

Pikes Peak State College

Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Student Handbook



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1. Welcome

On behalf of our faculty and staff, welcome to the Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Program. Whether you are beginning your journey or returning to continue it, you are entering a vital and rewarding field at an exciting time for healthcare. The knowledge, clinical judgment, and technical skills you develop here will equip you to meet emerging challenges and lead in a rapidly evolving imaging landscape.

Your education will be rigorous, and we are committed to making it one of your most positive and transformative learning experiences. Formal coursework is just the start of a lifelong commitment to professional growth in sonography. Our dedicated full-time and part-time faculty, together with our community and clinical partners, are devoted to providing an exceptional, student-centered education at PPSC.

As a DMS student, you are a responsible and accountable partner in this collaborative process. This handbook outlines the policies and procedures that support your success—from entry to graduation and onward to professional credentials through the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS). Please review it carefully and keep it for reference. You will be asked to sign an acknowledgment confirming you have read and understand these policies.

*Chadwick Meisner RT (R) (CT) (BD), BSBA
Director of Medical Imaging, Pikes Peak State College
&
All Faculty and Staff of the Imaging Department*

2. DMS Student Handbook Provision (Governance)

This Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Student Handbook contains pertinent information affecting students, current through the date of its issuance. The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are to be used in conjunction with the general requirements, policies, and procedures of Pikes Peak State College (PPSC). To the extent that any provision of this handbook is inconsistent with state or federal law, State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education policies (BPs) or Colorado Community College System Procedures (SPs), the law, BPs, and SPs shall supersede and control. BPs and SPs are subject to change throughout the year and are effective immediately upon adoption by the Board or System Chancellor, respectively. Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to BPs and SPs, as well as college directives, including but not limited to the contents of this handbook.

- CCCS Board Policies and System Procedures: <https://www.cccs.edu/about-cccs/state-board/policies-and-procedures/>
- PPSC Catalog and Policies: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/>

The faculty and the Director of Medical Imaging reserve the right to change DMS program policies. DMS students will be informed in writing of policy changes in a timely manner. Any changes will also be posted on D2L and the PPSC Medical Imaging/DMS Department website and, as appropriate, announced in the classroom/lab setting.

- D2L: <https://pikespeak.desire2learn.com/>
- PPSC Medical Imaging/DMS: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/programs/medical-imaging/index.php>

Nothing in this Handbook is intended to create (nor shall it be construed as creating) an expressed or implied contract or to guarantee for any term or to promise that any specific process, procedure, or practice will be followed, or benefit will be provided by the college. Pikes Peak State College reserves the right to modify, change, delete, or add to the information in this Handbook as it deems appropriate.

3. Vision, Mission, and Program Goals

Vision: Patient-centered sonography education that advances safe imaging, clinical excellence, and professional integrity.

Mission: Prepare competent, entry-level sonographers in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains through integrated didactic, lab, simulation, and clinical experiences that prioritize ALARA principles, ethical practice, and interprofessional collaboration.

Program Goals:

- Demonstrate proficiency in image acquisition/optimization and Doppler hemodynamics.
- Apply sonographic physics and instrumentation to produce diagnostic-quality studies.
- Communicate effectively with patients and interprofessional teams using the AIDET model.
- Uphold the SDMS Code of Ethics and patient confidentiality.
- Meet or exceed ARDMS eligibility requirements for SPI and specialty credentials.

References:

- SDMS Scope of Practice & Clinical Standards: <https://www.sdms.org/docs/default-source/Resources/scope-of-practice-and-clinical-standards.pdf>
- AIUM Guidelines and Statements: <https://www.aium.org>
- ARDMS: <https://www.ardms.org>

4. Student Responsibilities and Communication

- Students are responsible for all policies and procedures in this handbook, course syllabi, and official announcements.
- Monitor PPSC email and D2L announcements regularly for updates.
- Seek clarification from faculty as needed to fulfill student responsibilities.
- Participate actively in learning, remediation, and professional development.

5. Academic Standards, Progression, and Readmission

- **Minimum passing grade: Health Sciences minimum is C = 77% (no rounding).**
- Progression: Students must meet both didactic and clinical performance standards to advance.
- Failure of a DMS Course: Refer to remediation and readmission pathways; eligibility is contingent on space and satisfactory completion of action plans.
- Withdrawal and Incompletes: Follow PPSC policies and program procedures; consult faculty regarding impact on progression.
- Readmission: Determined by program capacity and student's remediation progress.

6. Evaluation & Grading (Division Policy)

Grading scale (Health Sciences):

- A = 93–100%
- B = 85–92%
- C = 77–84% (no rounding)
- D = 70–76%
- F = <70%

Courses may require minimums on specific components (e.g., exams, lab competencies, clinical evaluations). See syllabi.

7. Testing/Exams Policy

- Academic integrity applies to all assessments.
- Exam security: No unauthorized materials or devices; follow proctor instructions.
- Make-up exams: By policy and faculty discretion with documentation.
- Accommodations: Coordinate with Accessibility Services in advance.

8. Student Success and Support

- Tutoring, library, counseling, and accessibility services are available; see PPSC resources.
- Early alert and remediation opportunities are offered when concerns arise.
- Students are expected to engage with recommended resources and checkpoints.

9. General Skills Lab and DMS Simulation Policies

- Professional conduct: No profanity; maintain clinical decorum.
- Safety: Follow equipment checklists and faculty instructions.
- Dress code: Program-approved attire and PPE as directed.
- Scanning peers/volunteers: Requires informed consent/signed waiver; no diagnosis provided; follow incidental findings policy.
- Recording: Prohibited unless explicitly authorized for instructional use with prior consent.

10. Equipment & Room Safety

- Clean and disinfect consoles, keyboards, transducers, beds, chairs, and high-touch surfaces per IFUs.
- Manage cords and ergonomic positioning to prevent trips and strains.
- Report malfunctions immediately; remove unsafe equipment from service.

11. DMS Simulation Center Policies & Hours

- Access during scheduled labs and supervised practice hours.
- Instructor presence required for scanning sessions.
- All accidents/incidents must be reported immediately to the instructor.

12. Clinical Education Information

- Placement: Determined by the program; travel may be required.
- Onboarding: Students must meet site-specific requirements (immunizations, background checks, trainings).
- Attendance: Adhere to published clinical schedules; notify site and faculty of absences/tardiness per policy.
- Case Logging: Maintain de-identified, accurate exam logs verified by preceptors.
- Evaluation: Competencies and professional behaviors assessed via rubrics and direct observation.

Supervision Definitions:

- Direct Supervision: A qualified sonographer/physician is physically present and immediately available to assist the student.
- Indirect Supervision: A qualified sonographer/physician is available for consultation and can provide immediate assistance as needed, consistent with site policy and student competency level.

AIDET Patient Care Model: Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation, Thank You—used consistently in patient interactions.

13. Safe Practice Guidelines

- Follow standard and transmission-based precautions; perform hand hygiene; use PPE appropriately.
- Apply ALARA principles; monitor thermal and mechanical indices and exposure time.
- Ergonomics: Optimize scanner, patient, and sonographer positioning; take microbreaks.
- Chemical safety: Follow SDS and manufacturer IFUs for disinfectants used in HLD.
- Report safety concerns and near-misses promptly.

14. HIPAA and Confidentiality

- Access only the minimum necessary PHI for assigned patients.
- Do not capture/store/share clinical images or PHI on personal devices or social media.
- De-identify any educational materials.
- Complete required HIPAA training and follow site policies.
- HHS HIPAA: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>

15. Social Media and Electronic Devices

- Never share PHI on any platform.
- Maintain professional conduct online.
- Follow classroom, lab, and clinical site rules for device use.
- Recording is prohibited unless explicitly authorized.

16. Email Communication

- Use PPSC email for official communication.
- Check D2L announcements regularly.
- Respond to faculty and clinical site communications promptly and professionally.

17. Student Organizations and Opportunities

- Consider membership in SDMS; engage in professional development and conferences.
- Explore scholarships and PPSC student leadership opportunities.
- SDMS: <https://www.sdms.org>
- AIUM: <https://www.aium.org>
- ARDMS: <https://www.ardms.org>

18. Weather/Snow Policy

- Follow PPSC weather closure announcements.
- Clinical site operations may differ; communicate with faculty and site according to protocol.
- Safety is paramount—do not travel in unsafe conditions; coordinate make-up as directed.

19. Graduation

- Complete all program and institutional requirements; apply for graduation by posted deadlines.
- Pinning/recognition per division announcements; attire and conduct per program guidance.

20. Withdrawal and Incompletes

- Follow PPSC procedures for withdrawal.
- Incompletes may be granted if criteria are met; consult faculty and division policy.
- Administrative withdrawal may occur when students cannot fully participate in required activities.

21. Technical Standards / Essential Skills Requirements Policy

Individuals enrolled in the PPSC DMS Program must be able to perform essential skills as established by the program. Students who believe they cannot meet one or more standards without accommodation should request an ADA interactive session with Accessibility Services.

- Accessibility Services: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/student-resources/accessibility-services/>

22. Functional Abilities Table

The following table outlines functional abilities, standards, and examples of required activities in clinical, simulation, skills labeling, and lab practice.

Functional Ability	Standard	Examples of Required Activities in Clinical	Examples in Simulation	Examples in Skills Labeling	Examples in Lab Practice
Motor/Tactile	Fine motor control; sustained shoulder abduction; safe patient positioning within scope	Maneuver transducer with varied pressure; maintain probe orientation; assist with positioning using safe body mechanics	Simulate abdominal /OB scans; apply gel and covers; adjust probe pressure	Correctly label images (e.g., sagittal/transverse, laterality); annotate structures	Practice transducer grips; apply scanning ergonomics
Sensory/Perceptual	Visual acuity for grayscale/color Doppler; depth perception; auditory cues	Optimize depth/gain/TGC; evaluate spectral waveforms; respond to alarms	Recognize artifacts and adjust parameters	Verify labels and measurement cursors	Distinguish tissue interfaces on phantoms
Cognitive	Critical thinking; attention to detail; time management	Select exam protocol; adapt to patient conditions; correlate clinical history	Triage scanning tasks; follow emergency procedures	Apply measurement standards; follow rubric	Troubleshoot equipment settings
Communication	Clear, professional interaction	Obtain history; explain exam; use AIDET; escalate concerns to preceptor	Team communication during simulations	Use standard abbreviations and annotations	Present findings in debrief

Professional/Behavioral	Reliability; ethics; responsiveness to feedback	Arrive prepared; maintain confidentiality; uphold SDMS Code of Ethics	Accept coaching; maintain decorum	Follow checklists; maintain lab readiness	Clean and reset room; report issues
Ergonomics/Safety	Prevent musculoskeletal injury; safe equipment use	Adjust bed/console height; use supports; microbreaks	Use proper body mechanics	Maintain cable management ; PPE use	HLD chemical handling per IFUs

References:

- SDMS Scope of Practice & Clinical Standards: <https://www.sdms.org/docs/default-source/Resources/scope-of-practice-and-clinical-standards.pdf>
- AIUM Disinfection Statements: <https://www.aium.org/officialStatements/57>

23. Health Sciences AI Policy (Adapted for DMS)

AI may be used to support learning with disclosure and critical evaluation. Prohibited uses include generating clinical documentation or image interpretation for labs/clinical, fabricating logs/competencies, submitting AI work without citation, uploading PHI or identifiable images, and circumventing testing policies. Acceptable uses include brainstorming, outlining, study aids, grammar/clarity tools, verified citations, and faculty-directed activities. Students must demonstrate independent competence. Violations may impact grades, progression, and standing.

24. DMS Program Tracks and ARDMS Alignment

PPSC offers three program tracks. ***Cardiac (Adult Echocardiography) is not offered at this time.***

- General Sonography (Abdominal-Extended/Superficial): ARDMS Abdomen (AB), SPI
- OB/GYN Sonography: ARDMS OB/GYN, SPI
- Vascular Sonography: ARDMS Vascular Technology (VT), SPI

Tracks include scope, core competencies, course alignment, and clinical expectations; availability depends on site capacity.

25. Examinations and Credentialing (ARDMS)

Students are encouraged to sit for the ARDMS SPI exam at an appropriate time and pursue specialty exams upon meeting prerequisites. See ARDMS for current pathways and requirements.

- ARDMS: <https://www.ardms.org>

26. Program Dismissal Protocol

Progressive discipline may include verbal/written warnings, learning contracts, remediation plans, probation, removal from site, and dismissal for cause (e.g., unsafe practice, PHI violations, falsification of records, impairment, harassment, unprofessional conduct). The program reserves the right to remove students from clinical for safety concerns. Appeals follow PPSC procedures.

27. Handbooks, Syllabi, and Clinical Packets Acknowledgment

Each course in the DMS Program abides by policies in the DMS Student Handbook. Any additional requirements or policies for specific courses are printed in the course syllabus. Students acknowledge:

- I have read and understand the PPSC DMS Student Handbook and am responsible for its contents.
- I have read and understand the PPSC DMS course syllabus for the course currently enrolled and will seek clarification as needed.
- I understand that syllabus changes may occur and will be communicated via D2L announcements, content updates, or written information in class.

Signature: _____ Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____
Print Name: _____ Semester/Year: _____
Student S#: _____ Current Course: _____

28. Program Contacts

- Director of Medical Imaging: Chadwick Meisner, RT(R)(CT)(BD), BSBA
Email: Chadwick.Meisner@pikespeak.edu | Phone: 719-502-2239
- Clinical Coordinator: TBD (posted on D2L and program website)
- Health Sciences Division: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/programs/health-sciences/>

29. Appendices: Student Forms (Sign-and-Return)

A. Handbook Acknowledgment (DMS) I have read and understand the PPSC DMS Student Handbook and am responsible for its contents and policies.

Student Name: _____ S#: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

B. Course Syllabus/Clinical Packet Acknowledgment (per course) I have read and understand the DMS course syllabus and any clinical packet requirements for the current course.

Student Name: _____ S#: _____
Course: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

C. Assumption of Risk/Clinical Experiences Clinical experiences (practicum, rotations, supervised practice, internships, or observations) are a required component of the DMS program. Risks include ergonomic strain, infectious exposure, chemical disinfectants used in HLD, and dynamic clinical environments. I agree to follow ALARA, infection prevention, PPE, and safety protocols.

Student Name: _____ S#: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

D. Confidentiality and HIPAA Agreement I will access only the minimum necessary PHI for assigned patients; follow facility policies; de-identify educational materials; never capture/store/share images or PHI on personal devices or social media; and complete required HIPAA training.

Student Name: _____ S#: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

E. Academic/Clinical Remediation Plan (to be completed with faculty)

- Student: _____
Course/Clinical: _____ Date: _____
- Issues identified (knowledge/skills/professional):

- Measurable objectives:

- Actions/resources (labs, tutoring, readings, extra clinical):

- Timeline and checkpoints:

- Outcome: Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory

Student Signature: _____

Faculty/Coordinator: _____

Date: _____

F. Re-Entry Plan (if applicable)

- Reason for interruption:

- Required steps for re-entry:

- Timeline and approvals:

Student Signature: _____

Program Approval: _____ Date: _____

G. Clinical Incident Report (de-identified)

- Date/time: _____ Site: _____

Preceptor: _____

- Description of event (no PHI):

- Immediate actions taken:

- Follow-up/education:

Student Signature: _____

Faculty Review: _____

Date: _____

H. Case Log and Image Tracking Template

Case Log and Image Tracking Template

Use this template to record clinical cases. Each table provides space for 25 entries per page. Duplicate the final page as needed to continue logging.

Case Log — Page 1 (25 entries)

[illegible]

Case Log — Page 2 (25 entries)

[illegible]

Key Hyperlinks

- CCCS Board Policies and System Procedures: <https://www.cccs.edu/about-cccs/state-board/policies-and-procedures/>
- PPSC Medical Imaging/DMS: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/programs/medical-imaging/index.php>
- D2L: <https://pikespeak.desire2learn.com/>
- SDMS Scope/Standards: <https://www.sdms.org/docs/default-source/Resources/scope-of-practice-and-clinical-standards.pdf>
- AIUM (Guidelines/Statements): <https://www.aium.org>
- AIUM Disinfection of Transducers: <https://www.aium.org/officialStatements/57>
- ARDMS: <https://www.ardms.org>
- HHS HIPAA: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>