VANDERBILT HEALTH

Center for Programs in Allied Health

Medical Laboratory Science Program

Program Handbook
2026-2027

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO STUDENTS:

All students enrolled in VUMC Center for Programs in Allied Health (CPiAH) programs are bound by all VUMC, CPiAH, and Program policies. By enrolling in a CPiAH program, every student acknowledges his or her responsibility to abide by and adhere to all institutional and programmatic policies and procedures. Students therefore have the responsibility of being familiar with the policies and procedures described in the Program Handbook, in the Catalog of the Center for Programs in Allied Health, and on the CPIAH and respective program's websites.

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Program Information Provided by the CPiAH Catalog

The Catalog of the Center for Programs in Allied Health (CPiAH) contains information about Vanderbilt University Medical Center, the Center for Programs in Allied Health, and this program specifically.

Students are advised to refer to the CPiAH Catalog to obtain the following information about this program:

- Program Description
- Certification/Credentialing Information
- Mission, Credo and Goals
- Accreditation and Approvals
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INTRODUCTION TO THE DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORIES

Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories

The Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories operate on-campus within Vanderbilt University Medical Center and its MetroCenter location on Great Circle Road. The Laboratories operate 24 hours/day and 7 days/week to provide quality and timely results to promote patient care through accurate diagnostic, prognostic, and treatment information. The Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories are accredited by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) and licensed by the State of Tennessee. The laboratories meet all State and federal CLIA guidelines and are included in Vanderbilt Healths's accreditation from The Joint Commission. The Transfusion Medicine department is also accredited by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The primary goal of the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories is to provide excellence in patient care services. To accomplish this goal, laboratory testing is provided through the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories located in The Vanderbilt Clinic and MetroCenter; Anatomic pathology located in Medical Center North, Vanderbilt University Hospital (VUH), and MetroCenter; and point of care testing (POCT) located throughout Vanderbilt Health. The Department offers a full range of Anatomic and Clinical Pathology services to meet the needs of VUH and the surrounding community.

Anatomic Pathology Services
Neuropathology
Electron Microscopy
Histopathology Renal Pathology Surgical Pathology
Autopsy Service
Cytopathology

Clinical Pathology Services
Blood Bank/Transfusion Medicine
Point-of-Care Testing
Special Chemistry (Esoteric Chemistry and Toxicology)
Rapid Response Laboratory
Cytogenetics
Hematopathology and Flow Cytometry
Immunoserology
Microbiology (including Mycology, Mycobacteriology, and Molecular Infectious Disease)
Molecular Infectious Disease
Core Laboratory (including Chemistry, Urinalysis, Body Fluids, Hematology, and Hemostasis/Coagulation)
Molecular Diagnostics
Clinical Genomics
Histocompatibility Testing

Program of Medical Laboratory Science

The VUMC Program of Medical Laboratory Science was originally sponsored by the Veterans Administration Hospital and graduated its first class in 1954. Sponsorship transferred to Vanderbilt University Hospital in 1968. The program remained with Vanderbilt University Medical Center when the university and medical center split into separate organizations in 2016, and the program has been in continuous operation since transferring to Vanderbilt.

The program is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) and is licensed to operate by the State of Tennessee, Department of Health and Environment as required by the Tennessee Laboratory Act. (Contact information for NAACLS: 5600 N. River Road, Suite 720, Rosemont, IL 60018, www.naacls.org 733.714.8880. Contact information for the State Medical Laboratory Board: http://health.state.tn.us/Boards/MedLab/)

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

We support excellence in patient care and safety by providing accurate and timely laboratory information and services to improve the health of the individuals and communities we serve. As a leading academic medical center laboratory, we advance knowledge and the development of medical professionals through the Vanderbilt University Medical Center pillar goals of people, service, quality, growth and finance, and innovation.

Our program's mission is to cultivate a generation of highly skilled and compassionate medical laboratory scientists through comprehensive education and practical training within a hospital-based setting. We are committed to fostering a learning environment that promotes excellence, integrity, and innovation in laboratory medicine. Our program aims to equip students with the knowledge, critical thinking abilities, and technical proficiency necessary to excel in the dynamic field of medical laboratory science. By instilling a dedication to patient care, ethical practice, and continuous professional development, we aspire to empower graduates to positively impact healthcare outcomes and contribute to the advancement of medical science. The Medical Laboratory Science Program strives to maintain a quality education program to accomplish the following outcomes.

To provide proficient employees with advanced knowledge and skills for diagnostic laboratories at VUMC and other healthcare organizations.

Students perform high throughput and high complexity testing on a diverse patient population after training in VUMC's medical laboratories. Students become familiar with VUMC policies and procedures, preparing them to begin training as employees immediately after graduation. This integration of students in the VUMC laboratory environment decreases the expenses VUMC pays in recruitment and employee selection. Students who choose to work at other health care organizations after graduation apply the knowledge and experiences from the program to work in a fast-paced environment of varying complexities.

To provide a stimulating learning environment for students and laboratory staff.

Being involved in laboratory education provides an atmosphere in which laboratory professionals are pushed to maintain knowledge of current theory and testing procedures. Employees are challenged to investigate new and emerging trends in the field, positively affecting patient care. Interacting with students also allows employees to improve their skills in communication and instruction.

To maintain a source of professionals who constantly and consistently bring new knowledge into the laboratory field to drive change in health care.

Stagnation, job dissatisfaction, and burnout are reduced in the laboratory by providing a constant source of new professionals to alleviate staffing issues. These new professionals are motivated to learn and support patient care and laboratory testing. Laboratory professionals engage and share knowledge with students, ensuring that the students will have current, practical knowledge upon entering the workforce. Students also participate in seminar activities that prepare them to be leaders in their selected focus after graduation. Graduates of the program are encouraged to participate in professional organizations and other activities to influence the direction and remain on the forefront of their chosen career.

Our Values

Patient-focused service: We demonstrate care and compassion for our patients.
Professionalism: We act with respect, commitment, and integrity, and value each of our colleagues.
Safety: We promote a culture of patient and employee safety.
Quality: We are committed to accuracy, reliability, and continuous process improvement.
Growth and advancement: We advance healthcare through education, discovery, and innovation.

PROGRAM GOALS AND COMPETENCIES

The Medical Laboratory Science Program at Vanderbilt University Medical Center bases its educational program on principles essential to the preparation of students to achieve the ideals of the profession. The VUMC Medical Laboratory Science program strives to instill the following goals in each student through teaching and experiential learning:

1. **Goal 1: Proficiency in Laboratory Techniques and Procedures**
    - Perform laboratory tests of moderate and high complexity accurately and efficiently.
    - Demonstrate proficiency in specimen collection, processing, analysis, and interpretation of results.
    - Utilize laboratory instrumentation and technology effectively to conduct tests and troubleshoot equipment issues.
2. **Goal 2: Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills**
    - Apply critical thinking skills to analyze laboratory data, identify patterns, and draw appropriate conclusions.
    - Troubleshoot technical issues encountered during laboratory procedures and propose solutions.
    - Evaluate the reliability and validity of laboratory results, recognizing potential sources of error and taking corrective actions.
3. **Goal 3: Knowledge of Laboratory Sciences**
    - Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the principles, theories, and concepts underlying laboratory sciences, including biochemistry, microbiology, hematology, immunology, and clinical chemistry.
    - Apply knowledge of human anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology to laboratory practice and interpretation of laboratory results.
    - Stay updated with advancements in laboratory medicine, research methodologies, and emerging technologies relevant to the field.

4. **Goal 4: Communication and Interpersonal Skills**
    - Communicate effectively with healthcare professionals, patients, and laboratory staff, demonstrating professionalism, empathy, and cultural sensitivity.
    - Document laboratory procedures, findings, and results accurately and clearly in written reports and electronic medical records.
    - Collaborate with interdisciplinary healthcare teams to ensure accurate diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring of patient conditions.
5. **Goal 5: Professionalism and Ethical Conduct**
    - Adhere to professional standards, codes of ethics, and regulatory requirements governing laboratory practice.
    - Maintain confidentiality of patient information and protect the privacy and rights of individuals in accordance with HIPAA regulations and institutional policies.
    - Demonstrate integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior in all aspects of laboratory practice, including patient care and interactions with colleagues and patients.
6. **Goal 6: Quality Assurance and Laboratory Management**
    - Implement quality control measures and quality assurance protocols to ensure accuracy, precision, and reliability of laboratory results.
    - Participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of laboratory policies, procedures, and protocols.
    - Manage laboratory resources efficiently, including inventory control, equipment maintenance, and compliance with safety regulations.
7. **Goal 7: Lifelong Learning and Professional Development**
    - Engage in continuous professional development activities, such as attending conferences, workshops, and seminars, and pursuing advanced certifications or degrees to navigate changing trends in the profession.
    - Seek opportunities to contribute to the advancement of laboratory medicine and scientific knowledge and to advance within the career.
    - Demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning, self-reflection, and personal growth as a healthcare professional.

Graduate Expectations

Graduates of the VUMC Medical Laboratory Science program will have at least basic knowledge and skills in:

1. Application of safety and governmental regulations and standards within medical laboratory science
2. Principles and practices of professional conduct
3. Communications sufficient to meet the needs of patients, the public, and members of the intra- and interprofessional health care team
4. Principles and practices of administration and supervision as applied to medical laboratory sciences
5. Educational methodologies and terminology sufficient to train and educate users and providers of laboratory services
6. Principles and practices of clinical study design, implementation, and dissemination of results
7. Develop and establish procedures for collecting, processing, and analyzing biological specimens
8. Perform analytical tests on blood, body fluids, cells, and related substances
9. Integrate and relate data generated by the various clinical laboratory departments while making decisions regarding possible diagnostic information and discrepancies
10. Confirm abnormal results, verify and execute quality control procedures, and develop solutions to problems concerning the generation of laboratory data

11. Assess quality control results and quality assurance measures and instituting proper procedures to maintain accuracy and precision
12. Establish and perform preventive and corrective maintenance of equipment and instruments as well as identify appropriate sources for service
13. Develop, evaluate and select new techniques, instruments and methods in terms of their usefulness and practicality within the context of a given laboratory's personnel, equipment, space and budgetary resources
14. Demonstrate professional conduct and interpersonal skills with patients, laboratory personnel, other health care professionals, and the public
15. Establish and maintain continuing education as a function of growth and maintenance of professional competence
16. Provide leadership in the education of other health care professionals and the community
17. Exercise basic principles of management, safety, and supervision
18. Apply principles of educational methodologies and current information systems
19. Demonstrate and promote patient care

Our Vision

Our vision is to be a leader in medical laboratory science education, known for excellence in teaching, opportunities, and service to our patients. Guided by a commitment to innovation, collaboration, and social responsibility, we aspire to empower a diverse community of learners to become transformative leaders and compassionate professionals in the field of laboratory medicine.

Through our visionary approach to education, we seek to inspire a passion for discovery and lifelong learning, equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and ethical values necessary to address the complex challenges facing healthcare today and in the future. We envision a dynamic learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary collaboration, where students are encouraged to explore, innovate, and push the boundaries of scientific inquiry.

Our vision extends beyond the walls of the classroom and laboratory to embrace a commitment to service and social justice. We encourage our graduates to become leaders and advocates for health equity, diversity, and inclusion, dedicated to addressing disparities in healthcare access and outcomes and promoting the well-being of underserved communities locally, nationally, and globally.

As we strive to realize our vision, we are guided by our core values of integrity, compassion, excellence, and collaboration. We envision a future where the impact of our program is felt far and wide, shaping the future of healthcare and positively influencing the lives of countless individuals around the world.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this admissions procedure is to provide a transparent and standardized approach to student recruitment and selection. The procedure ensures that all applicants meet minimum eligibility requirements, and that those eligibility requirements create an environment that fosters learning and attention to patient care.

Application Process

Applications are accepted beginning the first Monday of July each year. A link to an online portal will be displayed on the program's website for students to upload and submit all required application materials and a link to request recommendations from three references. The program administrators will review application materials and update applicants with information regarding their eligibility, application status, and the next steps in the interview and selection process. The program director will schedule interviews with all qualified applicants when all application materials have been received and reviewed.

A final deadline for all materials by the Friday of the second week in November must be met for consideration. This deadline allows program administrators time to review application materials and interview the applicant before the cohort is selected by the program advisory committee in February.

Completed applications and official transcripts are reviewed by program administrators to ensure the applicant meets the minimum requirements for courses and grade point average (GPA). These requirements are as follows:

1. Possession of a baccalaureate degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university or eligible to receive a baccalaureate degree from an academic affiliate school upon completion of the program.
2. Successful completion of at least 90 semester hours (136 quarter hours).
3. A minimum overall GPA of 2.75 or higher and a science (biology and chemistry) GPA of 2.75 or higher.
4. Successful completion of at least 16 semester hours (24 quarter hours) in biological courses, including:
    a. Microbiology
    b. Immunology
5. Successful completion of at least 16 semester hours (24 quarter hours) in chemistry courses, including:
    a. College/General Chemistry I
    b. College/General Chemistry II
    c. At least one course in Organic Chemistry or Biochemistry
6. Successful completion of at least 3 semester hours (4.5 quarter hours) of a mathematics course at the College Algebra level or higher

Applicants are encouraged to update any science coursework that was completed more than seven (7) years prior at the time of applying to the program. Any updated coursework the applicant chooses to retake must be completed at a regionally accredited college or university. Consideration is also provided to applicants who have or are currently working in a science- or healthcare-related field in lieu of retaking older courses.

All applicants who do not meet the requirements will be contacted in writing with the reason(s) for which they do not qualify. All applicants who meet or will meet the minimum requirements before the program begins in June will be invited for an interview. Interviews are conducted until the end of January.

AP, CLEP, and survey courses are not recognized or accepted by the program, in accordance with the Tennessee Medical Laboratory Act.

All courses within the Medical Laboratory Science program are taught in English. Students who have completed postsecondary coursework outside of the United States must either have also completed postsecondary coursework in English, whether in the United States or another English-speaking country, or must submit documentation of English competency in reading and writing through a TOEFL evaluation. The program uses the current minimum scores as required by the VUMC medical school to determine the minimum acceptable score for applicants to be considered for the MLS program.

Interview Process

All qualified applicants will interview with program administrators either in-person or online through Microsoft Teams, as requested by the applicant. All interviewers will complete a standardized evaluation form that relates to the applicant's educational experience, work experience, interest, and knowledge of the Medical Laboratory Science profession, career goals, and personal attributes.

The program administrators will take in-person applicants on a tour of the laboratories and classroom, as available, and will schedule tours for online applicants as requested. The program director will discuss the program's schedule, outline, requirements, and outcomes with each applicant. The program administrators will also explain the student selection process to applicants. Applicants are encouraged to ask questions during the interviews.

Selection Process

The program advisory committee will select 16 students and additional alternates in February each year. Alternates are selected based on the applicant pool and not based on a minimum or maximum number. All applicants who interviewed for the program will be ranked, and information from the application and interview evaluation forms will be compiled as a synopsis for the committee to discuss and select the admitted, alternate, and declined students. All applicants who interviewed for the program will be notified electronically of the committee's decision following the committee meeting in February. Accepted students will be given one month to accept or decline their position in the program, and alternate students are contacted by rank if and when an open position becomes available.

The following are used to determine an applicant's rank for consideration in the program:

1. Average GPA: Mean of Overall GPA and Science GPA. If applicants have retaken any courses, the retaken course is noted on the applicant grade summary sheet, and the most recent grade replaces the original grade for GPA calculations.
    a. Science GPA: GPA of all Biology and Chemistry courses
    b. Overall GPA: The total coursework GPA, excluding physical education courses
2. Reference Average: Mean of total reference scores
3. Interview Average: Mean of total interview scores

Applicants are ranked based on the following weights for each calculation:

1. Reference Average has a weight of 1.
2. Interview Average has a weight of 2.
3. Average GPA has a weight of 2.

Therefore, the final rank for an applicant is determined as

[(2*Average GPA)+(2*Interview Score Average)+(Recommendation Letter Average)]/5

Priority Selection

Applicants may be provided priority selection into the program if and once **ALL** the following requirements are met:

1. The applicant meets all minimum requirements, including the completion of all prerequisite courses before the program begins in June.
2. The applicant completes their interview.
3. The applicant has a total ranked score of 3.60 or greater. Refer to the calculation above for information concerning the ranked score.

Applicants who meet all criteria listed in "Priority Selection" will be notified in writing of their acceptance into the program following the interview and when the final rank calculation is calculated. This process will bypass the typical selection of applicants by the Program Advisory Committee in February, thus providing a "fast track", or priority selection, option in which qualified applicants will be selected for the cohort following their interview and before the annual program advisory committee meeting and student selection in February.

Advanced Placement

In accordance with the Tennessee Medical Laboratory Act, the Medical Laboratory Science program does not grant credit for advanced standing or CLEP courses, nor does it decrease the length of training based on a student's previous experience or coursework. All students must complete the entire program as scheduled.

STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

As a student enrolled in the Medical Laboratory Science program, it is essential to understand and fulfill certain functions to ensure successful participation and completion of the program. These essential functions are necessary for academic and professional success in the field of laboratory medicine. Students must possess, and maintain throughout their time in the program, the ability to perform the following required actions:

Physical and Motor Skills:

1. Demonstrate the physical and motor skills necessary to safely and effectively perform laboratory procedures, including specimen collection, handling, and analysis.
2. Possess the dexterity and coordination required to manipulate laboratory equipment, instruments, and tools with precision and accuracy.
3. Perform laboratory procedures with manual dexterity, including repetitive hand motions, such as pipetting and typing.
4. Ability to stand, sit, and move around in a laboratory setting for extended periods.
5. Ability to properly lift and carry equipment and supplies up to 25 pounds as needed.

Sensory and Perceptual Abilities:

1. Possess adequate sensory and perceptual abilities, including vision, hearing, and tactile sensation, to accurately interpret laboratory results, distinguish colors, and detect changes in specimen appearance and cellular morphology.
2. Ability to observe and assess laboratory specimens, equipment, and surroundings with attention to detail and accuracy.

Cognitive and Intellectual Abilities:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and intellectual capacity necessary to comprehend complex scientific concepts, theories, and laboratory procedures.
2. Ability to analyze and interpret laboratory data, identify patterns, and draw appropriate conclusions based on data without guidance or advice and within given time constraints throughout the classroom, student laboratory, and medical laboratory settings.
3. Possess problem-solving skills to troubleshoot technical issues, identify sources of error, and implement corrective actions in laboratory settings.

Communication Skills:

1. Ability to communicate effectively and professionally with peers, instructors, physicians, healthcare professionals, and patients, both verbally and in writing.
2. Demonstrate active listening skills, empathy, and cultural competence in interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
3. Document laboratory procedures, findings, and results accurately and clearly in written reports and electronic medical records.

Interpersonal and Professional Behaviors:

1. Exhibit professionalism, integrity, and ethical conduct in all aspects of laboratory practice, including adherence to professional standards, codes of ethics, and regulatory requirements.
2. Collaborate effectively with interdisciplinary healthcare teams, demonstrating respect, teamwork, and leadership skills.
3. Maintain confidentiality of patient information and protect the privacy and rights of individuals in accordance with HIPAA regulations and institutional policies.

Safety:

1. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) based on laboratory activities being performed.
2. Promote a safe working environment through engineering controls and practices and following all safety protocols established by the program, Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories, and accrediting organizations.

3. Demonstrate safe working practices.
4. Seek ways to support and improve patient safety.

Time Management and Organizational Skills:

1. Manage time effectively to prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and balance academic coursework, laboratory responsibilities, and clinical rotations.
2. Demonstrate organizational skills to maintain accurate records, manage laboratory resources efficiently, and keep laboratory workspaces clean and organized.

Emotional Resilience and Stress Management:

1. Develop emotional resilience and coping strategies to manage the demands of the Medical Laboratory Science program, including academic rigor, clinical responsibilities, and exposure to challenging or emotionally taxing situations.
2. Seek support from peers, faculty, and support services as needed to maintain mental and emotional well-being throughout the program.

Commitment to Lifelong Learning and Professional Development:

1. Embrace a commitment to lifelong learning, self-reflection, and continuous professional development to stay updated with advancements in laboratory medicine, research methodologies, and emerging technologies.
2. Engage in opportunities to contribute to the advancement of laboratory science and healthcare delivery.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Our program is committed to providing equal and equitable educational opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities or unique needs requiring reasonable accommodations. We recognize the importance of fostering an inclusive learning environment where every student can thrive and reach their full potential. Therefore, we are dedicated to supporting students in accessing the necessary accommodations to facilitate their academic success and participation in our program.

Accommodations often include:

- Alternative testing environment, times, and/or format
- Visual and auditory alarms
- Modifications to physical spaces

Students whose work is impaired or altered due to a disability, medical condition, or other circumstances must request accommodations through the following steps:

1. **Initiation**
   If a student is unable to perform any function during the program without assistance or accommodations, they must contact the Medical Laboratory Science Program Director in writing via their VUMC Outlook email account. The student must include the specific diagnosis and provide official documentation from a licensed professional in the field related to the diagnosis that states the diagnosis and treatment or accommodation needs.
2. **Review**
   The program director will review the documentation provided by the student and assess the request for accommodations in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and institutional policies. The program director will share the student's request for accommodations and all information found in the documentation review with the Center for Programs in Allied Health to pursue accommodations.
3. **Determination**
   The program director may meet with the student, representatives from the Center for Programs in Allied Health, the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories administration, and clinical preceptors at outside clinical rotation sites to determine appropriate accommodations based on the licensed professional's recommendations and the student's functional limitations, academic requirements, and program standards. Consideration will also be given to determine what reasonable accommodations can be provided to the student consistently throughout the program in the various environments of the classroom, student laboratory, and clinical rotations.
4. **Notification**
   Once accommodations are approved, the program director will communicate the findings and determination of accommodations with the student and any instructors or clinical preceptors that will be expected to provide accommodations in writing via a VUMC Outlook email.
5. **Ongoing Support**
   Throughout the remainder of the program, the program director will remain available to provide ongoing support and assistance to students and instructors regarding accommodations. Students are encouraged to communicate any concerns or issues related to accommodations as they arise.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Our program is committed to creating and supporting a positive and respectful learning environment in which all students succeed and have the required tools and knowledge to positively impact patient care. Students are expected to adhere to the following behavioral expectations throughout the program:

Professionalism and Ethical Conduct

1. Students must behave in a professional and ethical manner while on campus or representing the program or VUMC during off-campus activities.
2. Student behavior must support patient care and safety while performing any program-related activities.
3. Students must abide by laws and regulations governing the sharing of sensitive information.

Attendance and Punctuality

1. Students are expected to be on time and present in their designated areas during the entire day as scheduled. Students should not ask to leave early or arrive late and should schedule personal activities during the day around the class schedule. Refer to the Attendance Policy for more information.

Communication and Collaboration

1. Students are expected to be engaged and participate in classroom discussions and activities.
2. Students are expected to communicate and collaborate with each other during classroom activities.
3. Students must communicate respectfully and professionally with instructors, classmates, patients, and other healthcare professionals in written and verbal communication.

Academic Integrity

1. Students are expected to uphold high standards of academic integrity and honesty and must not participate in cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty. See the Honor Code for more information.

Diversity and Inclusion:

1. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, perspectives, and identities and must not engage in discriminatory or harassing behavior.
2. Students must support the welcome and inclusive environment created by the program and VUMC. This includes caring for all patients and professionals despite differences in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or identification,

Safety

1. Students must be familiar with all personal and patient safety regulations and practices established by the program, Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories, and accrediting and regulatory organizations. To be familiar, students must complete all assigned safety training and demonstrate the ability to operate safety equipment.
2. Students must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the activities in which they are participating and follow all established safety procedures.
3. Students must report any unsafe environments or practices to the program director.

Compliance with Program Policies and Procedures

1. Students are expected to review and abide by all program policies, procedures, and requirements outlined in program handbooks, syllabi, and other official documents.
2. Failure to comply with program policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Personal Items

1. Students are expected to bring their laptops, calculators, and other items needed for learning and taking notes with them to class daily.
2. Students are not allowed to use their cell phones in the laboratory settings. Doing so may violate HIPAA regulations and contaminate the phone. Please step out of the laboratory into a hallway or other room to use cell phones.

Classroom and Student Laboratory

1. Students have access to the classroom and student laboratory, and all physical items in each, throughout the program. However, students are expected to notify the program director via Outlook email if they will be in these spaces outside of normal class time. Students must also verify on the posted calendars that no program activities are scheduled during the time they will be in the classroom or student laboratory.
2. Students are not allowed to perform any procedures that require direct supervision, e.g., phlebotomy or operating laboratory instruments, without a program administrator present.
3. Students may not damage or destroy any items or equipment in the classroom or student laboratory.
4. Students must notify the program director if they would like to borrow any books from the classroom.
5. Students are not allowed to be present in the classroom or student laboratory when students from other programs or other clinical rotations are performing program activities or assignments in these spaces without written permission from the instructor and program administrators.
6. Students must put away any materials used during their time in the student laboratory and clean all areas used at the end of each day or when students have finished using the items, whichever comes first.
7. Students may not use their cell phones in the student laboratory or laboratory departments. Students who must use cell phones must step out of the student laboratory or department to do so.
8. Students may wear one earbud or headphone when in the student laboratory or laboratory department except during laboratory practicals or when not an acceptable practice in the laboratory department. Students must ensure that the volume on their headphones cannot be heard by others around them.

Consequences of Violations

Violations of this student behavior policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to verbal warnings, written reprimands, probation, suspension, or dismissal from the program, in accordance with established procedures outlined in this handbook, the CPiAH catalog, and VUMC policies.

HONOR CODE

The Vanderbilt system holds that there is an agreement of mutual trust between students and faculty. Each student promises integrity in work submitted and the instructors, in turn, presume the honesty of the student. The honor system provides an atmosphere of trust essential to the fulfillment of the program's purpose of educating individuals of professional character. The members of the Vanderbilt community regard a breach of honor as a serious breach of their principles, their purpose, and the academic enterprise. As such, any documented breach in the Honor Code is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.

All work submitted as part of course requirements is assumed and expected to be the product of the student submitting it unless credit is given by the student using proper footnoting and bibliographic techniques in APA format or as prescribed by the course instructor. Cheating, plagiarizing, falsifying information, using artificial intelligence (AI), or any action designed to deceive any member of the faculty are prohibited. These activities will not be accepted whether they are intentionally or unintentionally performed. The system applies not only to examinations but also to all work handed in or reported, such as papers, lab reports, solutions to problems, practical exams, etc.

Each instructor has the prerogative to include or exclude what will be covered by the honor code in the course. However, all assignments are to be the work of each individual student without any assistance from other sources, including individuals or AI, unless the instructor specifically allows these sources to be used.

Without written designation otherwise, the Honor Code applies to the following:

Academic Integrity

1. Saving, copying, or using examinations or other assessment materials from any class is prohibited. This includes posting assessment questions to online websites designed for review or flashcards.
2. Falsification of documents, including checklists, preventative maintenance or quality control sheets, results, attendance and time sheets, and other materials, is prohibited.
3. Sharing questions or answers from any assessment used in the program is strictly prohibited.
4. Plagiarism of any student assignment or portion of the assignment or submitting an assignment or portion of the assignment without proper citation is prohibited.
5. Students are required to report a known or suspected violation of the Honor Code to the program director.

Originality and Attribution

1. Student assignments are prepared solely by the student and have not been previously submitted for a grade in any other course, whether at Vanderbilt University Medical Center or elsewhere, or otherwise published. Similarly, students are not allowed to assist or provide answers to assignments.
2. Assignments are not to be discussed with other previous, current, or past students.
3. Take-home assignments are not to be completed with input from others or with the use of class or outside materials unless allowed in writing by the instructor.
4. Electronic, paper, or internet resources are not to be used unless specifically allowed in writing by the instructor. If allowed, the student must be prepared to show or notate sources to instructor.
5. Unauthorized collaboration or use of unauthorized materials during examinations or assignments is prohibited.
6. The student must properly cite all sources used to create materials, including text, data, images, and ideas, in accordance with the current APA citation format.
7. Students are strongly encouraged to take notes during classes and clinical rotations. However, notes taken by students during their clinical rotations may not be shared with classmates who have not yet completed the clinical rotation for which the notes were created.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

1. Students are encouraged to use artificial intelligence to enhance their writing skills and to help them study, but student use of artificial intelligence cannot violate other aspects of this Honor Code, including the practice of only using AI when specifically allowed to do so for the assignment.
2. Students must cite the use of artificial intelligence using the current APA format to ensure transparency and honesty in their assignments.
3. Artificial intelligence apps or websites that enhance student learning or reviews student-submitted materials, including Grammarly, Socratic, and PhotoMath, are encouraged for student use outside of formal learning assessments.
4. Artificial intelligence apps or websites to which students submit actual quiz, study questions, or test questions are strictly prohibited.
5. Artificial intelligence apps or websites to which students submit patient or other protected information is strictly prohibited.
6. Students may not use artificial intelligence apps or websites during quizzes, exams, or laboratory practices.
7. Students should understand that artificial intelligence has limitations, and students are ultimately responsible for the quality and information submitted in their assignments. Students will not be allowed to appeal grades for erroneous information provided by artificial intelligence.

Intellectual Property

1. Students must respect the intellectual property rights of others, including proper use of copyrighted materials, proprietary software, and confidential information. Students may not engage in unauthorized

distribution, reproduction, or sharing of copyrighted materials or proprietary information, including academic materials and software resources.

Use of Technology

1. Students must adhere to institutional policies and guidelines regarding the use of computers, software, internet resources, and electronic communication.
2. Students must not engage in activities that compromise the security, integrity, or privacy of electronic systems, networks, or data, including hacking, unauthorized access, or distribution of malware.

PROBATION

Academic Probation Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support students who may be struggling academically while providing them with opportunities for improvement and success.

Policy Statement

Any student that does not achieve a minimum grade of 75% but achieves a grade of at least 70% in any Student Didactic or Clinical Rotation course will be placed on Academic Probation for that course.

Notification of Probation

1. Students who receive a final course grade between 70% and 74% will meet with the program director and educational coordinator(s) and will be notified in writing of their probationary status once final grades have been posted.
2. This notification will include the course for which the student will be placed on academic probation, the final grade the student received in the course, conditions of the probationary period, the date at which the probationary period expires, and notes from the program administrators and student to document specific circumstances surrounding the probation.

Remedial Examination

1. Students on academic probation will successfully complete their probationary period by taking a remedial examination for the course they previously failed and scoring at least 75% on the remedial exam.
2. The remedial examination will comprehensively cover the topics and learning objectives of the course and will be administered under the supervision of the program director or an educational coordinator.
3. The remedial examination must be completed within two (2) weeks of notification of the probation.
4. The remedial examination will be in the form of a comprehensive examination in the course for which the student is on academic probation. The grade from this comprehensive examination will replace the previous course grade.

Criteria for the Remedial Examination

1. Students must score at least 70% in the course for which they are placed on academic probation.
2. The student must independently review the presentations and other materials from the deficient coursework for a period of no more than two (2) weeks.
3. The student will not be given time away from the typical program coursework or classes to complete any studying or remedial work.

4. The student is not allowed to be tardy or absent during this two-week period unless an emergency or documented illness verified by a medical excuse justifies this tardy or absence.

Outcome of Remedial Examination

1. If a student passes their remedial examination with a 75% or greater, they have successfully completed the terms of academic probation and will be released from their probation.
2. If a student does not pass their remedial examination with a minimum of 75%, they are immediately dismissed from the program.
3. If a student does not achieve a minimum grade of 75% in a second course, a clinical rotation, or a behavioral evaluation, they are immediately dismissed from the program.
4. Students who are dismissed from the program based on their remedial examination grades may appeal through the CPiAH appeals process.

Student Support and Resources

1. During the probationary period, the student will meet with the program director, education coordinator, and the student support services manager as requested by the student to identify issues and discuss ways to improve their grades. Program administrators will provide study materials and tutoring as requested and as they are available to do so.
2. Students will have access to all course presentations, classroom library materials, and other online and printed materials provided by the program.

Behavioral Probation Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support students who may be struggling with professional behaviors necessary for working in healthcare while providing them with opportunities for improvement and success.

Policy Statement

A student will be placed on Behavioral Probation if they earn less than 75% on a behavioral evaluation during clinical rotations or have received two written warnings concerning their behavior throughout the program.

Notification of Probation

1. Students who meet the criteria for behavioral probation will meet with the program director and at least one of the educational coordinators and will be notified in writing of their probationary status once the behavioral evaluation has been completed by the clinical instructor.
2. This notification will include a review of the behavioral evaluation or written warnings, conditions of the probationary period, the date at which the probationary period expires, and notes from the program administrators and student to document specific circumstances surrounding the probation.

Behavioral Evaluation

1. The program administrators will provide the student with assigned trainings related to professional behavior, specifically to the area(s) in which the students received grades below 7.5.

Outcome of Probation

1. A student will remain on behavioral probation until graduation unless the student is already on academic probation or earns less than 75% on a second behavioral evaluation.
2. If a student earns less than 75% on a second behavioral evaluation or is already on academic probation, they will be dismissed from the program.

Student Support and Resources

1. During the probationary period, the student will meet with the program director, education coordinator, and other individuals employed in VUMC support services as requested by the student to identify issues and discuss ways to improve their behavior.

Causes of Immediate Dismissal

The following are causes for immediate dismissal, superseding the above protocol:

1. Unauthorized removal, destruction, or theft of any property of the program, hospital, employees, or patients. This includes physical property, including, but not limited to, instruments, reagents, and exams. This also includes all course and assessment materials, e.g. presentations, study questions, quizzes, and exams, found in the online learning management system, unless given specific approval for removing these materials is provided in writing by the instructor of the course.
2. Breach of any of the program's Honor Code policy.
3. The use or unauthorized possession of any intoxicants, illegal drugs, or narcotics on hospital grounds or impairment or intoxication from alcohol or drugs while performing program activities.
4. The use, possession, or distribution of firearms, explosives, fireworks, or knives on hospital grounds.
5. Willful submission of false information or alteration of any records or reports.
6. Disclosure of confidential information or discussion of any patient information with unauthorized personnel.
7. Negligence or misconduct in the performance of duty.
8. Disobedience or insubordination (any complaint concerning an employee or instructor should be brought to the attention of the program director, education coordinator, or the medical director immediately).
9. Drawing blood, performing procedures, or providing medication to a patient without the order of a physician.
10. Abusing a patient, employee, or fellow student. This includes physical, verbal, and emotional abuse as well as negligence or failure to adhere to established protocols and safety procedures.
11. Submission for publication of any material relating to the educational experience at Vanderbilt without prior written approval of the affiliate school and Vanderbilt.
12. Demonstrating behavior that violates professional ethics, integrity, or standards of conduct, including dishonesty and fraud.
13. Committing criminal offenses or engaging in illegal activities that pose a threat to the safety, security, or reputation of the program or organization.
14. Failure to meet academic requirements following attempts at remediation through academic or behavioral probation.
15. Demonstrating a pattern of repeated violations of program policies, regulations, or expectations, or displaying a disregard for established rules, guidelines, or directives.
16. Demonstrating unprofessional behavior repeatedly, including disrespect, unprofessional communication, disruptive behavior, or insubordination towards instructors, preceptors, program administrators, or classmates.

PROGRAM FACILITIES

Facilities for the program include office space in Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories at MetroCenter, a student classroom and laboratory in Light Hall (LH) and the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories at MetroCenter and assigned spaces in The Vanderbilt Clinic lab and Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories at MetroCenter. Student learning takes place in all mentioned sites with didactic and student laboratory exercises being performed in Light Hall and MetroCenter, and practical learning, or clinical rotations, being performed in The Vanderbilt Clinic and MetroCenter. The program also uses various departmental conference rooms as needed. Books and other reference materials are available in the program director's office and classroom. The MetroCenter location provides students with coffee and water stations throughout the medical laboratories, 18 microwaves, 3 refrigerators, and 2 freezers, indoor and outdoor seating, and a "grab and go" deli for hot and cold food options. Each student desk in the classroom provides students with personal storage space. When on campus at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, students have access to the hospital cafeteria, vending machines, a student lounge, and the classroom and student laboratory spaces.

The Center for Programs in Allied Health (CPiAH) administrative team has office spaces on the third floor of Light Hall at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Program of Medical Laboratory Science accepts one class per year that begins in June and continues until the end of June the following year. The course of study includes lectures, laboratory exercises, and clinical rotations.

The program is offered as a full-time, on-campus program that meets during typical dayshift hours, e.g. between 7 am and 4:30 pm. As an exception to these times, one four-day (Tuesday through Friday) portion of the Blood Bank clinical rotation is performed from 1-9 pm.

The first half of the program uses lectures and laboratory exercises to introduce students to physiology, pathophysiology, biochemical markers, and test principles and interpretation. The first week of class consists of orientation and is followed by seven months of lectures in diagnostic laboratory-related courses and seminar, which includes topics such as management, education, and professional development.

The second "half", or six months, of the program consists of the laboratory practicum, or clinical rotations. During this time students work alongside medical laboratory professionals to learn instrumentation, the application of testing methods, handling of patient samples, and reporting results. Students learn the practical application of the information learned from the first half of the program during this time.

Curriculum is reviewed annually by each course instructor. The program director reviews overall curriculum updates within the industry using the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Board of Certification (BOC) Content Guidelines and the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) Body of Knowledge (BOK). The program director also collaborates with instructors and laboratory professionals to ensure that the curriculum is current.

In addition to other assessments throughout the year, students must pass a final comprehensive exam before graduating.

Course Descriptions

Introduction to Medical Laboratory Science: Students are oriented to the program, profession, and VUMC. Students receive presentations to review important information they will need to utilize during the program, such as anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, and immunology. The focus of this course is to give them the basic skills and knowledge they will need to progress in the program. *(Lecture 1.5 credits)*

Clinical Chemistry: Clinical Chemistry explores biochemical constituents of body fluids, including physiology and pathophysiology. Emphasis is placed on the analytical methods of the laboratory. This includes the study of the principles, operation and maintenance of laboratory instrumentation, and quality control and quality assurance tools. *(Lecture 10.5 credits, Rotation 2.5 credits)*

Urinalysis: Urinalysis assesses the physical, chemical, and microscopic properties of urine. Emphasis is placed on laboratory procedures, morphological findings, and the correlation of test results to disease states. The course also introduces students to renal anatomy and physiology. *(Lecture 1.5 credits, Rotation 0.5 credits)*

Special Chemistry: Special Chemistry includes endocrinology and toxicology. Students explore physiology, pathophysiology, detection, and signs and symptoms related to hormones and their disease states. Toxicology covers therapeutic drugs, illicit drugs, volatiles, pharmacology, and pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. *(Lecture 5.5 credits, Rotation 1.5 credits)*

Hemostasis/Thrombosis (Coagulation): Coagulation studies the interaction of blood vessels, platelets, coagulation factors, and fibrinolytic system. Emphasis is placed on the laboratory procedures used in the diagnosis and management of various bleeding and thrombotic disorders. *(Lecture 3.5 credits, Rotation 0.5 credits)*

Hematopathology: Hematopathology studies diseases and disorders that are found in and affect blood cells and hematopoiesis. The course will focus on flow cytometry and other techniques used to diagnose leukemia and lymphomas, such as immunofixation, isoelectric focusing, and protein electrophoresis. *(Lecture 1.0 credits, Rotation 0.5 credits)*

Parasitology: Students learn about the life cycles and diagnostic stages of clinically significant parasites, focusing on the etiology and infective stages. Laboratory procedures for detecting and differentiating parasites are emphasized, including microscopic characteristics and molecular methods of detection and identification. *(Lecture 2.0 credits)*

Hematology: Hematology involves the study of maturation, morphology, and function of blood cells and their role in disease processes. Emphasis is placed on both manual and automated laboratory procedures, blood cell identification, and the relationship of cells with specific diseases such as anemia, leukemia, lymphomas, and reactive processes. *(Lecture 7.5 credits, Rotation 2.5 credits)*

Molecular: This course is the study of human and infectious agents' DNA, RNA, and chromosomes as they relate to normal and pathophysiology. Emphasis is placed on basic molecular theory, basic and advanced laboratory procedures, and the correlation of test results to disease states. *(Lecture 2.0 credits, Rotation 0.5 credits)*

Immunoserology: Study of the immunological response in infections and autoimmune diseases, the characterization of lymphocyte populations in neoplasms, and abnormal immunologic responses. *(Lecture 2.0 credits, Rotation 0.5 credits)*

Microbiology (Bacteriology and Mycology): Microbiology focuses on bacteria and fungi that infect humans. The course includes the laboratory identification of bacteria and fungi using conventional biochemical methods as well as rapid systems, antimicrobial susceptibility testing, and evaluation of clinical specimens for evidence of infection. *(Lecture 8.5 credits, Rotation 3.5 credits)*

Immunohematology (Blood Bank): Immunohematology studies blood group antigens and antibodies and their significance in transfusion therapy. This course includes donor selection, laboratory procedures for processing and selecting blood products, identification of blood group antigens and antibodies, blood storage procedures, quality control, transfusion practices and related complications, and component therapy. *(Lecture 5.5 credits, Rotation 3.5 credits)*

Body Fluids: Body fluids studies the normal and abnormal cells found in body fluids aside from urine and blood, including serous, spinal, and synovial fluids. Students learn about normal and pathophysiology, how to identify poor collection procedures, and how to correlate results with disease processes. *(Lecture 1.0 credits, Rotation 0.5 credits)*

Seminar: A variety of topics are covered in Seminar, including management and supervisory skills, laboratory operations, educational methodologies, research skills, regulatory issues, quality assurance tools, career planning, and reviews of technical material. *(Lecture 4.5 credits)*

Clinical Rotation Sites

Students primarily perform clinical rotations at the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories at MetroCenter and The Vanderbilt Clinic at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Students will also perform supplemental clinical rotations at the Veterans' Affairs (VA) laboratories in Nashville and Murfreesboro, Tennessee. These supplemental rotation sites allow students to learn about patient testing for a different patient population and within different facility types.

The program only accepts the number of students for which clinical rotation sites are available each year and communicates regularly with clinical sites to ensure that students have standardized and complete clinical rotation experiences. In the event that a student cannot complete clinical rotations as scheduled, and clinical placement cannot be immediately guaranteed, the program director will schedule clinical rotations to be completed at the first available date.

MetroCenter
445 Great Circle Rd., Nashville

The Vanderbilt Clinic
1301 Medical Center Dr., Nashville

Veteran's Affairs Medical Center
1310 24th Ave., Nashville

Alvin C. York VA Medical Center
3400 Lebanon Rd., Murfreesboro

Program Administrators and Instructors

Faculty Member	Position	Degree	Course Involvement
Holly Covas, MLS (ASCP)[CM] HTL (ASCP)[CM]	MLS Program Director	Ed.D, MPH, BS	Introduction to the Laboratory, Parasitology, Molecular, Seminar, Clinical Chemistry, Special Chemistry, Coagulation, Urinalysis
Alexandra (Alli) Leaver, MLS (ASCP)[CM] Erika Hall, MLS (ASCP) Samanwi (Sami) Munagala, MLS (ASCP)[CM]	MLS 2, Instructor MLS 3, Instructor MLS 3, Instructor	BS BS BS	Blood Bank
Emily Milford, MLS (ASCP)[CM]	MLS 3, Instructor	BS	Microbiology
Carly Marcum, MLS (ASCP)[CM]	MLS 4, Instructor	BS	Immunoserology
Jessica (Jessie) Smith, MLS(ASCP)[CM]	MLS Clinical Coordinator	BS	Microbiology, Clinical Rotations
Sylvia Verhoven, MLS (ASCP)[CM] PBT (ASCP)[CM]	MLS Education Coordinator	BS	Introduction to the Laboratory, Seminar, Molecular, Parasitology, Clinical Chemistry, Special Chemistry, Coagulation, Urinalysis
Mary Laramie, MLS (ASCP)[CM]	MLS 3, Instructor	BS	Hematology, Body Fluids

Sample Student Didactic Schedule

2026-2027 VUMC MLS Lecture Schedule

Week of:	8:30-12:00	1:00-4:30	
06/01-06/05	SPT 101: Introduction to the Laboratory		
06/08-06/12	IMH 101: Immunoserology	BCH 102: Urinalysis	
06/15-06/19			
06/22-06/26	MIC 101: Microbiology	BCH 101: Clinical Chemistry	
06/29-07/03			
07/06-07/10			
07/13-07/17			
07/20-07/24			
07/27-07/31			
08/03-08/07			
08/10-08/14			
08/17-08/21			
08/24-08/28	HEM 103: Hematopathology		
08/31-09/04	FALL BREAK		
09/07-09/11	IMH 102: Immunohematology (Blood Bank)	MIC 103: Parasitology	Classes will be held in Light Hall 423 during these six weeks.
09/14-09/18			
09/21-09/25		HEM 102: Hemostasis and Thrombosis (Coagulation)	
09/28-10/02			
10/05-10/09			
10/12-10/16		SPT 102: Seminar	
10/19-10/23	HEM 101: Hematology	SPT 104: Molecular Diagnostics	
10/26-10/30			
11/02-11/06		BCH 104: Special Chemistry	
11/09-11/13			
11/16-11/20			
11/23-11/27			
11/30-12/04			
12/07-12/11		BCH 103: Body Fluids	
12/14-12/18		SPT 102: Seminar	

Sample Clinical Rotation Schedule

01/04-01/08	Chem	Immuno	Molecular	Coag	Hematology	UA	Immuno	BB	BB	Hemepath	Micro	Chem	Micro	BF	Hematology	Hemepath
01/11-01/15		Hemepath		UA		Molecular	Hemepath			BF				Immuno		Immuno
01/18-01/22		Micro	Immuno	Molecular			UA			Immuno				BB		Coag
01/25-01/29	Molecular		Hematology		Immuno	Chem	Coag			UA		Immuno			Chem	Hematology
02/01-02/05				Immuno	Special Chem		BB	Micro	Immuno	BB	UA	Micro	Special Chem			
02/08-02/12	BF			Hemepath					Hemepath		Molecular					
02/15-02/19	BREAK	Special Chem	BB	Special Chem	Molecular	BREAK			Hematology				Hematology	Chem	Micro	Chem
02/22-02/26	Immuno					Coag					Immuno					
03/01-03/05	Hemepath	BREAK		BB	BREAK	Micro	Micro	Hemepath		Coag	BB	BREAK				Special Chem
03/08-03-12	Coag	Chem			Chem			Special Chem	UA	Hematology		Hematology	BF	Molecular	Molecular	
03/15-03/19	Micro		BREAK						BF				BB			UA
03/22-03/26			BF					BREAK	BREAK					Coag		
03/29-04/02		Coag	Chem	Micro	BB	Hematology	Molecular	Chem	Micro	Special Chem	Hematology	Special Chem		UA	BREAK	BF
04/05-04/09		UA												BREAK	Coag	Molecular
04/12-04/16	UA	BB					BREAK			BREAK		BF	Hemepath	Hemepath	Special Chem	
04/19-04/23	Hematology		UA--MC			Immuno	Chem	BF		Chem	Coag	UA	Immuno	Hematology		BREAK
04/26-04/30			Micro	BREAK	UA	BB		Immuno	Special Chem		BREAK	BB	Molecular		Immuno	Micro
05/03-05/07				BF	Hemepath			Coag			Hemepath				UA	
05/10-05/14	Special Chem	BF		Hematology	Coag		Special Chem	Hematology	Chem	Molecular	Chem		UA	Micro	BB	
05/17-05/21		Molecular			BF								BREAK			
05/24-05/28	BB		Special Chem				BF					Molecular	Coag			BB
05/31-06/04		Hematology		Chem	Micro	Special Chem		Hematology	Molecular	Coag	BF			Chem		
06/07-06/11			Hemepath			Hemepath				Molecular	Special Chem	Coag		Special Chem	BF	
06/14-06/18			Coag			BF			UA			Hemepath			Hemepath	
06/21-06/25	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review	Review

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of the Student

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) and the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) require that approved schools maintain detailed records of the students' progress throughout the year. These standards ensure that our program maintains excellence in educating and preparing students to meet the demands of a career in the laboratory.

Student assessment is based on program and course educational objectives, which are based on multiple resources, including ABHES and NAACLS standards, current laboratory practices, textbooks, and the ASCP BOC and ASCLS BOK guidelines. A variety of assessment models are used to determine cognitive, psychomotor, and behavioral learning outcomes. Cognitive learning is assessed throughout the program with study questions, quizzes, examinations, checklists, and other assignments. Psychomotor learning is assessed through laboratory exercises and practicals. Behavioral assessments are conducted through behavioral evaluations.

Formative assessments monitor initial student learning and provide opportunities for feedback and improvement whereas summative assessments determine student achievement and competency. Courses are designed such that information is scaffolded and revisited throughout the program to encourage students to learn information on multiple levels of understanding.

These areas are assessed by the following methods:

Performance in the Classroom/Student Laboratory

1. **Lecture**
   The lecture portion of the class focuses on physiology, pathophysiology, biomarkers, and related theory. The student is responsible for completing and understanding all lecture objectives, information presented in lecture and/or through handouts, and all assigned reading. Assessment will be made by exams, quizzes, study questions, case studies, and homework. Unless stated otherwise, all assignments, including open-book assignments, are individual assignments and not to be discussed among students. **Refer to the Honor Code for more information.**
2. **Student Laboratory**
   The laboratory portion of the classroom experience focuses on learning proper laboratory techniques, identification of formed elements and reactions that are useful in clinical diagnosis, and the correlation of theoretical knowledge with application. The student is expected to answer all student laboratory objectives as well as perform and demonstrate an understanding of all procedures and results. Assessment will be performed through the testing of unknown samples, practical examinations, written examinations, and performance.

Performance in the Clinical Rotation

This portion of the program is designed for the application of the theory and practical, or technical, aspects of each course. The student is responsible for all objectives and procedures covered in the lecture/student lab and the clinical rotation. The student is evaluated at the end of each rotation. The student is expected to answer all objectives, perform and demonstrate an understanding of all procedures presented, and complete all reading assignments. The student is expected to assimilate into the work environment, though supervision by a licensed medical laboratory scientist is required when performing and reporting patient testing. The student will be assessed in:

Comprehensive Final Exam

Each student must pass a comprehensive final exam as a requirement for graduation. This exam is a multiple-choice, computer-based exam with content and question weights similar to the Board of Certification (BOC) exam. The purpose of this comprehensive final exam is to ensure that students have the knowledge needed for certification and to prepare students for national certification exams. Students must earn at least a 75% to pass the exam and will have three attempts in which to do so. The first attempt for the comprehensive final exam will be scheduled by the program director and administered to the entire class at the end of April or beginning of May. Any students who do not pass on the first attempt will individually schedule their second and, if needed, third, attempt(s) with the program director or education coordinators. Once the student has received a score of 75% or greater, s/he will not need to complete any additional attempts.

Should the student not pass the comprehensive final after the third attempt, the Program Advisory Committee will meet to review the student's academic performance throughout the year. This review will result in either the student being dismissed from the program or in an extension of training in the area(s) of concern. The decision made by the Advisory Committee may be appealed according to the Center for Programs in Allied Health's Appeals Policy. Please refer to the CPiAH Catalog for more information regarding the Appeals Policy.

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

A vital part of the VUMC Medical Laboratory Science Program is a continual review and evaluation of the curriculum and techniques used in teaching. Evaluation of the program is accomplished in the following manner:

1. The program participates in the peer review and accreditation process sponsored by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) and the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES). These organizations require a periodic self-study to assess program compliance with established guidelines for the operation of a training program. This also involves peer review of the self-study and an on-site visit for continued accreditation. The program also maintains compliance with the regulations mandated by the Tennessee Laboratory Act, which includes periodic site inspections.
2. Student surveys: Students complete formal evaluations of each course as it is completed in both the lecture and the practicum components of the program. These evaluations are administered through the REDCap online tool by MLS program administrators and are anonymous. Evaluations are collected by the program director and shared with the clinical instructors, their managers, and the program officials. Information from these evaluations provides information about the effectiveness of our faculty and insights into course revisions that may be needed.
3. Graduate surveys: Recent graduates receive surveys 6-12 months after graduation. This survey is sent by the Center for Programs in Allied Health Student Support Services Manager. Surveys assess the graduate's ability to obtain and work in an entry-level position after graduation.
4. Employer surveys: Employers of recent graduates receive surveys 6-12 months after graduation to assess the entry-level knowledge of the graduate. This survey is sent by the Center for Programs in Allied Health Student Support Services Manager.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide students with clear expectations of their time and attendance within the program.

Policy Statement

Students are expected to be present on a full-time basis throughout the Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) program. Students must be present in the assigned site (classroom or laboratory section), at the scheduled start time. Students must arrive on time and remain in the area for the entire time scheduled, except when taking appropriate breaks.

For the first half of the MLS program year (June through December), attendance is taken daily by the lecture instructor or guest speaker and tracked in the Canvas learning management system. During the clinical rotation portion of the program during the second half of the program (January through June), a paper daily time sheet is used to track attendance. Students complete their start and end times within the paper time sheet, and clinical preceptors initial the student's daily arrival and leave times. Clinical preceptor approval confirms student attendance and involvement in learning activities each day. Rotation instructors sign the time sheet at the end of the rotation, and the student turns the time sheet in to the program director.

Lectures and student laboratory sessions are scheduled from 8:30 am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, with 12:00-1:00pm set aside for lunch. Any changes the program must make to this schedule are communicated to the students prior to the change and with respect to students' personal time. Changes are made to the entire class through VUMC email or Canvas announcements as soon as the instructor or program administrator is aware of the need for a time change.

Clinical rotation hours vary depending on the laboratory in which the student is rotating. Students will refer to the clinical rotation schedule for the rotation hours for each department. Typical laboratory hours are 7:00 am to 3:30 pm or 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, although some variation may occur, requiring students to complete clinical practicum hours outside of these hours. One week during the Blood Bank rotation requires students to attend the practicum from 1-9 pm. Students are made aware of this and other schedule irregularities during admission interviews and again during the program year.

Occasionally students are asked to arrive early or stay late to complete missed assignments. While this need is not a common occurrence, it is sometimes necessary in cases where activities cannot be completed during standard allotted time due to inclement weather, illness, etc. The schedule for these additional or remedial activities will be made at the instructor's and laboratory department's convenience and will be communicated with the program director and the student.

Absence Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline proper procedures for students to report and make up work for planned and unplanned absences and tardiness.

Policy Statement

Planned Absences

Students are strongly encouraged to plan personal and extracurricular activities around the program schedule to ensure that the student does not miss needed information. Any planned absences, such as medical appointments or job interviews, should be discussed with the instructor and program director prior to making the plans so that the program director and instructor can help the student identify the best time(s) for the student to miss. All planned absences must be approved via email by the course instructor and program director at least three days prior to the absence.

Students are responsible for completing all work/assignments that will be missed during the absence prior to the planned absence. If the instructor cannot or will not allow the student to complete missed work before the absence, the student is required to complete the assignment at the convenience of, or by the deadline set by, the instructor after the student returns from their absence. Any missed activities, including laboratory assignments, will be completed at the discretion of the instructor and are the responsibility of the student to schedule and complete. **Failure to follow this procedure will result in the student receiving a verbal warning for the first event, a written warning for the second event, and further punishment, including probation and potential dismissal from the program for future events.**

Unplanned Absences

In the case of illness, emergency, or similar situation in which a student must be absent without prior notice, the student is required to report the situation immediately by taking the following steps:

- Step 1: Call the appropriate department contact (as provided on course syllabus) for the lecture or rotation instructor. If the instructor is not available, the student is required to leave a message with the individual answering the call. The student should obtain the name of the individual taking the message, as the program may ask the student for this information to verify proper notice was provided.
- Step 2: Email the course or clinical instructor and the MLS Program Director, holly.covas@vumc.org, with pertinent information, including how long the student anticipates the absence to be and how the information was communicated to the instructor (i.e., phone call or message left with staff).

If the unplanned absence extends beyond one calendar day, the student must keep the instructor and MLS Program Director updated daily regarding the anticipated duration of time away. Any absence greater than one day requires a doctor's note with the date(s) of treatment and recovery listed to allow the student to return and have the opportunity to make up work missed during the absence.

Students should not attend any program activities, including lectures/student laboratory and clinical rotations if any of the following apply during the previous 24 -hour period:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

- Fever greater than 101 F
- Diagnosis of a communicable illness

If the student is well enough during their absence, they can request to attend class virtually through a Microsoft Teams meeting. All missed student laboratory or clinical rotation activities must be completed upon the student's return. Students are responsible for scheduling and completing all work and/or assignments missed during the absence, at the convenience of, or by the deadline set by, the instructor. This may require the student to arrive early, stay late, or come in on a weekend to make up missed work. All make-up work must be scheduled with the instructor within one week of the student's return. Failure to schedule make-up work or failure to complete make-up work as required will result in an automatic grade of zero (0) for the assignments/work required, which may result in academic remediation, up to and including academic probation and dismissal from the program.

Tardiness

A student is tardy (late) when the student is more than ten (10) minutes late for any lecture, laboratory, or clinical rotation. If a student is more than thirty (30) minutes late for any lecture, laboratory, or clinical practicum, the student is marked as absent for the entire activity. Exceptions to this policy (e.g., for extreme circumstances that are out of the student's control, such as abnormal traffic conditions) may be made at the discretion of the program (course instructor, rotation preceptor, or program director).

Students must notify the course instructor and program director as soon as the student is aware that he or she will arrive late, using the same steps as those appearing under the unplanned absences section above. Five (5) late arrivals during the program count as one absence. Any additional late arrivals during the program will result in disciplinary action, as described below.

If a student is tardy for a test or lab practical, the student is allowed to take the assessment, but the student will be given no additional time to take it; time will end at the same time as the students who began at the designated time.

Excessive Absence / Tardiness Policy

An excessive number of absences or tardies is defined as greater than five (5) absences or tardies throughout the program, excluding illness or medical needs, emergencies, or military obligations. If this occurs, the program director and education coordinators will meet with the student to discuss the pattern of absenteeism or tardiness and issue a written warning. If the student continues to have more absences or tardies following being placed on a written warning, unless due to a verified health condition, the program administrators place the student on behavioral probation. A continued pattern of tardiness after being placed on behavioral probation or actions that warrant placing the student on behavioral probation for a second time will result in dismissal from the program.

TUITION

VUMC Program's cost of attendance for the academic year beginning July 1 – June 30 of the following year is as follows (tuition and fees other than Books/Laptop are not estimates; students will be responsible for the amounts for those items as they appear below):

Application Fee	$ 50
Tuition	$ 7,500
Fees	$ 2,368
Books	$ 806
Total Cost	**$10,724**

Tuition and fees are made payable to VUMC, unless otherwise indicated. Students are required to pay the tuition and fees for each term 2 weeks prior to the beginning of classes for that term. Students with an unpaid tuition balance may be ineligible to attend class unless other arrangements have been made with the Center for Programs in Allied Health.

Students are required to pay various fees to VUMC upon application, enrollment, and during the course of study. Other expenses not directly related to education, such as health insurance fees, housing, transportation, meals, etc., are considered when calculating the anticipated cost of attendance, but in some cases, they may not be payable to VUMC. See "third party expenses" for an estimate of these costs.

All other expenses related to attending the program are the responsibility of the student. Specific additional expenses vary by program and are outlined in the program section of this catalog. Examples of such expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Health insurance
- Uniforms
- Meals
- Professional Credentialing
- CPR certification
- Travel to and from clinical assignments
- Parking
- Immunizations
- Housing Expenses
- Books

STUDENT ADVISING AND CONFERENCES

The MLS program director, education coordinators, medical director, and instructors maintain an open-door policy for students throughout the year. Students are encouraged to bring all concerns to the attention of program officials. Depending on the topic or availability of the instructor or program administrator, meetings may need to be scheduled ahead of time. Students may also email instructors or program administrators with questions. Additionally, the student support services manager within the Center for Programs in Allied Health is available for student guidance with study skills, job preparation skills, and related help.

Individual academic advising sessions with the student support services manager, program director, and education coordinator may be requested by students at any time to provide academic guidance, discuss career planning, address any personal or academic concerns, etc. Any questions or concerns about the program or about hospital, laboratory, or program policies and/or procedures should be brought to the attention of the program director, education coordinators, or medical director. Should those individuals fail to address the problem, the student should consult the VUMC Student Grievance Policy, provided in the Catalog of the VUMC Center for Programs in Allied Health.

All advising sessions are conducted with confidentiality and impartiality. Unless requested by the student or not advisable due to the specific reason for advising, all advising sessions are conducted between at least two program officials. The program director and at least one educational coordinator will conduct the advising session unless the program director is unavailable to do so in a reasonably timely manner. At this point, both educational coordinators will advise the student.

To schedule a meeting time with program administrators, students must use the Scheduling Assistant in Outlook to send a calendar invitation. Students who do not follow this procedure are not guaranteed a meeting time or duration.

COMMITMENT TO SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

VUMC supports and maintains a strong commitment to safety, health, and environmental protection through:

1. Promoting compliance with federal, state, and local safety, health, and environmental requirements;
2. Minimizing hazards, reducing pollution, and continuously improving practices regarding safety, health, and environmental protection;
3. Empowering faculty, house staff, staff, and students to demonstrate individual and institutional leadership in all matters pertaining to safety, health, and environmental protection while preserving academic freedom in research and education and evidence-based practices in patient care;
4. Protecting and maintaining safe and secure facilities for teaching, patient care, research, living, and work;
5. Emphasizing open communication with the VUMC community regarding safety, health, and environmental issues; and
6. Instilling the values of environmental stewardship and conservation of resources in VUMC's future leaders.

For more information, please visit the Office of Clinical and Research Safety website.

VUMC requires all staff and Medical Laboratory Science students to complete initial and annual safety training. All students are required to provide copies of their immunization records to Vanderbilt Occupational Health before the program start date to ensure that all immunization requirements have been met.

The Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories provide a safe working environment and keeping all faculty, staff, and students informed of potential safety hazards and safe work practices associated with their work.

Employees and students are provided with policies and procedures related to safe work practices in the laboratory, response to internal and external emergencies, handling of potentially infectious agents, handling of hazardous chemicals, and handling of radioactive materials.

In addition to VUMC training requirements, laboratory staff and program students receive training specific to the laboratory section and annually changes in practice occur within that laboratory.

Safety issues within the laboratory fall under the review responsibility of the Laboratory Safety Committee, which has representatives from each laboratory section. Responsibilities include development and review of laboratory specific safety policies and procedures, communication of current and changing safety issues, implementation of policies and procedures and monitoring of compliance through monthly internal inspections. The Laboratory Safety Committee has review and approval authority for laboratory safety policies and procedures.

Medical Directors, managers, and team leaders throughout the Diagnostic Laboratories are responsible for working with the members of the Laboratory Safety Committee to fulfill these duties and to assure that all employees and students have access to current information, personal protective equipment, engineering controls, and appropriate medical treatment in the event of an exposure or accident. They also have the responsibility of corrective actions in the event of non-compliance with any VUMC or Laboratory safety policy or procedure.

Employees and students are responsible for being knowledgeable about the risks and safe work practices associated with their work. Staff and students are expected to bring safety questions, concerns or issues to their supervisors, safety officers and laboratory leadership.

STUDENT CONDUCT

All students are bound by several standards of conduct, as outlined in the CPiAH Catalog, including:

- VUMC Code of Conduct
- VUMC Center for Programs in Allied Health Honor Code
- American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) Code of Ethics

Students should refer to these codes and their related policies to ensure clear understanding of expected standards of professionalism and conduct.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT WHILE ENROLLED AT VUMC

Students may be employed during the year of training in the Medical Laboratory Science Program. However, jobs during the first six months of training are discouraged due to the full-time nature of the MLS Program. If it is necessary for a student to hold a job during the program's first six months, the student must notify the program director. Students are encouraged to actively communicate with the program director about employment while enrolled to best facilitate their success in the program. Under no circumstances may students miss, arrive late to, or leave early from required program activities (class, laboratory, and rotation) to fulfill a job obligation.

Student Work Policy

Medical Laboratory Science students practice under the limited scope of a State of Tennessee Medical Laboratory Board Trainee Permit while enrolled in the program. The Trainee Permit allows students to perform patient testing under the direct supervision of a licensed medical laboratory professional.

- Students who have completed both the didactic and clinical components of a specific area of the laboratory are eligible to work in that area of the laboratory.
- Students who work must complete a VUMC application for employment prior to being hired and VUMC institutional orientation at the start of employment.
- Laboratory Team Leaders/Managers must have a posted position in My Workday to hire an MLS student.
- VUMC employment is independent of the program and shall not interfere with program operations.
- Trainee Permits expire on the day of graduation from the Program.
- Work will be paid and supervised.

DRESS CODE

The following dress code must be followed at all times:

1. Vanderbilt University Medical Center picture identification tags must be worn and visible while working, per VUMC policy.
2. Per OSHA guidelines, shoes worn in a laboratory may not be perforated, cloth, canvas, or sandals. Toes must be enclosed.
3. Clothing must be neat, clean, and appropriate to the professional environment. Business casual attire or scrubs are acceptable. Clothes with rips or holes or shorts may not be worn. Skirts are acceptable.
4. If clothing is not appropriate, instructors, at their discretion, will ask the student to not wear the clothing again, or will send the student home to change.
5. Nitrile gloves must be worn when handling blood or body fluid and be changed when visibly soiled or torn, per OSHA guidelines.
6. When performing a task that has a risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens, a disposable non-permeable lab coat must be worn. This must be buttoned and protect to below the knees. It must be changed when visibly soiled, contaminated, or torn.
7. When performing a task that could result in a splash or aerosol, a face shield or appropriate PPE must be worn if the work is not performed behind a protective barrier.
8. Nitrile gloves and disposable lab coats must be removed prior to leaving the laboratory and may not be worn in clean areas such as the lounge, rest rooms, offices, or administrative area.
9. Fingernails must be kept short enough so that they do not pierce through gloves. Chipped fingernail polish or acrylic nails are not acceptable.
10. Hair, ties, and jewelry must be secured so they do not fall forward into the face or touch work surfaces. Jewelry may not be worn over gloves.

GRADING POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this Grading Policy is to establish a transparent and standardized approach to grading student assessments throughout the Medical Laboratory Science program.

Policy Statement

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge, competency, and professionalism throughout the Medical Laboratory Science program. The minimum passing grade for all assessments to ensure knowledge, psychomotor ability, and behavior is 75%. Students are assessed and graded based on this minimum throughout the program in graded activities, including didactic assessments, laboratory practicals, clinical rotation activities, and behavioral evaluations.

Grading Scale

Scale	Grade	GPA	
95-100%	A		4.0
90-94%	A-		3.5
85-89%	B		3.0
80-84%	B-		2.5
75-79%	C		2.0
<75%	F	Failure	0
	P	Pass - Any course with a “P” grade	
	F	Fail - Any course with an “F” grade	

I	Incomplete - May be used at the discretion of the instructor in those cases in which the student is not able to complete work in the normal time. In those instances, the student and instructor develop a written plan for an extension to provide work by a specific date that falls within the period of time specified by the relevant program’s requirements (but in no circumstances greater than one month). An “I” that is not replaced by a letter grade within the period of time specified by the relevant program’s requirements, due to unsatisfactory completion of the student’s plan, will be changed to an F after the period specified by the program (a period not to exceed one month). Any course with an “I” grade is not calculated into the grade point average. Once a grade is assigned to the course (when conditions are met that allow for the removal of the “I” and assignment of a final grade), that grade will factor into the student’s GPA.
W±	Withdrawal – Utilized when a student leaves the course due to an approved leave-of-absence or withdraws from the school prior to the scheduled completion of a course. Any course with a “W” grade is not calculated into the grade point average.

Course Grading

Successful Course Completion: Each didactic course and clinical rotation, or practicum, will issue a final grade to students. A course is any portion of the program that includes instruction, has its own syllabus with grading criteria, and is identified as a discrete unit of instruction on the program calendar. Courses and clinical rotations mirror the departments within the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories, and the program may alter course and clinical rotation names and revise curriculum to ensure that students are able to successfully complete all coursework and clinical rotations to obtain and successfully perform at an entry level in any clinical pathology department at Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories or another medical laboratory within the United States. Students must earn a minimum of 75% in each student didactic and clinical rotation course to successfully complete the course.

The program and all related courses must be completed in their entirety for a transcript to be created and given. Incomplete transcript grades are not given. Students must successfully complete all components of the program within the 13 months of the program and in the order presented.

Students who do not successfully complete a course will be placed on Academic Probation and will be subject to the procedure outlined within the Academic Probation Policy of this handbook.

Additional Time to Complete Program: The Program Advisory Committee reserves the right to extend a student's training to make up for a deficit in a single course. This remediation is not to extend training more than five (5) months from the end of the program year, for a completion time of 150% of the program. Students may also receive additional time to complete the program due to military obligations or unforeseen circumstances, such as health conditions or emergencies. Students requesting additional time to complete the program due to military obligations or unforeseen circumstances must request consideration in writing to the program director. Specific details for completing the program will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

TEACH OUT POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this Teach-Out Policy is to establish procedures for the responsible and equitable discontinuation of the Medical Laboratory Science Program while ensuring that enrolled students have the opportunity to complete their studies and receive appropriate support and guidance during the transition period.

Policy Statement

In the event that Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) closes the Medical Laboratory Science program for any reason, the transition period will operate with the following principles:

1. **Student-Centered Approach:** The welfare and academic progress of enrolled students shall be the primary consideration throughout the teach-out process.
2. **Transparency:** Clear and timely communication shall be maintained with students, faculty, staff, accrediting organizations, and relevant stakeholders regarding all aspects of the teach-out process.
3. **Academic Integrity:** Academic standards and requirements shall be upheld, ensuring the quality and integrity of the educational experience until the completion of the program.
4. **Equity:** Measures shall be implemented to ensure fairness and equitable treatment of all affected students during the teach-out period.
5. **Support Services:** Adequate support services and resources shall be provided to assist students in successfully completing their studies and transitioning to alternative programs or career paths.

Teach-Out Plan

1. **Notification:**
    - Students shall be notified by the program director in writing of the decision to discontinue the Medical Laboratory Science Program.
    - Notification shall include the reasons for discontinuation, the planned teach-out period, and contact information for relevant academic advisors and support services.
2. **Teach-Out Period:**
    - Per the Vanderbilt University Medical Center Medical Laboratory Science program academic affiliation agreements, “any student from SCHOOL who is currently participating in the Program when notice of termination is given will be permitted to complete his or her training period as previously scheduled.” This policy shall also apply to students who have completed a baccalaureate or higher degree before beginning the Medical Laboratory Science program and would not be otherwise covered by the program’s academic affiliation agreements.
    - If the Vanderbilt University Medical Center Medical Laboratory Science program should close, all enrolled students will be allowed to complete his or her training as scheduled upon enrollment into the program. However, no additional students will be recruited or enrolled once the program closure has been announced. The program will immediately notify all affiliates, accrediting organizations, state medical laboratory board, and other invested parties to ensure that resources—physical, faculty, financial, and other forms—are available to minimize the effect to the enrolled students.
3. **Curriculum Completion:**
    - Efforts shall be made to offer all required courses and clinical rotations needed for students to fulfill program requirements as advertised at the time of the student’s enrollment. Unless prohibitive otherwise, students will complete all courses and clinical rotations within the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories.

- Alternative arrangements may be made, such as online courses, independent study options, or partnerships with other institutions, to ensure access to necessary coursework in cases that the program cannot be completed as advertised at the time of the student's enrollment.
- In the event that the enrolled students will not be able to complete training at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, program administrators will work with local programs or programs in other locations requested by the student to enter into a teach-out agreement that will allow the students to transfer into a comparable program to complete his or her training. If this occurs, Vanderbilt University Medical Center will transfer student records and outstanding tuition payments to the new program.

4. **Clinical Training:**
    - Arrangements shall be made for students to complete any remaining clinical training or practicum requirements in accredited facilities or through approved alternative arrangements made by collaboration with the program director and affiliated schools or hospitals.
    - Close collaboration with clinical affiliates, accrediting bodies, and the State of Tennessee Medical Laboratory Board shall be maintained to ensure the quality and legitimacy of clinical training experiences.
    - Clinical affiliates will be submitted to the State of Tennessee Medical Laboratory Board by the program director to receive approval by the board at its next scheduled meeting before sending students to complete clinical rotations at that site.
5. **Academic Advising:**
    - The student support services manager will meet with all affected students to provide guidance and support throughout the teach-out period.
    - The program administrators and the student support service manager will assist students in developing individualized academic plans, exploring transfer options, and addressing any concerns or challenges the students may encounter.
6. **Transfer Options:**
    - Information shall be provided to students regarding transfer opportunities to comparable programs at other institutions.
    - Assistance shall be provided to facilitate the transfer of academic credits and ensure a smooth transition for students transferring to alternative programs.
7. **Financial Aid and Tuition:**
    - The financial aid manager shall assist students in understanding the implications of program discontinuation on their financial aid eligibility and options.
    - Refund policies for tuition and fees shall be clearly communicated to students, and appropriate refunds or adjustments shall be provided as applicable. See the Tuition Policy for more information.
8. **Graduation and Credentialing:**
    - Every effort shall be made to ensure that enrolled students have the opportunity to complete all graduation requirements and receive their degrees or certificates. Additionally, students' eligibility for obtaining national certification and state licensure will be protected in the planning and implementation of this Teach Out Policy.
    - Student records will be archived within Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and all past and current students will be notified in writing where the records are stored and how to access them.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Purpose

This policy is established to ensure the safety and well-being of all Medical Laboratory Science students during periods of inclement weather that may disrupt normal campus operations. It aims to provide clear guidelines and procedures for students to follow in such situations.

Policy Statement

In the event of inclement weather, including but not limited to severe storms, snowstorms, or any other weather condition that poses a threat to the safety of students, the following policy will be enacted:

Communication and Expectations

1. **School Closure or Laboratory Staffing Concerns During Inclement Weather**
    a. The Center for Programs in Allied Health (CPiAH) Director will communicate information regarding any closures, delays, or changes in campus operations to program administrators and students through VUMC email. Students are responsible for checking their VUMC email and staying informed through official communication channels regarding any updates or changes related to inclement weather.
    b. Clinical instructors may request that students do not attend clinical rotations if the inclement weather negatively affects staffing in the Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories. Program administrators will communicate information regarding any closures, delays or changes in campus operations to students through VUMC email.

All classes, clinical rotations, and on-campus activities will be canceled, delayed, rescheduled, or modified if they are result from school closure or laboratory staffing concerns. The program administrators will identify alternatives to support student learning without compromising or negatively impacting learning activities. These alternatives may result in combining or rescheduling activities based on factors such as instructor availability, learning progression, and other program activities. Make-up activities and assignments may occur outside of normal program hours.

2. **Student Safety Concerns During Inclement Weather**

The safety and well-being of students are of paramount importance. Students are advised to prioritize their safety when traveling to and from campus during inclement weather conditions. Students are encouraged to follow local weather advisories, road conditions, and travel advisories issued by relevant authorities before commuting to campus. Students who live in areas impacted by the inclement weather who cannot safely report to VUMC may decide to not travel to campus and must report their absence to the program director and instructor using the Unplanned Absence Procedure provided in this handbook. As outlined in the Unplanned Absence Procedure, students who cannot attend program activities due to personal safety concerns must communicate with course instructors and program administrators to reschedule all missed learning activities at a time that coordinates with the instructor and laboratory department's schedule. Make-up activities and assignments may occur outside of normal program hours.

Remote Learning

In the event of a campus closure or delay during the didactic portion of the program, efforts will be made to facilitate remote learning and instructional activities via Canvas learning management system and Microsoft Teams to minimize disruptions to academic progress. Instructors will communicate with students regarding any adjustments to course schedules, assignments, or instructional methods necessary to accommodate remote learning during inclement weather.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency situation arising from inclement weather, students should follow emergency procedures as outlined by VUMC policies, including evacuation procedures, sheltering instructions, or other safety protocols. Students should familiarize themselves with emergency contact information and procedures provided by the VUMC Medical Laboratories for reporting emergencies or seeking assistance during inclement weather events.

Compliance

All students are expected to comply with the directives and guidelines outlined in this policy during periods of inclement weather. Failure to comply with this may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Attendance Policy outlined in this program handbook.

FORM TEMPLATES

Academic Probation Notice

NOTIFICATION OF ACADEMIC PROBATION

Date:
To: _____

This is to inform you that, due to your final grade of _____in the _____ Student Didactic course/Clinical Rotation, you are officially on academic probation.

You will have up to two (2) weeks to independently review the course materials from this didactic course or clinical rotation. You will not be given time away from the program's regular coursework or classes to complete this remedial work. You may not be tardy or absent during this two-week period. This two-week period will end on _____ (DATE). You will complete a comprehensive exam on or before this date. The grade from this exam will replace your current grade for the course. If you earn below a 75% in any future didactic course or clinical rotation, you will be dismissed from the program.

Should you fail to achieve an overall grade of 75% on the comprehensive exam, you will be dismissed from the program. You remain responsible for all fees owed to the Medical Laboratory Science program.

_____

Student Signature Date

Your signature indicates that you have been informed and understand the responsibilities associated with this standing of academic probation.

_____

Program Director Date

_____

CPiAH Representative Date

Comments:

Behavioral Probation Notice

NOTIFICATION OF BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

Date:
To: _____

This is to inform you that, due to

_____,

you are officially on behavioral probation.

If your behavior continues to earn another behavioral probation for the same reason, or if you participate in additional activities to elicit a second behavioral probation, such as a behavioral evaluation that is below 75%, you will be dismissed from the program.

_____
Student Signature Date

Your signature indicates that you have been informed and understand the responsibilities associated with this standing of clinical/behavioral probation.

_____
Program Director Date

_____
CPiAH Representative Date

Comments:

Behavioral Evaluation Template

Directions: In each of the following areas, check the statements that best describe the student. Use the comment area to add further information and to record critical incidents. The objectives are stated for each section.

Students should be evaluated at the end of the rotation. To calculate the grade, add the points for each category checked and divide by the total number of points in all categories in which you were able to evaluate the student.

Students must achieve a minimum of 75%. If a score of 75% is not achieved, the student is required to pursue counseling at the discretion of the clinical instructor and the program administrators.

Student: _____ Rotation: _____

Evaluator:_____ Rotation Dates: _____

Signatures:_____

Student* Date Clinical Instructor

_____

Program Director or Education Supervisor Date Grade

Comments:

**Student signature indicates that the student has reviewed the evaluation. It does not necessarily constitute agreement.*

December 2023

Objectives: Initiative, Judgment, and Concern for the Patient

A. Demonstrate initiative in studies and laboratory performance by preparing for assignments, asking relevant questions, assisting with approved tasks and making constructive use of time.
B. Demonstrate ability to assemble information to reach logical conclusions and use that information to make sound decisions.
C. Display a concern for the patient in handling of specimens, performance of tasks and communication with coworkers.

Initiative and Judgment	**<7.5 Below Expectations Unsatisfactory Requires conference**	**7.5-7.9 Meets Minimum Expectations**	**8.0 – 8.9 Above Average**	**9.0 – 10 Exceeds Expectations**	**POINTS**
Initiative	Performs delegated responsibilities but requires constant prompting and guidance. Unmotivated or disinterested.	Usually accepts and performs delegated responsibilities with occasional prompting.	Performs responsibilities independently. Willing and able to assume additional responsibilities when asked.	Consistently self-motivated to complete tasks and take initiative to help others without being asked.	
Judgment to assemble information and reach logical conclusions	Often makes inaccurate conclusions. Requires a lot of assistance from instructor to analyze situations to reach logical conclusions.	Usually logical in approach to problem solving. Makes an occasional inaccurate decision.	Can discriminate between relevant and irrelevant details to arrive at logical conclusions. Uses critical thinking skills with minimum instructor guidance.	Consistently makes correct conclusions, even for the most difficult problems. Applies critical thinking skills to all patient situations.	
Concern for the Patient	Frequently careless in handling patient specimens. Does not communicate or document complete information. Shows some concern for patient.	Usually conscientious in handling patient specimens. Few errors in documentation. Usually communicates complete information. Shows concern for patient.	Conscientious in handling patient specimens, documentation, and communication of important information. Few errors. Shows sincere concern for patient.	Conscientious in handling patient specimens, documentation, and communication of important information. Goes out of the way to show concern for the patient.	

Comments:

Objectives: Dependability

A. Demonstrate ability to accomplish required tasks and assignments accurately and within the allotted time frame.
B. Complies with program attendance policies by consistently arriving on time, returning from breaks on time and notifying appropriate personnel when leaving the work area or in the event of a necessary absence.
C. Remains on the job until assigned task is completed. Does not let breaks, lunch, people or extraneous factors interfere with completion of tasks.

Dependability	**<7.5** **Below Expectations**	**7.5-7.9** **Meets Minimum Expectations**	**8.0-8.9** **Above Average**	**9.0 – 10** **Exceeds Expectations**	**POINTS**
Accomplishment of required tasks and assignments	Rarely accomplishes assignments in allotted time frame.	Usually dependable and prepared for assignments	Consistently accomplishes the required assignments in the allotted time.	Always accomplishes the required assignments in the allotted time. Frequently accomplishes more than required.	
Attendance and Punctuality – Complies with school/lab polices.	Frequently tardy and/or absent. Frequently takes excessive lunches and breaks. Complies with policies only after counseling.	Occasionally tardy and/or absent. Rarely takes long lunches or breaks. Complies with policies.	Punctual with good attendance record. Rarely absent or tardy. Does not take unapproved long lunches or breaks. Complies with policy.	Outstanding record of attendance and punctuality. No absences. Does not take unapproved long lunches or breaks. Complies with policy.	
Productive use of clinical rotation time.	Frequently away from assigned area.	Usually present in assigned area.	Consistently present in assigned area. Rarely not available.	Superior. Spends no unauthorized time away from assigned area.	

Comments:

Objectives: Attitude

A. Accepts constructive criticism, is positive, and follows up with prompt consistent improvement. Works and communicates effectively with others. Shows ability to handle difficult situations in a reasonable manner. Contributes and cooperates to realize group goals.
B. Demonstrates professional integrity by complying with all hospital and program regulations, admits to errors and limitations, and practices professional ethics by demonstrating an understanding of confidentiality and legalities concerning patient information and HIPPA regulations.

Attitude	**<7.5** **Below Expectations**	**7.5-7.9** **Meets Expectations**	**8.0-8.9** **Above Average**	**9.0 – 10** **Exceeds Expectations**	**POINTS**
Toward supervisors, school policies, and safety issues	Reluctantly considers suggestions and constructive criticism. Frequently has to be reminded of with hospital and program policies.	Usually accepts and incorporates constructive criticism and suggestions. Is receptive to supervision. Follows hospital and program policies with occasional reminder.	Accepts and incorporates suggestions and constructive criticism. Complies with hospital and program policies.	Eagerly accepts and incorporates suggestions. Appreciates assistance by the instructor. Always complies with hospital and program policies.	
Toward faculty/employees, other students, and visitors. Functions as a team player. Displays a professional attitude.	Rarely tactful or a team player. Does not display a professional attitude.	Usually tactful and considerate of others. Usually a team player and displays a professional attitude.	Sensitive and considerate to the needs of others. Is a team player and displays a professional attitude.	Skillful in adapting to working with others. Inspires others. An outstanding team player and projects a professional image.	

Comments:

Objectives: Quality of Work

A. Demonstrates competency in performing tests accurately, with few errors and with minimal supervision.
B. Demonstrates an ability to provide complete and legible documentation of activities on worksheets and logs.

Quality of Work	**<7.5** **Below Expectations**	**7.5-7.9** **Meets Expectations**	**8.0-8.9** **Above Average**	**9.0 – 10** **Superior Consistently Exceeds Expectations**	**POINTS**
Competency	Frequent errors. Requires constant supervision.	Few Errors. Requires occasional supervision.	Commendable work. Rare Errors. Requires minimal supervision.	No errors. Always performs with 100% accuracy. Requires minimal supervision for approved tasks.	
Documentation	Documentation is incomplete and hard to read.	Documentation is usually complete and legible.	Documentation is complete and legible.	Documentation is complete and legible. Includes additional details to assist in future problem solving.	

Comments:

Would you feel comfortable working with this student as a fellow employee? If not, or if you have reservations, please leave comments.

- ❑ Yes, with no reservations
- ❑ Yes, with more experience
- ❑ Yes, with reservation(s)
- ❑ It would be a risk
- ❑ No, absolutely not

Notification of Excessive Tardies or Absences

According to the Medical Laboratory Science Program Handbook:

An excessive number of absences or tardies is defined as greater than forty (40) hours missed throughout the program, excluding illness or medical needs, emergencies, or military obligations. If this occurs, the program director and education coordinator will meet with the student to discuss the pattern of absenteeism or tardiness and issues a written warning. If the student continues to have unplanned absences and or tardiness after this warning, the student is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including probation and dismissal from the program.

You are hereby notified that you have incurred ____ (# hours) missed from the program are in danger of violating this policy. The dates of these occurrences are:

Please be aware that a continued issue with this to warrant a second notification will result in you being placed on behavioral probation. Continued behavior to be placed on behavioral probation a second time, or another issue with student behavior in which student will be placed on behavioral probation will result in the student being dismissed from the program.

I, _____, acknowledge that I have excessive absences or tardies and that I am aware of the potential consequences if this issue continues. I will correct this issue by the following actions:

_____
_____
_____

_____	_____	_____
Student Name (Print)	Student Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Program Official Name (Print)	Program Official Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
CPiAH Official Name (Print)	CPiAH Official Signature	Date