institution was informed that the progress report was satisfactory and that the accreditation would be extended for an additional two years.<sup>1</sup> This report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to provide “educational excellence and impact” as well as Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive.”

**Background:**

◇ Description of program. Nuclear Medicine Technology is the medical specialty concerned with the use of small amounts of radioactive material for diagnostic, therapeutic, and research purposes. Nuclear medicine procedures use radioactive materials to (1) perform body function studies and organ imaging; (2) analyze biologic specimens; and (3) treat disease.

⇒ The Bachelor of Science Program in Nuclear Medicine Technology requires four years of study. The first two years are completed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with a focus on the general education requirements and the basic sciences with introductory courses in chemistry, physics, anatomy, physiology, and at least intermediate algebra. The third year includes basic medical science coursework offered in the College of Medicine. Students are admitted into the professional/clinical year as seniors.

The fourth year is 12 months long and includes more than 350 hours of didactic course work in radiopharmacy, radiobiology, physics and instrumentation, radiation protection, patient care, radiochemistry and radioimmunology, medical terminology, applied anatomy and physiology, radioimmunoassay techniques, mathematics and statistics, administration and management, computer applications, and more than 1500 hours of clinical rotations in nuclear medicine at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. Upon completion of the 12-month clinical year, students are awarded the Bachelor of Science degree.

Students who have a bachelor’s degree or who are registered radiologic technologists may apply for the certificate program if they have completed the required college-level courses. Upon completion of the 12-month clinical year, students receive a Certificate of Completion in Nuclear Medicine Technology.

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<sup>1</sup> The maximum period for continued accreditation is seven years.

- ◇ Purpose of Accreditation. An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met national standards for its development and evaluation. To employers, graduate schools, and licensure, certification, and registration boards, graduation from an accredited program signifies adequate preparation for entry into the profession. In fact, many of these groups require graduation from an accredited program as a minimum qualification. Therefore, accreditation is also critical for recruitment of new students. Accreditation is also intended to protect the interests of students, benefit the public, and improve the quality of teaching, learning, research, and professional practice.
- ◇ Accrediting Agency. The accrediting body is the Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology (JRCNMT).
- ◇ Review Process. The self-study prepared by the Nuclear Medicine Technology program contained the responses to the standards required by the accrediting body.
  - ⇒ Administration – The nuclear medicine technology program shall be conducted in an institution that has documented its commitment to quality, integrity, and performance.
  - ⇒ Resources – The sponsor's human, physical, financial, and learning resources must be sufficient to support the educational goals and number of students admitted.
  - ⇒ Curriculum – The professional curriculum shall provide the student with a comprehensive body of knowledge and the necessary skills expected of a competent, entry-level nuclear medicine technologist.
  - ⇒ Operational Policies – The program is responsible for ensuring integrity in all operations dealing with students, staff, patients, and the public.
  - ⇒ Assessment – Program assessment includes routine collection and analysis of seven quantitative and qualitative outcomes. It must maintain at least an 80% student pass rate on national certification exams. Assessment results must be systematically documented in the process of program improvement. Student evaluation includes clinical and didactic evaluation of students based on the objectives and competencies identified in the course syllabi and must be frequent and reliable enough to indicate student progress and academic standing and the effectiveness of course design and instruction.
  - ⇒ Accreditation Maintenance – The sponsor, program, and JRCNMT all have responsibilities in the accreditation process. Fulfillment of these responsibilities provides assurance that accreditation of a program is conducted and maintained in an appropriate manner.
- ◇ On-Site Team Report. In August 2011, the visiting team identified strengths and deficiencies of the program. The team also addressed the need to maintain a maximum capacity of 11 students in the clinical phase of the program.
- ◇ Program Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.
  - ⇒ “Program director is dedicated to the success of the program, students, and graduates.
  - ⇒ Adjunct faculty and technical director at the hospital are well-qualified and dedicated to the program.

- ⇒ Program is well-received and respected in the professional community.”
- ◇ Suggestion offered by the Visiting Team to enhance program effectiveness. (Suggestions do not affect the status of the accreditation.)
  - ⇒ “Consider adding a Clinical Coordinator to contribute to program teaching and student clinical scheduling.”
- ◇ Deficiencies in Compliance with the Standards. (Institutional responses are in italics.)
  - ⇒ “General physics is a postsecondary, prerequisite core requirement. The visiting team indicated that not all admitted students had completed this prerequisite.”

*The University assured the accrediting agency that future students will not be admitted into the professional component of the program without first meeting all of the prerequisite coursework identified in the current version of the agency standards.*
  - ⇒ “Human anatomy and physiology is a postsecondary, prerequisite core requirement. The visiting team indicated that not all admitted students had completed this prerequisite.”

*The University assured the accrediting agency that future students will not be admitted into the professional component of the program without first meeting all of the prerequisite coursework identified in the current version of the agency standards.*
- ◇ Accreditation Status. In February 2012, the university submitted a progress report indicating that (1) the students who had been admitted without completing the prerequisites would do so prior to graduation and (2) future students would not be admitted into the professional component of the program without having met all of the prerequisite coursework identified in the Accreditation Standards. In April 2012, the Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology informed the University that, based on the information provided in the program’s progress report, it would extend accreditation of the program for two additional years. The next evaluation for continued accreditation of the program will occur in 2016.