# Histotechnician Program, AAS

**Program Features – Overview** (Course sequencing meant as a guideline for planning)

Northampton Community College (NCC) is partnering with Reading Area Community College (RACC) to offer a cooperative agreement between the two schools to better serve students in the Northampton, Monroe, Wayne and Pike regions who are interested in pursuing a career as a Histotechnician. This career pathway requires completion of the Histotechnician program which RACC currently offers at the campus in Reading, PA. Students must successfully complete general education courses at NCC and complete the remainder of the Histotechnician (HT) program at RACC. After satisfactory completion of all program requirements, students earn an Associate Degree in Applied Sciences in the Histotechnician Program from RACC.

The A.A.S. degree program in Histotechnology is designed to provide quality instruction to develop highly skilled and ethical histologic technology providers. Students will obtain the necessary academic and technical skills in all areas of the histology laboratory. Technical skills will include training to process body issues for microscopic examination, frozen section assistance, embedding techniques, microtomy, and special staining techniques.

**Program Rationale**

The primary goal of this program is to provide the theoretical and practical training necessary to prepare a student to enter the job market as an entry level, competent Histotechnician who is eligible to become a certified Histotechnician (HT) through the American Society for Clinical Pathology.

**Programmatic Program Outcomes**

Upon completion of the program, the students will:

- Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to perform current laboratory procedures as entry-level Histotechnician.
- Follow approved safety procedures and standards of practice when working in the histology laboratory.
- Recognize unexpected results and instrument malfunctions and take appropriate actions.
- Exhibit professional and ethical behaviors consistent with those of a healthcare professional.

**Proposed Sequence**

| Course Code | Course Title | Credits | Institution | RACC Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **FIRST SEMESTER** | | | |
| COLS | College Success | 3 | NCC | CSS 103 |
| ENGL 101 | English I | 3 | NCC | COM 121 |
| BIOS 204 | Human Anatomy & Physiology I | 4 | NCC | BIO 250 |
| MATH 140 | College Algebra | 3 | NCC | MAT 160 |

| Course Code | Course Title | Credits | Institution | RACC Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HTT 110 | Intro to Histology | 1 | RACC | |
| | **SEMESTER TOTAL** | **14** | | |
| | **SECOND SEMESTER** | | | |
| ENGL 151 | English II | 3 | NCC | COM 141 |
| or CMTH 102 | Intro to Communication | | | COM 151 |
| BIOS 254 | Human Anatomy & Physiology II | 4 | NCC | BIO 255 |
| CHEM 120 | General Chemistry I | 4 | NCC | CHE 150 |
| HTT 120 | Histology Techniques | 3 | RACC | |
| | **SEMESTER TOTAL** | **14** | | |
| | **SUMMER SESSION** | | | |
| HTT 150 | HT Practicum I | 4 | RACC | |
| | **SEMESTER TOTAL** | **4** | | |
| | **THIRD SEMESTER** | | | |
| SOCA 103 | Principles of Sociology | 3 | NCC | SOC 130 |
| or PSYC 103 | Introduction to Psychology | | | PSY 130 |
| BIOS 220 | Microbiology | 4 | NCC | BIO 280 |
| HTT 210 | Stains and Procedures | 3 | RACC | |
| HTT 250 | HT Practicum 2 | 6 | RACC | |
| | **SEMESTER TOTAL** | **16** | | |
| | **FOURTH SEMESTER** | | | |
| PHIL 202 | Ethics and Moral Problems | 3 | NCC | PHI 275 |
| HTT 220 | Special Techniques in Histology | 3 | RACC | |
| HTT 275 | HT Practicum 3 | 9 | RACC | |
| | **SEMESTER TOTAL** | **15** | | |
| | **TOTAL CREDITS** | **63** | | |

## Career Potential

The career potential for Histotechnicians is excellent, especially as histotechnology remains a growing field with the demand far exceeding the supply of skill, well-trained histotechnicians. The Bureau of Labor Statistics states that employment for all clinical laboratory technician positions is projected to grow 11 percent from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations. Vacancies for histotechnicians are expected to continue to increase due to the "baby boomer" generation exiting the labor force to retire.

## Potential Employers

Histotechnicians typically work in facilities where surgeries take place or where tissues are sent to the lab for examination by a pathologist. Therefore, Histotechnicians are employed in clinical laboratories, hospitals, medical clinics, and research facilities. Employment may also be found in

forensic and veterinary laboratories. With sufficient experience, a Histotechnician may also work in education, quality assurance, management and administration.

**Certification/Licensure**

The Histotechnician Program is seeking accreditation through the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS).

**Reading Area Community College**
**Northampton Community College**
**Histotechnician Program**

Section Process for Admission and Continued Enrollment in Histotechnician Courses

Reading Area Community College seeks to facilitate the transfer of students from Northampton Community College to the AAS Degree Histotechnician Program at Reading Area Community College. The student from Northampton Community College, who has successfully completed specific general education requirements and the selective admissions requirements, will be considered for admissions into the Histotechnician Program at Reading Area Community College.

**The student must meet the following ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA to be considered for selective admission into the Histotechnician Program:**

1. At the time of application, the following courses must be completed or currently in progress: BIOS 204, MATH 140, and HTT 110.
2. HT students must have a "C" or better in **all** courses in the HT curriculum.
3. The student must achieve a science/math GPA of 2.5 or higher (combined GPA of BIOS 204, MAT 140, and HTT 110).
4. Any course in the Histotechnician Program curriculum, or a prerequisite for a course, may not be repeated more than once. This requirement includes any courses taken at RACC or another institution. It also includes courses from which the student may have withdrawn or in which the student earned less than a "C" grade.
5. A student may repeat no more than 12 credits of the Histotechnician Program curriculum. Course repeats include courses taken at RACC and other institutions. It also includes withdrawals or courses in which the student earned less than a "C" grade.
6. Course repeats or withdrawals older than ten years may be excluded from consideration in the admissions process at the program director's discretion.
7. The student must meet with the HT Program Director to determine eligibility and certify that the student can carry out the duties and responsibilities of a Histotechnician Student by agreement through the "Essential Functions" document. (Appendix A)

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The student must submit the following by January 1:

1. Submit a comprehensive Letter of Intent requesting clinical student status.
2. Submit two (2) letters of recommendation; at least one must be from a RACC faculty member. Students from LCCC or NCC may substitute a faculty recommendation from their home school.

## SELECTION PROCESS

1. The HT Selection Committee will meet after January 1 to determine eligibility, evaluate the applicant's application materials and assign a rank value to each applicant. A point system will determine the rank of the student applicants. Incremental points will be awarded based on several criteria, including cumulative GPA, science /math GPA (combined GPA of BIOS 204, MATH 140, HTT 110).
2. Accepted students will be accepted beginning with the highest-ranked student until all the available clinical spaces are filled.
3. Students meeting the criteria but not assigned due to lack of clinical sites will be placed on a ranked waiting list unless space becomes available before the beginning of the summer semester. Students not given a clinical assignment will be required to re-apply the next year following the full application protocol.
4. Students declining clinical placement will be required to re-apply the following year.
5. The student will receive a notice stating the committee's decision (Accepted, Accepted with provision, Declined, or Waiting list) and clinical site assignment by February 1. Accepted students may register for the summer practicum 1 (HTT 150).
6. Progression into clinical experience is contingent upon satisfactory completion of coursework and maintenance of a 2.5 GPA in science and math.
7. All students are required to meet the health and immunization requirements of Reading Area Community College and our clinical affiliates. Accepted students will complete and submit the following to Castle Branch by April 1:
    a. Complete medical assessment including a physical exam and medical history
    b. Proof of immunity for Measles, Mumps, Rubella Varicella, and Hepatitis B
    c. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination; current Flu vaccination; Tdap vaccination
    d. Tuberculosis screening
8. Certification in Basic Life Support (BLS) by the American Heart Association.
9. "No record" status for PA Child Abuse Clearance, PA State Police Criminal Record Check, FBI fingerprint check.
10. Proof of a negative drug screen within 30 days of the first day of the summer practicum.
11. Proof of current enrollment in a health insurance plan.

12. Students must agree to abide by dress code/personal appearance and other policies set forth by the clinical affiliates

**The above policies may be changed or modified to comply with the accreditation agency or affiliate requirements. The Histotechnician Program reserves the right to make changes in the admission process without prior notice.**

The HT program reserves the right to review any HT student's academic performance and personal characteristics. Such a review may result in the dismissal of the student from the HT Program.

**Transfer Curriculum:**

Reading Area Community College (RACC) will accept and grant credit for Northampton Community College courses that are listed as equivalent if the student has completed the course with a grade of "C" or higher.

**Reading Area Community College**
**Division of Health Professions**
**Histotechnician Program**

## Essential Functions

Essential functions (or technical performance standards) represent the essential non-academic requirements that students in the Histotechnician Program must demonstrate in order to successfully participate in the program. Students must be able to affirm their ability to comply with the following functions:

### I. Physical Requirements:

A. OVERALL PHYSICAL HEALTH:

• Possess the overall physical, mental, and emotional health to maintain alertness and concentration during a clinical day under the stressful conditions of technical malfunctions, time constraints, and a distracting environment
• Bend, stoop, stand, and lift and move objects of at least 20 pounds
• Perform moderately taxing repetitive tasks, often requiring prolonged sitting or standing over several hours

B. MANUAL DEXTERITY:

• Possess sufficient hand-eye motor coordination to allow delicate manipulations of specimens, instruments and tools
• Grasp and release small objects (such as specimens, specimen containers, forceps, scalpels, slides, coverslips, pipette tips, pipettes, reagent vials)
• Fine motor skills to: twist and turn dials/knobs, pick up small objects, pinch, twist, and squeeze.
• Utilize a computer keyboard and mouse to operate laboratory instruments and verify and transmit data

C. VISION:

• Read and interpret charts, graphs, labels, instrument panels and printouts
• Discriminate colors, hue, shading or intensity and clarity
• Read microscopic material and record results
• Possess adequate peripheral vision
• Judge distance and depth accurately
• Read a computer screen

D. SPEECH AND HEARING:

• Possess normal, or correctable hearing in order to receive directions, respond to questions, answer phones, and respond to beepers, timers or alarms.
• Communicate effectively and sensitively in order to assess and comprehend verbal communication and adequately transmit information.

## II. Interpersonal Skills:

A. BEHAVIOR:

• Interact with coworkers and other members of the health care team in a polite, professional manner
•Function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, and display flexibility
• Demonstrate integrity, concern for others, commitment, and motivation

B. COMMUNICATION:

• Read and write in English in order to receive written and verbal instructions and accurately carry them out using proper channels of communication
• Follow verbal and written instructions in English
• Read and comprehend text, numbers, and graphs in professional and technical materials
• Use applicable computer software and the Internet for communication, education, and professional purposes