

Cytology Admissions/Enrollment

2026-2027 Academic Year

Application Process

The Cytology Program accepts applications year-round. The application deadline each year is March 15 to be considered for the summer semester start date. Please select 'Summer 2026' in the 'Anticipated Starting Semester' field of the application.

Candidates are evaluated based on the clarity and effectiveness of their communication, their motivation for entering the field of cytology, and their demonstrated leadership potential. These qualities are assessed through submitted application materials, as well as during the interview, where applicants are expected to articulate their goals, reflect on relevant experiences, and provide examples of initiative and collaboration.

Technical Standards

To be successful in the Cytology Program, applicants and current students must meet the following technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation.

Sensory and Motor Skills - Students and candidates for program admission should be able to:

- Work in small spaces
- Move objects up to 10 pounds with occasional carrying of objects up to 20 pounds including laboratory supplies and equipment
- Perform work in a stationary position for extended periods
- Work with physical files, including retrieving, moving and filing
- Operate and maintain laboratory equipment
- Operate a computer keyboard at a moderate skill level
- Operate a microscope
- Travel throughout the hospital system and, in some locations, off-site
- Tolerate physically demanding workloads

Communication - Students and candidates for program admission should be able to:

- Communicate, exchange accurate information and follow instructions
- Maintain comprehensive records of findings, ensuring clear, concise, and timely reporting of results

Intellectual - Students and candidates for program admission should be able to:

- Learn through a variety of teaching modalities including classroom lecture, cooperative learning, small group activities and laboratory exercises, individual and group presentations, and the use of technology assisted learning
- Operate at a fast pace and to prioritize multiple assignments/projects and respond to numerous requests
- Diagnose, problem solve, make decisions and critically think

Behavioral and Social Attributes - Students and candidates for program admission should be able to:

- Demonstrate emotional stability, maturity and good judgment
- Value all people throughout the organization, regardless of background or culture
- Demonstrate dependability and responsibility
- Exercise self-control and tolerate stress when dealing with multiple requests and/or conflicting demands
- Resolve conflicts, to work collaboratively, respectfully and with dignity with a team
- Perform problem solving skills in a timely manner
- Function effectively under stress to maintain poise and control and practice in a safe manner
- Adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in an environment of uncertainty
- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, dedication, compassion and motivation
- Accept constructive criticism and respond appropriately with an acceptable modification of behavior
- Transfer knowledge and laboratory skills to problems other than those set in the course of instruction, but that lend themselves to similar types of solutions

Observation - Students and candidates for program admission should be able to:

- Assess images electronically and on paper
- Observe laboratory, lecture and clinical demonstrations
- Differentiate color, hue, saturation and tones
- Compare and contrast small details

Requirements

To be eligible for admission to the Cytology program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Hold a baccalaureate-level degree from an accredited college or university
2. Achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) and a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all science and mathematics coursework
3. Complete a minimum of 28 semester hours or 42 quarter hours of combined Biology and Chemistry coursework. Strongly recommended coursework includes, but is not limited to:
 - General Biology
 - Anatomy and Physiology
 - Cell Biology
 - Histology
 - Immunology
 - Microbiology
 - Molecular Biology
4. Complete at least three semester hours or four quarter hours of any college-level mathematics or applied statistics/biostatistics
5. Demonstrate meaningful experience and exposure to laboratory or healthcare environments
6. Demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and professionally, particularly in scientific and clinical contexts, as evidenced by:

- Clear expression of ideas
- Understanding of personal and professional goals related to cytology
- Thoughtful and articulate responses during interviews or in personal statements

The Cytology Program **does not**:

- Allow completion of requirements through experiential learning
- Offer advanced placement courses for students prior to receipt of a baccalaureate degree

When an applicant repeats a prerequisite course, the program will consider the highest grade earned for admission and GPA calculations. For example, if a student initially earns an “F” and later earns a “C” in the same course, the program will use the “C” as the official grade for admissions/evaluation purposes.

Admission Documents and Requirements

An applicant is required to complete the following items after submitting their initial application in Campus Cafe in order for their application to be considered. Please note that documents marked with an asterisk (*) are not considered during the evaluation of applications and will not affect an applicant’s eligibility or admission decision. They are required, however, for administrative purposes. To begin, please select ‘Summer 20XX’ in the ‘Anticipated Starting Semester’ field of the application.

1. Create an account in the School of Health Professions secure [payment portal](#) and upload a copy of your registration confirmation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.*
2. Complete the [Applicant Demographic Survey](#) and upload a copy of your survey completion confirmation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.*
3. Complete the [Distance Education Technology Review and Acknowledgement survey](#) and upload a copy of your survey completion confirmation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.*
4. Compose an essay and upload the completed essay form to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe (Essay form Found on the Admissions webpage).

5. Complete a transcript evaluation form and upload the completed form to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe (Transcript evaluation form found on the Admissions webpage).
6. If the applicant's native language is not English, official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the Duolingo English Test (DET) are required. Applicants must have a total minimum score of 75 with written and speaking sections no less than 17 for the TOEFL. A minimum score of 105 is required for the DET. Exam date must be within two years of the program's start date. If applicable, complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or Duolingo English Test (DET) and upload a copy of your results to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.
 - The English Proficiency exam cannot be waived based on prior learning or work experience. This policy ensures that all students meet the same standardized language requirements, which supports academic success and helps maintain fairness and consistency in the admissions process.
7. Upload a copy of your resume or curriculum vitae to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.
8. Request three recommendation letters accompanied by three completed reference forms from the three individuals you have selected as references. Letters and reference forms are required to be submitted by the selected reference via email to CytologyProgram@ccf.org. The letters and completed forms will be uploaded to your applicant portal by program administration (Reference form found on the Admissions webpage).
9. Request official academic transcripts. You are required to submit official transcripts from every school you have attended. All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by World Education Services (WES) on a course-by-course basis. If applicable, upload a copy of your WES transcript evaluation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe. High school transcripts are not required. Once received, the transcripts will be uploaded to your applicant portal by program administration.

You can submit your official transcripts through one of two methods:

1. Electronically (preferred):

Request delivery to CytologyProgram@ccf.org

2. By mail (all paper transcripts must be submitted in an official sealed envelope):

Cleveland Clinic Cytology Program
Attention: Bridgette Springer
9500 Euclid Avenue/L13
Cleveland, OH 44195

Enrollment Documents and Requirements

If an applicant is accepted into the program the following items are required in order to enroll in the program. Please review the [health requirements](#) before submitting your documentation.

1. Complete and sign an Enrollment Agreement in Campus Cafe via DocuSign.
2. Complete the [Student IPEDS Survey](#) and upload a copy of your survey completion confirmation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.
3. Upload your negative tuberculosis (TB) test documentation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe. The TB test must be completed within 12 months prior to the start of the program.
4. Upload your immunization documentation for chicken pox (varicella) or positive titer to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.
5. Upload your immunization documentation for measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe.
6. Upload your positive hepatitis B vaccination/titer or completed waiver to your applicant portal in Campus Café (Hepatitis B vaccination/titer waiver found on the Admissions webpage).
7. Upload your tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap) booster documentation to your applicant portal in Campus Cafe. The booster is required within the past 10 years.
8. Influenza immunization documentation is required during flu season (November 1 through March 31). The applicant is required to upload documentation to the applicant portal in Campus Cafe if completing their application during flu season or will be required to obtain and submit documentation when the vaccination becomes available.

9. Complete the required onboarding tasks in SilkRoad. Onboarding will include a background check. Additional information will be provided following completion of the above items.

The evaluation of applicants begins after all application materials have been received.

Additionally, applicants should also be aware of the following:

- Ineligible applicants may have their applications considered for the following year by informing the program of their intent in writing and completing an application by the following year's deadline.
- Prospective students with complete applications who meet the academic eligibility requirements of this program will be contacted by mail to schedule a personal interview at Cleveland Clinic. Travel arrangements and all travel expenses are the responsibility of the student.
- Once all interviews are complete, students accepted into the program will be notified in writing.
- Prospective students who are not selected will be notified in writing.
- Applicants who elect to remain in the applicant pool for one additional year must notify the program director in writing and may waive a second personal interview if they desire.

Additional Occupational Health Testing Upon Enrollment

Students must complete the color discrimination test and the respirator fit test through the Cleveland Clinic's Occupational Health department located in H18. These tests are performed after the first day of class within the first month of the program.

Color Discrimination Testing

The Cytology Program requires a color blindness determination for each student enrolled in the program. It is possible to be a cytologist and be colorblind since cytologic diagnosis is done by morphology, but color is often used to describe certain cell types and changes in cells. It is imperative that the program be aware of any student who is colorblind so that the faculty can make changes in how cells are described to emphasize the morphology over any colors seen. No student will be eliminated from the program based solely on color blindness.

Students enrolled in the program who are colorblind will be afforded extra microscopic sessions to help overcome any difficulties they may have with microscopic diagnosis. It is the responsibility of the student to request this additional help. Students who are colorblind are required to achieve passing scores on all visual tests and have acceptable screening scores in order to complete the program.

UroVysion testing uses various colored fluorescent tags on probes that must be assessed microscopically. Students who are colorblind will be unable to perform this test and will be offered an alternative classroom experience during that portion of the course.

Students enrolled in the program will need to have Occupational Health assess the colorblindness test.

Occupational Health is located in H18. The test will need to be completed with a printed form for documentation submitted to the Program Director by end of the first month of classes.

Respirator Fit Testing

The Cytology Program requires respirator fit testing due to the students' involvement with rapid on-site evaluation (ROSE) of fine needle aspiration specimens. The clinical rotations including EBUS, EUS/Radiology and FNA may require droplet precautions to be followed, and students must be aware of the correct usage of a respirator.

Students enrolled in the program will need to have a respirator fit test in Occupational Health in H18 and receive documentation of their testing to give to the Program Director. The documentation will be kept in the students' file.