

Respiratory Care

About the Program

A respiratory therapist is a nationally recognized, credentialed professional responsible for the care of patients with acute or chronic cardiopulmonary disease. Students will graduate with an Associate of Applied Science in Respiratory Care. After completing Cincinnati State's accredited associate degree program, graduates will be eligible to take the National Board of Respiratory Care credentialing exams to earn the RRT credential and obtain an Ohio Respiratory Care Professional license.

The technical portion (RT courses) of the Respiratory Care program is five semesters. Prerequisites and other non-RT math & science courses may be taken before RT technical courses, and often have evening or online options, but the RT technical courses are offered only during the day. The program also includes a significant clinical component at various hospitals and specialty sites. Therefore, students should plan on being in RT class or clinicals Monday through Friday during the day while in the program. Students should not work night shift while in the technical portion of the program, but working evening shift is feasible as long as students do not exceed the recommended 24 hours per week.

A day in the life of a respiratory therapist might include—

- ◆ Delivering medications and therapies to patients with lung disease or breathing disorders.
- ◆ Interviewing patients and doing chest physical exams to determine what kind of therapy is best for their condition.
- ◆ Consulting with physicians to recommend a change in therapy, based on your evaluation of the patient.
- ◆ Performing tests to help diagnose or determine the severity of lung disease.
- ◆ Managing ventilators and artificial airway devices for patients who can't breathe normally on their own.
- ◆ Responding to emergencies and other urgent calls for care.
- ◆ Educating patients and families about lung disease so they can maximize their recovery.

Program Goals

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

Accreditation

The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)

<https://www.coarc.com/> Program # 200260.

Estimated Costs (2026-27)

◆ Tuition:

Ohio, in-state tuition: \$208.00 per credit hour; approximately \$13,312 (taking exact curriculum courses as stated in catalog, not including prerequisites courses, books or fees)

Out-of-state: Approximately \$26,624 (taking exact curriculum courses as stated in catalog, not including prerequisites courses, books or fees)

◆ Textbooks: Approximately \$1,000

◆ Fees-approximately \$1,400

Financial Aid

Students are advised to work with a Financial Aid advisor to ensure they will be able to finish the program using aid if that is their plan.

The final semester of the Respiratory Care program has 8 credit hours. Five of those hours are RT core classes, and 3 are psychology. If you take psychology before that semester, it leaves 5 credits, which is short of the required 6 to be eligible for student loans. So, in order to allow you to plan for the final semester in the program for those using student loans, here is what I suggest:

-Hold out PSY 110 (psychology) to take in the final semester.

-Retake a course you have already taken for a higher grade (check with financial aid before choosing).

-Pay for the final semester out of pocket (cost is approximately \$1200 - \$1500 counting tuition and fees).

Regardless of the option you choose, if it involves financial aid, you should always talk with the financial aid office first to make sure your choice will work.

Program Advising

Students not yet admitted to the college are assisted by the Admissions Office, please call 569-1544. Students interested in Respiratory Care should schedule an appointment with the program chair, Julie Klensch, by calling the Health Division at 513-569-1670.

Background Checks/Licensure Eligibility

All students are required to submit a background check. For the RC program, these are done after you are accepted into and begin the technical portion of the program. Specific instructions for this will be given during the first technical semester. Students must have a background check that will be acceptable at all clinical sites as we will not clinically place students according to background check results. If background check results prohibit a student from being placed, they cannot finish the program and will therefore not be permitted to continue. Any student who has a record should discuss it with the RC Program Chair, Julie Klensch, prior to pursuing the program to determine if it is feasible to risk beginning the program. In many cases, background check results can be okayed by submitting additional paperwork (expungement documentation, etc.), and certain minor offenses may be acceptable. These should also be discussed with the RC Program Chair. Ultimately, if a student is permitted to begin the program, the risk of problems that may arise from a student's record lies solely on the student, not the college or Program Chair.

Note that even if a student with a record is permitted to finish the program, state licensure and actual hiring are separate obstacles a student might need to overcome.

Job Market

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of respiratory therapists is projected to grow 13% from 2023 to 2033, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. Growth in the middle-aged and older population will lead to an increased incidence of respiratory conditions such as pneumonia, COPD, and other disorders that can permanently damage the lungs or restrict lung function. The aging population will in turn lead to an increased demand for respiratory therapy services and treatments, mostly in hospitals.

Pay

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics the median annual wage for respiratory therapists is \$77,960 (\$37.48 per hour). The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less.

Requirements for Selective Admission

Students will be selected through the selective admission process in order to start the programs technical (RT) courses. The program accepts about 25 students per year. Students must complete the following prerequisites in order to apply for selective admission:

- ◆ High school diploma or GED
- ◆ Admitted to the college and Respiratory Care declared as major
- ◆ High school or college biology with a grade of C or better
- ◆ 2.75 overall GPA from the most recent qualifying institution (at least 12 credit hours)
- ◆ Ready to take Statistics (MAT 131) and English Comp I (ENG 101)

Students must meet with Julie Klensch for advising in order to receive a selective admission packet and review the criteria. For those who have completed the prerequisites, applications for the competitive admission process will be accepted beginning each year on January 1st through February 25. Students will be notified no later than March 25th. Those accepted will begin the technical portion of the program the Fall semester of that year.

Key Components

Respiratory Therapist are responsible for the care of patients, some of who are critically ill. They are often required to manage highly complex pieces of equipment, as well as interact with patients in order to make other therapeutic assessments and decisions. Therefore, in order to be successful in the Respiratory Therapy Consortium, all applicants/students must be able to perform, or be making satisfactory progress toward learning to perform essential functions/technical standards.

Students can find a list of Essential Functions (minimum personal, professional, physical, and other minimum standards required of all students enrolled in the program) on the program website at:

<https://www.cincinnatistate.edu/academics/degree-certificate/respiratory-care-technology-rc/>

Program Chair/Program Advisor

Julie Klensch, M.Ed., RRT

julie.klensch@cincinnatistate.edu

Program Curriculum

Academic Year	Course Number	Course Title	Hours (class-lab-credit)
Year One – Fall Semester	RT 100	Introduction to Respiratory Care	1-0-1
	RT 101	Respiratory Care Science 1	3-2-4
	RT 172	Cardiopulmonary Anatomy & Physiology	3-2-4
	FYE 1XX	First Year Experience Elective	1-0-1
	BIO 151	Anatomy & Physiology 1	3-2-4
	ENG 101	English Composition	3-0-3
			17
Year One – Spring Semester	RT 102	Respiratory Care Science 2	3-2-4
	RT 111	Respiratory Clinical Practice 1	1-8-2
	RT 173	Cardiopulmonary Disease	3-2-4
	BIO 152	Anatomy & Physiology 2	3-2-4
	BIO 220	Microbiology	2-3-3
			17
Year One – Summer Semester	RT 103	Mechanical Ventilation	3-2-4
	RT 112	Respiratory Clinical Practice 2	1-16-2
	ENG 10X	English Composition Elective	3-0-3
	MAT 131	Statistics	3-0-3
			12
Year Two – Fall Semester	RT 201	Advanced Respiratory Critical Care	3-0-3
	RT 202	Specialties in Respiratory Care	2-0-2
	RT 211	Respiratory Clinical Practice 3	1-16-2
	BIO 240	Fundamentals of Pathophysiology	3-0-3
			10
Year Two – Spring Semester	RT 203	Respiratory Care Seminar	1-2-2
	RT 204	Respiratory Care Science Capstone	0-2-1
	RT 212	Respiratory Clinical Practice 4	1-16-2
	PSY 110	Introduction to Psychology	3-0-3
			8
Total Curriculum Credit Hours			64