

Admissions

Part-time Option for Track A RTTs

Recently, we sent out a brief survey to capture opinions from the clinical instructors affiliated with our program. We received 53 responses to date. An overwhelming majority thinks a part-time option should be available (44/53). Many who agreed also thought there might be more interest from RTTs in their department (39/53). Those who disagreed thought that fewer hours per day would not be a conducive learning environment. When asked what the best clinical schedule would look like for part-time RTTs, 26/52 chose 4 hours per day/5 days per week. The next choice was 2.5 days per week (16/52). Finally, the least amount of responses was in favor of alternating 2 days in week one and 3 days in week 2 (10/52). However, we may allow the internship site to choose what works best for their facility as long as 40 hours over 2 weeks is achieved.

We will strictly adhere to the clinical schedule chosen. The reason being is it decreases chances of accreditation citations. The JRCERT is also accredited by an agency that must ensure student labor and education laws are followed and that we are protecting the student. Therefore, it is absolutely not permitted for students to be pulled from a scheduled dosimetry rotation to cover staffing shortages on the treatment machines. We would be cited for this and potentially put on probation. Therefore, a schedule will need to be developed and adhered to, or the site will be disaffiliated immediately and the student will be dismissed. The program will not take chances on losing accreditation status due to managerial issues and lack of RTT coverage in the department.

We are accepting applications this admissions cycle (**deadline: January 7, 2022**) for Fall 2022 enrollment.

The purpose of the part-time option is to offer an additional enrollment option for Track A due to the number of inquiries we receive about this option. These individuals and sites must adhere to the same standards as the full-time option.

Due to equity issues, we will not allow full-time and part-time applicants to compete for seats in the program. We estimate that most of the part-time applicants will ask for a new affiliation or current sites will have a current RTT employee complete the part-time program and not accept a full-time external student.

Interviews

Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, it is possible that several clinical sites will be prohibited from allowing applicants into their facilities for interviews during this upcoming admissions cycle (February 2022). As we approach the interview scheduling date, we will be reaching out to all internship sites to determine their status. For fairness policies, it will be all virtual or all on-site; not a mixture of both methods. Therefore, if there are any sites that will not be able to accommodate on-site interviewing, we will make the decision to do all virtual (video conference) interviewing.

If you are planning to interview **internal applicants only**, you will not be listed as a potential site for qualified applicants; however, you must let us know that you plan to interview and you must adhere to our outlined interview process. We will need the name(s) of the potential applicant(s) to assure they meet the admissions requirements. If you have any questions please reach out to Anne Marie for clarification.

MEDICAL DOSIMETRY | FALL NEWSLETTER 2021

Clinical News You Can Use

Orientation for Incoming 2022 Cohort

The Clinical Orientation period will begin for students on Monday, January 10, 2022. Students will spend 8 hours/day, 5 days/week in the clinic. On Monday, January 24, 2022 formal class will begin and students will spend 6 hours of scheduled time in the clinic for 5 days/week (30 hours/week). Please see the Current Students website: (<https://www.uwlax.edu/grad/medical-dosimetry/current-students/>) and the Preceptors website: (<https://www.uwlax.edu/grad/medical-dosimetry/clinical-preceptors/#tab-clinical-management>) for upcoming semester schedules.

Anne Marie will be contacting all 2022 Clinical Preceptors in November to provide details regarding the clinical orientation and the clinical management system, Typhon. All 2022 clinical instructors and students will be entered into the Typhon clinical management system after the 2021 cohort graduates on December 19, 2021. Clinical instructors and students will receive an email with their access password and instructions for the clinical management system following the 2021 graduation in early January. Please contact Anne Marie (avann@uwlax.edu) if you have any questions.

Student Daily Clinical Hours

Reminder: All students are required to complete 6 hours per day of clinical internship. Because they are not there 8 or more hours, they do not get a 1 hour lunch. They get 30 minutes for lunch. This is why they are physically present for 6.5 hours each day. If you are allowing a 1 hour lunch, then the student is technically only there 5.5 hours per day. This is NOT permitted. If they want an hour lunch, they need to be there 7 hours per day for clinic.

2022 Clinical Site Visits

In Spring semester, Anne Marie generally visits each clinical site, preceptor and student to assess their adherence to program requirements and policies. Anne Marie will be contacting each site in early January to determine the feasibility of an on-site visit and/or the possibility of an alternative remote meeting. A date will then be determined for the on-site or virtual visit.

Clinical Adjunct Faculty Appointments

Reminder!! Any medical physicist or dosimetrist at our clinical internship affiliate sites can apply for clinical adjunct faculty appointments at UW-La Crosse.

Why would you want to do this? For some individuals, this is important to add to their CV or resume but you also have some benefits at UW-L (particularly the library). We have the information listed on the [Clinical Preceptor Website](#) welcome page. You will see a link for Clinical Adjunct Faculty Appointments. Contact [Nishele](#) if you are interested.

JRCERT

The JRCERT is continually in need of medical dosimetry site visitors. The ideal candidates are clinical instructors. As an affiliate of this program, please [visit the JRCERT](#) for more information on how you can be a site visitor.

2021 Clinical Educator Award of Excellence

This year we solicited nominations from the students for the 2021 Clinical Educator Award of Excellence. Nominations were evaluated based on the quality of submission by the student and the qualifying characteristics listed within the nomination.

Congratulations go out to the top 4 Outstanding Clinical Educators who were nominated for this respected award:

- Kelly Kovach - Michigan Medicine: Brighton Center for Specialty Care, MI
- Valarie Marble – Beaumont Health System, MI
- Patrick Melby – Gundersen Health System, WI
- Natasa Knab – University of Rochester Medicine - Wilmot Cancer Institute, NY

After careful review of the nominations, the 2021 Clinical Educator Award is presented to two clinical instructors whose qualifications stood out as equally impressive:

Natasa Knab and Patrick Melby



2021 Clinical Educator Award of Excellence

The characteristics **Natasa** exhibits are found in her nomination:

"One of my first rotations amongst dosimetrists at URMC was with Natasa. At an uncertain time, while still very green in the field, Natasa took the steps necessary to begin building my now solid foundation in dosimetry. Her previous background in physics translated into a teaching style that was easy to understand and was always reinforced by an applicable clinical example.

We began with the basics, placing beams on a water phantom, demonstrating the effects of various treatment scenarios, and evaluating beam energies or geometries with relation to isodose distributions. I could immediately tell that Natasa was invested in my growth as much as I was. As my skills improved, we advanced into more difficult clinical treatment planning techniques. Every day she had a plan for what we were going to work on, and regardless of how busy the department got, would always be available if I needed help or had questions. On her own time, she would printout educational materials for my review, would find and create teaching patients for us to work on, create step by step printouts of how to approach a specific plan, and would review and evaluate my plans from both a technical and clinical standpoint.

I found Natasa's mentorship style to be extremely encouraging to my progress. It is because of her tutelage that I am able to develop treatment plans that not only meet the technical requirements involved in planning, but also exceed clinically. I am beyond grateful for her encouragement and patience throughout the learning process and truly appreciate her willingness to make me feel like a solid and

contributing member of the team. Sometimes, it's the little things that are big things. As a student, including my name on emails with physicians, pointing out to a physician that I came up with a beneficial planning solution or asking my opinion on a simulation setup are small things that have a big impact on one's confidence level. From the beginning she made sure I was always included, made a point to ensure my successes did not go unnoticed, and wholeheartedly took me under her wing. Natasa's mentorship style fostered a welcoming environment and cultivated my professional growth. I couldn't be more grateful for my time with her, and I look forward to bestowing her influence on future students that I may have the opportunity to mentor in the future."



2021 Clinical Educator Award of Excellence

The characteristics **Patrick** exhibits are found in his nomination:

“Patrick Melby has been an excellent certified medical dosimetrist and clinical instructor for the past 5-years at Gundersen Health System in La-Crosse, WI. Over the years, Patrick continued to grow as a clinical instructor, and this past year, he stepped up into the role as the lead clinical preceptor for the clinic. As a coworker and instructor in the radiation oncology clinic, Patrick has demonstrated by example what it means to be a top-notch medical dosimetrist through communication, critical thinking, and relationship building. Patrick is respected by all staff members on the radiation oncology team and proves time and time again that no challenge is too hard. As a student, it can be uncomfortable to interrupt someone’s concentration during their busy workday to ask questions that may take time to explain. Patrick is exceptional in his response whenever approached with questions. He is always more than willing to take the time to go over even the simplest questions. More importantly, his approach and response gives the impression that it is okay to ask all the questions necessary to achieve learning outcomes. This allows for quick growth as a medical dosimetry student and to become comfortable in the clinic early in the clinical practice. Concepts in medical dosimetry can be difficult to explain when the student coming in has no background on the processes and procedures surrounding dosimetry or the treatment planning system. When I arrived at the clinic, Patrick spent a significant amount of time going over the very basics of radiation oncology and the treatment planning system offering a solid foundation before more difficult concepts were approached. Patrick continues to help perfect treatment planning techniques, encourages to think critically about plans, and suggests new methods or tricks to approach cases allowing the student to continue to enhance

their treatment planning skills. When mistakes are caught, Patrick resists correcting too quickly and insists that with careful review, the mistake can be found without his assistance. By having the ability to find the mistakes, the mistake can be learned from. Patrick is a huge advocate for the student and their education. If there is a learning opportunity, Patrick works with the student so that they may learn alongside the rest of the team. If there is something new that he learned or tried, he pulls the student in even if it doesn’t work. Even if the plan is nearly perfect, he will have the student try something new. He is persistent and insistent that all competencies be completed in as realistic of a situation as possible; including watching the simulation process, importing the images, contouring the anatomy, talking with the physician about the goals, completing the treatment planning process, documentation, billing and watching the plan be treated on the patient. He insists on having the student work with all the medical dosimetrists in the clinic so that the student can learn as many different ways as possible to approach a treatment plan. This approach to teaching and instruction is very beneficial to any student’s future career in medical dosimetry. Overall, Patrick is always willing to help in any way possible and is an excellent mentor in the field of medical dosimetry. As a student, I could not have asked for a better clinical experience. It is because of Patrick’s excellence in clinical instruction that I feel confident in my abilities as a medical dosimetrist and prepared to move forward towards employment and preparation for the Medical Dosimetrist Certification Exam.”

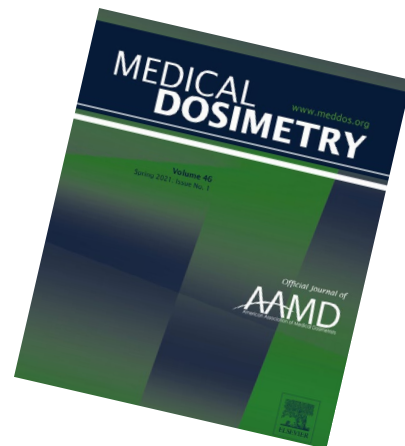


MEDICAL DOSIMETRY | FALL NEWSLETTER 2021

Recent Publications

These recent manuscripts were all published in the same Medical Dosimetry journal issue (Vol 46, Issue 4)

- Wilson L, Rohe R, Lenards N, Hunzeker A, Tobler M, Zeiler S, Fellows A. Minimizing clearance issues with prone breast patients on Varian linear accelerators through Isocenter placement. Med Dosim. In Press; Published online April 24, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meddos.2021.03.004>
- Casto Z, Liu M, Lenards N, Hunzeker A, Zoller W, Blakaj DM. Multiple case dosimetric evaluation of VMAT scalp irradiation using 3D milled bolus. Med Dosim. In Press. Published online May 12, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meddos.2021.03.007>
- Wilson A, Keefe J, Habibulla H, Lenards N, Hunzeker A, Tobler M, Zeiler S, Fellows A. Incidence of work related musculoskeletal disorders in medical dosimetry. Med Dosim. 2021; In Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meddos.2021.04.003>
- Hadsell CS, Lenards N, Hunzeker A, Tallhamer MJ, Hadsell MJ. The effect of measurement geometry on patient specific QA pass/fail rates for stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT) plans. Med Dosim. 2021; In Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meddos.2021.05.001>



MDCB Exam Results

We had outstanding MDCB exam results again with the cohort graduating in Dec 2020. There were 21/22 graduates who passed on 1st attempt resulting in a 95% pass rate for their cohort.

The new 5 year (2016-2020) exam pass rate for our program is 95% (109/115).

Social Media

Follow our [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) page. On our Facebook page, we post updates regularly while also posting job openings for current students and/or alumni. If you have a job opening or something you would like to share on our program FB page, contact Nishele.