Dear Prospective Student:

Thank you for your interest in our associate degree program in respiratory therapy. Respiratory therapy is the allied health profession that cares for patients with deficiencies and abnormalities of the cardiopulmonary system. The respiratory therapist sees a diverse group of patients ranging from newborn and pediatric patients to adults and the elderly. Disease states or conditions often requiring respiratory care include asthma, emphysema, chronic obstructive lung disease, pneumonia, cystic fibrosis, infant respiratory distress syndrome and conditions brought on by shock, trauma or post operative surgical complications. In addition respiratory therapists work in hospitals, homes, emergency transport teams, sleep centers, pulmonary function laboratories, outpatient clinics, and physician offices.

Our advanced practitioner level respiratory therapist program is twenty months in length and upon completion, awards the Associate of Applied Science degree. Eight hours of prerequisite courses are required prior to entering the program.

The field of respiratory therapy provides excellent opportunities for those interested in a dynamic and exciting career in cardiopulmonary sciences. Salaries for respiratory therapists are excellent and compare favorably with other allied health fields.

"Job opportunities for new graduates are also very good. Employment of respiratory therapists is expected to grow by 28 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations. Growth in the middle-aged and elderly population will lead to an increased incidence of respiratory conditions such as emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and pneumonia, respiratory disorders that permanently damage the lungs or restrict lung function. These factors will lead to an increased demand for respiratory therapy services and treatments, mostly in hospitals and nursing homes. In addition, advances in preventing and detecting disease, improved medications, and more sophisticated treatments will increase the demand for respiratory therapists. Other conditions affecting the general population, such as smoking, air pollution, and respiratory emergencies, will continue to create demand for respiratory therapists."


Enclosed is a description of the profession, costs and application process for the program. Deadline for application is May 1.

Sincerely,

Regina Clark, M.Ed., RRT
Program Director
Respiratory Therapy
What is a Respiratory Therapist?

Most people take breathing for granted. It's second nature, an involuntary reflex. But for the thousands of Americans who suffer from breathing problems, each breath is a major accomplishment. Those people include patients with chronic lung problems, such as asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema, but they also include heart attack and accident victims; premature infants; and people with cystic fibrosis, lung cancer, or AIDS. In each case, the person will most likely receive treatment from a respiratory therapist (RT) under the direction of a physician. Respiratory Therapists work to evaluate, treat, and care for patients with breathing disorders.

The Role of a Respiratory Therapist

Most respiratory therapists work in hospitals where they perform intensive care, critical care, and neonatal procedures. They are also typically a vital part of the hospital's lifesaving response team that handles patient emergencies. An increasing number of respiratory therapists are now working in skilled nursing facilities, physicians' offices, home health agencies, specialized care hospitals, medical equipment supply companies, neonatal intensive care units, flight teams and patients' homes.

Respiratory therapists perform procedures that are both diagnostic and therapeutic. Some of these activities include:

**Diagnosis**

- Performing stress tests and other studies of the cardiopulmonary system.
- Obtaining and analyzing sputum and breath specimens. They also take blood specimens and analyze them to determine levels of oxygen, carbon dioxide, and other gases.
- Interpreting the data obtained from these specimens.
- Measuring the capacity of a patient's lungs to determine if there is impaired function.
- Studying disorders of people with disruptive sleep patterns.

**Treatment**

- Operating and maintaining various types of highly sophisticated equipment to administer oxygen or to assist with breathing.
- Employing mechanical ventilation for treating patients who cannot breathe adequately on their own.
- Monitoring and managing therapy that will help a patient recover lung function.
- Administering medications in aerosol form to help alleviate breathing problems and to help prevent respiratory infections.
- Monitoring equipment and patient responses to therapy.
- Conducting rehabilitation activities, such as low-impact aerobic exercise classes, to help patients who suffer from chronic lung problems.
- Maintaining a patient's artificial airway, one that may be in place to help the patient who can't breathe through normal means.
- Conducting smoking cessation programs for both hospital patients and others in the community who want to kick the tobacco habit.

**Education and Training**

There are two levels of respiratory therapist: the certified respiratory therapist and the registered respiratory therapist. Respiratory therapists are required to complete at least a two-year associate's degree. Upon graduation they are eligible to take the national examination that, upon passing, leads to the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential. More than 400 community colleges and universities nationwide offer respiratory therapy programs. All aspiring respiratory therapists take courses in physics, mathematics, microbiology, anatomy and physiology, chemistry, and biology.

**The Professional Association (http://www.aarc.org)**

The Association is primarily responsible for developing educational opportunities for its members and ensuring that the standards of care and practice in the profession are developed and maintained. One ongoing project of the Association is to develop and upgrade written clinical practice guidelines, or standards, for the respiratory care profession as well as for use by government agencies and other health groups. In addition, the AARC develops materials that members can use in their community health promotion and disease prevention activities. The AARC monitors both federal and state legislative and regulatory activity that might affect the health and health care of this nation, such as issues related to Medicare, smoking, or hiring practices of health care workers.

**The Outlook**

The demand for respiratory therapists is high and expected to grow even more in the coming years due to the large increase in the elderly population; the impact of environmental problems that have already contributed to the yearly rise in number of reported asthma cases; and technological advances in the treatment of heart attack, cancer, and accident victims, as well as premature babies. The 2012 salary survey performed by the American Association for Respiratory Care reported an average annual income of $55,870 ($26.86 per hour) for therapists working in the US. The government Bureau of Labor and Statistics’ Occupational Outlook Handbook (http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/respiratory-therapists.htm) lists job growth as extremely high (greater than 19%) for the respiratory profession through 2022 due to the aging population.

If you would like to receive additional information about this dynamic medical profession and its professional Association, please contact:

**Regina Clark**  
Program Director, Respiratory Therapy  
Northwest Mississippi Community College  
5197 W.E. Ross Parkway  
Southaven, MS 38671  
R_clark@northwestms.edu  
www.northwestms.edu
Instructions for Applying to the Respiratory Therapy Program

1. Complete the Pre-requisite courses (Anatomy and Physiology I and II with “C” or better) before entering the program. (These may be taken during the summer before your August entrance date. You will, however, still need to apply before May 1.) Applications between May 1 and the August semester may be considered if the class is not full.
2. Observe a respiratory therapy department and the day-to-day activities of a therapist and complete the observation log.

3. Before May 1 Send the following information to:
   Northwest Mississippi Community College,
   DeSoto Center
   Attn: Mrs. Clark
   5197 W.E. Ross Parkway
   Southaven, MS 38671
   
   1. Respiratory Program Application (enclosed)
   2. ACT composite score of 18 (see below)
   3. High school transcript
   4. College transcript(s) if applicable
   5. Respiratory Department Observation Log (enclosed)

4. Send the following information to the Senatobia Campus:
   Northwest Mississippi Community College
   Registrar’s Office
   4975 Hwy51 N.
   Senatobia, MS 38668
   
   1. NWCC application
   2. ACT score (see below)
   3. High school transcript
   4. College transcript(s) if applicable

5. Applicants with a bachelor’s degree or greater may waive the ACT score if they have a GPA of 3.25 or better on the academic courses required in the curriculum and have taken their science courses within the last five years.

Admission to the program is on a competitive basis. Meeting minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission into the program. Sciences older than five years will have to be repeated. Preference is given to Mississippi Residents as well as those who have taken their prerequisites at Northwest Mississippi Community College.

**ACT Scores:** The ACT score is required for entry into the Respiratory Care program for students of every age and background regardless of previous college experience. (Please see #5 above for the only exception). If you have never taken the exam you should contact the counselors for an application. If you have taken the exam and are not sure of your score, you should first contact your high school and ask if it is posted on your transcript. If it is not you can contact the ACT office to request your copies at:

ACT Records
Telephone:319-337-1313
P.O. Box 451
Iowa City, IA 52243
Respiratory Therapy
Minimum Admission Requirements

Admission to the program is on a competitive basis. Meeting minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission into the program. Minimum admissions requirements include:

1. ACT composite score of 18
2. Completion of the pre-requisites Anatomy and Physiology I and II (lectures and labs) with a "C" or better and a college GPA of 2.0
3. Completion of the application process (see page 3)
4. 8 hours observation of a respiratory therapist and completion of the enclosed log sheet (see page 5)
5. To transfer from another Respiratory Program, the student must meet the minimum requirements as well as those stated in the catalog for transfer students and have a letter of recommendation sent from their previous program director.
6. The ability to pass a drug screen and background check prior to clinical rotations. Failure to pass both will result in dismissal from the program.
7. Any applicant with a bachelor's degree or greater may waive the ACT score requirement if they have a GPA of 3.25 or better on the required academic courses and have taken their science courses within the last five years.

*Science courses older than five years have to be repeated.
**Preference is given to Mississippi residents as well as those who have taken their pre-requisites at Northwest Mississippi Community College.

ESTIMATE Of Expenses

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<td>In-state tuition, per semester, full time</td>
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<td>licensure fees upon graduation</td>
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<td>national board exam fees upon graduation</td>
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# Respiratory Therapy Curriculum

## Prerequisites
- BIO 1513 Anatomy and Physiology I
- BIO 1511 Anatomy and Physiology I lab
- BIO 1523 Anatomy and Physiology II
- BIO 1521 Anatomy and Physiology II lab

## Freshman Year

### First Semester
- MAT 1313 College Algebra
- RCT 1313 Cardiopulmonary A&P
- RCT 1213 Patient Assessment & Planning
- RCT 1210 Patient Assessment Lab
- RCT 1114 Respiratory Care Science
- RCT 1110 Respiratory Care Science Lab
- RCT 1613 Respiratory Pharmacology
- 3 Humanities/Fine Arts Elective

### Second Semester
- ENG 1113 English Comp I
- SPT 1113 Oral Communication
- RCT 1515 Clinical Practice I
- RCT 1414 Respiratory I
- RCT 1410 Respiratory I Lab

### Summer
- RCT 1424 Respiratory Care II
- RCT 1322 Pulmonary Functions
- RCT 1523 Clinical Practice II

## Sophomore Year

### First Semester
- BIO 2924 Microbiology
- BIO 2920 Microbiology Lab
- RCT 2613 Neonatal / Pediatrics
- RCT 2434 Respiratory Care III
- RCT 2430 Respiratory Care Lab III
- RCT 2536 Clinical Practice III

### Second Semester
- CSC 1113 Intro to Computer Concepts
- RCT 2712 Respiratory Care Seminar
- RCT 2333 Cardiopulmonary Pathology
- RCT 2546 Clinical Practice IV
- 3 Behavioral / Social Science
Northwest Mississippi Community College
Respiratory Therapy Observation Log

As proud Respiratory Therapists we would like for you to be more familiar with our profession. This will also give you a better idea of what to expect over the next two years. You should contact a Respiratory Therapy Department, explain that you are applying to our program and would like to visit their department and spend some time with a therapist. After your day of excitement, ask them to sign your log. When you get home write a synopsis of your day and the things you saw. If you visited more than one place you should make copies of this form for each day.

Applicant Name: ___________________________ Hospital: ___________________________

Therapist: ___________________________

Date: ___________________________ Times of observation: ___________________________

Synopsis: (Please include specific tasks or procedures you observed)

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Respiratory Care Technology
Application for Admission

Date of Application: _______________________

Name: ________________________________
   Last   First   Middle   Maiden

Address: ________________________________
   Street    City    State    Zip Code

Social Security Number: __________________ Date of Birth: __________________

Home phone: ____________________________ Cell phone: _______________________

Parent/Guardian/Spouse:
   Last Name: __________________________ First Name: _________________________

Address: ________________________________
   Street or PO Box    City    State    Zip Code

Home phone: ____________________________ Cell phone: _______________________

Other Emergency Contact:
   Name: ______________________________ Relationship: _______________________

   Home phone: __________________________ Cell phone: _______________________

Please answer the following:
Have you completed all of the pre-requisite courses? Yes No
Are you currently enrolled taking your pre-requisite courses? Yes No
Are you currently enrolled at Northwest Mississippi Community College? Yes No
Have you applied to this or any other medical program before? Yes No
Have you previously been enrolled in a respiratory care program? Yes No
   If yes, please attach an explanation of your transfer and see admission requirements

Have you taken the ACT test? Yes No
   If Yes, Composite score _______
Do you have any experience in the medical field? Yes No
   If yes, please explain. ______________________________________________________

Education:
College(s):

Name          City          Course of Study or Degree Completed
__________________________________________________________________________

Notes (for program office use only)
Explain to the committee why you chose the field of respiratory care and what qualities would make you a good candidate for this program.


Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

NWCC complies with all applicable laws regarding affirmative action and equal opportunity in all its activities and programs, and does not discriminate against anyone protected by law because of age, creed, color, national origin, race, religion, sex, disability, veteran or other status.