



Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult)

Catalog and Student Handbook 2026-2027

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The Catalog and Student Handbook for the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) is current as of the publication date on the cover. It may be necessary to add new policies or make changes to the existing policies and guidelines due to the requirements and standards of the Program's accrediting body. Geisinger's Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) reserves the right to make changes at any time to any provision of this document, including changes to the amount of tuition and fees, academic Programs and course content, school policies and procedures, faculty and administrative staff, the school calendar and other dates, student evaluation procedures and other provisions. Notice is not required for a new policy to take effect; however, the Program will make reasonable attempts to notify students promptly of any policy changes through website or email postings, mail distributions, or other methods deemed appropriate by the Program administration.

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Introduction to the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program

About the Cardiac Sonography Program

A message from the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program Medical Director, Sindu Chandran, MD, FACC, FASE, FACP

Greetings Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program Student,

With great pleasure, I welcome you as a student to Geisinger's Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult). We are excited that you chose our Program to further your career. We are committed to preparing students to master the art and science of cardiac sonography by providing a comprehensive education and training experience.

Our Program aligns with Geisinger's vision to provide integrated healthcare through its commitment to innovation, quality care, and community service.

In this exciting time, when the field of cardiac imaging including echocardiography is seeing many advances, the need for skilled echocardiographers is ever increasing. Our student-centered environment will prepare learners to become successful in their careers in a competitive world.

Best wishes for a bright future ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sindu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Sindu Chandran, MD, FACC, FASE, FACP
Medical Director, Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program
Director, Echocardiography Lab, GCMC

Program Mission Statement

To prepare competent entry-level cardiac sonographers with exceptional knowledge and skills through comprehensive didactic instructions and extensive hands-on clinical experience. We are committed to developing cardiac sonographers who demonstrate strong technical proficiency, effective communication, critical thinking, ethical practice, and a commitment to lifelong professional growth in the rapidly advancing field of Cardiology.

Program Description

The Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Program is a **12-month certificate course** focused on:

- Classroom didactics
- Hands-on laboratory training
- Clinical externship experience

Program specialty areas include:

- Transthoracic Echocardiography (TTE)
- Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE)
- Stress Echocardiography (SE)

Program training is divided into three semesters

- 15-17 weeks in length — Fall, Spring, and Summer

Students gain comprehensive knowledge in cardiac anatomy and physiology, hemodynamics, and ultrasound physics, while developing the technical expertise and professional competencies required to perform high-quality echocardiographic examinations. Graduates are prepared for entry-level positions as adult cardiac sonographers to deliver accurate, patient-centered diagnostic care and to meet the demand of today's evolving cardiovascular healthcare landscape.

Program Goals & Objectives

The Program aims to prepare entry-level cardiac sonographers who are competent in cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills) and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the profession of Adult Cardiac Sonography.

Upon graduation from the Program, the student will be able to:

- Perform diagnostic cardiac ultrasound imaging safely and effectively by applying adequate echocardiographic scanning techniques, including appropriate ultrasound physics and instrumentation principles.
- Analyze anatomic, pathologic, and/or physiologic data as well as integrate pertinent patient history and supporting clinical data to facilitate optimal diagnostic imaging results.
- Exercise their judgment in the performance of echocardiography to help them develop into echo clinicians.
- Engage in continuous self-assessment and professional development.
- Use what they've learned to appear and pass the national registry exams.

Students are expected and required to display professional behavior including:

- Clear, compassionate, and professional communication with patients and families.
- Effective collaboration with cardiologists, physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals.

- Respect for patient confidentiality.
- Professional, reliable, and cultural sensitivity in clinical and academic settings.

Administration & Faculty



Sindu Chandran, MD, FACC, FASE

Program Dean and Medical Director,
Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program
Director, Echocardiography Lab, GCMC



Kaitlyn Mroczka, BS, RDCS

Program Director,
Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program



Alexandra Laver, RDCS

Clinical Coordinator,
Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program



George Ruiz, MD, MBA
System Chief of Cardiology
Vice Chair Heart and Vascular Institute



Abigail Santmyer, MHA
Chief Executive Officer,
Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program
AVP – Heart and Vascular &
Neuroscience Institutes

Contact for Program Information:

- Kaitlyn Mroczka, BS, RDCS
Program Director, Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program

Facilities

Classroom & Scan Lab

- Geisinger Northeast Training Center
60 Glenmaura National Blvd, Moosic, PA 18507

Clinical Sites

- Geisinger Community Medical Center, Scranton (GCMC)
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Wilkes Barre (GWV)
- Geisinger Medical Center, Danville (GMC)

Accreditation & Affiliations

Accreditation is a voluntary process that allied health education Programs may undertake to demonstrate compliance with standards designed to indicate a level of education competency.

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) is not currently accredited. The Program plans to seek accreditation in the near future by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), a national accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education. Programmatic accreditation is granted upon the recommendation of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Cardiovascular Technology.

Accreditation is not guaranteed.

To learn more about the accreditation process, you may visit the websites below.

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)

9355 - 113th St. N, #7709

Seminole, FL 33775

Phone: (772) 210-2350

Email: mail@caahep.org

Website: www.caahep.org

Joint Review Committee on Education in Cardiovascular Technology (JRCCVT)

1449 Hill Street

Whitinsville, MA 01588-1032

Phone: (978) 456-5594

E-mail: office@jrccvt.org

Website: <https://www.jrccvt.org/>

Institutional Accreditation/Affiliation

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) is approved by the Geisinger Heart and Vascular Institute which is accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH).

Program Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee brings together communities of interest to guide Program improvement, support faculty on Program changes and strengthen educational outcomes in alignment with the Program mission. The Program Advisory Committee is comprised of the Program Medical Director, Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, clinical instructors, students and graduates, Department Chair of Cardiology, administrative leadership personnel and a public member. The Committee meets at least annually and provides advice regarding Program goals based on the changing needs and expectations of the Program's communities of interest, reviews curriculum, and assesses Program effectiveness and outcomes.

Admissions Information

Admissions Policy

Admission to the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (CSP) is open to all applicants, meeting the criteria specified below. The Program has a limited student body, with a maximum of 4 students selected yearly. The Program reserves the right to reject applicants or rescind eligibility for an applicant to begin classes if all admissions and enrollment requirements are not completed by the Program's start date.

Non-Discrimination

It is Geisinger's policy that no individual will be excluded from participation in, denied benefits from, or subjected to discrimination in Geisinger's services, Programs, or activities based on race, color, religion (including religious observance, practice or belief), national origin, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, age, disability, genetic information, veteran or military status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law or regulation.

Geisinger is committed to a working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. All applicants and employees receive equal consideration.

Please refer to the following Geisinger policies:

- Non-Discrimination Policy
- Non-Retaliation

Admission Requirements

Admission to the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program is a selective process based on various factors including academic eligibility and grades, letters of recommendation, previous experience in the health care field (especially cardiovascular services) and interview skills. Applications are reviewed and ranked by the selection committee. Receipt of applications will be confirmed, and notification of the initial selection process outcome will be communicated. A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$150 is required upon notification of acceptance.

In order to be considered for entrance into the Program, applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. 18 years of age or older
2. Proof of United States Citizenship or Permanent Residency Status (no Visa sponsorships).
3. Completion of one of the following:
 - Two-year associate's degree in any field (healthcare preferred)

- Accredited Allied Health Program (associate's degree)
 - Bachelor's degree (any field)
4. Completion of the following prerequisite coursework
Applicants must show completion of post-secondary course from an accredited college or university in the following with a letter grade C or higher:
- Anatomy and Physiology I (4 credits)
 - Anatomy and Physiology II (4 credits)
 - College Algebra or higher
 - Communications (English, speech, composition course)
 - Medical Terminology
 - Physics (preferred but not required)

All applicants must submit a transcript showing completion of courses by the application deadline.

The most competitive candidates will possess:

- A GPA of at least 3.0
- Previous experience in patient care
- Previous experience in cardiology

Application Process

The application window starts February 1st of each year. All complete applications with supporting documents should be submitted by the application deadline of May 15th. Please refer to the Cardiac Sonography Program website for details and to submit your application. Mail-in applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Required Materials

- \$50 Application Fee
- Resume/CV
- Two letters of reference (one work/professional and one personal (not a family member))
- Educational Transcripts (Official only)
- Essay (see guidelines below)

Essay Guidelines

1. Tell us about your history and future goals in the field of cardiovascular technology (500-700 words)
2. Use the following questions as a framework for your essay:
 - Why do you want to pursue a career in cardiovascular technology?
 - How have your prior experience prepared you for this career?
 - What specific qualities do you possess that set you apart from other applicants?

- Looking beyond graduation, what would you like to accomplish in this field?

Admissions Procedure

- Applicants will receive a submission confirmation via email from the Program.
- If eligible, an in-person interview will be scheduled at Geisinger Community Medical Center or Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center.
- Applicants will then be notified in writing if they have been accepted into the Program.
- If accepted, the applicant must confirm or decline by the date stated in their acceptance letter.
- Once acceptance into the Program is complete, you will receive a phone call and an email from the Program Director.
- If an applicant whose acceptance into the Program has been completed decides not to attend the Program, please notify the Program Director immediately.
- A maximum of four (4) students per year will be selected for the Program.

Enrollment Requirements

- Satisfy admission requirements
- Satisfy academic prerequisites
- Enrollment fee: \$150 (non-refundable)
- Pass a health assessment which includes a drug screening (administered by Geisinger's Employee Health Department)
- Submit a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance
- Submit a Federal Criminal History Record (FCHR) check
- Not a user of tobacco products

Background Checks

Geisinger utilizes multiple types of background checks for clinical and non-clinical personnel and students as stated below. Geisinger requires that offers of acceptance into the Program include the condition that the applicant submit to and successfully pass the following checks prior to their start date:

- Drug Screen
- Nicotine Screen
- Health Screen
- Criminal Background Check (includes PATCH - Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History, and OIG Sanction Screenings)

Criminal Background Checks

All prospective students will require a Criminal Background Check (including PATCH and OIG Sanction Screenings). In addition, prospective students working with direct, hands-on patient care will also require the following clearances:

- Child Abuse History Clearance (CAC)
- FBI Fingerprint Background Check

FBI Fingerprint Background Check

Geisinger requires prospective students to obtain new CAC and FBI Fingerprint Background Check clearances, unless the individual can provide clearances obtained for other purposes that are dated within 4 years of the Program start date. When clearances are provided from the prospective student under these circumstances, they will be required to sign an affirmation letter indicating there are no changes to the clearance status. Geisinger will generate a new PATCH Clearance on every prospective student.

Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Screening

The health screening includes screening for drug and tobacco usage which are violations of the Geisinger Drug and Alcohol, Drug-Free Workplace, and Tobacco Free policies.

Basic Life Support Certificate

All students enrolled in the Program should have their BLS certification completed prior to the start date of the Program.

Application Timeline

- February 1 – Begin accepting applications
- May 15 – Application deadline
- May (second week) – Selected applicants sent a request for an interview
- July (first week) – Acceptance and denial letters sent out
- July 15 – Accepted applicants must accept offer and pay enrollment fee
- September 1 – Classes begin with orientation of students in the first week

(Dates are approximate and subject to minor variation from year to year)

Foreign Transcripts

Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program does not accept coursework taken at a foreign institution.

Academic Counseling/Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action will be initiated if a student fails to follow the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) policy guidelines and/or meet Program requirements.

First Infraction – Verbal Warning: A first, less serious infraction may result in a verbal warning. The Program Director will meet with the student to review the concern. The discussion will be documented and placed in the student's file. Repeat or additional concerns may require further review and formal corrective action.

Second Infraction – Written Warning: A second infraction may result in a written warning. The documentation will summarize the performance or conduct concern, expectations for improvement, and notice that continued issues may lead to additional corrective action.

Third Infraction – Final Written Warning or Suspension: Continued or serious concerns may result in a final written warning or suspension. Suspensions are typically up to three days but may vary based on the circumstances. Time away will be scheduled to minimize disruption to learning while addressing the issue promptly. Based on severity, suspension may occur at any stage of the corrective action process.

Fourth Infraction – Dismissal: Failure to meet expectations following prior corrective action may result in dismissal from the Program. The student may be offered the opportunity to resign in lieu of dismissal. Based on severity, suspension may occur at any stage of the corrective action process.

Grounds for Dismissal

Program dismissal may occur for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Failure to maintain a minimum passing grade of 77% in didactic, lab, or clinical coursework
- Unprofessional, inappropriate, or unethical conduct
- Unexcused absence
- Breach of patient or organizational confidentiality (HIPAA)
- Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism

The Program Director and Medical Director determine the appropriate level of corrective action based on the circumstances after reviewing with the CSP Committee on Academic and Professional standards.

Programmatic Probation

When a student is placed on probation, required corrective actions will be provided in writing, including a defined timeframe for compliance. Failure to meet the corrective actions within the designated timeframe will result in dismissal from the Program.

Clinical partners retain the contractual right to deny or revoke student access to their facilities. If a student is removed from a clinical site due to a violation of clinical policy, Program policy, or any serious behavioral concern, the Program is not obligated to assign an alternative site. In such circumstances, the Program Director and Medical Director will review the circumstances to determine whether reassignment, remediation, or dismissal from the Program is appropriate after reviewing with the CSP Committee on Academic and Professional standards.

Immediate Dismissal

While the Cardiac Sonography Program is committed to progressive discipline whenever appropriate, certain conduct or performance deficiencies are incompatible with continued participation and may result in immediate dismissal without prior warning. Immediate dismissal is reserved for conduct that poses a risk to patient safety, violates legal or ethical obligations, or undermines the integrity of the Program or clinical learning environment.

Patient Safety Violations

Any action or omission that jeopardizes patient safety, including but not limited to:

- Practicing beyond the authorized student scope of practice
- Performing clinical procedures without required supervision
- Failing to follow established clinical protocols after corrective instruction
- Willful disregard of infection control, universal precautions, or safety procedures
- Gross negligence or unsafe behavior during patient care activities

Confidentiality and Legal Violations

Any violation of legal, regulatory, or institutional confidentiality obligations, including:

- Unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of protected health information (HIPAA violations)
- Improper use of electronic health records
- Falsification or alteration of medical, clinical, or Program records
- Misrepresentation of clinical hours, competencies, or academic submissions

Academic Integrity Violations

Serious violations of academic honesty, including:

- Cheating on examinations or competency assessments
- Plagiarism or submission of another's work as one's own
- Alteration or falsification of academic or clinical evaluations
- Unauthorized collaboration or use of prohibited materials

Professional Misconduct

Conduct that fundamentally violates professional healthcare standards, including:

- Verbal or physical abuse, threats, or harassment of patients, students, staff, or faculty
- Discriminatory or retaliatory conduct prohibited by law or Program policy
- Dishonesty, intimidation, or behavior that disrupts the learning or clinical environment
- Sexually inappropriate behavior or boundary violations

Impairment or Substance-Related Violations

Any conduct involving impairment that endangers safety or violates institutional policy, including:

- Use, possession, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol during Program or clinical activities
- Refusal to comply with required drug or alcohol testing
- Reporting to clinical duties in an impaired condition

Failure to Maintain Clinical Eligibility

Circumstances that render a student ineligible to participate in clinical education, including:

- Revocation or denial of access by a clinical site due to serious misconduct or policy violation
- Failure to maintain required vaccinations, health clearances, CPR certification, or background clearances
- Inability to meet Program Technical Standards without reasonable accommodation

Criminal Conduct

Conduct involving:

- Arrests or convictions for crimes that materially affect patient safety, trust, or clinical eligibility
- Failure to disclose required criminal history or falsification of background check information

Extraordinary Circumstances

Conduct not specifically listed above may result in immediate dismissal only if it is comparable in severity and risk to the categories described above.

Process Safeguards (Including Immediate Dismissal)

Except where immediate action is required to protect patient safety or comply with legal obligations:

- The student will receive written notice of the basis for dismissal.
- The student will be informed of the right to appeal under the Program Dismissal and Appeal Policy.
- All decisions will be documented and retained in the student's Program record.

Withdrawal Policy

Students must submit a [Program Withdrawal Form](#) (see appendix) to withdraw from the Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult). Students who stop attending the course without submitting proper documentation as required will not receive any transcript from our Program.

Reentry Policy

Students who have voluntarily withdrawn from the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program or did not graduate after attending the Program may apply to reenter, but readmission is not guaranteed. Students are required to meet all admission criteria in place at the time of application submission. Reentry into the Program is subject to space availability and is at the discretion of the Program Director and Medical Director.

Pregnancy Policy

Please refer to [Pregnancy and Parenting Student Resources](#) in SharePoint.

Students in the Cardiac Sonography Program are covered under the [GCHS Policy on Pregnancy and Parenting Protections](#).

No student will be subject to retaliation for becoming pregnant during the Program or for requesting pregnancy-related modifications. A student has the right to voluntarily disclose pregnancy and to continue participation in the Program. The Program is committed to providing a safe, supportive learning environment and will work with the student to determine reasonable adjustments that enable progression toward completion of academic and clinical requirements. Depending on individual circumstances, pregnancy or related conditions may affect the student's ability to meet standard timelines and could result in delayed completion.

Students are encouraged to notify the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator as soon as they are comfortable so appropriate planning, safety measures, and support can be arranged.

When a pregnancy is disclosed, the student will collaborate with Program leadership to develop an individualized plan. This plan may address scheduling, clinical activities, safety considerations, and timelines. Documentation from a licensed healthcare provider may be requested when restrictions or limitations are identified.

The Program will make reasonable efforts to support the student's continuation and completion of the curriculum while maintaining academic, clinical, and safety standards.

After written notification, the student may choose one of the following pathways.

Option #1 – Undeclared Pregnancy

The pregnant student may choose not to declare pregnancy. The declaration of pregnancy by a student is voluntary and not required. The student may choose any of the other options at any time during her pregnancy.

Option #2 – Declare Pregnancy and Continue in the Program without modification

The pregnant student may declare pregnancy and request to continue in the Program and clinical rotations without modification. The student must provide the Program Director a written intent to continue in the Program without modifications.

Option #3 – Declare Pregnancy with Requested Restrictions in Clinical Rotations

A student may elect to continue didactic, laboratory, and clinical education.

If this option is selected:

- Medical clearance may be required, including any applicable restrictions.
- The student must continue to meet attendance, academic, clinical, and professionalism standards.
- Missed time must be completed in accordance with Program requirements.

If progression in a course is interrupted, the student may be required to rejoin the course sequence at the next offering.

Option #4 – Leave of Absence

A student may request a leave of absence related to pregnancy or recovery.

If approved:

- The leave may extend up to one year from the agreed start date.
- Prior to return, the student may be asked to demonstrate readiness to resume coursework and clinical responsibilities. This may include assessments or validation of previously completed content.
- Upon return, the student must meet all Program expectations required for progression and graduation.

Option #5 – Voluntary Withdrawal

A student in good academic and professional standing may elect to withdraw.

Students who withdraw due to pregnancy may request consideration for readmission in accordance with standard Program admission processes and timelines. As part of reentry, the Program may require knowledge or skills validation.

Support Commitment

The Program, in partnership with Title IX, is committed to:

- Treating pregnancy and related conditions in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination standards
- Protecting student safety
- Preserving academic integrity

- Enabling students to continue or return whenever feasible.

Questions regarding rights, protections, or available modifications may be directed to the Program Director or the Title IX Coordinator.

(Please sign the “Pregnancy Policy” Form)

Title IX Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Misconduct & Harassment

For detailed information, please refer to the Title IX Resource page at go.geisinger.edu/titleix

Students in the Cardiac Sonography Program are covered under the GCHS Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Misconduct and Harassment (Title IX)

Title IX Statement

Geisinger is prohibited by Title IX from discriminating on the basis of sex in the education Programs and activities that it operates and this requirement to not discriminate extends to admissions and employment. Under Title IX, if Geisinger has actual knowledge of Title IX Sexual Harassment in its education Program or activity against a person in the United States, Geisinger must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. Geisinger’s response would be deliberately indifferent only if its response to sexual harassment is clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

Sex discrimination, which includes sexual misconduct and Title IX Sexual Harassment, is prohibited by this policy. This policy is applicable regardless of the sex of individuals engaging in sexual activity. In addition, retaliation against the complainant or witnesses is also prohibited by the Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Misconduct and Harassment (Title IX). Applicants, students or employees who experience sex discrimination or sexual misconduct are encouraged to report it as soon as possible.

Title IX Coordinator

Andrea Mulrine

Phone: 570-510-0845

Email: ajmulrine@geisinger.edu or titleix@geisinger.edu

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all applicants seeking education or employment be given careful consideration. The Act mandates that reasonable accommodations be provided for individuals with disabilities when necessary. It also supports the identification of essential job functions, which can be used along with other selection criteria to evaluate potential candidates for professional Programs or

employment. Qualified students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations consistent with ADA requirements, provided essential Program standards can be met.

Program Tuition and Fees

The tuition for the Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Program is set at \$25,000.

Tuition does not include textbooks, uniforms, other Program fees, and living or transportation expenses.

Work Commitment Agreement

Geisinger is pleased to support your professional development by covering the \$25,000 tuition for this Program. In return, there is a required commitment to remain employed with Geisinger for 24 months following graduation from the Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult).

Participation in any work commitment or tuition assistance arrangement is governed solely by a separate written agreement. Nothing in this Handbook creates an obligation to accept employment or guarantees employment following graduation.

Please be aware that the IRS considers this commitment a taxable benefit, and it will be taxed on the biweekly forgiveness amount throughout the commitment period. This arrangement is designed to promote both the student's professional growth and the success of Geisinger.

Employment Disclosure

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (CSP) does not guarantee or promise employment. Students in good standing with the Program who complete the graduation requirements may be offered employment with Geisinger, but it is not a guarantee.

The Cardiac Sonography Program is designed as a pathway to sit for the required national credentialing exam, Registered Cardiac Sonographer (RCS), offered by Cardiovascular Credentialing International, or the Registered Diagnostic Cardiovascular Sonographer (RDCS), offered by the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS). For more information about the exam, please log onto: www.cci-online.org or www.ardms.org. The RCS and/or RDCS-AE credential is required to work in an accredited echocardiography lab. Therefore, the student must pass the exam by the end of completion of the Program or within 5 months of the Program completion date to work in our/Geisinger's accredited labs and be eligible for this work agreement.

Program and Course Description

Academic Calendar 2026-2027

Fall Semester 2026	
Start of Semester	Tuesday, September 1
Labor Day No class	Monday, September 7
Clinical Internship I Begins Friday only	Friday, September 18
Clinical Internship I Begins Thursdays and Fridays	Thursday, October 15
Thanksgiving Break No class or clinical	Thursday, November 26 – Friday, November 27
Fall Semester Final Exam	Monday, December 14 – Thursday, December 17
Winter Break No class or clinical	Monday, December 21 – Friday, January 1, 2027
Spring Semester 2027	
Start of Semester	Monday, January 4
Clinical Internship II Begins Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays	Wednesday, January 6
Spring Break No class or clinical	Monday, March 29 – Friday, April 2
Spring Semester Final Exam	Monday, April 26 – Thursday, April 29
Summer Semester 2027	
Start of Semester	Monday, May 3
Clinical Internship III Begins	Tuesday, May 4

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays	
Memorial Day No class or clinical	Monday, May 31
Independence Day (observed) No class or clinical	Monday, July 5
Summer Semester Final Exam / CCI Exam	Monday, August 16 – Friday, August 27
Graduation	Tuesday, August 31

Education Hours Requirement

Required Hours

- 40 hours per week (Monday to Friday)

Classroom Didactics & Scan Lab

- Weekdays: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Clinical Rotations

- Weekdays: 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Curriculum Overview

Course Length (Hours/Credits)

Fall Semester – 16 weeks	Contact Hours
Adult Echocardiography I	161
Adult Echocardiography Lab I	192
Clinical Internship	168
Ultrasound Physics and Instrumentation I	39
TOTAL	560
Spring Semester – 17 weeks	Contact Hours
Adult Echocardiography II	120
Adult Echocardiography Lab II	120
Clinical Internship	368
TOTAL	608
Summer Semester – 17 weeks	Contact Hours
Adult Echocardiography III	112
Clinical Internship	512
TOTAL	624

Course Descriptions

Semester I – Fall

Adult Echocardiography I (AE-101)

Adult Echocardiography I provides an integrated foundation in adult transthoracic echocardiography, including patient care principles, normal cardiac anatomy and physiology, and introductory echocardiographic pathology. Emphasis is placed on professional practice, patient interaction, and correlation of normal and abnormal cardiac structure and function with echocardiographic imaging concepts.

This course prepares students for laboratory instruction, clinical education, and progressive echocardiographic interpretation coursework.

- Prerequisite: Admission to the Program
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program.
- Contact hours: 161

Adult Echocardiography Lab I (AE-101 L)

This course provides supervised hands-on instruction on foundational transthoracic echocardiography scanning principles and techniques. This laboratory-based course emphasizes the development of psychomotor skills, image orientation, and proper use of ultrasound equipment necessary for entry-level adult echocardiographic examinations. Students practice patient positioning, transducer manipulation, and acquisition of standard echocardiographic views under direct faculty supervision. Emphasis is placed on normal cardiac anatomy identification, image optimization, basic Doppler application, and adherence to professional standards, patient safety, and infection control practices as well as correlation between ECG and the cardiac cycle. Proper ergonomics techniques will also be covered. Laboratory activities are designed to reinforce concurrent didactic instruction and prepare students for progressive participation in clinical education.

Adult Echocardiography Lab I supports the student's transition from theoretical understanding to practical skill development in a controlled educational setting.

- Prerequisite: Admission to the Program
- Corequisite: AE-101
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program.
- Contact hours: 192

Ultrasound Physics (DMS-122)

This course explores the physical principles of acoustics, Doppler ultrasound, hemodynamics, and sonographic instrumentation, with a focus on clinical applications in diagnostic medical sonography. Students will learn proper techniques for producing quality diagnostic images through theoretical and laboratory instruction. Key topics include sound energy and its characteristics, the piezoelectric effect, properties of ultrasound waves, speed of sound and propagation, pulsed Doppler, color flow Doppler, and hemodynamics equations, display modes, bioeffects, the ALARA principle, and quality assurance. Coursework is designed to prepare students for national registry examinations in sonography, physics and instrumentation.

- Prerequisite: Admission to the Program
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program
- Contact hours: 39

Clinical Internship I (AE-103)

Clinical Internship I provides students with their initial supervised clinical experience in adult echocardiography. This course introduces students to the clinical environment and the professional role of the cardiac sonographer while reinforcing foundational knowledge and skills acquired through concurrent didactic and laboratory instruction.

Under the direct supervision of qualified clinical preceptors, students observe and assist with transthoracic echocardiographic examinations, patient preparation, and departmental workflow. Emphasis is placed on patient safety, infection control, professional communication, HIPAA compliance, and adherence to ethical and legal standards of practice. Students begin developing basic image acquisition skill, appropriate patient interaction, and professional behavior.

The course is an introductory experience that supports the transition from the academic setting to progressive participation in clinical education.

- Prerequisites: Admission to the Adult Cardiac Sonography Certificate Program
- Prerequisite: Admission to the Program
- Corequisite: AE-101, AE-101 L
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program.
- Contact hours: 168

Semester II – Spring

Adult Echocardiography II (AE-201)

Adult Echocardiography II advances the student's understanding and application of adult transthoracic echocardiography through integrated evaluation of cardiac structure,

function, and pathology. Building upon the foundational knowledge established in Adult Echocardiography I, this course emphasizes the application of echocardiographic findings to complete examination protocols and progressive interpretive decision-making.

Instruction focuses on systematic assessment of systolic and diastolic function, correlation of echocardiographic patterns with common adult cardiac pathologies, and appropriate use of Doppler principles in clinical context. Pathologic conditions previously introduced are revisited through case-based learning and applied imaging strategies, reinforcing how disease processes influence image acquisition priorities, protocol selection, and preliminary interpretation.

Students develop increased proficiency in correlating imaging findings with clinical presentation while maintaining appropriate scope of practice and supervision. Adult Echocardiography II supports expanded clinical participation and prepares students for advanced echocardiography coursework, increased clinical responsibility, and registry level critical thinking.

- Prerequisite: AE-101
- Corequisite: AE-201L
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program.
- Contact hours: 120

Adult Echocardiography Lab II (AE-201L)

Adult Echocardiography Lab II provides supervised hands-on instruction designed to advance the student's technical proficiency in adult transthoracic echocardiography. Building upon foundational scanning skills developed in Adult Echocardiography Lab I, this laboratory course emphasizes refinement of image acquisition, protocol completion, and application of echocardiographic techniques in increasingly complex clinical scenarios.

Students practice acquisition of complete transthoracic echocardiographic examinations, with emphasis on image optimization, efficient workflow, and appropriate application of two-dimensional and introductory Doppler techniques. Laboratory activities reinforce concurrent didactic instruction in systolic and diastolic function assessment and common adult cardiac pathology. Emphasis is placed on professional scanning behavior, critical thinking, and preparation for expanded participation in clinical education.

Adult Echocardiography Lab II supports the student's progression toward supervised independent scanning and readiness for advanced echocardiography coursework.

- Prerequisite: AE-101L

- Corequisite: AE-201
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program.
- Contact hours: 120

Clinical Internship II (AE-203)

Clinical Internship II expands the student's supervised clinical experience in adult echocardiography with increased participation in transthoracic echocardiographic examinations. Building upon foundational clinical skills, students assume a more active role in patient care, image acquisition, and examination workflow while continuing to work under the direct supervision of qualified clinical preceptors.

Students perform increasing portions of standard adult echocardiographic studies, including acquisition of routine views and application of introductory Doppler techniques. Emphasis is placed on effective patient communication, professional behavior, image quality improvement, basic documentation, and correlation of clinical findings with didactic instruction. Students continue to develop technical competence, time management skills, and professional judgment consistent with progressive clinical education.

Clinical Internship II supports advancement toward supervised independent performance while maintaining appropriate instructional oversight.

- Prerequisite: AE-101, AE-101L, AE-103
- Corequisite: AE-201, AE-201L
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to progress to the next semester and continue the Program.
- Contact hours: 368

Semester III – Summer

Adult Echocardiography III (AE-301)

Adult Echocardiography III is an advanced course focused on specialized and interventional applications of adult echocardiography to support the student's transition to entry-level professional practice. Delivered concurrently with Clinical Internship III, this course emphasizes advanced clinical reasoning, protocol selection, and exposure to specialized and evolving echocardiographic applications.

Instruction includes stress echocardiography, transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), three-dimensional echocardiography, adult congenital heart disease, advanced imaging of repaired and prosthetic valves, ultrasound contrast agents, and cardiac interventions. Emphasis is placed on understanding indications, procedural workflows, sonographer responsibilities, image interpretation concepts, and clinical limitations of

interventional and specialty studies. Content is presented at a didactic and observational level when appropriate and reinforced through advanced case-based learning and clinical correlation.

Adult Echocardiography III supports registry preparation, professional readiness, and scope-appropriate participation in advanced echocardiographic applications under appropriate supervision.

- Prerequisite: AE-201
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to pass this semester.
- Contact hours: 112

Clinical Internship III (AE-303)

Clinical Internship III provides an advanced clinical experience designed to support the student's transition to entry-level professional practice in adult echocardiography. Through extensive supervised participation, students perform comprehensive transthoracic echocardiographic examinations with increased independence while maintaining appropriate clinical oversight.

Emphasis is placed on complete examination workflow, advanced image acquisition, Doppler assessment, and incorporation of measurements appropriate to adult echocardiographic evaluation. Students refine critical thinking skills, efficiency, and clinical decision-making, while demonstrating professional behavior, communication, and adherence to institutional policies and ethical standards. Exposure to specialized echocardiographic procedures, such as stress, transesophageal, or three-dimensional echocardiography, may occur when available at clinical sites.

Clinical Internship III prepares students for successful entry into the workforce and eligibility for national credentialing examinations.

- Prerequisite: AE-103, AE-203
- Corequisite: AE-301
- Course Requirements: Students must earn a minimum grade of 77% to pass this semester.
- Contact hours: 512

Course Objectives | Theory, Lab, Clinical

Upon graduation from the Program, the student shall be able to:

- Demonstrate proficiency in the safe and effective performance of diagnostic cardiac ultrasound examinations by applying appropriate echocardiographic scanning techniques, ultrasound physics principles, and instrumentation controls.

- Analyze normal and abnormal anatomic, physiologic, and pathologic findings and integrate pertinent patient history and supporting clinical information to facilitate optimal diagnostic imaging and examination quality.
- Apply sound professional judgment during the performance of echocardiographic examinations, demonstrating clinical reasoning consistent with entry-level echocardiography practice.
- Engage in continuous self-assessment and professional development, recognizing the importance of lifelong learning in the evolving field of cardiac sonography.
- Demonstrate entry-level competency required for eligibility to seek and successfully complete national credentialing examinations appropriate to adult cardiac sonography.

Graduates of the Program are expected to consistently demonstrate professional behavior, including the ability to:

- Communicate clearly, compassionately, and professionally with patients, families, and members of the healthcare team.
- Collaborate effectively with cardiologists, physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to support quality patient care.
- Demonstrate ethical practice, accountability, and respect for patient confidentiality, in accordance with professional and legal standards.
- Exhibit professionalism, reliability, and cultural sensitivity in clinical, laboratory, and academic settings.

Grading System

Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade of 77% (C+) in all coursework to remain in good academic standing. Course grades are derived from attendance, skills laboratory performance, written examinations, and clinical evaluations. Student progress will be formally reviewed at least once each semester following midterm assessments. The Program Director will meet with students individually to discuss academic performance, professional development, and any opportunities for improvement.

When performance concerns are identified, an action plan may be implemented to support student success. Documentation of these discussions and any recommended actions will be maintained in the student's permanent academic record. Students will have the opportunity to provide written comments regarding the evaluation.

Students failing to secure the required course grades/clinical competency at the end of the semester will not be able to progress to the next semester. One additional attempt for the end-of-semester exam will be given to the student to pass the exam within two weeks of failing the test.

Grading Scale

A 100-93	C+ 79-77*
A- 92-90	C 76-73
B+ 89-87	C- 72-70
B 86-83	D 69-60
B- 82-80	F < 60

*A minimum passing grade in all coursework is $\geq 77\%$, which is a C+. Anything less than a 77% (“C +” letter grade) is considered course failure. Grades are rounded up from ≥ 0.50 .

Required Textbooks and Course Materials

- Anderson, B. *A Sonographer’s Guide to the Assessment of Heart Disease*. MGA Graphics, 2014. ISBN: 9780992322205
- Edelman, S. K. *Understanding Ultrasound Physics*. 4th ed. ISBN: 9780962644450
- Palma, R. A. *The Echocardiographer’s Pocket Reference*. 5th ed. Arizona Heart Foundation, 2020. ISBN: 9780578687179
- ASE Guidelines and Standards [ASE Guidelines and Standards Link](#)

Required textbooks and course materials are subject to revision and may be updated annually in response to curricular changes and program needs.

Library Resources

Students have access to the Geisinger Health Sciences Library. Students are able to use their Geisinger sign-on and PingID to access electronic resources from the library either on or off campus.

Academic Information

Transfer of Credit to and from Other Schools/Programs

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program is a certificate level Program and does not accept credits from outside institutions. Exception is the prerequisites required to apply for the Program.

Advanced Placement Credit

There is no advanced placement credit given for prior academic or clinical experience. Prior advanced placement credit may be used for pre-requisite requirements.

Attendance Policy

The Cardiac Sonography Program (CSP) comprises classroom didactics, skills lab training sessions and clinical rotations. We aim for our students to achieve excellent academic performance, for which regular attendance in classes and rotations is required. A student's absence from class, labs or clinical rotations represents a missed opportunity to learn essential skills required to achieve competence and graduate as an adult cardiac sonographer. The Program expectation is full attendance in all the learning platforms mentioned above.

Students are required to check in and out using Trajecsys® at their designated clinical site.

Excused absences are granted for health-related reasons but must include a signed letter from a medical doctor.

(Please sign "Attendance Policy Form")

Personal Day Policy

- A personal day excuses the student from the Program for sickness or personal leave.
- A personal day must be approved by the Program Director.
- A maximum of 5 personal days are allowed while enrolled in the Program.
- Personal days can only be taken as full day or half day.
- Students must notify the instructor and/or the clinical site supervisor at least two hours prior to the start of the clinical day.
- Email is the preferred method of communicating this information to the Program Director and the Clinical Coordinator/site instructor.
- Personal days cannot be used consecutively (i.e., a Friday or Monday for 5 weeks in a row).
- It is discouraged to use personal days along with Program breaks or holidays.
- The students are required to provide at least two weeks' notice for all time off requests (when reasons other than illness).
- The students may be asked to sacrifice a full personal day if dismissed from the clinical setting for any reason (e.g., reporting late, inappropriately dressed, inappropriate behavior, incomplete records, inappropriate prepared for a class or clinical rotation).
- The students are responsible for making up for any missed classes, lab instructions or rotations.

Excused Absence Policy

Interested students may seek permission from the Program Director to attend local, state or national meetings related to echocardiography. These should be requested at

least 60 days in advance and would be at the discretion of the Program Director to grant permission. Make up time or forfeit of benefit days will not be required for students who are granted permission to attend and they must submit a certificate of attendance from the workshop or courses they attend at these meetings.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences which include but are not limited to being absent from a class or rotation, arriving late/tardiness, returning late from breaks or leaving early (early departures before the conclusion of the assigned class/lab instruction or clinical rotation shift) without prior notice are considered as unprofessional behavior. The students are responsible for making up for any missed classes, lab instructions or rotations.

The following will result in disciplinary action by the Program:

- Excessive missed time and habitual tardiness. Students may be sent home from their scheduled rotation if found to be tardy and will then be required to make up their entire day. Faculty instructors have the discretion to deduct points from attendance or exam grades if a student is late for class or exams. A verbal warning will be issued for up to three (3) repeated instances of unexcused tardiness. If the behavior continues, it will lead to further disciplinary action.
- Leaving early before the end/completion of the assigned class/lab instruction or clinical shift is deemed unprofessional and will not be accepted.
- Inappropriately dressed for their class or clinical rotation is unacceptable and may result in the student being sent home and charged with an unexcused absence.
- Inadequately prepared for their class or clinical is not acceptable and may result in student being sent home and charged with an unexcused absence.

These will be recorded each semester and monitored by the Program Director/Program Coordinator.

After two (2) unexcused absences in a class or clinical day in one semester, counseling will occur with the possibility of probation.

Five (5) or more unexcused absences from didactic classes, lab instruction, or clinical rotations will result in a one letter grade reduction in the student's average for that semester. Ten (10) or more unexcused absences from class or clinical rotations in a semester may result in dismissal from the Program.

Bereavement Leave

Bereavement leave may be granted in accordance with the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program policy and at the discretion of the Program faculty. Students may receive up to three (3) days of excused absence for the death of an immediate family member. Appropriate documentation may be required.

Immediate family includes a student's:

- Spouse or partner
- Parent, stepparent, or legal guardian
- Parent-in-law
- Child or stepchild
- Sibling or stepsibling
- Grandparent or great-grandparent
- Grandchild or great-grandchild
- Spouse's grandparent

For the death of a family member outside the immediate family, students may receive up to one (1) day of excused absence.

Other family members include a student's:

- Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
- Brother-in-law or sister-in-law
- Niece or nephew
- Aunt or uncle
- The aunts or uncles of a student's spouse
- Individuals who, in the judgment of the Program Director, have a significant and unique relationship to the student

Makeup Time Policy

Makeup time is only granted in exceptional circumstances, which must be approved by the Program Director in advance. Any days missed from the clinical education over and above the allotted number of benefit days must be made up prior to the end of the semester from which the days were missed. Students need to contact the Program Director within 48 business hours of the missed clinical day to reschedule clinical make up time. The Program Director has the authority to determine which days are acceptable as makeup days. Students will not be allowed to makeup time on other than four- or eight-hour blocks of time scheduled for their didactics, skills lab or clinical rotations. Students will not be allowed to participate in excess of 10 (ten) hours in any 24-hour period or 50 hours in any one-week period of combined classroom and clinical assignments.

Missed or Late Assignments

It is Program expectation that all assignments be completed and submitted on time to progress through the semesters per the course syllabus and finally graduate from the Program on time.

Banking Time

The Program strictly prohibits the practice of "banking" time. "Banking" involves arriving early or staying late at the clinical site with the intention of leaving early or arriving late

on same or another occasion. Scheduled adjustments due to rare unforeseen circumstances may be granted to individual students at the discretion of the Program Director/faculty.

Leave of Absence or Long-Term Leave of Absence

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) is an accelerated certificate Program. Time away will significantly hamper students' learning opportunity by missing their necessary hours. Hence, a leave of absence is discouraged, however, it will be considered under certain circumstances on an individual basis. Student will have to submit a written request to the Program Director, at least two weeks in advance, if possible. The Program reserves the right to deny or grant leaves of absence.

- Students on a leave of absence are required to speak with the Program Director two weeks prior to the petitioned return date.
- Students returning from medical LOA must have their healthcare provider's clearance form completed before re-entering the Program stating that they are physically able to return to full clinical duties.
- The Program faculty will assess the student's readiness to return upon evaluation.
- All or any combination of the following may occur: oral interview, comprehensive exams, clinical and scan skills assessment.
- Students must be competent at the appropriate Program level before returning to the clinical setting.
- Students on a leave of absence must complete all coursework, didactic and clinical before graduation. See attendance policy for makeup time specifics.
- Under certain circumstances, long term leave of absence requests can be considered and will be reviewed by the Program Director for approval or not.
- Upon acceptance, the student will be "conditionally accepted" for placement in a future cohort, provided they meet the readmission criteria.
- The written request to return must be received within one (1) year of the LOA. After one (1) year of absence, a student must reapply to the Program.

Observed Holidays

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program will observe the following holidays

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas

Students are not permitted to be at a clinical site during scheduled holidays.

Scheduled Break Weeks

Students have two scheduled break weeks over the length of the Program as indicated by the academic calendar. Students who wish to take vacation are encouraged to utilize these break weeks for this purpose.

Inclement Weather Policy

Geisinger prioritizes the safety of all students. During periods of inclement weather, students are expected to report to their assigned clinical site only if they can travel safely.

Because clinical sites span multiple geographic regions, the Program Director will determine when weather conditions warrant cancellation or excused time for specific locations. Any officially designated weather-related closures may be used as make-up time as needed.

Students are required to contact the Program Director to confirm whether class or clinical activities are operating on schedule for the day. All notifications regarding delays, cancellations, or schedule changes will be communicated via email.

Note: If it is unsafe to drive due to inclement weather, travel is discouraged, and the safety of students is the utmost priority.

School Closing

In the event of inclement weather or other circumstances that result in a delayed start, cancellation, or instructor absence, the course instructor will notify all students via email. Notification will be provided by 5:00 AM or at least three (3) hours prior to the scheduled start time, whichever is later. Any schedule changes will be clearly outlined in the communication.

Classes may begin later than scheduled, conclude early, or be conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams as appropriate. Students are responsible for reviewing their email before leaving home to confirm any updates to class or laboratory schedules.

Academic Honesty Policy

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) is committed to maintaining an environment that reflects the highest standards of academic excellence, professionalism, and integrity. Students are expected to conduct themselves ethically in all academic, laboratory, and clinical activities and to uphold Geisinger's values of honesty, respect, and accountability.

Academic integrity includes, but is not limited to, completing one's own work, appropriately citing sources, accurately representing clinical performance, and

submitting truthful and complete documentation. Upholding these standards supports a culture of trust and ensures the integrity of the educational experience for all learners.

Violations of academic honesty, including plagiarism, falsification of records or attendance documentation, or any form of academic misrepresentation, may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program, consistent with Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program and policy guidelines.

(Please sign “Academic Honesty Form”)

Communication

Communication between students and instructors outside of scheduled class time may occur through approved channels, including telephone and email. In accordance with Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program policy, all Program-related email communication must be conducted exclusively through Geisinger email accounts. This ensures secure, consistent, and professional communication across the Program.

Electronic communication is an essential component of the learning experience. As a requirement of the Program, students are expected to check their Geisinger email accounts daily, as email serves as the primary method of communication outside of classroom and clinical sessions.

Students should be aware that electronic communications are not private. All messages sent or received through Geisinger systems may be considered public records and may be subject to legal discovery.

Under no circumstances may patient information, including patient identifiers or any protected health information (PHI), be transmitted electronically through email or other unsecured channels. All communication must comply with HIPAA, Geisinger confidentiality standards, and Program policies regarding patient privacy.

Employment Policy

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (CSP) is academically rigorous and requires a substantial commitment of time, focus, and professional engagement. To support student success, it is strongly recommended that students do not pursue or maintain full-time employment while enrolled in the Program. The academic, laboratory, and clinical requirements are intensive, and outside employment may negatively impact academic performance, clinical readiness, and overall well-being.

Students are expected to prioritize the responsibilities of the Program to ensure successful progression and professional development.

In accordance with educational and clinical training standards, students are not permitted to receive any form of payment or compensation for participation in clinical

rotations. Clinical experiences are designed solely for educational purposes and must remain free of any employment relationship.

Student Housing

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program does not provide or assist in student housing.

Program Technical Standards & Essential Skills

Purpose

There are certain technical and physical standards expected of cardiac sonography students for them to perform their duties effectively. They are not conditions for admission to the Program, but they indicate abilities and characteristics that are necessary to successfully complete the requirements of the Cardiac Sonography Program. All students must possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. They must have functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, and equilibrium. Students must have motor function capabilities to meet the demands of sonographic education and the demands of patient care.

Behavioral Standards

With or without reasonable accommodations, the student must be able to accomplish the following safely, efficiently and competently.

- Communicate clearly, compassionately, and professionally with patients and families.
- Provide emotional support and physical support to the patient when needed during their patient encounter.
- Demonstrate ethical practice, accountability, and respect for patient confidentiality.
- Display professionalism, reliability, and cultural sensitivity in clinical and academic settings.
- Demonstrate qualities such as respect, politeness, teamwork, collaboration and discretion while interacting with patients, families, supervisors and coworkers.
- Appropriately respond in emergency situations with sick patient's and be quick to respond to patient needs.
- Collaborate effectively with cardiologists, physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals.
- Prioritize tasks, sometimes multitask if situations demand while interacting with patients.
- Handle stressful situations related to technical and procedural standards in patient care situations.

Intellectual Standards

Students in the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program must demonstrate strong conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities. Sonographers are required to apply complex problem-solving and critical-thinking skills in both routine and emergent situations. Students must be able to exercise sound reasoning and judgment, particularly when navigating challenging clinical, ethical, or moral situations.

A core expectation of the Program is the ability to comprehend and interpret multi-dimensional anatomical relationships, as this competency is essential to producing accurate diagnostic images.

Students must also maintain the psychological and emotional stability necessary to function professionally under stress. This includes managing traumatic or high-intensity clinical situations, working with uncooperative or incapacitated patients, participating in fast-paced multidisciplinary procedures, adapting to demanding schedules, and responding effectively during emergencies such as clinical “Code” situations.

These abilities are fundamental to safe and competent practice and are required throughout all educational and clinical components of the Program.

Physical, Interpersonal, Communication, Mobility, Tactical, Hearing, & Visual Demands

Students in the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program must possess the physical abilities, motor skills, and functional capacity necessary to safely and effectively perform all essential tasks associated with cardiac sonography. These requirements ensure that students can meet clinical expectations, protect patient safety, and successfully complete the competencies outlined within the Program.

Students must be able to:

- Work on their feet for extended periods, up to 80% of the time, with full use of both hands, wrists, shoulders, and upper extremities. This includes coordinated muscular movement, balance, and tactile sensation.
- Reach, position, and assist patients, including rolling patients from side to side as needed to obtain proper imaging windows.
- Lift, transfer, or support patients when moving them from wheelchairs, stretchers, or other transport devices.
- Push and pull heavy equipment, such as ultrasound machines, patient gurneys, and other cardiovascular equipment safely and effectively.
- Demonstrate fine motor skills and manual dexterity to assess pulses, palpate veins, take vital signs, handle syringes, prepare medications, and manage IV-related equipment in accordance with scope and training level.

- Visually monitor patients in low-light environments, which is common during imaging procedures.
- Accurately analyze imaging and instrumentation displays to obtain diagnostic-quality images appropriate to the student's level of training.
- Differentiate subtle variations in color and grayscale, as required for cardiovascular imaging and related procedures.
- Communicate clearly and professionally, including verbally explaining imaging examinations or cardiovascular procedures to healthcare teams during case reviews, educational sessions, and conferences.
- Interpret and analyze clinical data, including reviewing patient charts and confirming procedural orders.
- Correlate clinical information to appropriately perform examinations or cardiovascular procedures in alignment with established protocols, professional standards, and Geisinger policies.
- Perform cardiovascular procedures accurately, within the scope permitted by their training and under appropriate supervision.
- Manipulate mechanical and patient care equipment, including keyboards, switches, controls, plugs, and blood pressure devices.
- Operate digital and imaging-related technology, such as laser printers, computers, tablets, and mobile intelligent devices.
- Respond appropriately to equipment signals, including auditory and visual alarms.
- Use laboratory equipment requiring coordinated fine motor skills and precision.
- Maintain balance and physical stability while imaging patients of varying body types and mobility levels.
- Stand or sit for prolonged periods, depending on the needs of the examination or clinical workflow.
- Perform basic resuscitation and emergency procedures, in accordance with American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) standards for healthcare providers, including CPR and AED use.

(Please sign “Program Technical Standards and Essential Skills” Policy Form)

Occupational Risks

Musculoskeletal Injury

Cardiac sonographers are at increased risk for musculoskeletal disorders due to repetitive motions, prolonged static postures, improper positioning while scanning and repositioning patients with limited mobility. These injuries commonly affect the neck, back, shoulders, wrists and hands.

Exposure to Infectious Disease

Sonographers frequently work in close physical contact with patients for prolonged periods of time, including those with infectious diseases, and are at an increased risk of being exposed to but not limited to bloodborne pathogens and respiratory infections.

Visual Strain and Physical Fatigue

Prolonged periods of screen time and focusing on ultrasound images can cause eye strain, headaches and visual fatigue. It is common for sonographers to stand and walk for extended periods of time as well as apply sustained pressure while performing echocardiograms. Sonographers can experience physical fatigue from wearing lead aprons and standing in a static position for several hours during procedures.

Radiation Exposure

Cardiac sonographers often work alongside other imaging modalities and assist in fluoroscopy-guided interventions that require echocardiography guided imaging, which can lead to radiation exposure.

Scan Lab Policy

All students are required to sign the Voluntary Scan Lab Consent Form prior to participating in their first scan lab session. Scan labs are defined as supervised educational activities in which students perform ultrasound scanning on one another using Program-approved equipment.

All training sessions will be conducted under faculty supervision, and exposure times and output levels will be carefully controlled. Ultrasound settings will not exceed those used in standard diagnostic imaging, consistent with established safety guidelines.

The Program adheres to the ALARA (As Low as Reasonably Achievable) principle to ensure safe and responsible use of ultrasound. This includes prudent selection of imaging parameters and ongoing monitoring of exposure to support a safe learning environment.

(Please sign “Volunteer Consent Form”)

Fair Practices

Participation in scan labs provides students with an opportunity to gain practical scanning experience prior to performing examinations on patients. These sessions are conducted under the direct supervision of Program faculty and are designed to support skill development in a controlled educational environment.

To be a volunteer in scan labs is entirely optional. Students may choose not to be a volunteer and may opt out at any time without penalty. A student's choice to volunteer—or not—will not impact grades, evaluations, or academic standing. Students may withdraw their consent at any point during a session.

Students must understand that images obtained in the scan lab are educational only and do not represent a formal diagnostic examination. The student performing the scan is not a licensed physician or a credentialed sonographer and therefore cannot provide clinical interpretation. If an incidental finding is observed during a simulated scan, the student being scanned should contact their personal healthcare provider if they wish to pursue formal evaluation.

All information obtained during scan lab sessions, including images and observations, is considered confidential. HIPAA regulations apply, and students must maintain strict confidentiality regarding any information learned during voluntary scan activities.

(Please sign the “Fair Practices” Form)

Student Work Policy

Students may not be used as substitutes for regular staff at any clinical site during their clinical practicum. Clinical rotations are designed solely for educational purposes, and students must function in a learner role, not as employees. Students may perform specific tasks only after demonstrating competency and only under appropriate supervision as defined by Program faculty and clinical site guidelines.

While discouraged as set forth above, students may be employed in a clinical setting outside of their scheduled educational hours, provided that:

- The work is voluntary and compensated.
- The position is separate from their role as a student and governed by standard employee policies.
- The employment does not interfere with academic, laboratory, or clinical responsibilities.
- Tasks performed during employment are not counted toward required clinical education hours or competencies.

Clinical education hours must reflect supervised learning experiences only. Improperly counting work hours as clinical hours or functioning in a staff capacity during scheduled clinical education time, is strictly prohibited. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the Program.

Student Scope of Practice

Students in the Cardiac Sonography Program are required to perform the duties of a diagnostic medical sonographer only under the supervision and direction of a qualified physician or credentialed sonographer. At no time may a student function independently or assume responsibilities outside the scope of their training.

Students are strictly prohibited from providing oral or written diagnostic interpretations, clinical impressions, or medical advice. All clinical findings must be referred to the supervising sonographer or physician for formal interpretation and documentation.

These expectations ensure patient safety, maintain regulatory compliance, and support the educational integrity of the Program.

Exposure to Blood-Borne Pathogens, Communicable Diseases, Accidental Exposures, & Needle Stick

All students in the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program will receive instructional material on communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B, as part of the Introduction to Cardiac Sonography curriculum. Upon entry into the Program—and thereafter as required by clinical affiliates—all students must complete a TB skin test or an approved equivalent screening.

If a student is identified as having a communicable disease or a bloodborne pathogen infection, the Program will follow established procedures to protect the health and safety of the community, patients, faculty, and the student. This policy is also designed to ensure that infected students receive appropriate guidance and support.

In the event of a potential exposure or incident during clinical education:

- The response will depend on the clinical site's protocols and the nature of the exposure.
- The student may be evaluated onsite (urgent or emergency care) or may be required to seek care from their personal healthcare provider.
- If the exposure involves blood or body fluids, including needlestick injuries, the clinical affiliate's exposure control procedures will be used to document, track, and manage the incident.
- The student is responsible for completing all required forms and documentation promptly.

This Communicable Disease Policy exists to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and will be applied in a manner that protects the health and well-being of all students, staff, patients, and members of the clinical learning environment.

(Please sign “Bloodborne Pathogen/Needle Stick” Policy Form)

Universal Precautions

Exposure to blood and body fluids is an inherent risk for all healthcare personnel, including students in the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program. To ensure a safe learning and clinical environment, Universal Precautions must be followed at all times during laboratory and clinical activities.

Students are required to adhere to the following infection-control practices:

- Hand hygiene must be performed between interactions with different classmates, faculty, or simulated patients.
- Gloves must be worn whenever contact with bodily fluids is possible.
- All used gloves must be disposed of in designated regulated-waste containers.
- If any surface or equipment in the lab becomes contaminated with body fluids, students must immediately notify faculty so that appropriate cleanup and disinfection protocols can be implemented.

Students are responsible for maintaining compliance with all infection-control standards outlined by the Program and by their clinical sites during practicum rotations.

Instruction on Universal Precautions—including the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), hand hygiene, and exposure-control procedures—will be provided in the Introduction to Cardiac Sonography course, with additional assessments as needed.

During unexpected public health circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, additional protective measures may be required, which may include N95 respirators, goggles, face shields, or other PPE in accordance with Geisinger and clinical site guidelines.

This policy is designed to protect students, faculty, patients, and the broader healthcare community from unnecessary risk of infection.

Clinical Injury/Incident and Reporting

If a student is injured while participating in clinical activities, the following procedures must be followed to ensure timely reporting, appropriate medical evaluation, and compliance with clinical site and Program requirements:

Immediate Reporting

The student must report the incident immediately to the clinical site supervisor or preceptor. If medical evaluation is required, the student will be directed to the hospital's Emergency Department or the appropriate on-site care location. The incident must also be reported promptly to the Program Director and Clinical Coordinator.

Clinical Site Documentation

The student must complete all reporting requirements and documentation as outlined by the clinical site's policies and procedures. This may include incident reports, exposure forms, or occupational health documentation.

Program Notification

All clinically related incidents must be documented and submitted to the Cardiac Sonography Program within 48 hours of the event, in accordance with Program reporting standards.

Before the student may return to the clinical environment, medical clearance must be submitted to the Cardiac Sonography Program. Clearance must indicate that the student is fit to safely resume clinical duties without restrictions beyond those authorized by the Program.

(Please sign the “Clinical Injury/Incident and Report” Form)

Professional Appearance & Ethics

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Professional Conduct, Confidentiality, and Disciplinary Standards Policy

Students enrolled in the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) are required to adhere to all policies of both the Program and affiliated clinical sites. This includes standards related to confidentiality, professionalism, patient care, safety, and dress code. While participating in clinical education, students are held to the same behavioral expectations and may be subject to the same disciplinary actions as employees of the hosting clinical facility.

Professional Expectations and Behavior Standards

Students must consistently demonstrate behaviors that support a safe, respectful, and effective learning environment. Conduct that infringes on the rights, safety, or well-being of others—or that disrupts the educational process—may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Expectations include:

- Demonstrating intellectual curiosity and commitment to applying echocardiography principles in the evaluation of cardiovascular disease
- Dedicating substantial independent study time to master the field of echocardiography
- Developing and maintaining strong psychomotor skills, hand–eye coordination, and adaptability to new technical skills
- Maintaining both physical and mental health is necessary for managing stressful clinical situations and collaborating with healthcare professionals
- Demonstrating effective communication, active listening, and teamwork skills in all clinical and academic settings
- Maintaining professional behavior in all interactions, including demonstrating proper telephone etiquette
- Upholding a positive, respectful attitude toward the Program, clinical sites, faculty, and fellow students
- Refraining from publicly expressing negative comments about the Program, clinical sites, or personnel

Appearance and Personal Grooming

Students' appearance, professionalism and communication are critical for their success as a healthcare provider. Hence, below are the expectations of the Program.

Dress Code

- Students should appear clean, neat, and professional.
- Navy blue scrub pants and tops embroidered with the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) logo must be worn at all times for classes, lab, and clinical rotations. Scrubs must be purchased by the student prior to the start of the Program.
- A photo I.D. must be worn at all times.
- Comfortable hospital work shoes or clean sneakers may be worn. Open-toed shoes and Crocs are not permitted.
- Fingernails are to be kept neat and trimmed with neutral polish only. Long fingernails and artificial nails of any type are not permitted.
- No excessive jewelry or excessive makeup.
- No hats or head scarves are to be worn during rotations.
- No offensive body odor, including strong-scented perfumes or body sprays.
- Hair must be neat and well-groomed.
- No chewing gum while at clinical.

Exceptions to the Cardiac Sonography Program clinical dress code/professional appearance may be made for religious, cultural, or medical reasons.

Ethics and Professionalism

Students performing clinical duties under the supervision of physicians share in the ethical responsibilities expected of all healthcare professionals. Students are required to uphold the principles of patient-centered care and to consistently act in the best interest of the patient.

Students must respect and acknowledge each patient's values, beliefs, and personal preferences. They must not interfere with a patient's ability to express their beliefs, nor impose their own personal viewpoints during any clinical interaction.

Working collaboratively with the healthcare team, students are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism, respect, and ethical conduct in every patient encounter.

Confidentiality

Students are required to maintain strict confidentiality regarding all patient information obtained directly or indirectly during clinical education. Patient information may only be shared with authorized personnel and exclusively for appropriate clinical or educational

purposes. Disclosure of patient information to anyone not authorized—either inside or outside the hospital—is strictly prohibited and considered a serious violation of confidentiality standards.

Students must conduct themselves professionally both on and off duty, in a manner that reflects positively on the hospital, the Program, the profession, and themselves. Behavior that undermines professionalism or discredits the clinical site or Geisinger will not be tolerated.

Unprofessional conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Loss of Program privileges
- Suspension from the Program
- Dismissal from the Program

These measures are intended to uphold the integrity of the clinical environment and ensure that all students meet the professional expectations required of healthcare providers.

The HIPAA Privacy Rule

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule establishes national standards for safeguarding patients' medical records and personal health information. All students in the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) are required to understand and fully comply with these regulations to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and security of patient information.

The Privacy Rule requires that all patient information—whether written, electronic, or verbal—remain confidential. Disclosure of patient information is permitted only for purposes of treatment, payment, or healthcare operations, unless specific patient authorization has been obtained. Any unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of protected health information (PHI) is strictly prohibited and may result in serious legal, professional, and academic consequences.

Students must adhere to HIPAA guidelines at all times, including during clinical assignments, classroom activities, laboratory exercises, and any academic work that involves patient data.

Expectations include:

- Safeguarding all forms of patient information
- Accessing PHI only when required for assigned educational activities
- Maintaining confidentiality during and outside of clinical hours
- Reporting any suspected or actual breaches of confidentiality to the appropriate Program and clinical site personnel immediately

By following the HIPAA Privacy Rule and Geisinger confidentiality standards, students uphold the trust central to patient care and maintain the integrity expected of healthcare professionals.

(Please sign “HIPAA Compliance Agreement”)

Patient Modesty

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and patient-centered care during all clinical encounters. Proper draping and covering techniques must be used throughout examinations to promote patient comfort, dignity, and privacy. At the conclusion of any ultrasound study, students must ensure that the patient is fully covered or completely dressed before opening the door or exiting the room.

When entering a patient room with a closed door, students must knock first and wait for permission to enter. This practice maintains patient privacy and demonstrates respect for personal space.

If a student feels uncertain, uncomfortable, or requires assistance during any patient interaction, they must seek guidance from a hospital staff member or supervising clinician. Students are responsible for determining the appropriate and professional manner to approach each patient encounter.

Throughout every examination, students are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and clearly
- Demonstrate genuine concern for the patient’s well-being
- Maintain awareness of patient comfort and emotional needs
- Provide professional, attentive care
- Ensure that, at the completion of the exam, the patient feels supported and that the student has provided their best effort

These expectations ensure a safe, respectful, and compassionate environment and uphold the standards of Geisinger and the sonography profession.

Social Media Policies

Students must adhere to all confidentiality and professional conduct policies related to social media and electronic communication. Any statements, images, or online activity that could harm an individual, a patient, the Program, or Geisinger are strictly prohibited and may result in immediate dismissal, with potential legal consequences in severe cases. Recording of any class or laboratory activity is strictly prohibited, including audio, video, photographs, or any mobile device recordings. Under no circumstances may any Program-related content be posted or uploaded to online or social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, or similar services. These expectations protect confidentiality,

maintain the integrity of the educational environment, and uphold the professional standards required of all students.

Use of Personal Electronic Equipment

The use of personal electronic devices—including cell phones, smartwatches, laptops, tablets, and recording devices—is prohibited unless explicitly permitted by the instructor or clinical preceptor. Cell phones may not be used during clinical hours under any circumstances. If an emergency requires temporary access, the student must notify the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator in advance; if permission is granted, the phone must remain on silent or vibrate mode, and all conversations must occur away from patients, waiting areas, and the sonography department. In the classroom, electronic devices may only be used with instructor approval. If a student is found using a personal device without permission, the device will be secured for the remainder of the class period, and the incident will be documented in the student's permanent record.

Program Requirements & Evaluations

Credentialing Exams

The Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult) is designed as a pathway to sit for the required national credentialing exam, Registered Cardiac Sonographer (RCS), offered by Cardiovascular Credentialing International, or the Registered Diagnostic Cardiovascular Sonographer (RDCS), offered by the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS). For more information about the exam, please log onto: www.cci-online.org or www.ardms.org. The RCS and/or RDCS-AE credential is required to work in an accredited echocardiography lab.

All students are required to sit for the national registry exam through Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI) in the last two weeks before completion of the Program. Due to unforeseen circumstances, if a student is unable to sit for the exam or does not pass the national registry exam prior to the Program completion date, the student should target passing the exam as soon as possible within 5 months of completion. If students meet eligibility criteria, they may sit for the registry exam through the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS) upon Program accreditation.

Upon successful completion of the registry exam, the student will earn one of the following credentials

- **CCI Echocardiography Credential**
Registered Cardiac Sonographer (RCS)
- **ARDMS Echocardiography Credential**

Registered Diagnostic Cardiac Sonographer (RDCS) (Adult Echocardiography (AE))

Graduation Requirements

- Complete all coursework requirements
- Complete the required hours of the Program
- Maintain a passing grade $\geq 77\%$ for all coursework (clinical competency evaluations)
- Be eligible to appear or pass national registry exam in Cardiac Sonography: CCI (and/or ARDMS optional)

If a student does not receive a passing grade in the academic or clinical rotations, the student will not be able to continue in the Program. At that time, the student will be dismissed from the Program and will receive a letter documenting the total hours (both clinical and didactic) that they have completed for their own records.

Clinical Site Recordkeeping

Students are required to maintain a daily log of all ultrasound examinations in which they participate—whether observing, assisting, or performing—and must enter all cases into the Trajecsyst[®] Reporting System each day. Logs should be completed after clinical hours or, when appropriate, during approved downtime. Failure to log studies on a daily basis will result in grade deductions.

Patients must be identified using the first initial, first three letters of the last name, and the medical record number.

All students are required to use Trajecsyst[®] and must pay the full registration fee prior to beginning clinical rotations, as directed by the Program Director. Trajecsyst[®] is used for accessing clinical announcements, clocking in and out of clinical sites, submitting time exception forms, entering daily logs, reviewing evaluations, and tracking competency attempts. Students must register in the system and will be granted access once added by the Program Director.

Payment must be submitted by the designated due date, and failure to do so will result in loss of access and prohibition from attending clinical assignments.

Attendance must be documented by clocking in and out through Trajecsyst[®]. All time records will be verified by IP address and approved by the Clinical Coordinator or Clinical Instructor. Clocking in or out from unauthorized locations constitutes deliberate falsification of records and will result in disciplinary action, including potential grade reduction. Students must also enable location services on their smartphones to verify their presence at clinical sites; if the system becomes unavailable, they must contact the Clinical Coordinator by phone or email and leave a message.

The Trajecsyst[®] Reporting System website can be found at <https://www.Trajecsyst.com>.

Evaluations

The student will be evaluated once a month by the clinical site on personal appearance, hygiene, professional standards, relationships with other students, hospital staff and patients. This evaluation is meant as constructive criticism and should be accepted as such.

Competency Requirements Procedure in Trajecsyst[®]

The Faculty and/or Instructors will grade the student using the appropriate competency test in Trajecsyst[®] and will at no time give the student assistance during the test.

The students will be tested on competencies in adult echocardiography, scan labs and clinical competencies throughout their various rotations as well as at the end of each semester.

A grade of “C+” or greater must be obtained to pass. If a student fails the competency, the student will be required to repeat the competency again.

Patients will be selected at random for testing clinical competency.

Canvas/LMS

Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) for the Cardiac Sonography Program. A tutorial and overview of the system will be provided during orientation week.

Students are required to check their LMS accounts daily. Assignments and direct communications from the faculty and/or instructors will be posted on Canvas.

General Information

Student Health & Well-Being

Geisinger is committed to supporting the well-being of all students and employees, and students are encouraged to utilize the resources available through the Center for Professionalism and Well-Being, accessible on the Geisinger SharePoint site. The demands of the learning process can be challenging, and personal responsibilities such as health, family, and finances can increase stress and overwhelm even the most resilient individuals. While faculty are available to support students throughout their training, they are not the only resource, and students are encouraged to seek assistance as needed. All students are required to complete a health and vaccination screening through Geisinger Employee Health prior to admission to the Program. Geisinger policies related to drug, alcohol, and tobacco use; vaccination; biohazard safety; infection control; and bloodborne pathogen exposure are reviewed and updated

regularly and can be found in the Geisinger Policy Manager. Significant policy updates are typically communicated to students, and acknowledgment of compliance is recorded in GOALS, found in Workday.

Clinical Placement

Students will be scheduled for their clinical rotations at the three main Geisinger Campuses in Northeast and Central Pennsylvania throughout their training period. The schedule will be available to the students well in advance for them to plan their travel to the clinical sites.

- Geisinger Community Medical Center, Scranton, PA (GCMC)
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Wilkes Barre, PA (GWV)
- Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, PA (GMC)

Students are assigned to a clinical site each semester and will rotate through all sites at least once over the duration of the Program. Site assignment will be coordinated by the Program Director and/or clinical coordinator. Site assignments and selection will be predetermined based on the availability and capacity of each clinical site, the educational needs of the student, required competencies, and the student's progression through the Program.

Transportation

Students are responsible for their transportation to and from all scheduled classes and clinical placements. This includes any related expenses, such as parking fees and tolls.

Students must arrive on time, be punctual, and follow their assigned schedules.

Vaccination

Pre-admission student health records are reviewed by employee health to ensure compliance with Geisinger Mandatory Vaccination and Infection Control and Biosafety policies. Students must minimally demonstrate immunity to mumps, measles, polio, and varicella-zoster either by completed immunizations or serological confirmation of immunity to mumps and measles. All students are screened for TB. Influenza A/B vaccination documentation is required pre-admission for students. Seasonal influenza vaccination or waiver compliance is required for students enrolled in the Program during the second semester. Students will be informed of the dates of compliance by the Program Director and published in Our Geisinger SharePoint and Employee Health SharePoint sites.

CPR Certification

Students are responsible for maintaining current American Heart Association Healthcare Provider Level CPR certification (2-year). Proof of certification in Basic Life

Support (BLS) for the Healthcare Providers is offered through the American Heart Association. The student must maintain a current CPR certification while enrolled in the Adult Cardiac Sonography Program. Certification is good for two calendar years. In-person certification is required. If the current certification expires before the anticipated graduation date, the student will be required to complete another CPR course while in the Program. Failure to maintain a current CPR certification will result in immediate withdrawal from all clinical courses.

Student Health Insurance

Students are recommended to maintain personal health insurance throughout the duration of the Program. Health insurance is not provided by the Program. Students without access to health insurance from an employer may seek insurance through the health insurance marketplace or may explore insurance options through Geisinger Health Plan at <https://www.geisinger.org/health-plan>. Participation in a Geisinger Health Plan is not a requirement of Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program.

Student Liability Insurance

Students are covered by Geisinger for personal liability and do not need to purchase separate liability insurance.

Religious or Medical Exemption Request

Students enrolled in the Cardiac Sonography Program who wish to request an exemption from specific Program requirements due to religious beliefs or medical conditions may submit a formal written request for review. Students seeking a religious exemption must provide a statement explaining the Program requirement in question and how it conflicts with their sincerely held religious beliefs and may be asked to include supporting documentation from a recognized religious leader or organization. Students requesting a medical exemption must submit written documentation from a licensed healthcare provider describing the medical condition, the reason the exemption is necessary, and any relevant supporting information. All exemption requests are reviewed individually by Program administration, and decisions are based on the validity of the request and the Program's ability to accommodate it without compromising educational integrity or the safety of patients, students, or staff. Students are encouraged to submit requests as early as possible to allow adequate time for review and determination.

Jury Duty

Students who anticipate an absence from their clinical site due to jury duty should first request to be excused from service for the duration of the Program. If the court does not grant this request, the student will be required to make up all missed clinical time as

determined by the clinical instructor and Program faculty. Students must provide official documentation confirming their jury duty service.

Court Dates

If a student is required to appear in court to provide testimony—whether for a personal matter or as a witness—the time missed from clinical duties will be recorded as an absence. Program faculty may assign make-up time based on the length and impact of the absence to ensure all clinical requirements are met.

Complaints & Inquiries

If there is a complaint and/or inquiry regarding the Program's operation, the student should first contact the Program Director. If the issue is not resolved, the Medical Director should then be contacted.

Student Grievance Policy

Many student concerns can be resolved through direct discussion with the appropriate instructor or staff member, and students are encouraged to address issues at the earliest indication of a problem. This grievance process outlines the steps students should follow to ensure that any concern is fully, fairly, and confidentially reviewed. Any resolution will apply only if the student agrees to accept it, and students must first pursue concerns through this procedure before seeking further action. This grievance process applies to matters involving recruitment, enrollment, attendance, education, or other Program-related issues and does not apply to grade disputes or complaints regarding sexual harassment, which are addressed separately in this handbook. All information submitted as part of a grievance will be kept strictly confidential by the Program, and no reprisals of any kind will be taken against any party involved.

The Program will investigate grievances promptly and thoroughly.

Step 1

Students should first discuss concerns involving an individual instructor, staff member, policy, or class directly with the person involved or with the Program Director.

Step 2

If the matter is not resolved, the student may submit a written, dated, and signed statement describing the grievance and any actions taken to date to the Medical Director and the Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program – Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CSP-CAPS).

Student Grievance Process

This grievance procedure is intended to address concerns promptly and without unnecessary delay. Students must begin **Step 1** within ten business days of the incident

or circumstances that gave rise to the complaint. If the issue is not resolved, the student must initiate **Step 2** within ten business days of receiving a response, or if more than twenty business days have passed without a response. Failure to follow the required timeframes will be interpreted as acceptance of the last resolution proposed by the Cardiac Sonography Program.

Academic Grading Appeals

Students who believe they have received an incorrect or unjustified final grade must first discuss the concern directly with the course faculty member.

If the issue is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may appeal to the Program Director, and if still unresolved, the matter may be escalated to the Program's Medical Director. Students have five business days after final grades are posted to contact the instructor with questions about a final grade, and faculty are expected to communicate student progress throughout the semester in a fair and timely manner.

Grade appeals are appropriate only when a student believes that a final grade was miscalculated or assigned in a manner inconsistent with the grading policies outlined in the course syllabus; they are not intended to challenge specific test or assignment grades or to dispute course content.

Claims that a grade was affected by discriminatory conduct will not be addressed through the academic grade appeal process and will instead be referred to Geisinger's Office of Accessibility and Opportunity.

When a student believes that the final course grade is inaccurate or inconsistent with stated course policies, they may initiate a grade appeal following the established procedures.

Grade Appeal Process

Students are encouraged to pursue an informal resolution before filing a formal grade appeal by first discussing their concerns directly with the course instructor. The instructor should respond within five business days of the student's request.

If the issue is not resolved informally, the student may submit a formal written appeal to the Program Director within ten business days of receiving the instructor's response. The written appeal must include the student's name and contact information, the course name and number, the grade being appealed, a detailed explanation of the grounds for the appeal, and any supporting documentation.

The Program Director will review the appeal, may request additional information from the student or instructor, and will issue a written decision within ten business days.

If the student disagrees with this decision, they may submit a written appeal to the Medical Director of the Cardiac Sonography Program within five business days, including all previously submitted materials and the Program Director's decision.

The Medical Director will review the appeal, may hold a hearing or review with CSP Committee on Academic and Professional Standards if needed and will provide a written decision within fifteen business days; this decision is final.

All grade appeal proceedings will be handled confidentially, and retaliation against any student for pursuing a grade appeal is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

Please refer to Geisinger's [Non-Retaliation Policy](#).

Committee on Academic and Professional Standards

The Geisinger Cardiac Sonography Program – Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CSP-CAPS) has been created to have processes in place by which to file grievances and appeals for decisions regarding personal and academic conduct, behavioral expectations and Program progress, dismissal, and penalties. The committee composed of the Geisinger Heart and Vascular Institute's senior leadership and administrative personnel, CSP senior faculty as well as selected members from the CSP Advisory Committee.

Committee Charges

- Convene as necessary in a timely manner to review academic penalty decisions and adjudicate appeals.
- Conduct meetings and hearings in an impartial and confidential manner.
- Communicate decisions according to policies in a timely manner to students, Program Director, and other parties as necessary.
- Serve as the final decision for appeal of academic and professional penalties up to and including Program dismissal.

Transcripts/Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the confidentiality of student education records. Under FERPA, students have the right to review the records maintained by the Program and may request corrections to any information they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. Written permission is required before the Program may release information from a student's record, except in circumstances permitted under federal law. Additional information regarding allowable disclosures without explicit student consent is available at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov>. Students who believe their FERPA rights may have been violated may file a complaint at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>. Student records—including admission

and dismissal documents, graduation materials, tuition records, counseling or advising notes, grievances, transcripts, contact information, and academic or clinical assessments—are stored securely within the Cardiac Sonography Program Administrative SharePoint. Physical records are maintained securely by the generating faculty member or in the student's Program file. After graduation or dismissal, any physical student record materials not returned to the student are retained for one year and then securely destroyed if they contain FERPA-protected information. Electronic transcripts and a scanned copy of the official Program completion certificate, or the record of Program dismissal, are retained indefinitely in the Program's Administrative SharePoint repository.



Cardiac Sonography Program (Adult)

Heart and Vascular Institute

Cardiac Sonography Program	Individual	Heart and Vascular Institute
System Chief of Cardiology, Vice Chair Heart and Vascular Institute	George Ruiz, MD, MBA	System Chief of Cardiology, Vice Chair Heart and Vascular Institute
Chief Executive Officer	Abigail Santmyer, MHA	AVP Heart and Vascular Institute
Dean and Medical Director	Sindu Chandran, MD, FACC, FASE, FACP	Director, Echocardiography Lab, GCMC Associate Cardiologist
Program Director	Kaitlyn Mroczka, BS, RDCS	Echocardiographer & Technical Director, GWV
Clinical Coordinator	Alexandra Laver, RDCS	Echocardiographer, GWV

Required Student Signatures

Please note that all forms referenced in this handbook are not included in this document and will be distributed directly to accepted students.

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook

Attestation of the Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Student Statement of Understanding and Release

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Attendance Policy

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Technical Standards and Essential Skills Verification Form

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Fair Practices

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Volunteer Consent Form

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Pregnancy Declaration Form

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
HIPAA Compliance Agreement

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Academic Honesty Agreement

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Bloodborne Pathogen/Needle Stick

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Clinical Injury/Incident Form

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Student Profile

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Counseling Form

Geisinger Adult Cardiac Sonography Student Catalog and Handbook
Program Withdrawal Form