

RESPIRATORY THERAPY

Program Description

Respiratory Therapy is a dynamic and challenging healthcare profession. Therapists work with physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals in intensive care units and hospital floor care areas. They are involved in the treatment, management, and rehabilitation of patients with lung and heart problems. Respiratory Therapists manage the ventilation of critically ill patients, as well as provide care to patients with acute and chronic pulmonary disease. The Respiratory Therapy program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) (coarc.com).

Learn more about the program on the [Respiratory Therapy website](#).

Program Learning Outcomes

- Graduates will be able to demonstrate the necessary knowledge, entry-level competency, and clinical skills in respiratory therapy.
- Graduates will be able to demonstrate the appropriate values, critical thinking skills, time management, and communication skills needed for competent respiratory therapy care in multidisciplinary settings.

Career Opportunities

The employment outlook for graduates is good—Respiratory Therapists can work full or part-time. The average annual salary for new graduates is approximately \$90,000. The average annual salary for experienced registered therapists in the Bay Area is approximately \$110,000 to \$120,000. Most therapists work 8 or 12-hour hospital shifts. Graduates may specialize in many different areas, including but not limited to: intensive care (adult, neonatal, and pediatric), pulmonary function testing, and home care. There are also many opportunities for advancement within the field of Respiratory Therapy.

Award Type(s)

- AS = Associate in Science Degree
- CA = Certificate of Achievement

Units Required

- Major: 100
- Certificate(s): 12

Program Application

Admittance to the Respiratory Therapy Program is through an application process. Program information, admission criteria details, and applications can be found at the [Respiratory Therapy program website](#).

Program Prerequisites

Must be completed with a grade of "C" (or "P") or better. For the purposes of any GPA calculations for program prerequisites, the "P" grade is calculated the same as the "C" grade.

- High school diploma, G.E.D., or equivalent.
- Compliance with Technical Standards. See the [Respiratory Therapy program website](#) for information.

Code	Title	Units
Intermediate Algebra or equivalent		5
One of the following:		5
ENGL C1000	ACADEMIC READING AND WRITING	
ENGL C1000H	ACADEMIC READING AND WRITING - HONORS	
ESLL 26	ADVANCED COMPOSITION & READING	
or equivalent		
CHEM 25	FUNDAMENTALS OF CHEMISTRY	5
or CHEM 30A	SURVEY OF INORGANIC & ORGANIC CHEMISTRY	
or equivalent chemistry course that includes a laboratory		
BIOL 40A	HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY I	15
& BIOL 40B	and HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY II	
& BIOL 40C	and HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY III	
or a semester of Anatomy that includes a laboratory and a semester of Physiology that includes a laboratory, or equivalent courses		
AHS 52	MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY (or a medical terminology course of at least 3 quarter/2 semester units)	4

Associate Degree Requirements

A minimum of 90 units is required¹ to complete the associate degree, including:

- Core courses for the major (100 units total)
- Completion of one of the following general education patterns:
 - Foothill College General Education
 - **Summer Session 2025 only**—CSU General Education Breadth (CSU GE Breadth)²
 - **Summer Session 2025 only**—Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)²
 - **Beginning Fall Quarter 2025**—California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)³

¹ Additional elective course work may be necessary to meet the 90-unit minimum requirement for the associate degree.

² Summer Session 2025 is the final term during which CSU GE Breadth and IGETC may be used. Please see a counselor for more information.

³ Cal-GETC begins in Fall Quarter 2025. Please see a counselor for more information.

Note: A grade of "C" (or "P") or better is required for all core courses used for the degree or certificate. In addition, the student must obtain a minimum GPA of 2.0.

Refer to the Associate in Arts & Associate in Science Degree Requirements page for complete information about graduation requirements and catalog rights.

Core and Support Courses

Core Courses

Course	Title	Units
First Year		
Fall Quarter		
AHS 50A	INTRODUCTION TO ALLIED HEALTH PROGRAMS	1.5
BIOL 41	MICROBIOLOGY	6
RSPT 50A	RESPIRATORY THERAPY PROCEDURES	4.5

RSPT 51A	INTRODUCTION TO RESPIRATORY ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY	2
RSPT 52	APPLIED SCIENCE FOR RESPIRATORY THERAPY	3
RSPT 54	ORIENTATION TO RESPIRATORY CARE	2
RSPT 55A	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY I	0.5
Units		19.5
Winter Quarter		
AHS 50B	INTERPROFESSIONAL PATIENT COMPETENCIES	0.5
RSPT 50B	INTRODUCTION TO PATIENT CARE PROCEDURES	5
RSPT 51C	PATIENT ASSESSMENT & PULMONARY DISEASE	4
RSPT 53A	INTRODUCTION TO RESPIRATORY THERAPY PHARMACOLOGY	2
RSPT 55B	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY II	0.5
RSPT 56	ORIENTATION TO HOSPITAL & PATIENT CARE I	1
Units		13
Spring Quarter		
PSYC C1000 or PSYC C1000H	INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY or INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY - HONORS	5
RSPT 50C	THERAPEUTICS & INTRODUCTION TO MECHANICAL VENTILATION	4
RSPT 51B	RESPIRATORY PHYSIOLOGY	3
RSPT 55C	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY III	0.5
RSPT 57	ORIENTATION TO HOSPITAL & PATIENT CARE II	2
Units		14.5
Second Year		
Summer Session		
6 Weeks		
RSPT 55D	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY IV	0.5
RSPT 61A	ADULT MECHANICAL VENTILATION	4
RSPT 70A	CLINICAL ROTATION I	2
Units		6.5
Fall Quarter		
AHS 60A	CARDIOLOGY FOR ALLIED HEALTH	2
RSPT 53B	ADVANCED RESPIRATORY THERAPY PHARMACOLOGY	2
RSPT 55E	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY V	0.5
RSPT 61B	NEONATAL RESPIRATORY CARE	3
RSPT 70B	CLINICAL ROTATION II	8
Units		15.5
Winter Quarter		
AHS 60C	ADVANCED CARDIAC LIFE SUPPORT	2
RSPT 55F	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY VI	0.5
RSPT 61C	HOME & REHABILITATIVE RESPIRATORY CARE	2
RSPT 63A	ADVANCED PATHOPHYSIOLOGY & PATIENT MANAGEMENT	3
RSPT 65	COMPUTER PATIENT SIMULATIONS	0.5
RSPT 70C	CLINICAL ROTATION III	8
Units		16
Spring Quarter		
AHS 50C	INTERPROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES FOR COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE	0.5
RSPT 55G	MEDIATED STUDIES IN RESPIRATORY THERAPY VII	0.5
RSPT 60C	PULMONARY DIAGNOSTICS	3
RSPT 61D	PEDIATRIC RESPIRATORY CARE	2
RSPT 62	MANAGEMENT, RESUME & NATIONAL BOARD EXAMINATION	1
RSPT 70D	CLINICAL ROTATION IV	8
Units		15
Total Units		100

Certificate Requirements

Certificate of Achievement in Interventional Pulmonology Assistant

• Units: 12

Code	Title	Units
RSPT 85	INTERVENTIONAL PULMONOLOGY THEORY & APPLICATION	5
RSPT 86	INTERVENTIONAL PULMONOLOGY PROCEDURES	5
RSPT 87	INTERVENTIONAL PULMONOLOGY CLINICAL PRACTICUM	1
RSPT 88	INTERVENTIONAL PULMONOLOGY RESEARCH PROJECT	1
Total Units		12