

United Regional Health Care System Medical Laboratory Science Program

United Regional Health Care System
1600 11th St
Wichita Falls, TX 76308
940-764-3187

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Student Handbook

Program Staff

Program Director	Amanda Snook, MS, MLS(ASCP)
Assistant Program Director	John Ford, MS, MLS(ASCP)
Lab Director	Amy Fountain, DSCLS, MLS(ASCP)

Clinical Affiliates

United Regional Lab	United Regional Health Care System, Wichita Falls, TX
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Passion, Purpose, & Pillars (Mission Statement)

The Medical Laboratory Science Program is dedicated to its role in delivering quality healthcare by educating and training the next generation of competent and compassionate medical laboratory scientists. We strive to promote the professional standards expected in healthcare and maintain the high academic standards required in the field of medical laboratory science. We believe these values are consistent with the Passion, Purpose, and Pillars of United Regional

Passion

To provide excellence in health care for the communities we serve.

Purpose

To make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Pillars

People-To provide an excellent working environment for our employees, medical staff, and volunteers so that we can all know that we're making a positive difference in the lives of others

Service-To provide warm, compassionate, and efficient care for our patients and their families.

Quality-To provide a safe environment, evidence-based processes, and excellent clinical outcomes for the patients we serve.

Finance-To provide financial strength, allowing us to reinvest in, and develop, our people, our technologies, and our facilities.

Growth-To ensure that we provide excellence in health care for the communities we serve not only today but well into the future.

Program Goals

Support students and ensure that they meet the entry level competencies as defined by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS)

Provide a quality educational experience in medical laboratory science as assessed by the outcome measures required by NAACLS, graduate retention within United Regional Lab and United Regional Health Care System, and evaluations collected from students, graduates, employers, and faculty

Train students to be competent and compassionate medical laboratory scientists and give them the tools to succeed in the field at the bench level and beyond

Support United Regional Lab, the greater Wichita Falls area, and our profession by graduating skilled medical laboratory scientists

Graduate Competencies

Upon completion of the Medical Laboratory Science Program, a graduate will meet the following entry level competencies:

A. Professional Behaviors and Communication

1. Demonstrate professional and ethical behavior along with effective interpersonal communication skills when engaging with various stakeholders.
2. Establish effective interprofessional working relationships with other healthcare professionals, demonstrating comprehension of and respect for their roles and patient welfare
3. Value and advocate for a workplace environment that fosters inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

B. Safety & Compliance

1. Comply with government regulations and accreditation standards relevant to the respective discipline.
2. Adhere to prescribed protocols for overall laboratory safety, biohazard containment, and waste disposal.
3. Implement quality assurance principles to ensure the validity and accuracy of laboratory-generated data.

C. Education & Research

1. Acknowledge and respond to individual requirements for continuing education and development to foster growth and maintain professional competence.
2. Provide instruction to users of laboratory services regarding appropriate procedures, test utilization and interpretation.
3. Evaluate clinical research studies and data sets to assess applicability and validity

D. Laboratory Operations

1. Employ a logical and systematic problem-solving approach when identifying errors and/or technical issues with laboratory procedures and instrumentation.
2. Apply principles of data security to safeguard laboratory and hospital information systems.
3. Apply principles of quality assurance to ensure validity and accuracy of laboratory data.
4. Recognize principles and practices of laboratory management as applied to clinical laboratory science.

E. Pre-Analytical Competencies

1. Evaluate specimen collection, processing, and storage procedures in accordance with standard operating procedures.
2. Ensure specimen integrity is maintained throughout the sample procurement process.

F. Analytical Competencies

1. Adhere to written policies, processes, and procedures for analytical testing, analysis, and instrumentation maintenance.
2. Evaluate and provide rationale for troubleshooting protocols in analytical testing when appropriate.
3. Perform routine procedures in accordance with standard operating procedures.
4. Apply quality control principles to analytical testing procedures, including instrument calibration, statistical analyses of control results, Westgard rules, and verification of reference ranges.
5. Perform basic calculations, dilutions, and statistical analyses for procedures and analytical testing in the respective discipline.
6. Apply theoretical principles of instrumentation to current methods of analysis

G. Post Analytical Competencies

1. Perform all post-analytical procedures in accordance with quality assurance protocols and regulatory standards.
2. Evaluate results for accuracy relative to quality control, patient history, specimen integrity, and overall clinical correlation.
3. Report test results, including abnormal, STAT, and critical values, in accordance with the laboratory's standard operating procedures

Outcomes & Accreditation

The United Regional Health Care System Medical Laboratory Science Program is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS). More information can be found at naacls.org or by emailing info@naacls.org. NAACLS can also be reached at:

National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)
5600 N. River Road
Suite 720
Rosemount, IL 60018-5119

Phone: 773-714-8880

Fax: 773-714-8886

Program Outcomes

	2022	2023	2024	3-year average
Graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%
BOC pass rate	50%	100%	80%	80%
Job placement rate	75%	100%	100%	93%

Admissions Criteria

Applicants must possess a degree in biology, chemistry, or a related field **OR** be eligible for a Bachelor of Science degree in MLS, Biology, Chemistry, or a related field from an affiliated university upon completion of the URHCS Medical Laboratory Science Program. Required prerequisite coursework is as follows:

- 16 hours in Biology including a Microbiology course with a lab. Immunology is strongly recommended but not required.
- 16 hours in Chemistry including one semester of Biochemistry or Organic chemistry, preferably including a lab.
- 6 hours of math including college algebra or higher and a statistics course

A minimum overall **AND** science (biology, chemistry, and physics) GPA of 2.5 is required for admission.

Applicants must have all required documents submitted before midnight of the application deadline. Required documents include:

[Digital Application](#)

Official Transcripts

[GPA Calculation & Coursework Verification Worksheet](#)

Letter of Intent

Three Confidential Recommendation forms

Links to the Digital Application and GPA worksheet can be found on the program website. Official transcripts and the letter of intent should be submitted to mlsprogram@unitedregional.org. Confidential Recommendation forms are digital; links to the forms are sent to references listed by the student on the digital application.

Hospital Onboarding

All students must complete hospital onboarding before the first day of class. This includes a background check, drug screening, TB screening, color-vision testing, and mask fitting. Students in the January cohort must fulfill Employee Health's influenza vaccination requirement. This requirement can be met by receiving a flu shot during onboarding, receiving a flu shot before onboarding and providing documentation, or completing an exemption form at Employee Health during onboarding. Students will also be asked to submit a picture that will be used for their badge.

After completion of the Employee Health portion of the onboarding process (drug screen, mask fit, color-blind test, TB screening), students will be required to attend hospital-wide orientation. The Employee Health portion of onboarding will take place on the Monday before the first day of class.

Essential Functions

The ability to perform certain essential tasks is necessary for all students entering the URHCS MLS Program. The function of these tasks is essential for successfully completing the clinical education component. These essential functions are based upon the specialized nature of the work in the profession of medical laboratory science and are aligned with the job performance standards for an employed medical laboratory scientist. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate any disabilities to allow for the performance of these essential functional tasks.

To perform essential functions the student shall possess:

1. The ability to read and write
2. Visual acuity to discriminate color in urine chemistry reactions, chemical reactions, and microscopic identification of cell morphology, special stains, etc.
3. Adequate motor skills to perform phlebotomy procedures, instrument calibration and maintenance, delicate sampling procedures, a variety of manual, semi-automated, and automated analytical procedures, and computer keyboarding

4. Physical ability to tolerate long periods of standing
5. Physical strength for light lifting of weights of 25 pounds or less from the floor to waist level
6. Communication skills necessary to interact effectively with instructors, physicians, patients, and other members of the health care team in or person or via telephone
7. Demonstrated maturity and mental stability to function effectively under stress

A student who fails to meet the above essential functions may be denied admission to the program.

Advanced Placement

All students accepted into the URHCS MLS Program must complete the full curriculum regardless of previous experience.

Immunizations

Hepatitis B

- Students are required to have a complete series of Hepatitis B vaccine prior to the start of direct patient care in accordance with Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.64.

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)

- MMR vaccination is required for students according to Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.64.
- Students born on or after January 1, 1957 acceptable evidence of vaccination of two doses of a measles-containing vaccine administered since January 1, 1968 (preferably MMR vaccine).
- Students born on or after January 1, 1957, must show acceptable evidence of vaccination of two doses of a mumps vaccine.
- Students must show acceptable evidence of one dose of rubella vaccine.

Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis Vaccine (Tdap)

- Tdap is required for students according to Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.64.
- Students must show receipt of one dose of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis vaccine (Tdap). In addition, one dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine must have been received within the last ten years. Td vaccine is an acceptable substitute, if Tdap vaccine is medically contraindicated.

Varicella Vaccine

- Varicella Vaccine is required for students according to Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.64.
- Students are required to have received two doses of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine

Required Documentation

For those vaccines required by Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.64, students must provide proof of vaccination, verification of immunity, or verification of history of illness.

Proof of vaccination should be in the form of a shot record. The month, day, and year of each shot should be documented and should be accompanied by the signature or stamp of the physician or physician's designee, or public health personnel

- Immunization records generated from electronic health record systems must include clinic contact information and the provider's signature/stamp
- An official immunization record generated from a state or local health authority is acceptable
- An official record received from school officials, including a record from another state, is acceptable

Serologic confirmations of immunity to measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis B, or varicella are acceptable. Evidence of measles, rubella, mumps, or hepatitis B, or varicella illnesses must consist of a valid laboratory report that indicates confirmation of either immunity or infection

A written statement from a parent (or legal guardian or managing conservator), school nurse, or physician attesting to a child's/student's positive history of varicella disease (chickenpox), or of varicella immunity, is acceptable in lieu of a vaccine record for that disease (see form at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/docs/c-9.pdf>)

In Texas, shot records are available at the Public Health Department in the county where the vaccination was administered. Students that are having difficulty obtaining their shot records are directed to consult with the MLS Program Director (see below)

Exemptions

Influenza vaccine exemption requests are handled by Employee Health

For those vaccines required by Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.64, students can claim an exemption for medical reasons or reasons of conscience

- To claim an exclusion for medical reasons, the child or student must present an exemption statement to the school or child-care facility, dated and signed by a physician (M.D. or D.O.), properly licensed and in good standing in any state in the United States who has examined the student. The statement must state that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.
- To claim an exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student must present to the Program Director a signed and notarized affidavit on a form provided by the department of state health services (DSHS) stating that the student declines vaccinations for reasons of conscience, including because of the person's religious beliefs. The affidavit will be valid for a two-year period from the date of notarization. A student who has not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of DSHS.

A person claiming exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, from a required immunization may only obtain the affidavit form by submitting a request (via online, fax, mail, or hand-delivery) to DSHS

Requests for affidavit forms can be made through the DSHS Immunization program website (at www.ImmunizeTexas.com)

Provisional Enrollment

A student may be provisionally enrolled if the student has received at least one dose of each specified vaccine prior to enrollment and goes on to complete each vaccination series as rapid as medically feasible in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule as approved by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). However, the provisionally enrolled student may not participate in coursework activities involving potential contact with blood or body fluids until the full vaccination series has been administered.

- Although provisionally enrolled, lack of vaccination will prevent the student from participating in certain activities within the didactic section of the program. This lack of participation will count against the student's grades. Students cannot begin clinical rotations without meeting the vaccination requirements.

Students that are unable to provide adequate documentation of vaccination or verification of immunity/history of illness can receive the Hepatitis B vaccine and Tdap vaccine from Employee Health free of charge. Free and low-cost vaccines for adults without insurance are available the Wichita County Public Health Department.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the MLS Program is designed to prepare students to successfully pass their certification exams and to enter the workforce as competent medical laboratory scientists. The 25-week didactic portion consists of lectures and student labs that will give students the background knowledge and basic skills necessary to succeed in clinical rotations. The 26-week clinical rotation functions as a clinical internship. Students work on real patient samples with their clinical preceptor. Clinical rotations provide students with practical training that prepares them to enter the workforce after graduation. Credit/contact hours are as follows:

Didactic

- MLS 4000 Introduction to Medical Laboratory Sciences (1.6/68)
- MLS 4001 Clinical Hematology & Hemostasis (4.6/202)
- MLS 4002 Body Fluid Analysis (1.6/68)
- MLS 4003 Clinical Chemistry (3.2/144)
- MLS 4004 Blood Banking (3.6/153)
- MLS 4005 Microbiology (5.4/240)

Didactic total – 20 credit hours*/875 contact hours

Clinical Rotations

- MLS 4101 Phlebotomy Practicum (1/40)
- MLS 4102 Hematology Practicum (4/200)
- MLS 4103 Clinical Chemistry Practicum (5/240)
- MLS 4104 Blood Banking Practicum (4/200)
- MLS 4105 Microbiology Practicum (8/320)

Clinical Total – 22 credit hours*/1000 contact hours

*These are the recommended credit hours. Universities may grant a different number of credit hours for each course.

Textbooks

Students are expected to purchase a textbook for each of the didactic courses except for Intro to MLS. Students may purchase print or ebook versions and may purchase older editions if they choose. Students should purchase a copy of the following texts:

- Modern Blood Banking and Transfusion Practices by Denise M Harmening (F.A. Davis)
- Koneman's Color Atlas and Textbook of Diagnostic Microbiology (J&B Learning)
- Clinical Laboratory Hematology by McKenzie & Williams (Pearson)
- Clinical Chemistry: Principles, Techniques, and Correlations (Bishop)
- Urinalysis and Body Fluids by Strasinger & Di Lorenzo (F.A. Davis)

Students will be provided classroom copies of the texts used in Intro to MLS

Course Descriptions

MLS 4000 Introduction to Medical Laboratory Science – Introductory course that includes general hospital orientation led by United Regional's Human Resources department. Topics include laboratory management, laboratory safety, lab basics and mathematics, and a review of the basic principles of immunology and molecular biology.

MLS 4001 Clinical Hematology & Hemostasis – This course is a comprehensive study of the human hematopoietic system and its relationship to other organ systems. Introduction to the theory and practical application of routine and special hematology procedures, both manual and automated, red blood cell and white blood cell maturation sequences, normal and abnormal morphology, and associated diseases. Includes morphological and biochemical relationships of erythropoiesis and leukopoiesis in healthy vs. disease states, as well as the performance and application of current methods in hematologic analysis, and technology. Labs include slide preparation and staining, examination of normal peripheral smears, and examination of abnormal differentials.

MLS 4002 Body Fluid Analysis – This course covers the formation and characteristics of various body fluids including urine, serous fluid, synovial fluid, and semen. General characteristics, pathologies, and principles of analysis are studied for each body fluid. Labs include chamber counts and body fluid differentials.

MLS 4003 Clinical Chemistry – This course is a comprehensive study of the chemistry of the human blood and body fluids and its relationship to other organ systems. The course involves introduction to the theory and practical application of routine and special chemistry procedures, including manual and automated tests. The performance and application of current methods and technology in chemical analysis of blood and other body fluids is analyzed. Labs include basic pipetting practices, spectrophotometry, and osmometry.

MLS 4004 Blood Banking – This course involves the student in the study of blood antigens and antibodies. The topics to be covered include donor screening, preparation of components, antigens and antibodies of the ABO, Rh and other blood group systems, pretransfusion testing procedures, hemolytic disease of the newborn, neonatal and obstetrical transfusion practice, autoimmune hemolytic anemias, and adverse effects of transfusion. Labs include basic tube typing and antibody identification.

MLS 4005 Clinical Microbiology – This course is a comprehensive look at clinically relevant microbes including bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses. Topics include bacterial identification, antimicrobial susceptibility testing, parasitic life cycles, fungal identification, and basic virology. Labs include basic plating techniques, simulated plate reading, and bacterial unknowns.

MLS 4101 Phlebotomy Practicum – Students will spend one week training in phlebotomy at the reference lab draw station located on Barnett Road. Students are expected to complete 50 sticks during their phlebotomy rotation.

MLS 4102 Hematology & Hemostasis Practicum – Five-week rotation in the Hematology department at United Regional Lab. Students will be trained on manual and automated methods for hematology, urinalysis, and coagulation. This includes training in cell counts and differentials, urine sediment identification, reagent preparation, and quality control.

MLS 4103 Clinical Chemistry Practicum – Six-week rotation in the Chemistry department at United Regional Lab. Students will get hands on experience in quality control procedures, instrument maintenance, laboratory automation and informatics.

MLS 4104 Blood Banking Practicum – Five-week rotation in the Blood Bank at United Regional Lab. Students will get hands on experience in tube and gel typing, antibody screening and identification, unit preparation and release, inventory management, and quality control.

MLS 4105 Clinical Microbiology Practicum – Eight-week rotation in the Microbiology department at United Regional Lab. Students get hands on experience in culture set up and interpretation, bacterial identification, various molecular techniques, and quality control.

Other Didactic Requirements

Students are allotted one hour of self-study time at the end of each day during the didactic portion. This time is used to complete various assignments including procedure quizzes and weekly slides. Students must read and complete a short quiz over all relevant procedures before beginning clinicals; a complete list will be provided during the first week of class. White blood cell differentials and direct Gram stains are assigned on a weekly basis. Students must complete 100 differentials and 50 Gram stains before beginning clinicals. Students will also be required to complete a presentation on medical ethics. Details for this project are given during the first week of class.

Fees & Scholarships

The MLS Program does not charge tuition. Students are responsible for purchasing their own scrubs, school supplies, and required textbooks. 3+1 students may be charged tuition by their university. All students are afforded a \$125 monthly stipend. All students are offered a \$5000 scholarship contingent on their agreement to work for United Regional for one year after graduation and to obtain certification within six months of graduation.

General Policies

Students of the MLS Program are expected to adhere to the United Regional Employee Handbook as outlined in general orientation. Students can access the Employee Handbook or full versions of MLS Program specific policies at any time through PolicyStat. Brief descriptions of MLS Program policies are provided below.

Attendance

Attendance is tracked throughout students' time in the program. Students are afforded five (5) personal days. Advance notice must be given before using one of these days. Students must provide a doctor's note if they miss class because of an illness. Students are considered late if they are more than 7 minutes late to class or clinicals. Students may be placed on academic probation if they have more than five (5) unexcused absences or late arrivals.

Academic Probation

Students unable to maintain an average of C, or B if on scholarship, during the didactic portion or during clinical rotations may be placed on academic probation. A student placed on academic probation will be given a set time to improve their performance and may be removed from the program if they fail to do so. The student will have a right to appeal this decision to the Program Director and Laboratory Director.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and professional manner. Any student that fails to do so may be removed from the program. Behaviors that may result in dismissal include; alcohol or drug use during clinical hours, academic dishonesty, and serious violations of safety policies.

Student Records

Student records are maintained by the Director and Assistant Director. Students may review their grades and evaluations at any time. These records will not be released to a third party unless written consent is given by the student.

Inclement Weather

The MLS Program will follow MSU and WFISD in declaring inclement weather days. During the didactic portion, students will not be expected to attend class on an inclement weather day. During clinical rotations, students are treated as essential employees and must make arrangements to attend clinicals. United Regional provides a ride service on inclement weather days that students can utilize.

Academic Advising and Confidentiality Policy

Students of the URHCS MLS Program have the opportunity to work closely with the Director and Assistant Director and are encouraged to seek their guidance whenever the need arises. The MLS Program staff is dedicated to maintaining the confidentiality of its students and ensuring that all students get equal and impartial academic guidance. No student records will be released to a third party without written consent from the student

Student Service Work Policy

Students may have the opportunity to be employed in the laboratory as an uncertified MLS under the guidelines listed below. The number of hours will be limited, and the student must continue to maintain grades above the minimum level designated in the Grading Policy.

Students who do work are employed using the following guidelines:

1. Student service work outside of clinical hours is noncompulsory
2. Students will not be substituted for staff during their clinical hours
3. The hours worked by the student must be available hours, budgeted and approved by the Laboratory Director.
4. A qualified laboratory technologist must be present during the hours the student is working in an approved area.
5. The number of hours worked by the student shall NOT exceed 16 hours per week per student.
6. The student's hours of work shall NOT interfere with or conflict with the hours the student spends in class.

7. The student MUST obtain approval from the Laboratory Director and Program Director before beginning work.
8. The student's grades must be maintained at a level of 70% or approval to work will be withdrawn.

Inactive Status, Closure of the Program, or Loss of Rotation Site

In the event that program officials or URHCS administration decide that the program will go inactive or close, faculty, applicants, current and incoming students, and academic affiliates, will be notified within 7 working days of the decision and effective date. Inactive status or closure will in no way affect students currently enrolled in the program or those already accepted for an upcoming class. Current students will be given adequate time to complete the program curriculum. Inactive status or closure will not affect a current student's eligibility to take the national certifying examination. The procedure for inactive status and closure of the program is detailed in the program's Policy and Procedures Manual.

The program will not accept more students than availability of rotation sites.

Student Academic Grievance Procedure

Anything in the clinical setting that is a cause for distress, a reason for complaint, or a feeling of having been treated unfairly can be defined as a "grievance". Although every effort should be made to find a suitable solution to a problem by informal means, the student has the option to use the Grievance Policy. If he/she disagrees with a decision made by a member of the MLS School faculty that concerns their progress in the program, the student and faculty are encouraged to handle the situation promptly. This ensures that the problem will be dealt with according to its severity at the time of the occurrence. The following steps should be followed:

1. Discuss the grievance with the instructor involved.
2. If a satisfactory result is not obtained, or if the student does not wish to discuss the grievance with the instructor, the student should request a meeting with the Program Director. If the grievance involves the Program Director, a meeting should be requested with the Lab Director.
3. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she may request a meeting with the Grievance Committee. This request must be made in writing and directed to the Program Director. The request must (a) state the facts on which the grievance is based, (b) state the remedy or corrective action requested, and (c) be signed by the student.

The student will be notified within 5 working days after the receipt of the request of the date and time of the meeting of the Grievance Committee. The decision of the Grievance Committee shall be final.

The Grievance Committee is made up of (1) a member of the laboratory administrative staff (Medical Director, Program Director or Laboratory Director not involved in the grievance), (2) a faculty member not involved in the grievance, and (3) an ad hoc (non-voting) University Representative if requested by the student.

Student Appeals Process

The purpose of the Appeals Board shall be to:

1. Re-evaluate the grievances and documentation of the dismissal decision and the student's appeal;
2. Uphold or rescind the dismissal decision;
3. Cite the conditions for readmittance and the allowable time frame if applicable;
4. Ensure conditions have been met by means of a follow-up report for the student file at a specified date; and
5. Write a summarized report to be dated and signed by the board members, the Program Director and the Student in triplicate.

Membership of the appeals board

The Appeals Board shall consist of 3 voting members selected from the following: (1) college advisors, (2) MLS students, (3) clinical faculty members, and (4) laboratory medical staff. These members shall be appointed by the Program Director, shall not have been involved in any incidents leading to the student's dismissal from the program and be subject to approval by the student. Different members shall be selected for each appeal.

The Appeals Procedure

1. An appeal may be made as a direct response to dismissal as a result of failing grades, conduct, behavior, or attitudes contrary to the student's professional responsibilities or hospital policies.
2. The request for an appeal must be made in writing to the Program Director or Medical Director within 10 "working" days after the dismissal decision.
3. The request will state (a) the basis on which the appeal is made and (b) the remedy or correction requested of the Advisory Board. (c) The appeal must be signed by the student.
4. The student will be notified by the Advisory Board in writing of the date and time for the meeting within 5 "working" days after the receipt of the request. The meeting will be held at the earliest possible date for all the board members.
5. The student shall be notified in writing of the Advisory Board's decision within 5 "working" days. The decision of the board shall include: (a) a statement upholding or rescinding the dismissal action, (b) recommendations including specific dates for actions, if applicable, and (c) a specific date for a follow-up report to be made by the board if the decision or recommendations warrant.

6. A summary of the appeals process and its recommendations will be sent to the student, the Program Director, and a copy will be placed in the student's file.
7. The Advisory Board's decision shall be final.

Student Disciplinary & Dismissal Policy

This policy/procedure defines disciplinary actions to be taken when a student's actions are either academically or behaviorally unacceptable for the Program. A log of student errors, misconduct and any other issues shall be maintained in each department. This will facilitate the processes listed below.

1. **Academic Probation:** A student will be placed on academic probation if they have average grades below 70% in any area considered to be a major component of the program. Major components include: Hematology, Clinical Chemistry, Blood bank, and Microbiology didactic sections, the comprehensive final exam in the didactic portion, departmental rotations in Hematology, Chemistry, Blood bank, or Microbiology. The student will be placed on probation for a maximum of four weeks or until he/she raises the grade. The student will not receive their student stipend during this time. The student will be given the opportunity to improve their performance by the following means: make up exams and extra work in the didactic portion, extended departmental rotations if scheduling allows, time on 2nd shift or weekend shifts outside of normal clinical rotation hours. The student should be made aware of areas that need improvement before being placed on academic probation. In the didactic portion students will be regularly updated on their performance. In clinical rotations, students will be evaluated on a weekly basis. Performance issues that may lead to academic probation should be addressed in these weekly evaluations. If satisfactory performance is not evident at the end of the academic probation period, dismissal will be considered.
2. **Professional Behavior Probation:** A student will be placed on probation if their attitude, conduct, or behavior is inconsistent with hospital and/or laboratory policies, or inconsistent with the professional role expected of a Medical Laboratory Scientist. The student will not receive their student stipend during this time.
3. **Professional Behavior Suspension:** If the student's attitude, conduct, or behavior has jeopardized patient care or well-being, the student may be placed on temporary suspension of 3 days. The Advisory board will decide if the student's actions warrant suspension. The student may also be placed on Professional Behavior Probation and will not be paid their stipend until reinstated. The student will be responsible for making up any tests, quizzes, etc. These will be made up on the student's own time after hours or on weekends with the appropriate faculty supervision.
4. **Dismissal:** A student who is in danger of failing a major component of the program or who violates student conduct policy can be considered for dismissal. Dismissal will only be considered if:

1. The student is warned of his/her standing by their instructor before failing a major component of the program.
2. If a lack of improvement is noted and the student fails a major component of the program, a conference is held with the student, the instructor, and the Program Director where the student will be notified that they are being placed on academic probation. The student will be made aware of areas that need to be improved and provided with the parameters of their academic probation. A counseling report is placed in the student's file, and the student is placed on academic probation.
3. Additional assignments or time in departmental rotations will be assigned as outlined in the above section. The student will be regularly updated on their probationary status through weekly meetings with the Program Director/Assistant Program Director. If at the end of the students' academic probation, they have not made satisfactory improvements, they will be considered for dismissal.
4. Students may be considered for immediate dismissal when their presence constitutes a significant problem for the hospital. Attitudes, conduct, or behavior not consistent with the hospital policies, (examples are in the United Regional Health Care System Employee Handbook), or not consistent with the professional role expected of a Medical Laboratory Scientist are grounds for dismissal.
5. Reinstatement: A student whose training was terminated due to unsatisfactory progress or excessive absences may be readmitted the following year after appealing for re-evaluation by the Advisory Board. A period of probation may be set up by the board at the beginning of the reinstatement requiring the student to show satisfactory progress during this period. The student will be notified in writing of the decision of the Advisory Board.

Student Conduct Policy

In accordance with the United Regional Health Care System (URHCS) employee handbook and URHCS policies, the School of Medical Laboratory Science seeks to establish and maintain standards of conduct, which will support effective and efficient daily operations. Such procedure includes the administration of equitable and consistent student discipline. Discipline may be progressive or immediate depending on the infraction. The purpose of discipline is to assist the student and provide constructive efforts toward achieving satisfactory standards of conduct. Each student is responsible for understanding and following policies, practices, procedures, laws, regulations, standards, and work rules (see hospital policies). Students failing to meet expectations of performance or conduct and who do not follow such guidance will be disciplined via verbal counseling, written counseling, probation, suspension and/or dismissal as outlined in the Disciplinary Policy/Procedure in the Student Policy Manual.

The following are examples of causes for student discipline, up to and including dismissal.

1. Any form of dishonesty, including, but not limited to any theft of property from URHCS or the URHCS School of Medical Laboratory Science.
2. Intoxication while on the job, or the unauthorized bringing of intoxicating beverages on premises. Possessing, using, selling or being under the influence of narcotics, marijuana, or other illegal substances (including the misuse of prescription medication) on URHCS premises or while representing the URHCS School of Medical Laboratory Science.
3. Any form, regardless of how subtle, of solicitation for personal gifts or tips from patients or their families.
4. Being discourteous to the public, patients, physicians, fellow employees, or students.
5. Violation of laws, workplace ethics, or hospital ethics.
6. Insubordination, including willful negligence or refusal to perform student work in the manner in which it was assigned.
7. Disregarding the Absenteeism/Tardiness Policy of the URHCS School of Medical Laboratory Science.
8. Threat voiced or inferred against anyone in the URHCS organization; patients, visitors, employees working with the student or otherwise affiliated with the School of Medical Laboratory Science.
9. Releasing confidential information without appropriate authorization.
10. Willful intent to injure self, other students, patients, or employees.
11. Unauthorized presence at URHCS property when not scheduled for classes; or presence in an unauthorized area at any time.
12. Possession of prohibited and/or concealed weapons of any kind.
13. Racial or sexual harassment, or any other workplace harassment in violation of laws and regulations.
14. Unauthorized sleeping while in class or clinical rotation.
15. Gambling on URHCS premises.
16. Conviction of criminal offenses or performing verified acts of a criminal nature.
17. Violation of safety rules, creating an unsafe environment, or performing an unsafe act, which jeopardizes employees, students, visitors, physicians, or patients.
18. Use of tobacco in any building or smoking in unauthorized areas.
19. Leaving assignment or workstation for any reason without permission of bench instructor (immediate supervisor) and/or Program Director.
20. Multiple instances of various infractions or repeated instances of the same infraction.
21. Repeated instances of inadequate response to counseling by instructors and/or Program Director.
22. Falsification of any information in an application for scholarship or to the school.
23. Fighting, horseplay, or otherwise engaging in activities which might cause injury to workers, patients, visitors, or physicians.

24. Failing to treat others with respect and courtesy, including the failure to show appropriate respect for bench supervisors, faculty, Program Director, and Medical Director.
25. Failure to adhere to the school's verbal and written policies, procedures, and practices; or laws and regulations, or other standards implied via the ongoing consistent practices of URHCS

Academic Calendar

The MLS Program operates on a year-round basis and does not follow the typical academic calendar of quarters and semesters. Classes begin in January and July of each year. The January class will begin on the 2nd or 3rd Monday of each year and end on the 1st or 2nd Friday of January the following year. The July class will begin on the 2nd Monday of July and end on the 1st or 2nd Friday of July the following year. The MLS Program observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Students are off on all recognized holidays and are afforded one week for Spring break (2nd week of March) and up to one week for Winter break (students are off between Christmas day and New Year's Day)

Grading Policies

Didactic

Student grades are assigned based on the accumulation of points throughout the program. A student's letter grade is based on the percentage of points they earned from the total points possible. Students must achieve a 70% or greater to advance to clinical rotations.

Clinical Rotations

Each clinical rotation is worth up to 1000 points except for phlebotomy which is worth 500. Each department has its own grading policies. For departments in which a number grade is given, the number is multiplied by 10 (i.e. a grade of 92% in a department will be worth 920 points). For departments in which no number grade is given, points will be assigned based on weekly evaluations. Students must achieve a 70% or greater to advance to their next clinical rotation.

Final Grade

Students will receive a final overall grade based on the percentage of points they earned from the total points possible. Final student grades will be used to determine priority in shift assignments for those students that go on to work at United Regional after graduation.

Student Progress and Graduation

Students must achieve a C (70%) in each section of the didactic and clinical portions of the program to progress through the program and ultimately graduate. Upon graduation, students will be eligible to take the ASCP Board of Certification exam. Graduation from the program and granting of a degree or certificate is not contingent upon obtaining any external certification.

Commitment to Fair Practices

The ability to meet our obligations to patients and the community largely depends upon attracting and developing competent, loyal employees. When you accept a position at United Regional Health Care System (URHCS), be it as a student or employee, you assume responsibilities to our patients, your peers, the staff, the public and URHCS as an institution. URHCS and the Medical Laboratory Science Program strive to:

1. Recognize and respect each student and employee as distinct individuals.
2. Promote the spirit of cooperation and teamwork between many different clinical areas and personnel throughout the hospital as a whole.
3. Communicate the System's policies, plans, and events and encourage a free flow of information up, down and across the organizational lines of the hospital.
4. Assure that the students have a meaningful grievance procedure.

Previous classes

















