

# RESPIRATORY CARE

## Associate of Applied Science degree



### Program and Career Description:

A Respiratory Therapist is a health care professional that assists physicians in diagnosis, evaluation, monitoring, treatment and rehabilitation of patients with disorders affecting the cardio-respiratory system. Registered Respiratory Therapists also educate patients, families and communities on topics relating to the cardio-respiratory system. For more information, visit [www.columbiastate.edu/respiratory-care](http://www.columbiastate.edu/respiratory-care).

### How long is the program?

Columbia State offers a two-year program in Respiratory Care.

### What does the program provide?

- Hands-on training at area Middle Tennessee health care facilities.
- Community service activities.
- Participation in the Respiratory Care Club.
- Involvement in professional meetings.
- Low student-to-teacher ratio.

### How is the job market?

Demand for Respiratory therapists is anticipated to grow 12% from 2014 to 2024, faster than the average (7%) for all occupations according to the \*Bureau of Labor Statistics ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)). Median income was \$58,670 (\$28.21/hr) in May 2016.

Career	Annual Mean Wage
Respiratory Therapist (TN)	\$23,270 - \$52,900

\*Check out this web site for additional information about education requirements and preferred work styles and abilities for these careers. Salaries are not guaranteed and vary dramatically by area of the country, state, and community as well as setting (ie, hospital, clinic, or physician's office.)

[www.columbiastate.edu/respiratory-care](http://www.columbiastate.edu/respiratory-care)

### Opportunities

Graduates are eligible to take the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) credentialing exams to become Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs). Graduates are commonly employed at Middle Tennessee health care facilities including adult, pediatric and neonatal intensive care units. Future employers may also offer on the job training in various specialty areas. Graduates may pursue additional formal education (certifications or baccalaureate degrees) at other institutions through traditional or online formats.



# RESPIRATORY CARE

## Major in Respiratory Care (A.A.S.)

The program provides clinical experiences at several middle Tennessee health care facilities. These experiences include working with newborns, children, adults and geriatric patients. Clinical experiences are obtained in such areas as general care, intensive care, emergency room and pulmonary diagnostics. Additionally, students attend respiratory care professional meetings and participate in community service activities. Transportation to and from the various venues is the responsibility of the student.

The graduate is eligible to take the national credentialing examinations to become a registered respiratory therapist (RRT). Those desiring to work in Tennessee upon graduation are required to obtain a Respiratory Care License to practice.

**Criminal background checks are a requirement at most affiliated clinical training sites. Based on the results of the criminal background check, an affiliated clinical site may determine to not allow your presence at their facility. This could result in your inability to successfully complete the requirements of a specific course and the program. More information is available from the program director.**

**Applicants who have been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation may be ineligible for licensure as a registered respiratory therapist. For more information, contact the respiratory care program director for details.**

**Multiple clinical affiliates require satisfactory results from a drug screen prior to the start of clinical training. A positive drug screen will result in the student being excluded from clinical attendance. In this case the student will be counseled to withdraw or will ultimately earn a failing grade based on inability to complete the clinical requirements of the program. Students are also subject to random drug screening throughout the program.**

### Accreditation

The Respiratory Care Program at Columbia State Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).

Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)  
1248 Harwood Road  
Bedford, TX 76021-4244  
817-283-2835  
[www.coarc.com](http://www.coarc.com)

### Program outcomes include:

The goal of the program is to prepare graduates with demonstrated competence in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills) and affective (behavior) learning domains of respiratory care practice as performed by registered respiratory therapists (RRTs).

In order to achieve the program goals the program has adopted the following outcomes:

1. Students will pass a multi-part comprehensive examination similar to the national credentialing examinations prior to graduation.
2. Graduates will pass the credentialing examinations at or above the national rate.
3. Graduates will receive satisfactory performance evaluations from their employers within the first year after graduation.

A new class is admitted each fall. Applications are accepted from January 1 to May 1. Applicants will be notified by the first week in June concerning acceptance into the fall class. Applications received after May 1, but before the beginning of the fall semester, may be considered on a space available basis. Class size is limited by

laboratory and clinical space. Therefore, entrance into the program is competitive. Those not selected may reapply for subsequent classes.

### Admission Requirements

All applicants must complete the following requirements by the application deadline to be considered for entrance into the program.

1. Meet all College admission requirements.
2. Complete all entrance examinations such as the ACT/SAT or placement exam as required by the College prior to the application deadline.
3. Exemption from or satisfaction of Learning Support competencies in reading, writing, and math as determined by college placement standards.
4. Possess a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale for academic subjects. Learning Support courses are not included as part of the GPA.
5. The Respiratory Care Program complies with all Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. All students will be provided reasonable accommodations regarding physical and mental limitations. In keeping with the accreditation standards outlined by CoARC, all students must possess the physical and emotional abilities required of a respiratory therapist. These abilities include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Physical strength necessary to carry common objects, push or move common equipment, move and reposition patients in bed, perform CPR, etc.
  - b. Manual dexterity required to assemble common equipment, perform skills such as intubation, arterial puncture, etc.
  - c. Auditory ability to hear alarms, listen to breath sounds, measure blood pressure, etc.
  - d. Visual acuity necessary to differentiate colored alarms, read information from various types of electronic monitors, record data onto electronic and print media, etc.
  - e. Verbal abilities to effectively communicate necessary information to others.
  - f. Possess a command of the English language necessary to effectively communicate verbally and in writing with patients, families and other health care workers. An English proficiency test may be required of those who use English as a second language.
  - g. Perform the duties of a respiratory therapist under the stress of medical emergencies, death and dying, natural disasters, etc.
6. College credit for Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II must be within the past five years to count toward the Respiratory Care degree or the courses must be repeated.

### Admission Procedures

1. Submit the following to the Admissions office:
  - a. Completed Application for Admission to the College.
  - b. Official college transcripts.
  - c. High school transcripts or High School Equivalency Diploma (GED® or HiSET®).
  - d. ACT/SAT or placement exam results as required by the College.
2. Attending a program orientation session is strongly encouraged. Orientation gives an overview of the profession and the program selection criteria, important components of the program and continuation criteria. Orientation sessions are scheduled throughout the year. Contact the program director for dates and times.
3. Submit program application to the Respiratory Care Program director by the application deadline.
4. Attend an interview, by appointment, with program faculty once all other application requirements have been completed.

# RESPIRATORY CARE

## Continuation Requirements

In order to remain in the program, students must meet the following requirements:

1. Earn a "C" or higher in each respiratory care course.
  2. Satisfactorily complete each clinical skill evaluation.
  3. Complete the required math and science courses no later than the semester listed on the program of study.
  4. Earn a "C" or better in each required math and science course.
  5. Maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA or better, excluding Learning Support courses.
  6. Maintain professional conduct as outlined in the program's student handbook.
  7. Prior to the start of clinical rotations each student must provide documentation regarding a physical exam, current immunization, proof of health insurance, possession of malpractice insurance, criminal background check and drug screening. See the program's student handbook for details.
    - a. Health Requirements: All students must submit evidence of good health by returning a completed Physical Examination form. Forms are given to the students once admitted into the Respiratory Care program.
    - b. All students must have:
      1. Documented initial negative TB skin test and chest x-ray. TB skin tests must be repeated annually.
      2. Evidence of Immunity for:
        - a. Rubella (German measles or 3 day measles), (positive titer).
        - b. Varicella zoster (chicken pox) (positive titer).
        - c. Rubeola titer (measles), (positive titer).
        - d. Tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis booster within the past ten years.
        - e. Mumps (positive titer).

The complete list of requirements is given on the Physical Examination form.

  - c. CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) Requirements: All admitted students must submit evidence of current BLS (Basic Life Support) Provider certification compliant with American Heart Association (AHA) standards. Inclusion of two-person CPR and AED (Automatic Electronic Defibrillator) use is required. In order to meet clinical affiliate expectations, AHA HeartCode® (blended learning) nor HeartSaver® are accepted. BLS classes are available through numerous providers and are periodically offered by Columbia State through the Economic & Workforce Development (EWD) office. Certification must be maintained continuously for the duration of enrollment.
  - d. Malpractice Insurance: Malpractice insurance is required for all clinical courses. A group policy is provided with the fee assessed with tuition each fall.
  - e. Health Insurance: Students are responsible for all costs incurred related to health problems, including injuries occurring during clinical experiences. Students are required to maintain health insurance while in the program and provide verification prior to the start of clinical training.
  - f. Criminal background check: All students must have a criminal background check performed within 90 days prior to the start of clinical training. Depending on the finding of the background check a student may not be allowed to start or finish clinical training requiring the student to withdraw from the program.
  - g. Drug screening: All students must have a drug screen performed within 90 days prior to the start of clinical training. Depending on the results of the drug screen a student may not be allowed to continue in the program.
8. Meet/comply with the requirements of clinical affiliates regarding students.
9. All math and science courses must be completed with a "C" or better no later than the semester listed in the program of study and possess a GPA of 2.0 or higher, excluding Learning Support courses.

Students who do not meet the continuation requirements described above will be unable to continue in the program and required to withdraw. Students who withdraw from the Respiratory Care program may still be eligible to continue as a student of the College. Depending on the circumstances, students may have the option to apply for readmission to the program at a later date. Refer to "Readmission" below. A maximum of two program admissions are allowed.

## Readmission into the Program

Readmission into the program is not guaranteed. Readmission is based on available space and the circumstances of withdrawal or dismissal. Students seeking readmission must submit a formal, written request to the program director and an updated program application at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the semester for which they desire to enroll. Didactic knowledge and clinical skills may be retested in order to determine placement. Previously completed classes may need to be repeated. Other activities may need to be completed as a condition for readmission depending on the circumstances of withdrawal. Consult the program's student handbook and program director for further details.

All admission and continuation requirements apply to those seeking readmission. Due to the rapid technological changes in respiratory care, a gap of three or more years will necessitate repeating all respiratory care education courses. Additionally, Anatomy and Physiology I & II courses which are more than 5 years old must be repeated.

## Advanced Standing (transfer into the program & CRT-to-RRT)

### Transfer

Students wanting to transfer into the program must follow the admission requirements outlined above. Additionally, the program director or the director of clinical education from the previous program must provide a letter of recommendation. Transfer into the program will be based on space availability and the circumstances of the transfer. Admission into the program based on transfer is not guaranteed. Students must make application to the program at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the semester they desire to enroll.

Students may be tested over previous Respiratory Care course material and clinical skills. A minimum of 75% must be obtained in all areas in order to be accepted. Placement will be based, in part, on didactic and skill evaluations.

Students must have completed, with a "C" or better, all required math and science courses as outlined in this catalog. Anatomy & Physiology I and II courses that are more than 5 years old must be repeated. Due to the rapid technological changes in respiratory care, those having a three or more year gap in their respiratory care education must repeat all Respiratory Care courses.

Transfer students will take at least the last two semesters of Respiratory Care courses at Columbia State.

### CRT-to-RRT

Those with the CRT credential wanting to continue their education and become registry eligible must follow the admission requirements outlined above. Admission into the program is not guaranteed. Students must make application to the program at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the fall semester. Specific requirements include:

1. Satisfy the "Admission Requirements" and "Continuation Requirements" of the program as listed above.
2. Provide documentation of current ACLS provider training that does not expire prior to the anticipated graduation date.

The CRT-to-RRT applicant must complete the last two semesters of Respiratory Care courses at Columbia State Community College. The applicant may request to test out of Clinical Practice III.

# RESPIRATORY CARE

## Program Requirements

The courses below are applicable to degree requirements. Students may be required to take additional Learning Support courses.

Communications Requirement  
ENGL 1010 or 1020  
SPCH 1010

Natural Sciences Requirement\*  
BIOL 2010, 2020, 2230

\*BIOL 2010 and 2020 must have been completed no more than five years prior to start of program.

Mathematics Requirement (Take 1 course)  
MATH 1530, 1630, 1710, 1720, 1730, 1830, 1910

Social/Behavioral Science (Take 1 course)  
PSYC 1030 or 2130

Humanities/Fine Arts (Take 1 course)  
ART 1030  
ARTH 2010, 2020  
ENGL 2015, 2130, 2230, 2330, 2920, 2440  
HUM 1130, 1131  
MUS 1030  
PHIL 1030, 2030, 2033  
THEA 1030

Major Required Courses  
COLS 101  
\*\*RCT 101, 102, 120, 130, 150, 191, 192, 212, 221, 242, 252, 293, 294

\*\*Respiratory Care courses must be repeated if three or more years have elapsed since completion.

### Requirements for Graduation include:

- Earning 25% of total program credits in residence at Columbia State.
- GPA of at least 2.0 in program courses.
- Cumulative GPA must be at least 2.0.
- Taking the Exit Exam.

Detailed information is available via  
[www.columbiastate.edu/respiratory-care](http://www.columbiastate.edu/respiratory-care)

If you have completed TN eCampus courses, run a degree audit from the student tab in myChargerNet to determine how these courses apply to this program.

## Sample Academic Plan

### First Year – Fall Semester

___ RCT 101	Fundamentals of Respiratory Care I	4
___ BIOL 2010	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4
___ ENGL 1010	Composition I <u>or</u> ENGL 1020 Composition II	3
___ COLS 101	Columbia State College Success	1
___	Mathematics Requirement	3
___	Social/Behavioral Science	<u>3</u>
		<b>18</b>

### First Year – Spring Semester

___ RCT 102	Fundamentals of Respiratory Care II	4
___ RCT 120	Respiratory Care Pharmacology	2
___ RCT 191	Clinical Practice I	1
___ BIOL 2020	Human Anatomy & Physiology II	4
___ BIOL 2230	Microbiology	<u>4</u>
		<b>15</b>

### First Year – Summer Semester

___ RCT 130	Intensive Care Monitoring	4
___ RCT 150	Arterial Blood Gases	4
___ RCT 192	Clinical Practice II	<u>3</u>
		<b>11</b>

### Second Year – Fall Semester

___ RCT 221	Mechanical Ventilation	4
___ RCT 242	Respiratory Pathophysiology	3
___ RCT 293	Clinical Practice III	4
___	Humanities/Fine Arts	<u>3</u>
		<b>14</b>

### Second Year – Spring Semester

___ RCT 212	Pulmonary Functions/Seminar	4
___ RCT 252	Neonatal/Pediatric Respiratory Care	4
___ RCT 294	Clinical Practice IV	4
___ SPCH 1010	Fundamentals of Speech Communication	<u>3</u>
		<b>15</b>

**TOTAL CREDIT HOURS 73**

#### Statewide Alignment:

*Columbia State is in the process of adopting/implementing curriculum changes in accordance with TN Board of Regent's (TBR) statewide alignment initiative. Changes may involve (but are not limited to) general education requirements, core course sequencing, course titles/rubrics/numbers, and admission criteria. Prospective students should consult with program officials for guidance with individual academic plans based on projected enrollment dates.*

#### For more information contact:

R. David Johnson at  
[david.johnson@columbiastate.edu](mailto:david.johnson@columbiastate.edu) or 931.540.2663  
or

Health Sciences Division office at  
[healthsciences@columbiastate.edu](mailto:healthsciences@columbiastate.edu)  
931.540.2600 or 931.540.2599