INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The purpose of the Program Handbook is to serve as a reference and resource for the students in each of the programs in the VUMC Center for Programs in Allied Health (CPIAH). The Program Handbook is one of the important documents that provide operational guidance to students, to assist them in their successful progression through their programs. Other key documents with policy and procedure information important to students include:

- **Catalog of the VUMC Center for Programs in Allied Health** – Source of important policies and other information related to VUMC, the CPIAH and each program. The catalog is available on the VUMC CPIAH website.
- **Program Handbook** – Each CPIAH program provides students its own Program Handbook. The policies and procedures in the Program Handbook are aligned with VUMC, CPIAH and program policies that appear in the Catalog, as well as other locations. The purpose of the Program Handbook is to provide more specific details about each program, with a particular focus on operational information and procedures.
- **VUMC CPIAH website and Program Website** – The Center for Programs in Allied Health has its own website, and that website houses a website for each program within the CPIAH. Students will find important information regarding both the institution and the programs on these sites.

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.
Contents
INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM HANDBOOK ................................................................. 2
Contents ....................................................................................................................... 3
IMPORTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE CPIAH CATALOG .......... 5
  • Program Description .......................................................................................... 5
  • Certification/Credentialing Information ............................................................... 5
  • Mission, Credo and Goals .................................................................................. 5
  • Accreditation and Approvals ............................................................................. 5
  • Staff and Faculty ................................................................................................. 5
  • Program Advisory Committee ........................................................................... 5
  • Admission Information ....................................................................................... 5
  • Academic Program .............................................................................................. 5
  • Course List & Descriptions ................................................................................ 5
  • Student Assessment & Grading .......................................................................... 5
  • Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements .............................................. 5
  • Graduation Requirements .................................................................................. 5
  • Professional Code of Ethics ................................................................................ 5
INTRODUCTION TO THE DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORIES, VUMC DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY, MICROBIOLOGY, AND IMMUNOLOGY ....................................................... 6
PROGRAM FACILITIES ............................................................................................... 6
ACADEMIC PROGRAM ............................................................................................... 6
  Minimum Competencies ......................................................................................... 6
  Comprehensive Final .............................................................................................. 7
  Sample Lecture/Student Laboratory Schedule ..................................................... 7
  Sample Clinical Practicum Schedule ..................................................................... 9
STUDENT ASSESSMENT ............................................................................................. 9
  Evaluation of the Student ...................................................................................... 9
    Performance in the Lecture/Student Laboratory .................................................. 9
    Performance in the Clinical Practicum ............................................................... 9
STATEMENT OF PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS (ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS) ...................... 14
EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM .......................................................................... 14
ATTENDANCE POLICY .............................................................................................. 14
  Absence Policy ...................................................................................................... 15
    Excessive Absence / Tardiness .......................................................................... 16
STUDENT ADVISING AND CONFERENCES .......................................................... 16
COMMITMENT TO SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ............ 17
STUDENT CONDUCT ............................................................................................... 18
IMPORTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE CPIAH CATALOG

The Catalog of the Center for Programs in Allied Health (CPIAH) contains important 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 in order to obtain the following information about this program:

- Program Description
- Certification/Credentialing Information
- Mission, Credo and Goals
- Accreditation and Approvals
- Staff and Faculty
- Program Advisory Committee
- Admission Information
- Academic Program
- Course List & Descriptions
- Student Assessment & Grading
- Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements
- Graduation Requirements
- Professional Code of Ethics
INTRODUCTION TO THE DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORIES, VUMC DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY, MICROBIOLOGY, AND IMMUNOLOGY

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

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
Microbiology, including Mycology and Mycobacteriology
Virology/Immunology
Molecular Infectious Disease
Core Laboratory (including Chemistry, Urinalysis, Body Fluids, Hematology, and Hemostasis/Coagulation)
Hematopathology
Molecular Genetics

The VUMC Diagnostic Laboratories operate 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week to provide accurate, timely test results to support physicians and other providers in the assessment of our patients. The extensive laboratory test repertoire reflects the specialized services/programs at Vanderbilt and the Department’s commitment to meeting the clinical needs of our patients and physicians. In addition, each discipline (Clinical and Anatomic) has a medical director with expertise in that specialty. Residents and attending pathologists are available 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week for consultation and/or interpretation of test results for laboratory testing performed on-site or referenced to an outside laboratory.

The Diagnostic 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 Hospital’s The Joint Commission accreditation.

PROGRAM FACILITIES

Facilities for the program include office space in The Vanderbilt Clinic (TVC), a student classroom and laboratory in Light Hall (LH), and assigned spaces in The Vanderbilt Clinic lab and One Hundred Oaks (OHO) lab, where student practical learning activities take place. The program also uses various departmental conference rooms as needed.

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 first week of class consists of orientation, and is followed by seven months of lectures (including topics such as management, education, and professional development) and experiential laboratory sessions. The second six months of the program consists of the laboratory practicum, during which time students work alongside medical laboratory professionals to learn instrumentation, the application of testing methods, handling of patient samples, and reporting results. In addition to other assessments throughout the year, students must pass a final comprehensive exam before graduating.

**Minimum Competencies**

Upon completion of the program, the student will be able to demonstrate the following entry-level competencies:

- Develop and establish procedures for collecting, processing and analyzing biological specimens and other specimens
- Perform analytical tests on blood, body fluids, cells, and related substances
- Integrate and relate data generated by the various clinical laboratory departments while making decisions regarding possible discrepancies
- Confirm abnormal results, verify and execute quality control procedures, and develop solutions to problems concerning the generation of laboratory data
- Make decisions concerning the results of quality control and quality assurance measures and instituting proper procedures to maintain accuracy and precision
- Establish and perform preventive and corrective maintenance of equipment and instruments as well as identify appropriate sources for service
- 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
- Demonstrate professional conduct and interpersonal skills with patients, laboratory personnel, other health care professionals, and the public
- Establish and maintain continuing education as a function of growth and maintenance of professional competence
- Provide leadership in the education of other health care professionals and the community
- Exercise basic principles of management, safety, and supervision
- Apply principles of educational methodologies
- Apply principles of current information systems

**Comprehensive Final**

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 class as a whole. Any students who do not pass on the first attempt will individually schedule their second and third, if needed, attempt(s) with the program director. 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 either result in a failure to graduate 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 Program’s Appeals Policy.

**Sample Lecture/Student Laboratory Schedule**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 5-9</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 12-16</td>
<td>Immunology</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 19-23</td>
<td>Immunology</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 26-30</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 3-7</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 10-14</td>
<td>Parasitology</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 17-21</td>
<td>Parasitology</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 24-28</td>
<td>Molecular</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31-Aug 4</td>
<td>Molecular</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 7-11</td>
<td>Blood Bank</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 14-18</td>
<td>Blood Bank</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 21-25</td>
<td>Blood Bank</td>
<td>Toxicology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 28-Sept 1</td>
<td>Blood Bank</td>
<td>Toxicology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4-8</td>
<td>Blood Bank</td>
<td>Body Fluids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 11-15</td>
<td>Blood Bank</td>
<td>Eso Chem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 18-22</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 25-29</td>
<td>Urinalysis</td>
<td>Eso Chem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 2-6</td>
<td>Urinalysis</td>
<td>Eso Chem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 9-13</td>
<td>Coag</td>
<td>Virology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 16-20</td>
<td>Coag</td>
<td>Mycology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 23-27</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 30-Nov 3</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 6-10</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 13-17</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 20-24</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 27-Dec 1</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 4-8</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 11-15</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 18-22</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sample Clinical Practicum Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9/2017</td>
<td>BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-Jan</td>
<td>BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-Jan</td>
<td>BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Jan</td>
<td>BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Feb</td>
<td>Micro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Feb</td>
<td>Micro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-Feb</td>
<td>Micro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-Feb</td>
<td>Micro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Mar</td>
<td>UA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Mar</td>
<td>Tox/EsO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-Mar</td>
<td>Tox/EsO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-Mar</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Apr</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-Apr</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-Apr</td>
<td>Hematology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-Apr</td>
<td>Coag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-May</td>
<td>IP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-May</td>
<td>Chem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-May</td>
<td>Chem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-May</td>
<td>Chem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-May</td>
<td>Phleb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Jun</td>
<td>BF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Jun</td>
<td>MIDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-Jun</td>
<td>MG/Virology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-Jun</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-Jun</td>
<td>GRADUATION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STUDENT ASSESSMENT

#### Evaluation of the Student

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) requires that approved schools maintain detailed records of the students’ progress throughout the year. These records are based on the following parameters: Theory, Technical Performance, and Behavior. These areas are assessed by the following methods:

- **Performance in the Lecture/Student Laboratory**
  - Lecture: The lecture portion of the class will focus on physiology, pathophysiology, and related theory. The student is responsible for completing and understanding all lecture objectives, information presented in lecture or through handouts, and all assigned reading. Assessment will be made by exams, quizzes, study questions, case studies, and homework.

- **Student Laboratory**
  - The laboratory portion of the classroom experience will focus 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 Practicum**
  - 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 practicum. The student is evaluated at the end of each practicum/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:

- Theory and Technical Performance: This includes study questions, quizzes, exams, and checklists.
- Performance Evaluation: This evaluation is customized for each laboratory and is used to assess the student’s ability to perform entry level procedures and routine operations in the laboratory.
- Behavioral Evaluation: This is used to assess skills in the professionalism domains. The student must score a minimum of 75%. A score of less than 75% will result in remedial action. The areas assessed in the Behavioral Evaluation are as follows:

**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. Displays a concern for the patient in handling of specimens, performance of tasks and communication with coworkers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative and Judgment</th>
<th>0 Unsatisfactory Requires conference.</th>
<th>7.5 – 7.9 Below Expectations</th>
<th>8.0-8.9 Meets Expectations</th>
<th>9.0 – 9.5 Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>9.5 – 10 Superior Consistently Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Initiative</td>
<td>Unmotivated. Reluctant to accept delegated responsibilities. Displays no interest in rotation.</td>
<td>Performs delegated responsibilities but requires constant prompting and guidance.</td>
<td>Usually accepts and performs delegated responsibilities with occasional prompting.</td>
<td>Performs responsibilities independently. Is willing and able to assume additional responsibilities when asked.</td>
<td>Consistently a self-starter who completed tasks and takes initiative to help others without being asked.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Judgment to assemble information and reach logical conclusions</td>
<td>Unable to assemble information or reach logical conclusions even with additional assistance from instructor.</td>
<td>Often makes inaccurate conclusions. Requires a great deal of assistance from instructor to analyze situations to reach logical conclusions.</td>
<td>Usually logical in approach to problem solving. Makes an occasional inaccurate decision.</td>
<td>Can discriminate between relevant and irrelevant details to arrive at sound conclusions.</td>
<td>Consistently makes correct conclusions, even for the most difficult problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Concern for the Patient</td>
<td>Careless in handling of patient</td>
<td>Frequently careless in handling</td>
<td>Usually conscientious in handling patient</td>
<td>Conscientious in handling patient</td>
<td>Conscientious in handling patient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>0 Unsatisfactory Requires conference.</td>
<td>7.5 – 7.9 Below Expectations</td>
<td>8.0-8.9 Meets Expectations</td>
<td>9.0 – 9.5 Exceeds Expectations</td>
<td>9.5 – 10 Superior Consistently Exceeds Expectations</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Accomplishment of required tasks and assignments</td>
<td>Cannot be relied upon. Fails to complete any assignment in the allotted time frame.</td>
<td>Rarely accomplishes assignments in allotted time frame.</td>
<td>Usually dependable and prepared for assignments</td>
<td>Consistently accomplishes the required assignments in the allotted time.</td>
<td>Always accomplishes the required assignments in the allotted time. Frequently accomplishes more than required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Attendance and Punctuality – Complies with school/lab polices.</td>
<td>Always late and or frequently absent. Always takes excessive lunches and breaks. No regard for school or lab</td>
<td>Frequently tardy and or absent. Frequently takes excessive lunches and breaks. Complies with policies.</td>
<td>Occasionally tardy and or absent. Rarely takes long lunches or breaks. Complies with policies.</td>
<td>Punctual with good attendance record. Rare absence or tardy. Does not take unapproved long lunches or breaks.</td>
<td>Outstanding record of attendance and punctuality. No absences. Does not take unapproved long lunches or breaks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives: Dependability**

A. Demonstrate ability to accomplish required tasks and assignments accurately and within the allotted time frame.

B. Comply 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>0 Unsatisfactory Requires conference.</th>
<th>7.5 – 7.9 Below Expectations</th>
<th>8.0-8.9 Meets Expectations</th>
<th>9.0 – 9.5 Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>9.5 – 10 Superior Consistently Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Toward supervisors, school policies and safety issues</td>
<td>Resents any form of supervision or constructive criticism. Does not comply with hospital and program policies.</td>
<td>Reluctantly considers suggestions and constructive criticism. Frequently has to be reminded of hospital and program policies</td>
<td>Usually accepts and incorporates constructive criticism and suggestions. Is receptive to supervision. Follows hospital and program policies with occasional reminder.</td>
<td>Accepts and incorporates suggestions and constructive criticism. Complies with hospital and program policies.</td>
<td>Eagerly accepts and incorporates suggestions. Appreciates assistance by the instructor. Always complies with hospital and program policies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Toward faculty/employees, other students and visitors. Functions as a team player. Displays a professional attitude.</td>
<td>Quarrelsome, tactless and inconsiderate of others. Not a team player. Does not display a professional attitude.</td>
<td>Rarely tactful or a team player. Does not display a professional attitude.</td>
<td>Usually tactful and considerate of others. Usually a team player and displays a professional attitude.</td>
<td>Sensitive and considerate to the needs of others. Is a team player and displays a professional attitude.</td>
<td>Skillful in adapting to working with others. Inspires others. An outstanding team player</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives: Attitude

A. Accepts criticism as constructive, 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.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Work</th>
<th>0 Unsatisfactory Requires conference.</th>
<th>7.5 – 7.9 Below Expectations</th>
<th>8.0-8.9 Meets Expectations</th>
<th>9.0 – 9.5 Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>9.5 – 10 Superior Consistently Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Documentation</td>
<td>Documentation is incomplete, illegible and inconsistently performed.</td>
<td>Documentation is incomplete and hard to read.</td>
<td>Documentation is usually complete and legible.</td>
<td>Documentation is complete and legible.</td>
<td>Documentation is complete and legible. Includes additional details to assist in future problem solving.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT OF PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS (ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS)

Students must possess and maintain throughout their time in the program the physical capability and manual dexterity required to perform phlebotomy and routine laboratory procedures. These include, but are not limited to, repetitive hand motions and the differentiation of colors for interpretation of colorimetric reactions and cellular morphology. Students must also possess the physical ability to work with laboratory computers and communicate effectively with medical technologists, patients, physicians and other health care professionals.

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. These evaluations are used to identify areas that need improvement. Evaluation of the program is accomplished in the following manner:

- The program participates in the peer review and accreditation process sponsored by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS). This organization requires 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. This includes periodic site inspections as well.
- Students play a large role in the evaluation process by completing 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 and are anonymous. These 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.
- Students are also asked to complete an evaluation at the end of the training program to provide input on the overall organization and operations of the program as well as provide information on their first post-graduation job experience.
- Surveys are distributed to the employers of recent graduates between 6 months and one year following graduation, to assess the effectiveness of the program’s curriculum. Once again, this information is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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, attendance is taken daily by the lecture instructor. During the clinical practicum portion of the program (second half of the year), students a required to maintain a daily time sheet. Time sheets are used to accurately document all arrival, departure and break times, including absences and episodes of tardiness. Time sheets must be signed by both the clinical instructor and the student. In signing the timesheets, both the clinical instructor and the student attest to the fact that the information on the timesheet is correct and reflects actual time the student was present. Time sheets must be submitted to the program director at the completion of each rotation.
Lectures and student laboratory sessions are scheduled from 8:30am 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 through email prior to the change.

Clinical practicum hours vary depending on the laboratory involved. Students will refer to the clinical rotation schedule for the practicum hours for each department. Typical laboratory hours are 7:00am to 3:30pm or 8:00am to 4:30pm, although some variation may occur, requiring students to complete clinical practicum hours outside of these hours. In particular, one week during the Blood Bank rotation requires students to attend the practicum from 3:00pm to 11:30pm (during “second shift”). 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 in order to complete assignments. While not a common occurrence, it is sometimes necessary in cases where could not be completed during standard allotted time due to inclement weather, illness, etc.

Absence Policy

Planned Absences
In addition to scheduled breaks and holidays, students are allowed to miss up to five days for personal reasons. These days are for planned absences, related to such activities as routine doctor appointments, vacations, etc. Planned absences must be approved via email by the course/clinical instructor and MLS Program Director at least one day prior to the absence.

Students are responsible for completing – prior to the planned absence – all work/assignments that will be missed during the absence, unless the student is told by the instructor to complete the work after returning from the absence. (In that case, the student is required to complete the assignment at the convenience of, or by the deadline set by, the instructor).

If a student is absent from only one class on a particular day, but not both classes, the missed time will be calculated as a half day. Similarly, students who miss only a portion of their clinical rotation will be deducted only for the time missed.

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 practicum 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 in order to verify proper notice was provided.
- Step 2: Email the course or clinical instructor and the MLS Program Director at holly.covas@vanderbilt.edu 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 day, the student must keep the instructor and MLS Program Director updated on a daily basis regarding the anticipated duration of time away. Any absence greater than one day requires a doctor’s note in order for the absence to be excused and in order for the student to have the opportunity to make up work missed during the absence.
Students should not attend any program activities, including lectures/student laboratory and clinical practica if any of the following apply:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever greater than 101 F degrees
- Diagnosis of a communicable illness

Upon returning from an Unplanned Absence Students are responsible for 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 in order 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 SAP Warning, probation and dismissal from the program.

**Tardiness**

A student is considered to be tardy (late) when the student is more than ten (10) minutes late for any lecture, laboratory, or clinical practicum. 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) may be made at the discretion of the program (course instructor, practicum supervisor 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 Planned Absence, which is deducted from the student’s remaining personal days. 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**

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 meets with the student to discuss the pattern of absenteeism or tardiness and issues a written warning. In the event that 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.

**STUDENT ADVISING AND CONFERENCES**

The MLS program director and clinical instructors maintain an open door policy for students throughout the year. Students are encouraged to bring any and all concerns to the attention of program officials.

Individual academic advising sessions are held periodically to provide academic guidance, discuss career planning address any personal or academic concerns, etc. Students may ask to schedule academic advising sessions with the program director.
Any questions about the program or about hospital, laboratory, or program policies and/or procedures should be brought to the attention of the program director or medical director. Should the 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.

**COMMITMENT TO SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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

A. Promoting compliance with federal, state, and local safety, health, and environmental requirements;
B. Minimizing hazards, reducing pollution, and continuously improving practices regarding safety, health, and environmental protection;
C. 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;
D. Protecting and maintaining safe and secure facilities for teaching, patient care, research, living, and work;
E. Emphasizing open communication with the VUMC community regarding safety, health, and environmental issues; and
F. Instilling the values of environmental stewardship and conservation of resources in VUMC’s future leaders.

This commitment is defined in the Vanderbilt University Environmental Health and Safety Policy found at [https://safety.vanderbilt.edu/index.php](https://safety.vanderbilt.edu/index.php)

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 ensure that all immunization requirements have been met.

The Vanderbilt Diagnostic Laboratories continue the Vanderbilt Commitment by providing 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 any time changes in practice occur within that laboratory.

Safety issues within the laboratory fall under the review responsibility of the Laboratory Safety Committee with 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 Supervisors 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 in order 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 strongly discouraged, due to the full-time nature of the MLS Program. If it is necessary for financial reasons for a student to hold a job during the program’s first six months, the student must notify the MLS Program Director. Students are encouraged to actively communicate with the Program Director about employment while enrolled, in order 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, practicum) in order to fulfill a job obligation.

Student Work Policy
The state of Tennessee does not allow non-licensed personnel to perform laboratory testing. Medical Laboratory Science students practice under the limited scope of a State of TN 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 Supervisors/Managers must have a posted position in Taleo in order 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.