

Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy (BSRT)

Student Handbook

In accordance with CoArc Standard DA1.5 – program academic policies apply to all students and faculty regardless of location of instruction.

This document (the BSRT Student Handbook) is intended to serve as a useful and comprehensive resource for students in the BSRT. While every effort is made to ensure the information contained in this manual is both accurate and timely, the official Undergraduate Student Catalog for Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) contains the definitive information for students in all programs at the university. In the case where information provided in this handbook conflicts with the official catalog, the catalog will prevail. Students are encouraged to access the SCSU Student Handbook and become familiar with the information it contains.

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Section 1: Program Overview and Goals

The goal of the SCSU AS-to-BSRT Program is to provide graduates of entry into respiratory care professional practice degree programs with additional knowledge, skills and attributes in leadership, management, education, research or advanced clinical practice both to meet their current professional goals and to prepare them for practice as advanced degree respiratory therapists.

The curriculum is built upon the RRTs' prior education and professional experiences, while remaining congruent to the goals of the program. To accommodate students' achievements and their own focus and career plans, the program emphasizes an individualized curriculum designed to develop specific learning opportunities for each student. Program coursework focuses on written and oral communication, patient advocacy, ethics, quality improvement, leadership and management, teaching in health care, critically reviewing studies, advanced respiratory care modalities and topics, and an interprofessional capstone.

Learning outcomes are focused on the 2018 STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION OF DEGREE ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMS IN RESPIRATORY CARE as approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).

The AS-to-BSRT program is designed to enhance the student's professional career in Respiratory Therapy. The curriculum provides students who hold Associate degree in the field of respiratory care and RRT

certification, with the necessary skills and knowledge to be fully prepared to further assume professional leadership roles in clinical practice, research, education, marketing and management.

The mission of the AS-to-BSRT Program in Respiratory Care at SCSU is to provide sound instruction and resources for currently practicing respiratory care professionals, to enable students to develop the knowledge, skills, attitude, and critical thinking necessary to function as successful and competent respiratory therapists. The AS-to-BSRT Program in Respiratory Care at SCSU fosters and promotes these important concepts through the advancement of education, teaching excellence, practice, research, community engagement and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Section 2: Program Faculty

Program Director:

Dr. Joan Kreiger, the BSRT Program coordinator, is a licensed Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT), registered pulmonary function technologist (RPFT) and tenured college professor who also holds a Master's Degree in Public Health Education (MS) and a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership (EdD). She has extensive background in teaching healthcare issues and topics at a public university; private, liberal arts institution; and, via online platform at major, urban not-for-profit health care, education and research enterprise. She is described as a self-motivated, creative individual with expertise in developing and teaching courses in health/human disease; theories and clinical applications of respiratory care; bioethics; and other courses that explore concepts of health and health systems dynamics. Dr. Kreiger is a demonstrated leader and interdisciplinary collaborator, trained in pulmonary care and she maintains her clinical license through per diem work in cardiopulmonary exercise testing and research. She is committed to influencing and guiding the students of today to become the global healthcare leaders and interprofessional practitioners of tomorrow.

StrengthsFinder® signature skills: *Strategic, Ideation, Deliberative, Intellection, Maximizer*

Adjunct Faculty:

Frank Salvatore, RRT, MBA, FAARC

Connie Dills, MBA, RRT, RPFT

Lynn Taylor, MSN, FNP-C

Section 3: Admission Requirements

To be eligible for the BSRT program, a student must have both of the following:

- Earned Associate of Science Degree in Respiratory, Associate of Applied Science or Associate of Health Science **in Respiratory Care** from a regionally accredited institution
- RRT credential (verified on the NBRC database)

All students are required to meet the SCSU general education/core requirements (referred to as the Liberal Education Program "LEP" requirements) prior to graduation from the program. Applicants are encouraged to contact the program director prior to admission.

The final decision on acceptance rests with the Department of Respiratory Care at SCSU.

General Note: Other factors such as cumulative GPA, respiratory care GPA, and course selection will be considered when determining acceptance into the BSRT program.

Section 4: Expected Student Learning Outcomes (ESLOs)

In concert with the STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION OF DEGREE ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMS IN RESPIRATORY CARE, the BSRT program developed Student Learning Outcomes that reflect what competencies we expect graduates of the program to achieve over their course of study.

Four major competency domains (leadership; evidence based-practice; critical thinking; and clinical decision-making) integrate across six areas (patient-specific knowledge and skills; clinical knowledge; professional attributes; interpersonal and interprofessional communication; practice-based research; and, professional leadership) anchor the SCSU BSRT student learning outcomes and expectations in alignment with relevant CoArc standards.

Competency Domains	Expected Student Learning Outcomes	Relevant CoArc standard -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Competencies 	<p>Graduates will exemplify leadership attributes in their work environments. They will demonstrate an understanding of how to make contributions to their professional communities and how to effect beneficial changes in institutional policy, professional organizations and government. Graduates will synthesize theories of fundamental organizational implications with particular regard to regulatory requirements specific to the healthcare system.</p>	<p>DA4.5 DA4.8</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-based Medicine and Respiratory Protocols 	<p>Graduates shall demonstrate an analytical approach to clinical situations and shall have sufficient understanding of established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences to effectively apply this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. Graduates will demonstrate an ability to formulate a clinical question, search the medical literature, and assess the collected literature for quality, relevance and limitations. Graduates will exhibit an ability to collect, manage, organize and synthesize data to produce information.</p>	<p>DA4.3 DA4.7</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Thinking Competencies 	<p>Graduates shall demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective interaction with others (e.g., patients, patients' families, physicians, other health professionals/ coworkers, students, faculty, and the public). Apply critical thinking to ethical and moral standard analysis. Graduates will demonstrate collaboration in interprofessional teams to accomplish a common goal. Integrate the critical thinking domains specific to respiratory care (technology, patients, clinicians) and demonstrate an ability to excel within each domain.</p>	<p>DA4.6 DA4.7</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Decision-Making Competencies 	<p>Graduates shall demonstrate advanced ability to provide person-centered care and to improve respiratory metrics as tied to quality outcomes. Graduates shall demonstrate an advanced ability of decisiveness by exhibiting behaviors and attitudes through an integrated practice of patient-specific knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>DA4.3 DA4.5 DA4.6</p>

	Students will explore the connections between critical thinking, clinical reasoning, diagnostic reasoning, decision analysis and issues in a variety of health care settings.	
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Section 5: Technical Skills

Successful completion of the baccalaureate degree in respiratory care implies that the graduate will have enhanced the knowledge and skills necessary to appropriately deliver patient care as a respiratory care provider. In the role as a health care provider, the respiratory therapist should be able to deliver urgent and non-urgent care to patients of all ages and in all settings including hospital, chronic care facilities, ambulatory settings, and in the home. The current health care system also requires the respiratory therapist to be skilled in age-specific patient education. All registered respiratory therapy students possess these skills as evidenced by their completion of an entry level program

In addition, the following abilities and expectations are required of students in the BSRT program:

ANALYTICAL THINKING

- Transfer knowledge from one situation to another
- Process information
- Evaluate outcomes
- Problem-solve
- Prioritize tasks
- Maximize long and short-term memory

CRITICAL THINKING

- Identify cause-effect relationships
- Plan/control activities for others
- Synthesize knowledge and skills
- Sequence information

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Negotiate interpersonal conflict
- Respect differences in patients
- Develop cultural humility
- Establish rapport with patients
- Establish rapport with co-workers

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Teach (e.g., patient/family about pulmonary health care)

- Explain procedures
- Give oral reports (e.g., report on patient's condition to other health care workers)
- Interact with others (e.g., health care workers)
- Influence people
- Direct activities of others
- Convey information through writing (e.g., progress notes)

Section 6: Course Number and Titles & Course Descriptions (from SCSU course catalog)

Course Number/Title	Description	Credits
RSP 315 Healthcare in the Age of Mass Media	Examines the role that mass media plays in the health of global citizens. Investigations into the way healthcare messages are communicated and understood through traditional and non-traditional media formats. E-health, telemedicine, and medical tourism are examined. Explores the current and emerging issues such as organ donation as a 'Facebook' status, television marketing of e-cigarettes, and storytelling as a way to communicate healthcare information.	3
RSP 325 Dimensions in Healthcare Leadership	The study of theories, principles, and skills needed to function in a leadership position. Emphasis is placed on the development of competencies applicable to not only the professional practice of respiratory care, but also as members of the community. Addresses the key issues confronting healthcare leaders today; examines the causes, and develops reasonable solutions to current healthcare challenges.	3
RSP 330 Case Studies in Medical Ethics	Investigation of groundbreaking medical cases that shape the way healthcare is practiced today. Examination of ethical and social issues surrounding the practice of medicine, particularly the relationship between clinician and patient. Emphasis on the role that advancements in medical technology and biomedical innovation play in healthcare decision-making.	3
RSP 340 Principles of Care Coordination in Respiratory Disease Management	Examination of the systems and tools necessary to work successfully with the respiratory disease population. Health models, processes, staffing, training, patient advocacy/engagement, and reporting/reimbursement, with the aim of improving patient outcomes and reducing healthcare costs. Introduction to concepts and principles of pulmonary rehabilitation, and medical home model of care. Exploration of ways to optimize quality of life for chronically ill patients with cardiopulmonary disease through rehabilitation, education, and outpatient management.	3
RSP 415 Healthcare Systems, Policy and Billing	Engage the student in comprehending the history, trend, issues and evolution of the American health care system with emphasis on the evolving nature of healthcare policy and payment. Contemporary issues in America's health care	3

	system are discussed to identify ways that the organization, delivery and payment of health care, Medicare/Medicaid; issues related to health care disparities and the future directions of the provision of care may impact care. A broad investigation of the provision of payment and billing for health services for the insured, the uninsured and the underinsured.	
RSP 420 Neonatal Pediatrics in Respiratory*	Overview of fetal and neonatal development and physiology of the cardiopulmonary system. Normal and abnormal physiology, diagnostics, and possible treatment including examination of trends and technology utilized for neonatal care is researched. Explores the assessments made by the healthcare team on the newborn and continuing monitoring of neonates with respiratory other difficulties. <i>*waived for students who hold the RRT-NPS credential</i>	3
RSP 425 Respiratory Care Education	Fundamental background in educational theory and practical application skills of educational delivery and evaluation within the construct of the healthcare environment, most notably the respiratory care profession. Course content includes information on designing a lecture or course for the classroom, as an in-service or in a continuing education program. Focus on assessing educational needs, organizing instruction, instructional methods, and education.	3
RSP 440 Evidence-Based Practice and Research in Respiratory Care	Conceptual examination of evidence-based practice and skill acquisition necessary to incorporate evidence and best practices into professional work with the lung disease patient. These include an understanding of research methods and a scientific approach to critical appraisal of research literature. Analysis of strong scientific data to support approaches to respiratory care. Examination of the development of respiratory care practice guidelines.	3
RSP 445 Respiratory Care Seminar	Designed to allow the student to explore clinical process in an advanced practice area (neonatal critical care, pediatric critical care, adult critical care, pulmonary rehabilitation, pulmonary function laboratory, polysomnography, hyperbaric therapy, respiratory care management or respiratory care education) through the development of clinically-related projects in the areas of quality improvement, healthcare organizational structures and current processes in patient management with the goal of acquiring the skills necessary to conduct and present original research. Students should select a specialty topic that reflects their area of interest. Peer-to-peer teaching is an integral part of this course.	3
RSP Program Electives:	Students may elect up to 9 credits of program electives from the list below:	

PCH 351 Health and Society	Examination of health services and institutions; the role of health professionals and their relationships with clients; and the relationship between illness and the social process.	3
PCH 450 Death, Dying and Bereavement	Understanding death in our culture and social and personal mechanisms for responding to death, dying and bereavement.	3
HLS 210 Principles of Patient Centered Healthcare	An exploration of the concepts and principles of patient centered care as a growing number of hospitals, clinics and continuing care facilities face challenges of providing quality care and exemplary patient experience. Examination of the response to healthcare consumer demands, improvement in care delivery systems, and the advancement of more personalized, humanized experience for the patient.	3
HLS 400 Health Informatics	Exploration of health informatics including definitions, theory, technologies, workflow and expectations of health systems and health information exchange. Provides students with fundamental knowledge of the concepts of health informatics and how technology can be used to advance the delivery of health care. Students will gain an understanding of the challenges for a healthcare informatics professional to analyze and deliver usable and accessible systems and solutions.	3
HLS 437 Clinical Trial Administration and Good Clinical Practice	Introduction to the principles, conduct, and ethics of clinical trial administration and good clinical practice. Clinical trial design, management, regulatory issues, and analysis will be considered. Topics will include research designs, ethics and regulatory policies, protocol development, treatment allocation, blinding, randomization and stratification, quality control, sample size and statistical power, data management and safety monitoring, interpretation of results, and scientific communication. Alternative study designs (e.g. observational and quasi-experiment) will be considered and sources of bias will be addressed.	3
SOC 344 Medical Sociology	Examination of the influences of social factors such as race, class, and gender on health and illness of individuals and groups in society. Included are discussions about ethical issues in health care research and application of sociological theories, as well as the review of global health issues such as AIDS, and the structure and outcomes of different health care systems including the U.S.	3
HMS 410 Pathophysiology	Provides the student with knowledge in pathophysiology. Lecture material explains the underlying process involved with medical conditions of the physically active as required, to include their etiologies, symptoms, signs, and prognosis.	3

	Total RSP credits	24cr.
	+ total program Elective credits	+9cr.
	Total BSRT program credits*	=33cr.

*all students must complete university requirements for general education; university policy requires all graduates to take at least 30 credits at SCSU. BSRT Students must maintain a C+

Section 7: Student Resources

Interested applicants should contact the program director prior to applying to the program. Applicants should apply through the university website Admissions link as a TRANSFER student and should follow all steps accordingly. New applicants are encouraged to monitor their personal emails for correspondence that may initially erroneously be diverted to 'spam' folders. As an online program, students are encouraged to have a working email as the first line of communication with the program director.

Student Records

The BSRT program application, advising documentation, and other pertinent information and correspondence are maintained by the program coordinator in a password-protected electronic file, with strict adherence to all FERPA guidelines.

University Policies

Students are responsible for knowledge and adherence of all student conduct policies:

<https://inside.southernct.edu/student-conduct>

<https://inside.southernct.edu/student-conduct/academic-misconduct>

<https://www.ct.edu/files/policies/2.1%20StudentCodeofConduct.pdf>

<https://inside.southernct.edu/student-conduct/sexual-misconduct-policy>

Section 8: Academic Standards and Remediation

Students must satisfactorily complete the number of credit hours required on their BSRT program with a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 ("C+" average) each semester and cumulatively. All RSP courses completed for credit toward a BSRT must be passed with a minimum grade of C plus (C+). If the minimum grade requirement is not attained, the course must be repeated, even if the overall GPA is a 2.5 or above. Courses not completed with the minimum grade requirements will not be counted toward degree requirements but the grade will be calculated in the program and cumulative grade point averages.

Faculty provide initial remediation for students struggling in individual courses. Remediation may take the form of review of test material after administration, individual meetings with students, re-administration of tests, alternative assignments, alternative testing, etc. as appropriate to the course.

Faculty may refer students to the Academic Advising Center via the Navigate Alert System. The purpose of the Alert is to provide support to academic faculty and students in: (1) early identification of failing or sub-par academic performance; (2) development of remediation plans to foster student success, (3) determining program continuance or termination. The Advising Center may provide support for the student in the form of a plan designed to aid the student in the successful completion of academic coursework. Remediation options may include, but are not limited to: modifying the student's academic planned program; adjusting the

student's due dates on assignments; modifying activities of instruction; recommending assistance through the university's writing center; and/or suggesting counseling through the University counseling services.

Section 9: Financial Aid

Students are encouraged to consult with the financial aid office for assistance
<https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/financial-aid>

Many hospitals and healthcare organizations provide tuition assistance/reimbursement. The program director is available to work with students whose institutions require proof of enrollment.

Section 10: Disability Services and other Resource Centers

Southern Connecticut State University and the BSRT welcome students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require accommodations to fully participate in the BSRT Program should contact the Disabilities Resource Center (DRC). <https://inside.southernct.edu/drc>
All accommodations must have prior approval from the DRC.

Writing Center Resource: <https://inside.southernct.edu/writing-center>

Advising Center Resource: <https://inside.southernct.edu/advising>

Section 11: Faculty and Student Expectations

Students should review each course syllabus for specific course details regarding instructor communication, preferences, as well as specific course guidelines and expectations.

Below are general expectations for both faculty and staff.

Communication Expectations:

- SCSU establishes email as one of the official modes of communication. Instructors and students are responsible for receiving and reading all communication delivered to their University email addresses
- Students are encouraged to regularly communicate with the program coordinator and advisors/student success coaches.
- Generally, course instructors will send a welcome email several days prior to the start of a course outlining any specific requirements ahead of the course start date.
- Faculty will inform students of general course information or alterations by using the 'Announcements' function in Blackboard. These announcements are emailed as well as posted; check into the course site frequently to ensure you do not miss updated information.
- Generally, faculty will work to respond to student emails within 48 hours except on weekends and holidays. If this timeline is altered, the faculty will let students know via an announcement.
- In accordance with the code of conduct, both students and faculty are to model professionalism, respectful discourse, academic integrity, and netiquette, etc. Please ensure all communication is respectful and professional.

General Student Expectations

- Login and participate in the course 3 out of 7 days each week. (note the Tuesday-to-Monday weekly schedule)

- Weekly RSP course units “open” on Tuesday mornings at 6:00am and all materials (assignments, quizzes, etc.) are due by the upcoming Monday at 11:59pm. *Please note this policy only applies to **RSP** courses at Southern. Students taking online courses in other departments should check with those instructors and/or syllabi for due dates.*
- Adhere to etiquette and professional standards when communicating with faculty and other students online in order to ensure proper and courteous interactions.
- Be cognizant of potential gender, cultural, and professional differences in verbal communications and interactions online.
- Manage time and learning in order to fully participate in online activities and discussions and to post assignments promptly when due.
- Plan to devote an appropriate number of hours each week for completing class activities. Approximate time spent on activities will vary depending on reading and/or comfort level with using technology as well as individual time management, professional/personal obligations, etc.
- Assume responsibility for learning.
- Participate in a vibrant online learning community peer-to-peer, as well as faculty-to-student.
- Respond to course correspondence in a timely manner.
- SCSU establishes email as one of the official modes of communication. Instructors and students are responsible for receiving and reading all communication delivered to their University email addresses.
 - Contact the Information Technology HELP DESK (203-392-5123) for assistance in migrating a personal email address to a campus email address.
 - Students should always include their student ID# on any queries involving registration or advising.
 - For queries regarding class work, always cite the exact title of the assignment in question, AND the exact course and section number. Upload screen shots or documents as appropriate, to assist the instructor in understanding your question.

Section 12: Grievance and Appeal Procedures

Grade appeal processes are posted on the SCSU website, including a link for how to file a complaint with the Connecticut State Portal Entity at the Connecticut Office of Higher Education.

<https://catalog.southernct.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-standards.html>

<https://www.southernct.edu/about/accreditation>