

Radiation Therapy Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the format of the program?

A: Students are accepted into the program after they complete two-three years of general education and program pre-requisite courses. The first year of the program begins in the fall semester, and students take courses on the UW-La Crosse campus. Upon completion of the first year, the students are then assigned to one clinical internship site in La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, or Chicago. The internship year is 13 months long (begins in early July and ends in late July), and students also take courses at that site. Graduation is in late July of the internship year.

2. Do I need to choose a major before I apply to the program?

A: You will be considered undeclared/pre-RT on campus until you apply to the RT program. You can remain undecided until application to the program and do not need to declare a different major. If you are selected and admitted to the program, then your major officially becomes RT.

3. Do I need to select a minor?

A: It is not required that students have a minor to be in the radiation therapy program. If you are going to apply in the spring of your sophomore year, the course work during the first two years is rigorous, leaving little room for additional courses. Students who choose to wait until their junior year to apply often have time to fit courses for a minor into their schedule.

4. As a pre-RT student on campus, who should I contact for academic advising?

A: Melissa Weege is the advisor for all pre-radiation therapy and current radiation therapy students. Students should contact her for course registration, course transfers, and all academic questions. Her email address is: weege.meli@uwlax.edu.

The admission coordinator for the radiation therapy program is Peter Amann. Students should contact him for questions related to application and admission into the program. His email address is amann.pete@uwlax.edu.

5. When can I apply to the RT program?

A: Once you have completed (or registered for) all general education requirements and the pre-requisite courses for the program, you are eligible to apply to the program. This will be prior to the spring semester of the sophomore or junior year. Admission to the program occurs once per year with applications due mid-December. Candidates are interviewed, selected, and notified of acceptance by early March. (You can be registered for courses in the spring semester while the admissions process is occurring.) Admitted students begin program course work in the fall semester of the year of acceptance.

6. What activities can I be doing to enhance my application to the program?

A: The best place is to start by downloading the application for the program from the program website: www.uwlax.edu/rt. You will find it under the Admissions tab. Look at the different sections that we inquire about and this will give you a good idea of what things are important to boost your application.

Such areas or sections include: having previous patient-care healthcare experience (CNA, EMT, pharmacy tech, phlebotomist, radiographer, etc.), having health care volunteering experience, and participating in campus professional organizations (RT Club, Colleges Against Cancer, Relay for Life).

In addition, it is required that you complete a 40 hour observation period in a radiation therapy department. During this time you will be able to see the various functions of a radiation therapist, as well as many different radiation therapy procedures. You will complete an observation checklist and log your hours, in addition to being evaluated by a radiation therapist that you spent time with. These forms can also be found on the website under the admissions tab for your viewing and for you to take with you to your observation. You can complete your observation hours at any of the clinical internship sites that are affiliated with our program or in any radiation oncology department.

7. What are the strong points of the program?

- The radiation therapy program is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT).
- Since the program began in 1997, it has been a strong in its effort to produce patient-centered radiation therapists.
- The program boasts of its perfect board exam pass rate on first attempt since the first class graduated in 1999.
- Graduates of the program are successful in finding employment both regionally and nationally.
- The average starting salary reported by the most recent class of graduates was \$58,000.
- Many of the program's graduates have pursued graduate degrees, medical dosimetry, management, educational leadership, and membership in national and state professional societies.