

PRE-RADIATION THERAPY

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Advising Center

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PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Radiation Therapy is a highly specialized branch of medicine which utilizes ionizing radiation in the treatment of cancer. The radiation therapist is a professional member of a radiation therapy team that includes physicians, nurses, dosimetrists, and physicists. Radiation therapists combine an interest in science and technology with a strong commitment to patient care.

Professional competence requires that therapists apply knowledge of technology, anatomy and physiology, physics, pathology, and oncology. Radiation therapists work closely with social workers, nurses, and physicians to assist patients and their families through the physical and emotional experiences of cancer diagnosis and treatment. They must be comfortable working with critically ill patients and flexible in dealing with a fast pace, unexpected schedule changes, and sometimes long work hours. Career opportunities exist primarily in hospitals, with a smaller portion of therapists working in physician offices, outpatient care centers, and medical and diagnostic laboratories. See the Occupational Outlook Handbook at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos299.htm> for more information.

A **Bachelor of Science (BS) in Radiation Therapy Technology** is offered at **Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU)**. In order to apply to the Radiation Therapy program, students must complete the prerequisite coursework outlined below and have earned a minimum of 90 transferable quarter hours from an accredited institution(s). If accepted to the OHSU Radiation Therapy program, students then complete two additional years of coursework at OHSU to earn the BS in Radiation Therapy Technology.

The prerequisite coursework can be taken at **Portland State University (PSU)** and requires a good background in biology, chemistry, and mathematics. Students who wish to earn a bachelor's degree at PSU before moving on to earn the BS in Radiation Therapy at OHSU should complete the University Studies program and may want to consider a major in general science, biology, or chemistry.

Prerequisite Coursework

OHSU Prerequisite Courses	Equivalent PSU Courses
Math & Natural Science (minimum 47 quarter credits)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Algebra (4) • College Trigonometry/Pre-Calculus (4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTH 111 (4) – Introductory College Math I • MTH 112 (4) – Introductory College Math II
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemistry & Lab (min. 12) – full sequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH 104/107, 105/108, 106/109* (15) – Introductory Chemistry with Lab
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology & Lab (min. 12) – full sequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BI 207, 208, 209** (12) – Biology for Allied Health with Lab (starting in 2011-2012; prior to 2011-2012, BI 101-103 with lab fulfilled this requirement)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physics & Lab (min. 12) – full sequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PH 201/214, 202/215, 203/216 (15) – General Physics with Lab <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Note: MTH 112 (4) – Introductory College Math II – is the recommended prerequisite for Physics</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition (min. 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CH 250 (4) – Nutrition or • PHE 425 (4) – Nutrition for Health
Writing (minimum 9 quarter credits)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to College Writing (min. 3 credits) • Technical Writing (min. 3 credits) • Writing Research Papers or Writing as Critical Inquiry (min. 3 credits) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WR 121 (4) – Intro to College Writing or completion of Freshman Inquiry • WR 227 (4) – Technical Writing • WR 222 (4) or WR 323 (4) – Writing Research Papers or Writing as Critical Inquiry

*General Chemistry (CH 221/227, 222/228, 223/229) can also be used to fulfill this requirement.

**Principles of Biology (BI 251, 252, 253) can also be used to fulfill this requirement.

Prerequisite Coursework, Continued

Computer Literacy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If not computer literate, take CS 105 – Computer fundamentals or ISQA 111 – Fundamental Computer Concepts
Arts & Letters (minimum 9 quarter credits)	
Minimum 9 quarter credits arts/letters electives: Recommend Philosophy & Second Language OHSU considers the following to be arts/letters: History of Art, Art Appreciation, History of Music, Music Appreciation, English (not to include Composition), Linguistics, Philosophy, Religion, Speech, Theater Arts, Foreign Language (200 level or higher), Women's Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take any 9+ credits of arts/letters coursework, but recommend PHL 201 (4) – Intro to Philosophy – and Foreign Language courses (foreign language courses must be at the 200 level or higher)
Social Science (minimum 9 quarter credits to include Human Development)	
General Psychology (3)	PSY 204 (4) – Psychology as a Social Science or PSY 200 (4) – Psychology as a Natural Science
Human Development (3)	PSY 311 (4) – Human Development (take PSY 204 or 200 before taking PSY 311)
Another 3-4 credits of Psychology, Anthropology, or Sociology	PSY *** or ANTH *** or SOC *** (4) – Any course from these depts, not including the PSY courses listed above
Suggested Additional Preparation (Recommended, Not Required)	
Anatomy & Physiology	BI 301, 302, 303 (12) – Anatomy & Physiology
Statistics	STAT 243 (4) – Introduction to Prob & Stats

There is **no seven-year limit** on prerequisite coursework, but if science coursework is not recent, it is recommended that you update your knowledge by taking science courses (biology, physics, chemistry).

Postbac students and students who will have earned a bachelor's degree by the time they matriculate to the OHSU Radiation Therapy program must complete the math and natural science requirements but need not complete the writing, arts/letters, and social science requirements, *with the exception of Human Development (PSY 311)*.

Completion of the preparatory courses does not guarantee acceptance into the Radiation Therapy program. Prerequisite courses must be completed with a C- or higher (though C and C- grades in prerequisite courses are not looked upon favorably). Admission is limited and competitive. Most students accepted to the program have a **GPA of 3.0 or higher** and approximately half of those have a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Additional OHSU Radiation Therapy Admissions Requirements:

- Minimum **90 quarter hours** (60 semester hours) of college coursework completed prior to matriculation in the radiation therapy program.
- Minimum **40 observation hours** prior to March 1 of application year. Contact Linda Yates at OHSU (yatesl@ohsu.edu or 503-494-3445) for list of clinical affiliates who will allow you to observe. Online HIPAA training program required - see <https://www.ohsu.edu/bigbrain/>.
- Two years of the same **foreign language** in high school or two quarters of the same foreign language in college.

OHSU Radiation Therapy Application Information:

- Applications may be submitted only **between January 1 and March 1**.
- The admissions committee will review applications in early March; interviews of selected applicants begin soon thereafter. **Admissions decisions are made in May**; nine students are accepted to the program each year. Classes start in August.
- **Three recommendation letters** and a **personal statement** are required. OHSU recommends two letters from instructors (ideally from chemistry, biology, and/or physics faculty) and one from a supervisor/employer. You may submit more than three recommendation letters if you wish. Do not submit character references; these are not acceptable. Recommendation forms are available at the OHSU Web site: http://euston.ohsu.edu/radiation_therapy/download/recommend.pdf
- See the OHSU Radiation Therapy Web site for more information on the application process: http://euston.ohsu.edu/radiation_therapy/

Tips & Recommendations:

- **Consider taking University Studies courses** along with Radiation Therapy prerequisites, as admission to OHSU's Radiation Therapy program is limited and competitive.
- **Personally review the OHSU Radiation Therapy Web site and the Web sites of other professional program(s)** to which you plan to apply.
- **Check periodically with the adviser** for help with planning out your courses as well as updates on recent changes, remaining University and pre-professional requirements, and application procedures.
- **Request letters of recommendation from professors ahead of time**, while their experience with you is fresh. Don't wait until you are in the process of applying to the program.
- **Be engaged and professional during your observation experiences with radiation therapists.** Dress and communicate professionally and ask questions as appropriate. Don't be shy; take advantage of the opportunity to learn as much as you can. Radiation therapists that you observe will submit evaluations of you to the Radiation Therapy program.
- **Complete a FAFSA form in January.** To obtain a financial aid packet, call 503-494-7800.

OHSU Radiation Therapy Program Contacts:

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