

**Reading Hospital
School of Health Sciences**

Medical Laboratory Science (MLS)

Student Handbook

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**Accredited by the
National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences**

Revised 6/2020

**Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences
Medical Laboratory Science Program
Student Handbook
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Section I: Introduction

1. Educational Statement

Reading Hospital is committed to educational sponsorship, as evidenced by the numerous programs it makes available to the community. The faculty and staff accept the responsibility for the design of a curriculum that will enable the students to meet the stated learning goals and objectives of the program. By enrolling in the Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Program, students agree to make the necessary commitment to achieve the educational foundation necessary to enter the profession of Medical Laboratory Science. Through active participation in all scheduled classes and clinical assignments, the student will learn the skills necessary to provide health care to their community in a professional, compassionate, and responsible manner.

Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences Medical Laboratory Science Program reserves the right to change the curriculum, educational policies, program requirements, fees, and calendar as considered necessary for the progressive development of the Program.

2. Program Rules, Regulations, and Policies

The MLS program follows the policies of the Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences (RHSHS) unless noted otherwise. RHSHS policies can be found on the school website at <https://reading.towerhealth.org/academics/health-sciences/school-policies/>. Students are expected to exhibit responsibility and, as allied health professionals, conduct themselves in a professional manner. Areas of responsibility include those to the patient, to the institution, to the physician, to the profession and to oneself. By carefully reviewing these pages, the student will gain the information necessary to know what is expected of them during their medical laboratory science education.

3. Program Accreditation

The School of Medical Laboratory Science is fully accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS).

National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)
5600 North River Road, Suite 720
Rosemont, Illinois 60018
Phone 773-714-8880
Fax 773-714-8886
www.naacls.org

To be an accredited program, the MLS program must adhere to the standards set by NAACLS. NAACLS is committed to be the premier international agency for accreditation and approval of educational programs in the clinical laboratory sciences and related health professions through the involvement of expert volunteers and its commitment to public service. Students are an important community of interest to accrediting and approval bodies, and one of the goals of accreditation and approval is the protection of students, in addition to the assurance of program quality. If a student believes that the program is not in compliance with the standards set forth by NAALCS, the student must follow the procedures outlined on the NAACLS website.

4. Mission Statements

Mission Statement of Reading Hospital

The mission of Reading Hospital is to provide compassionate, accessible, high-quality, cost-effective health care to the community; to promote health; to educate healthcare professionals; and to participate in appropriate clinical research.

Mission Statement of the School of Health Sciences

The mission of the Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences is to provide educational programs that develop competent and compassionate professionals capable of providing high-quality service to individuals, families, and communities.

Mission Statement of the Medical Laboratory Science Program

The mission of the Medical Laboratory Science Program is to develop pre-professional students into lab practitioners who have a professional attitude, a solid foundation in the scientific principles involved, proficiency in the performance of laboratory procedures, and who are well prepared to take on the professional role of a healthcare practitioner committed to life-long learning. After successful completion of the Program, students will be qualified to sit for the Board of Certification examination given by the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP).

5. Philosophy and Goals

The clinical laboratory is an integral part of the health care field. It provides physicians with information helpful in diagnosing and treating patients. It is because of this integral part that the laboratory plays in the total health care delivery system that a continuous need for qualified laboratory personnel exists.

During the year-long program, the main goal is to transform qualified students into medical professionals who can apply scientific principles and techniques to the vital role that laboratory science plays in the hospital and healthcare environment.

Other goals of the program include developing high-quality lab professionals committed to lifelong learning, staying abreast of new developments, and having the flexibility to adapt to a changing profession.

The School also has as a goal to fulfill the need for high quality clinical laboratory practitioners for our own hospital and the community.

6. Program Outcomes

The combined practical and classroom experience is designed to allow the student to meet the objectives of the program, to provide the student with insight into the role of the medical laboratory scientist on the healthcare team, and to equip the student to meet the professional challenges of a career in medical laboratory science. This is done by maintaining an atmosphere that encourages learning, professional growth, and high academic standards.

Since Medical Laboratory Science is concerned with the performance of laboratory determinations and analyses used in the diagnosis and treatment of disease, the student spends most of his/her time in the laboratory departments. Students rotate through all clinical laboratory sections, learning procedures performed in each section and practicing them to attain professional skill levels. After demonstrating proficiency in laboratory procedures, students are permitted to perform selected procedures under careful supervision to develop speed, confidence, and ability to organize and work efficiently under pressure. This process enhances a sense of responsibility and self-confidence.

MLS Program Objectives

At the completion of the one-year program, the MLS graduate will be able to:

- State the importance of the clinical laboratory and the part it plays in the diagnosis and treatment of the patient.
- Perform proficiently routine laboratory procedures and some specialized procedures.
- Add new procedures and duties to his/her repertoire with ease using the basic knowledge acquired in the clinical program and will demonstrate the ability to read and understand a procedure manual in order to perform testing.
- Judge the validity of laboratory results, confirm abnormal results, and integrate and relate data generated by various departments while making decisions regarding possible discrepancies in routine tests.
- Utilize quality control methods and standards in maintaining accuracy and precision.
- Perform some basic preventative maintenance of equipment and instruments.
- Evaluate new methods and procedures with minimal assistance by applying knowledge of principles, procedures, and techniques.
- Recognize a problem and identify the cause; apply the problem-solving approach to situations including making decisions concerning the results of quality control and quality assurance measures.
- Communicate ideas and data and exhibit professional conduct through interpersonal skills with patients, laboratory personnel, other health care professionals, and the public.
- Recognize the need to be responsible for his/her work and to respond to constructive criticism in a positive manner.
- Exhibit compassion and respect for the patient and allied health care personnel.
- Recognize the importance of information concerning the patient and realize that it should not be discussed indiscriminately.
- Attend continuing educational programs to establish and maintain continuing education as a function of growth and maintenance of professional competence.
- Follow established safety procedures in the performance of his/her laboratory duties in order to maintain a safe working environment for himself/herself and other laboratory employees.
- Apply principles of current laboratory information systems.
- Write simple procedures for collecting, processing and analyzing biological specimens and other substances following established guidelines.
- Perform bench-level teaching via demonstrations of methods and explanation of theories to all required personnel.
- Be prepared to successfully pass the Board of Certification examination.

Section II: Ethics and Professionalism

MLS students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner deemed appropriate to represent the profession.

1. Ethics

The Code of Ethics published by the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) sets forth the principles and standards by which Medical Laboratory Professionals and students admitted to professional education programs practice their profession. The ASCLS Code of Ethics states:

I. DUTY TO THE PATIENT

Medical Laboratory Professionals' primary duty is to the patient, placing the welfare of the patient above their own needs and desires and ensuring that each patient receives the highest quality of care according to current standards of practice. High quality laboratory services are safe, effective, efficient, timely, equitable, and patient-centered. Medical Laboratory Professionals work with all patients and all patient samples without regard to disease state, ethnicity, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Medical Laboratory Professionals prevent and avoid conflicts of interest that undermine the best interests of patients.

Medical Laboratory Professionals are accountable for the quality and integrity of the laboratory services they provide. This obligation includes maintaining the highest level of individual competence as patient needs change, yet practicing within the limits of their level of practice. Medical Laboratory Professionals exercise sound judgment in all aspects of laboratory services they provide. Furthermore, Medical Laboratory Professionals safeguard patients from others' incompetent or illegal practice through identification and appropriate reporting of instances where the integrity and high quality of laboratory services have been breached.

Medical Laboratory Professionals maintain strict confidentiality of patient information and test results. They safeguard the dignity and privacy of patients and provide accurate information to patients and other health care professionals. Medical Laboratory Professionals respect patients' rights to make decisions regarding their own medical care.

II. DUTY TO COLLEAGUES AND THE PROFESSION

Medical Laboratory Professionals uphold the dignity and respect of the profession and maintain a reputation of honesty, integrity, competence, and reliability. Medical Laboratory Professionals contribute to the advancement of the profession by improving and disseminating the body of knowledge, adopting scientific advances that benefit the patient, maintaining high standards of practice and education, and seeking fair socioeconomic working conditions for members of the profession.

Medical Laboratory Professionals accept the responsibility to establish the qualifications for entry to the profession, to implement those qualifications through participation in licensing and certification programs, to uphold those qualifications in hiring practices, and to recruit and educate students in accredited programs to achieve those qualifications.

Medical Laboratory Professionals establish cooperative, honest, and respectful working relationships within the clinical laboratory and with all members of the healthcare team with the primary objective of ensuring a high standard of care for the patients they serve.

III. DUTY TO SOCIETY

As practitioners of an autonomous profession, Medical Laboratory Professionals have the responsibility to contribute from their sphere of professional competence to the general well being of society. Medical Laboratory Professionals serve as patient advocates. They apply their expertise to improve patient healthcare outcomes by eliminating barriers to access to laboratory services and promoting equitable distribution of healthcare resources.

Medical Laboratory Professionals comply with relevant laws and regulations pertaining to the practice of Clinical Laboratory Science and actively seek, to change those laws and regulations that do not meet the high standards of care and practice.

PLEDGE TO THE PROFESSION

As a Medical Laboratory Professional, I pledge to uphold my duty to Patients, the Profession and Society by:

- Placing patients' welfare above my own needs and desires.
- Ensuring that each patient receives care that is safe, effective, efficient, timely, equitable and patient-centered.
- Maintaining the dignity and respect for my profession.
- Promoting the advancement of my profession.
- Ensuring collegial relationships within the clinical laboratory and with other patient care providers.
- Improving access to laboratory services.
- Promoting equitable distribution of healthcare resources.
- Complying with laws and regulations and protecting patients from others' incompetent or illegal practice
- Changing conditions where necessary to advance the best interests of patients.

2. Professional Performance Expectations (Affective Domain)

While completing the course of didactic and clinical instruction, the medical laboratory science student will:

- Accept constructive criticism in a positive manner.
- Actively participate in laboratory rotations and lecture by answering questions, taking notes and asking pertinent questions.
- Behave in a pleasant and orderly manner.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude.
- Communicate effectively and in a professional manner with faculty, staff, and classmates.
- Demonstrate attentiveness during instruction.
- Demonstrate ethical behavior by respecting the confidentiality of patient records and using discretion when discussing patient matters.
- Demonstrate interest and educational initiative by using free time in the lab productively to improve skills and/or keep current with reading assignments.
- Display punctuality when arriving in the lab in the morning; after lecture, lunch and breaks.
- Dress in a manner that is professional and safe.
- Demonstrate compassion, consideration, and respect in all interactions with others whether in person or on the phone.
- Exhibit cooperation by assuming work voluntarily in addition to that assigned.
- Follow established safety procedures.

- Recognize the importance of his/her work to the diagnosis and treatment of the patient.
- Display professional maturity by responding to the challenges of multiple assignments and tests in a positive, constructive, and professional manner without reluctance or resentment.
- Demonstrate dependability by finishing assignments on time and beginning activities without delays or waiting for reminders.
- Demonstrate integrity in dealing honestly with his/her mistakes.
- Demonstrate perseverance by overcoming obstacles to achieve goals.
- Demonstrate task performance initiative by prioritizing and completing multiple tasks accurately in allotted time.
- Maintain work area in a clean and orderly fashion.

3. Code of Conduct

The MLS program follows the RSHS Conduct Policy No. 334. Students are always expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. In addition, the MLS student is expected to follow the program specific code of conduct.

As a clinical laboratory science professional, with a shared goal of establishing a positive learning atmosphere for class members and faculty of the RSHS Medical Laboratory Science Program, the MLS student will commit to the following:

- The MLS student will accept responsibility for establishing and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships with every member of the MLS Program and Lab Services.
- The MLS student will establish and maintain a relationship of functional trust with every member of the MLS Program and Lab Services. The MLS students' relationship with each person will be equally respectful.
- The MLS student will not complain about another member of the MLS Program or Lab Services.
- The MLS student will accept the responsibility to resolve conflict in a professional manner.
- The MLS student will affirm each person's contribution to the MLS program.

4. Dress Code Policy

Purpose: Standards for appropriate dress help ensure a professional image for MLS students. Students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects attention to safety, respect for self and others, and cleanliness. Failure to adhere to the policy will result in disciplinary action.

Policy:

- While working in technical and specimen handling areas, students shall wear department-appropriate PPE.
- The student may wear a scrub outfit or business casual street clothes. Scrub outfits must be styled for professional wear. Scrub pants may be white or solid colored. Scrub tops may be solid colored to match the pants, or printed to coordinate with the pants. Outfits may not contain logos or promotional advertisements. Pants should not touch the floor. Pants are not to be rolled up at the bottom or tucked into socks or shoes. Students are restricted from wearing all navy blue, all burgundy, or all gray (same color scrub tops and bottoms together) while in clinical areas.
- Some examples of UNACCEPTABLE dress: Jeans, legging, capris, stretch pants, sweat shirts or sweat pants, tank tops, low cut tops, cropped tops, shorts, or visible undergarments.
- Hospital issued photo ID badge must always be worn in accordance with RSHS Policy # 385.

- Footwear must be clean and in good repair and should be selected for comfort and safety. Duty shoes, all-leather sneakers, and dress shoes are acceptable (must be fluid impervious). Open toes shoes, canvas shoes, sneakers with mesh material, and clogs with holes are unacceptable for safety reasons.
- Hairstyles, makeup, and nail polish should be simple and neat. **The use of fragrances is prohibited.** Artificial fingernails are not permitted while having any direct patient contact (e.g. phlebotomy). Fingernail length shall not exceed ¼” beyond the fingertip.
- Hair longer than shoulder length must be pulled back off the shoulders when performing technical procedures and when in patient areas.
- Facial hair must be neatly trimmed.
- Body piercings other than the ear, (such as tongue, lip, and eyebrow) must be covered so as not to be visible.
- The student may be asked to cover visible tattoos which could be considered offensive to others.
- Dangling necklaces or bracelets are prohibited. Excessive or extreme jewelry such as rings on every finger is not permitted.
- No cell phones outside backpacks/purses during lab rotations, lectures or exams, except in emergency situations with pre-approval from program director or a laboratory supervisor. Cell phones may be used in student classroom during breaks and lunch.

Section III: Attendance and Health

1. Length of Course and Academic Calendar

Length of Course

Approximately 48 weeks of Classroom and Clinical Instruction (including breaks). Classes and clinical activities are scheduled Monday through Friday. The program typically adheres to an 8-hour daily schedule and educational activities may be scheduled between the hours of 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM. The MLS Program does NOT follow the academic calendar of the RSHS and classes may be in session when the RSHS is closed. The academic calendar is distributed electronically.

Holidays/Days Off

The MLS program observes the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day and Memorial Day. The MLS program has a winter break in December and a Friday off in the spring.

Personal Leave/Illness:

Students are permitted 5 days for personal leave or illness. If a student is absent greater than 5 days, the student may be required to make up the time/activities missed at the end of the program or over holiday/break time. Continued absenteeism will result in disciplinary action and could result in dismissal from the program.

2. Mealtime Breaks During Clinical Rotations

Students will be assigned a 30 – 35 minute lunch break during the 8-hour school day. When students are in clinical rotations, the student lunch and breaks will coincide with that of the tech (preceptor) assigned to the student. Students are expected to return promptly to the laboratory following lunch break.

3. General Attendance Information

Purpose: To ensure that MLS students are aware of the expectations regarding attendance during the clinical year.

Policy: Students are expected to attend all lectures, clinical assignments, student laboratories, enrichment activities, leadership collaboration meetings, and any other scheduled activities. Students are expected to be on time for all scheduled activities.

Procedure: The academic calendar is distributed at the beginning of the clinical year. Monthly schedules are distributed electronically each month. Students are expected to be in their assigned area, organized, and ready for clinical or lecture at the time scheduled. Tardiness, excused, and unexcused absences will be recorded on the student attendance record. The Program Director will maintain attendance records for each student.

Tardiness:

1. Not arriving at the classroom or assigned lab area at the appointed time.
2. If the student will be delayed, the student is responsible for notifying the laboratory department to which he/she is assigned and the Program Director's voice mail at 484-628-0555. The student should proceed to the assignment as soon as possible.
3. Consistent tardiness will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

Excused absence:

1. A legitimate reason for not attending class or lab rotation.
2. Five days are allotted for personal leave or illness.
3. Unplanned absence: personal illness or injury (medical verification of absence may be required)
4. Scheduled absence: funeral attendance (family as defined in HR policy), job interview, or other individualized situations that require a student's presence (e.g.- graduation practice).
 - a. **These days are NOT vacation days.**
 - b. Scheduled absences must be scheduled and approved by the program director and the clinical coordinator, lead tech, or assistant manager of the department the student is currently training in. These may NOT be used on exam days (lecture or lab), on days of scheduled enrichment activities, or the day immediately before or following a program break or holiday.

Unexcused absence:

1. Results when the student does not have a pre-scheduled excused absence or does not call to notify the laboratory and the Program Director of his/her absence. More than one occurrence of unexcused absence is deemed unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.

Students' responsibilities:

1. **Personal Days:** Must be scheduled in advance and be approved by the Program Director and clinical coordinator, or lead tech. Complete a Personal Day Request Form.
2. **Unplanned absences (illness/injury):**
 - a. Leave a message on the Program Director voicemail at 484-628-0555
 - b. Call into the laboratory to have your name placed on the "Call Off Board" at 484-628-5388 prior to 0700. Get the name of the person to whom you reported your absence.
 - c. Call the clinical department where you are currently assigned.
 - d. You **MUST** notify the Program Director and Laboratory **EACH DAY** that you are absent.
3. Discuss with the instructor(s) the options for making up any missed learning activities upon returning to class.

- a. It is at the discretion of the instructor if missed experiences can be made up at a later date. Some activities cannot be rescheduled.
- b. Absence the day of a scheduled exam will be subject to review by the Program Director.
- c. If a student misses lectures due to absence or tardiness, it is his/her responsibility to obtain the missed lecture content from a classmate.

4. Important Phone Numbers

Program Director	484-628-0555
Main Lab (use to get name on “call off board”)	484-628-5388
Blood Bank	484-628-8616
Chemistry	484-628-8493
Hematology and Coagulation	484-628-8872
Histology	484-628-8565
Microbiology	484-628-5826
Urinalysis	484-628-8875
School of Health Sciences	484-628-0100

5. Inclement Weather

Purpose: The inclement weather policy is intended to provide student guidelines regarding travel in inclement weather or an emergency. It is recognized that in cases of inclement weather, local conditions may prohibit students from being here or being on time. Students are expected to make a reasonable attempt to get to class, lab or lab-related learning experiences, but each student is encouraged to utilize personal judgment in deciding to attend class based on his/her local weather circumstances and safety of travel.

Policy: The MLS program is a pre-professional program and therefore the School generally will not cancel classes for inclement weather. Students are expected to attend classes and rotations even if other activities at the hospital or the RHSHS have been cancelled. However, if the hospital officially declares a weather emergency, classes will be cancelled.

Procedure: School closures or delays in opening will typically be communicated to the students by the Program Director at least 2 hours prior to the start of classes via phone (text message) and/or hospital email. Closures/delays are not posted on local television or websites. You may receive an email from the RHSHS indicating that the RHSHS is closed or delayed. This email should be disregarded as the MLS program does NOT follow the inclement weather policy of the RHSHS.

The Program Director or designee may make the decision to delay the start of class, have early dismissal, or cancel class.

Students MUST notify the Program Director AND each department of a late arrival or absence due to inclement weather. Ask that your name be placed on the “call off” board if you will be absent. This day will be deducted from the student’s allotted time off.

6. Health Services for Students (RHSHS Policy 320)

Reading Health System Occupational Health Services (OHS) facilitates the provision of health services for students in the Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences. Refer to Policy No. 320: Student Health Services.

Injuries and Exposures during Clinical activities

In the event that an injury or exposure does occur during the student's participation in clinical activities, students should refer to RSHS Policy 320.

In addition, the student must immediately notify the lead tech, clinical coordinator, or assistant manager. The student is also responsible for notifying the Program Director ASAP.

Procedure for Reporting Communicable Diseases

Reading Hospital tracks the occurrence of communicable diseases occurring in students and employees. Students having symptoms of the communicable diseases listed in the RSHS Policy 320 should notify OHS at 484-628-8499.

Temporary Limitations

All students must be medically clear to fully participate in all clinical activities.

Refer to RSHS Policy 321: Students with Temporary Limitations.

The Program Director will make the final decision regarding the student's ability to complete the program.

Students with Disabilities

Refer to the RSHS Policy No. 322: Students with Disabilities

Section IV: Academic Policies

1. Curriculum

The curriculum is a structured educational experience consisting of lectures, computer educational modules, textbook assignments, examinations; case studies; self-study assignments; and clinical laboratory rotations designed to serve as a student's senior year of college (3+1 option). Students without a baccalaureate degree must have completed all college requirements BEFORE the start of the clinical program so that the student will be granted a baccalaureate degree by the college upon satisfactory completion of the hospital program.

Didactic Instruction:

Lectures will be scheduled at specific times on a pre-established schedule.

Orientation/Clinical Preparation:

Students spend 8 weeks in classroom instruction and student labs prior to the start of clinical laboratory rotations. Topics covered include safety; ethics; medical terminology; phlebotomy; quality assurance/quality control; laboratory math; point of care testing; and instrumentation. Coagulation and urinalysis lectures occur during this time. Microbiology and immunohematology student labs occur at the RSHS. Students receive introductory lectures in hematology and immunohematology.

Clinical Rotations: Each student is assigned a unique rotation. All laboratory rotations are completed in the Reading Hospital Department of Laboratory Services and placement in clinical rotation is guaranteed. The student clinical education is organized by a clinical coordinator in each department.

2. Course Descriptions and Credits

The courses included in the curriculum are listed below along with the suggested number of credits per course. Since the Medical Laboratory Science Program at the Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences is affiliated with several colleges/universities, we report the student's grade and allow the individual institution to assign the credits. Different institutions assign 30 to 36 credits for the clinical year. The MLS program does not offer advanced placement; transfer of credits; or credits for experiential learning.

MLS 410: Clinical Chemistry (8 credits) - Includes enzymology, endocrinology, biochemistry of lipids, carbohydrates and proteins, metabolism of nitrogenous end products, physiology and metabolism

of fluids and electrolytes, and toxicology as related to the body and diseases. Result interpretation and data correlation with diseases, as well as instruction in the operation, maintenance and troubleshooting of analytical instruments, are integral components of this course.

MLS 420: Clinical Microbiology (8 credits) - The study of pathogenic bacteria, mycobacteria, parasites, viruses, and fungi, their rapid and exact identification and antibiotic susceptibility testing. Involves techniques to isolate, stain, and culture. Includes molecular methods and their introduction into the clinical laboratory.

MLS 430: Clinical Seminar (3 credits)- Topics include leadership, laboratory management, educational methodology, safety, ethics, compliance, point-of care testing, professional development, quality control/quality assurance, laboratory mathematics, and medical terminology as it is applicable to the field of laboratory science. This course provides instruction and clinical experience leading to proficiency in the practice of phlebotomy. The course culminates in the spring of the year with the presentation of case studies.

MLS 440: Coagulation (2 credits) - The study of systems involved in the coagulation of blood, detection of deficiencies in those systems, and the control of anticoagulant therapies. Manual and automated techniques of diagnostic tests for abnormalities are included.

MLS 450: Hematology (4 credits) - The study of the origin, development, morphology, function, and reactions of the blood cells. Includes normal and abnormal cell identification by morphology, immunologic and genetic markers; disease and cell type correlation; and instrumentation use in the analysis and quantitation of blood cells.

MLS 460: Immunohematology (Transfusion Medicine) (4 credits) - The study of the processing, storage, and administration of human blood and its components. Includes the study of blood group antigen and antibody systems, antibody detection and identification methods, and compatibility testing as related to the transfusion of human blood.

MLS 470: Immunology and Serology (included in Microbiology and Immunology curricula) (4 credits) - The in vitro study of antigen-antibody interactions, the science of immunity, and the study of the in vivo development of antibodies against specific foreign antigens. Includes serological diagnostic testing methods.

MLS 480: Urinalysis (2 credits) - The study of the chemical and microscopic elements of urine. Includes the study of body fluids.

Anatomic Pathology (noncredit) - Students spend time in pathology, histology, and cytology as an enrichment experience.

3. Grading

Purpose: To inform students of the grade requirements for the MLS program.

Policy: The RSHS Grading Policy #305 is followed to determine final grades only. Students are informed of specific course evaluation grading in each course syllabus.

Procedure: MLS students are graded in both the didactic portion of the program and the clinical laboratory rotation experience. Students are required to maintain a minimum grade of 77% in both lecture and laboratory rotations.

The grading system is as follows:

A	= 94 - 100	F	= <77
A-	= 90 - 93.9		
B+	= 87 - 89.9	WP	= Withdrawal Passing
B	= 83 - 86.9	WF	= Withdrawal Failing
B-	= 80-82.9	I	= Incomplete
C+	= 77 - 79.9		

- **Didactic evaluation:** Didactic evaluation is accomplished using examinations, quizzes, case studies, self-study assignments, and other modalities. Satisfactory performance in the affective domain criteria is required to successfully pass each course.
- **Laboratory rotation evaluation:** In the clinical laboratory portion of the program, final grades are determined by quizzes; written examinations; technical ability; practical examinations (unknowns), if applicable; and affective domain. Each technologist (preceptor) assigned to train the student is required to submit a technical and affective domain evaluation of the student. Students are graded by several staff technologists who are teaching them on the bench to maintain impartiality in grading.
- **Final Course Grades:** For courses with a laboratory rotation component, 50% of the final grade is derived from the laboratory component and 50% of the grade is derived from the lecture (didactic) component. All final grades are recorded in the student's permanent record and are available to students on Web Connect.

The Program Director is responsible for keeping all records and discussing the results of evaluations and grades with the student. Appeals for change of grade for individual assignments, quizzes, or examinations are handled initially with the instructor and the student requesting the grade review. If arbitration is necessary, the Program Director will intervene. Refer to the RSHS Policy No. 365: Academic Grievance for final grade appeal.

For 3+1 students, grades are reported to the college/university MLS advisor/coordinator and the college/university registrar. The college/university may record grades for the clinical year as Pass/Fail on the student's transcript.

4. Academic Integrity

Refer to the RSHS Policy No. 307: Academic Integrity.

Smart watches must be removed during any assessments.

Please note: Giving or receiving information or assistance on unknowns assigned during clinical rotations is considered cheating and subject to disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the program.

5. Qualified Supervision

In laboratory rotations students will be with an instructor (preceptor). After demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to perform procedures under qualified supervision.

6. Academic Advisement/Counseling

Purpose: The academic advisement/counseling program is designed to create a supportive relationship to help MLS students address academic, professional, and personal needs. The Program Director and faculty are available to advise and guide students through the program. The Program Director will meet with students at least once a quarter for advisement and guidance. The Program Director maintains an

open-door policy. The Program Director and faculty are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and impartiality while advising and guiding students through the program.

Policy: Counseling forms are used to document academic advisement for students achieving a grade of less than 77%; for affective domain concerns; for attendance issues; and for non-compliance with any hospital, school, laboratory, or program policies, rules, or regulations.

Procedure: The Program Director or faculty member will fill out a counseling form which will be signed by the student, instructor, and the Program Director. The form will list reason for counseling; recommended action; and student comments. These forms are kept confidential and are kept in the student's file. A copy is given to the student for his/her reference. Counseling forms are not completed for routine advisement meetings.

Academic Advisement: If there is an indication before the completion of a lab rotation or lecture that the student's grades are likely to fall below a 77%, the Program Director and faculty member will meet with the student to discuss the situation and suggest possible ways to improve performance. The purpose of academic advisement is to provide students with notice that they are in significant danger of failing. A counseling form will be filled out with recommendations and a timeframe for improvement. Remedial work may be assigned. The faculty is willing to provide individual tutoring, within reason, for any student who requests additional help. If by the third exam in a lecture course the student does not have a minimum grade of 77%, the student may be placed on academic probation.

7. Academic Probation

Purpose: To inform MLS students of the performance expectations, provide a structure for consistent intervention when students are not performing well, and connect students with the resources that can help facilitate their academic success.

Policy: Continued enrollment in the MLS program is dependent on the student maintaining satisfactory academic progress throughout the curriculum. Students must achieve an average of 77% in each course to progress in and ultimately graduate from the Program.

Procedure: Academic Probation is a warning that performance or progress is not satisfactory and immediate steps are required to improve performance. Probation is an indication of serious difficulty which may result in dismissal from the program. If a student achieves an average of less than a 77% in any lab rotation or lecture, he/she will be placed on academic probation. The student will be informed in writing by the Program Director that he/she has been placed on academic probation. If placed on probation, the student is required to work with the program director to develop an action plan to improve performance. The student will be given a time period to improve performance before further action is taken. Probationary terms are determined on an individual basis. Remedial work may be assigned. During this time, grades will be monitored closely by the Program Director and the faculty member(s) involved. For 3+1 students, the college advisor/coordinator will be notified.

If the student does not meet the requirements of their probationary action plan, the student will be dismissed from the program. There is no suspension. A student who is involuntarily dismissed from the program will be ineligible for readmission.

8. Causes for Dismissal

Purpose: To provide guidance to the student who is being dismissed from the MLS program. Refer to RSHS Policy No. 319: Dismissal

Policy: Dismissal is the permanent withdrawal of the student from the program by the Program Director. There is no suspension. A student may be dismissed from the MLS program for any of the following reasons (not inclusive):

1. Academic/clinical failure: failure to maintain the minimally required grades stipulated for lecture, laboratory and/or affective components.
2. Failure to meet the standards of conduct.
3. Continued absenteeism or tardiness.
4. Divulging patient or pertinent hospital information.
5. Violations of school, hospital, laboratory, and/or program rules, policies and/or regulations.
6. Theft
7. Falsification of records.
8. Willful destruction of property.
9. Using any hospital computer for an unauthorized purpose.
10. Plagiarizing another's written publication or cheating of any sort in academic assignments.

Procedure:

The student will be notified to meet with the Program Director. The Program Director will explain the reason(s) for dismissal of the student.

- The student has the right to appeal the decision through the grievance procedure.
- For 3+1 students, the college advisor/coordinator will be notified of the student's dismissal.
- The School will refund tuition according to the RSHS Policy No. 601: Tuition Payment and Student Refund Policy.

9. Grievance Procedures

- Academic Grievance: Refer to RSHS Policy No. 365: Academic Grievance Policy
- Non-Academic Grievance: Refer to RSHS Policy No. 366: Non-Academic Grievance Policy

10. Voluntary Withdrawal from the School

- Refer to RSHS Policy No. 318: Voluntary Withdrawal from the School

11. General Program Objectives

The following are expected intellectual outcomes, skills, and behaviors of the Medical Laboratory Science Student. The taxonomic level within each domain follows the objective:

Cognitive Domain

After attending lectures, reading assigned materials, and performing tests in the laboratory, the student will be able to: (Specific criteria listed in each course)

- Recall the basic theoretical concepts related to clinical discipline. LEVEL I
- Define terminology associated with clinical discipline and normal values. LEVEL I
- Describe the pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical variables affecting collection, testing of specimens, and the reporting of results. LEVEL I
- Describe principle of operation of laboratory instruments. LEVEL I
- Describe preventive maintenance and troubleshooting techniques for laboratory instruments. LEVEL I
- Explain the principles, procedures and techniques of all routine and some special laboratory procedures as applicable. LEVEL I
- Differentiate human anatomy and physiology, as it relates to discipline, in both health and disease. LEVEL II

- Analyze the underlying theory of procedures performed in the laboratory, including general description of analyte, clinical significance of analyte, methodology of procedure, interferences, and reference ranges as applicable. LEVEL III
- Apply knowledge of normal laboratory data to differentiate between normal and abnormal values and specimens. LEVEL II
- Interpret laboratory results using guidelines of methodology and procedure. LEVEL II
- Compare alternate methodologies. LEVEL II
- Correlate basic laboratory procedures to identification of pathologic states. LEVEL III
- Integrate data from multiple analyses/laboratories to determine probable diagnosis of patient. LEVEL III
- Select additional tests that could be performed to support or confirm a patient's diagnosis. LEVEL II
- Assess data for possible discrepancies and resolve problems considering the patient's condition. LEVEL III
- Evaluate new methods and procedures with minimal assistance through application of basic scientific principles, accepted laboratory techniques, statistical evaluation of data, cost analysis, and other management principles. LEVEL III
- State the importance of quality assurance, quality improvement, and quality control in each area of the clinical laboratory. LEVEL I
- Describe the quality control procedures performed in each department. LEVEL I
- Explain the importance of quality control in maintaining accuracy and precision in all areas of the clinical laboratory. LEVEL I
- Discuss the importance of the continuous assessment of laboratory services in all clinical disciplines. LEVEL II
- Apply a problem-solving approach in all areas of the clinical laboratory. LEVEL III

Psychomotor Domain

After attending lectures, reading assigned materials, and performing tests in the laboratory, the student will be able to: (Specific criteria listed in each course)

- Recognize acceptable, sub-optimal, and unacceptable specimens according to Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for each laboratory area. LEVEL I
- Process specimens as instructed in a timely manner without being reminded. LEVEL II
- Select appropriate procedure, reagents, and quality controls for test requested. LEVEL I
- Perform manual and automated procedures accurately and precisely to generate reliable results. LEVEL II
- Operate, maintain, and calibrate instruments and prepare/change reagents as applicable. LEVEL II
- Identify sources of error and interferences in analysis as applicable. LEVEL I
- Record QC and/or patient results according to SOP and in a neat and orderly manner. LEVEL II
- Perform Quality Control and evaluate acceptability. LEVEL II
- Troubleshoot procedure or instrument when QC is out of range or when results do not correlate with patient's clinical condition. LEVEL III
- Perform procedure/assigned task in a logical sequence within allotted time frame. LEVEL II
- Perform as a team member. LEVEL II
- Apply previously learned technical knowledge to add new procedures/technologies to repertoire with ease. LEVEL III

Affective Domain

While completing the course of didactic and clinical instructions, the MLS student will:

- Receive assignments given in the laboratory. LEVEL I
 - Listen attentively to explanation of procedure.
 - Actively participate by answering questions and demonstrating interest and attention to the subject matter.
- Actively participate in lectures by answering questions and asking pertinent questions. LEVEL I
- Respond positively to individuals who have teaching and supervisory responsibilities. LEVEL II
 - Cooperate with instructor/supervisor in lab assignment.
 - Communicate effectively with faculty in a professional manner.
 - Respond to the challenges of multiple assignments and tests in a positive, constructive, and professional manner.
- Demonstrate compliance with and commitment to laboratory rules and practice. LEVEL I
 - Report to lab and lecture at scheduled time and return promptly from lunch and breaks.
 - Comply with lab safety policies and procedures.
 - Dress in a professional manner and with regard to safety.
- Respects the confidentiality of patient records and uses discretion when discussing patient matters. LEVEL II
- Value accuracy as being critically important in the provision of patient care. LEVEL II
 - Follows laboratory procedures for accession, identification, transport, storage and disposal of specimens.
 - Complete appropriate instrument maintenance and procedure QC before initiating patient testing.
 - Explains the importance of accuracy and timeliness of result reporting.
- Endorse dependability as a work value in assignments. LEVEL II
 - Notify Program Director and laboratory department when circumstances cause lateness or absence.
 - Plan all scheduled absences in advance and with regard to lab rotation requirements.
 - Complete all assigned laboratory tasks (procedures, unknowns, written and practical exams) within established timeframes.
- Maintain effective and positive interpersonal relationships. LEVEL II
 - Communicate effectively in person and over the telephone with patients and other healthcare personnel.
 - Interact in a friendly, cooperative, professional manner with peers and instructors.
 - Strive to resolve any problem that may arise by discussing problem with respective peer or instructor.
 - Represent the laboratory favorably to other departments and to the public.
- Receptive to constructive criticism. LEVEL III
 - Willingly accepts professional constructive criticism regarding work.
- Establish good work habits. LEVEL III
 - Organize work for an efficient flow of specimen testing.
 - Manage reagents, supplies, and equipment.
 - Strive to leave work area in clean and safe condition.
- Persist in self-motivation toward learning. LEVEL III
 - Initiate assigned tasks without prompting.

Strive to resolve sources of error or discrepancies caused by suboptimal specimens or interfering substances without prompting.

Strive to resolve out-of-range QC without prompting.

Endeavor to function independently as skills develop on rotational assignment.

Volunteer to assist with patient workload.

Keep current with reading assignments.

Cognitive objectives are measured by written examinations in both lecture and laboratory.

Psychomotor objectives are measured by practical examinations and checklist evaluation in the laboratory.

Affective objectives are measured by a checklist evaluation in both lecture and laboratory.

12. Graduate Entry Level Competencies

The curriculum is designed to provide the student with the theoretical and practical knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for competence at career entry as a graduate medical laboratory scientist. At entry level, the MLS will possess the entry level competencies necessary to perform the full range of clinical laboratory tests in areas such as Clinical Chemistry, Hematology/Hemostasis, Immunology, Immunohematology/Transfusion medicine, Microbiology, Urine and Body Fluid Analysis, and other emerging diagnostics, and will play a role in the development and evaluation of test systems and interpretive algorithms. The medical laboratory scientist will have diverse responsibilities in areas of analysis and clinical decision making, regulatory compliance with applicable regulations, education, and quality assurance/performance improvement wherever laboratory testing is researched, developed, or performed. Although job responsibilities vary, graduates will be able to:

- incorporate concepts learned from both the classroom and laboratory experiences to provide accurate and meaningful results that reflect current standards in healthcare
- perform routine laboratory procedures and some special procedures proficiently
- recognize the importance of adding new procedures and technologies to his/her repertoire with ease
- make judgments about the validity of laboratory results
- use quality control methods and standards in maintaining accuracy and precision
- evaluate new methods and procedures with minimal assistance
- recognize a problem, identify the cause, and apply the appropriate problem-solving approach to troubleshoot laboratory instrumentation and information systems
- keep records and be able to communicate ideas and facts to a variety of persons both within and beyond the limits of the laboratory
- collaborate with diverse members of the health care team to provide quality, accurate and timely laboratory results in a cost-effective manner
- comply with all legal, regulatory, and ethical requirements associated with the practice of medical laboratory science
- demonstrate responsibility for his/her own work and decisions and be willing to help others
- accept teaching responsibilities at the bench level through demonstration of methods and explanation of theories
- be aware of the need to participate in life-long continuing education in order to maintain competency in the performance of the professional duties

At entry level, the Medical Laboratory Scientist will have the following basic knowledge and skills:

- Application of safety and governmental regulations and standards as applied to clinical laboratory science;
- Principles and practices of professional conduct and the significance of continuing professional development;

- Communications sufficient to serve the needs of patients, the public and members of the health care team;
- Principles and practices of administration and supervision as applied to clinical laboratory science;
- Educational methodologies and terminology sufficient to train/educate users and providers of laboratory services
- Principles and practices of clinical study design, implementation, and dissemination of results.

12. Teach Out Plan

In an unforeseen disaster or event where the school/program can no longer operate, all didactic materials and lectures will be distributed online via the learning management system. In addition, students will complete their clinical rotations at one of our affiliated Tower Health Hospitals. In the event the MLS program closes, students will be permitted to finish their education/clinical experience, but no new students will be accepted.

Note: If the Teach Out Plan ever goes into effect, the Program Director will submit the Teach Out Plan to NAACLS within 30 days of the official announcement of the closure of the program.

Section V: Safety

1. General Safety Information

Safety is an important part of any laboratory and students receive extensive instruction in Laboratory Safety. The Hospital abides by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations (e.g. blood borne pathogens, hazardous communication) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidelines (CDC). Students are expected to adhere to these guidelines as well as all Hospital, School, Program, and laboratory safety policies and procedures. The health and safety of students and faculty is safeguarded by requiring updated immunizations, by providing safety training, and by providing personal protective equipment in all areas of the laboratory.

- Initial orientation training includes but is not limited to Fire Safety, Hazardous Chemicals, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), Standard Precautions, and Transmission Based Precautions.
- The program is responsible for the student's education about and compliance with blood borne pathogens and OSHA regulations. MyTowerLearningHub courses will be assigned and must be completed within the allotted time.
- Students are responsible for reviewing and adhering to all safety policies for the RHSHS and the Reading Hospital.
- Students must attain an average of at least 77% on the Safety exam.
- The Hospital requires that all employees and students report any accident, injury, or exposures to their supervisors immediately so that emergency measures may be instituted. Refer to RHSHS Policy No. 320: Student Health Services.
- Safety is also a consideration for the patients of Reading Hospital and Tower Health. To ensure that patient safety will be maintained, all students are required to complete background checks. Refer to RHSHS Policy No. 324: Student Background Checks.

2. Evacuation Plan for the MLS Classroom in K Building, 3rd Floor

Purpose: To provide a plan for the evacuation of the K3 classroom, faculty office and kitchen area in the event of a fire or other emergency situation.

Policy: K building must be **evacuated** in the event of activation of a fire alarm **on any floor of K building**. If you discover a fire, pull the closest manual pull station and call security command center at extension 8282.

Procedure: Overhead voice alert will sound a floor and compass point where a fire is located. Strobe lights will also strobe until the fire is under control; the system is reset; and the code green is given that the emergency is over. Close any windows and close door behind the last person to exit. The classroom instructor, if present, will coordinate the evacuation. Check the restroom if all students are not in attendance, and then direct everyone to exit as quickly as possible. Roll will be taken when evacuation is complete and all are assembled outside.

Evacuation Route:

Primary Evacuation Route: All students and employees will exit the lounge (restroom area), classroom and faculty office and proceed to the LEFT toward the center stairwell. Proceed down the stairwell to the Ground floor. After exiting the stairwell, proceed straight through the reception area to the outside. All students and employees will then turn left and proceed toward the front of K building

Secondary Evacuation Route: In the event the fire or emergency involves the Center of the building, follow the secondary route. All students and employees will exit the lounge (restroom area), classroom and faculty office and proceed to the RIGHT toward the exit sign parallel to Spruce Street. Go down the outside stairwell, exit the door and turn LEFT. All students and employees are to meet in the front of K building.

Section VI: General Information

1. Student Work Policy

Purpose: To ensure that all student activities, especially while students are completing clinical rotations, will be educational in nature.

Policy: A student may be employed in the laboratory per-diem on **weekends and after school hours** if he/she wishes, and if there are budgeted hours available.

Procedure:

- The number of hours assigned should not interfere with the student's academic responsibilities or progress in the program.
- Students will not be substituted for regular staff during school hours.
- Service work is non-compulsory.
- The student must have completed the clinical rotation in the area where the position is available, and the student may perform only those procedures in which he/she is assessed as competent.
- The student will always work under supervision.
- Students working as per-diem employees are subject to all employee rules and regulations.
- Students are not guaranteed employment with Reading Hospital during their education or upon graduation.

2. Use of K3 Classroom/RHSHS/Key Distribution/Lockers

General Classroom Rules

- No food in the classroom or student lab at the RHSHS. Exceptions will be made in the classroom when faculty brings food for the class.
- Drinks are permitted in the classroom but not in the student lab.
- Do not rearrange tables or desks.
- Do not write on the whiteboards.
- Classroom library books are for in classroom use only. Please do not remove.

- Noise must be kept to a minimum. We share the building with other classrooms and offices.
- No sleeping in the classroom or lying on the floor.

Use of K3 Classroom and Kitchen

Students are permitted to utilize the K3 classroom and its contents (e.g. computers, educational software, reference books) at times not scheduled for lecture or laboratory use. Students are permitted to use the kitchen/lounge on K3 for breaks and lunch. **Food items are not to be stored in the classroom. Students are responsible for keeping the classroom and lounge areas tidy.**

Key Distribution

Students will receive a K3 classroom key. **Students are expected to secure the lock on the classroom when it is unoccupied.**

Students will be responsible for:

1. Using the key in accordance with Reading Hospital Policies and Procedures.
2. Returning the key to the Program Director prior to their graduation ceremony. Keys not returned may affect the release of grades to their respective college/university and/or candidacy for graduation.

Lockers

Students will receive a locker on the ground floor of C Building and will be required to provide their own lock for the locker. The locker will provide a safe environment for the student's personal belongings during their clinical rotations. Students should not leave valuables unattended in the student classroom or clinical laboratory. A badge access coat room is available on C3 near the laboratory. **Personal belongings such as coats and backpacks are not permitted in the laboratory.**

3. Retention of Student Files and Records

Purpose: To provide guidance to MLS students, former MLS students, and MLS graduates who desire to have their educational records released during or after enrollment.

Policy: All student records are maintained on a confidential basis in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This handbook fulfills the FERPA requirement of "annual notice" regarding your rights under FERPA. Refer to RSHS Policy No. 325: Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Student records are open to the student at his/her request except for reference letters if the student has waived the right of access. Records must be reviewed in the presence of the Program Director or designee.

Procedure:

The following items comprise the MLS student record:

- Admission File
- Student Health Records
- Attendance Records
- Evaluation and Advisement Records
- Transcript Records

Location and Retention Timeframes:

- Admission File: May include completed application, transcripts, references, and correspondence to and from the applicant. Admission records for graduates, withdrawn and terminated students are

retained for five years. Admission records of accepted but not enrolled applicants as well as rejected applicants are maintained for two years. Records are maintained in the permanent record room at the RSHS.

- **Student Health Records**: Includes pre-admission physical, immunization records, blood and body fluid exposure and all other health related information collected for and during enrollment. Health files are maintained by Student Health Services. All items listed in the health files are retained for five years except for immunization records and blood and body fluid exposure records which are retained ad infinitum.
- **Attendance Records**: Includes academic and clinical attendance, and tardiness. Maintained in the Program Director's Office for five years.
- **Evaluation and Advisement Records**: May include laboratory and lecture grade summary sheets, competency evaluations, technical performance evaluations, affective domain evaluations, academic and clinical advisement records, documentation of safety training, laboratory rotation schedule and any correspondence with college advisor. Maintained in the Program Director's Office for five years.
- **Transcript Records**: Maintained by the Registrar's office ad infinitum. Transcript records contain the student's legal name; course grades and credits; and dates of admission and completion.

Request for Release of Records

Students must request transcripts through the RSHS Registrar's Office. Transcript Request Form can be found online at <https://reading.towerhealth.org/academics/health-sciences/for-students/registrars-office/transcript-request-form/>. Written permission must be granted to the program director for the release of any other records to a third party such as attendance and evaluation records.

4. Graduation Requirements

Students enrolled in the Medical Laboratory Science Program will be eligible for graduation when they successfully complete all requirements of the program. The requirements include passing all courses with a final average equal to or greater than 77%.

Other requirements that must be met include successful completion of the capstone project, the Case Study; and successful completion of the assigned phlebotomy experience.

Students must have all financial obligations satisfied, all tests and assignments completed, all evaluation forms completed and returned, and their student ID badge and key returned before all obligations are determined to be met. When all obligations have been met, the student will be eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion which is awarded by the Program.

Successful completion of the program and receipt of the certificate are NOT contingent on the student taking or passing any external certification examination(s).