

Medical Laboratory Science Handbook



2019– 2020

Table of Contents

1. Welcome
 - 1.1. Welcome to the Program
 - 1.2. Accreditation
 - 1.3. Support of Institutional Mission
 - 1.4. Description of the MLS Profession
 - 1.5. Program Goals and Philosophy
 - 1.6. Program Objectives
 - 1.7. Entry Level Competencies
 - 1.8. Faculty and Staff Contact Information
2. Program Information
 - 2.1. Admission
 - 2.1.1. 2+2 MLT to MLS Online Route
 - 2.1.2. Traditional Campus Based Route
 - 2.1.3. Alternate Status
 - 2.2. Clinical Training
 - 2.2.1. Traditional Option and Current Affiliates
 - 2.3. Immunizations and Insurance
 - 2.4. Curriculum
 - 2.4.1. 2+2 Option
 - 2.4.2. Traditional Option
3. Financial Information
 - 3.1. Tuition
 - 3.2. Fees and Expenses
 - 3.3. Financial Aid

4. Academic Information
 - 4.1. Scholastic Requirement
 - 4.2. MLS Grading Policy
 - 4.3. Testing Policy
 - 4.4. Withdrawal, Readmission, and Appeal Policies
 - 4.5. Graduation
 - 4.6. Professional Organizations
 - 4.7. Violations
5. Conduct and Safety
 - 5.1. Dresscode
 - 5.1.1. Classroom
 - 5.1.2. Clinical
 - 5.2. Conduct Expectations
 - 5.3. Code of Conduct
 - 5.4. Safety Guidelines
 - 5.4.1. Standard Precautions
 - 5.4.2. Hazardous Substances
 - 5.4.3. General Rules
6. Clinical Rotation Manual
 - 6.1. Service Work Policy
 - 6.2. Clinical Experience
 - 6.2.1. Affiliates
 - 6.2.2. 2+2 Scheduling
 - 6.2.3. Traditional Route Scheduling
 - 6.3. Student Responsibilities
 - 6.3.1. Professional Behavior
 - 6.4. Drug Screen Policy and Procedure
 - 6.5. Background Check Policy and Procedure

Vision:

The Medical Laboratory Science Program fosters medical and scientific endeavor. Medical Laboratory Science graduates will employ expertise, compassion, and professionalism to guide patient care and medical decisions throughout various healthcare settings in their communities.

Mission:

The Medical Laboratory Science program believes that quality education is the foundation of quality healthcare. Our program produces competent and confident scientists through rigorous didactic, technical, and professional coursework.

Section 1 - Welcome

1.1 Welcome to the Program

Congratulations on your acceptance to the MLS program at Thomas University. The MLS Program Handbook has been developed to assist you with your education. It is important to read and become familiar with the information presented in this handbook. Please refer to this as a main source of information regarding operational policies and procedures of the program.

MLS courses utilize Canvas, Thomas University's learning management system. This program is used to deliver most of your lectures (recorded), messages, assignments, quizzes, and instructional materials. You will receive important information regarding your access to Canvas and your student accounts.

This program handbook does not constitute a contract between Thomas University and its students, applicants for admission, or with any other person. The MLS program faculty reserves the right to change, without notice, any statements in this handbook. Information on changes will be available to students in a reasonable and timely manner by the MLS Program Director.

Although the MLS program faculty members have made every reasonable effort to attain factual accuracy in this handbook; no responsibility is assumed for editorial, clerical, or printed errors or mistakes. The

MLS program faculty have attempted to present information that, at the time of preparation for printing, most accurately describes the program policies. If there is a conflict between the MLS Program Handbook and the University's Student Handbook or University Catalog regarding university issues, the University Handbook and Catalog shall prevail.

Completion of the Medical Laboratory Science Program at Thomas University does not guarantee employment for graduates. Successful completion of competencies taught in the program will make the student eligible to sit for several certification exams and be competitive in the current job market.

1.2 Accreditation

Thomas University's MLS programs are accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Services (NAACLS) through the United States Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Contact information for NAACLS:

National Accrediting Agency for Clinical
Laboratory Sciences
5600 N. River Rd. Suite 720,
Rosemont, IL 60018-5119
773.714.8880
www.naacls.org

1.3 Support of Institutional Mission

The Thomas University Medical Laboratory Science program is a program of study compatible with the mission and policies of Thomas University and encourages each medical laboratory science student to benefit and contribute as a partner in the economic development and stability of their communities.

The philosophy of the Thomas University Medical Laboratory Science program reflects a desire to achieve educational excellence and committed to meeting healthcare needs.

1.4 Description of the MLS Profession

Medical laboratory science is a profession dedicated to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease. It combines the challenges of medicine, the basic sciences of biology and chemistry, and the clinical sciences into a very satisfying professional career. The major clinical sciences within medical laboratory science are medical microbiology, clinical chemistry, hematology and coagulation, and immunohematology.

Medical laboratory scientists function as detectives, investigating and determining the causes of diseases. They perform routine and complex analyses, utilizing the latest in biomedical instrumentation and molecular diagnostic techniques. They are responsible for the accuracy of their results and are expected to correlate interdependent test results and

physiological conditions. Their work may include supervision and teaching.

The profession of medical laboratory science is dynamic, continually changing to reflect scientific and medical discoveries. Due to their educational background, graduates enjoy a wide range of career opportunities. Many medical laboratory scientists are employed in hospital and private laboratories where they utilize their expertise in such sophisticated areas as andrology/embryology, bone marrow transplantation, cancer research, forensic toxicology, molecular diagnostic testing, and HLA tissue typing to name a few. Others work chiefly in health agencies, industrial medical or biomedical laboratories, pharmaceutical companies, research laboratories, forensic laboratories, and veterinary clinics.

The ability to relate to people, a capacity for calm and reasoned judgment, a demonstration of commitment to the patient, and advanced communication and customer service skills are essential qualities of medical lab scientists. Laboratory professionals demonstrate ethical and moral attitudes and principles that are necessary for gaining and maintaining the confidence of patients, professional associates, and the community.

The B.S. degree in medical laboratory science includes courses in basic sciences, management, research, medical sciences, and off-campus clinical experiences in a variety of hospitals. Knowledge gained through these courses, as well as the hands-on laboratory activities experienced by students, give them the competence needed

to gain employment upon graduation. Graduates are eligible for national certification examinations.

The medical laboratory science major also functions as a pre-medical curriculum for those interested in medical school, and provides a basis for graduate study in medical laboratory science or related areas such as clinical chemistry, immunology, molecular biology, toxicology, forensic sciences, management, or medical laboratory science education.

1.5 Program Goals and Philosophy

The purpose of the Thomas University Medical Laboratory Science program is to provide educational opportunities to individuals that will enable them to obtain the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to succeed as clinical laboratory scientists. General goals of the program include the following:

1. To provide education, which acknowledges individual differences and respects the right of individuals to seek fulfillment of educational needs.
2. To provide an environment which encourages the individual to benefit and contribute as a partner in the economic progress, development, and stability of their communities.
3. To provide education which develops the potential of each student to become a productive, responsible, and upwardly mobile member of society.
4. To provide quality medical laboratory science education in an atmosphere that fosters interest in and enthusiasm for learning.
5. To prepare graduates to function as accountable and responsible members within their field of endeavor.
6. To prepare graduates to function as safe and competent practitioners in the medical laboratory science field.
7. To prepare graduates with the highest level of competence possible given the constraints of the interests and ability levels of the individual.
8. To provide educational and related services without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicapping condition, academic disadvantage, or economic disadvantage.
9. To foster employer participation, understanding, and confidence in the instructional process and the competence of medical laboratory science graduates.
10. To provide guidance to medical laboratory science students to assist them in pursuing educational opportunities that maximize their professional potential.
11. To encourage graduates to recognize and to act upon individual needs for continuing education as a function of growth and maintenance of professional competence.

Important attributes for success of program graduates are analytical thinking, problem solving, and the ability to apply technology to the work requirement. Medical

Laboratory Science is a dynamic profession; therefore, careful attention to current curriculum and up-to-date instructional equipment is required. The program promotes the concept of change as the technology evolves and nurtures the spirit of involvement in lifelong professional learning.

Thomas University accepts the following concepts concerning education in medical laboratory science:

1. The scientist is a skilled person who performs laboratory tests on body fluids under the direction of a qualified physician, pathologist or laboratory director.
2. The scientist evaluates and correlates clinical laboratory test results performed on a patient but does not make a diagnosis from these results.
3. The student scientist should be educated to assess the needs of the patient and provide laboratory data within the scope of his/her training.
4. The educational standards and administrative policies of the program in medical laboratory science should conform to those approved by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences.
5. All instruction should be geared to the educational level and experience of the individual.
6. An advisory committee, which is representative of the professionals concerned with the training and employment of clinical laboratory

scientists, should provide guidance in the planning, organizing, and operation of the program.

1.6 Program Objectives

The specific objectives of the program are to provide skilled medical laboratory scientists who perform effectively by:

1. Collecting, processing, and analyzing biological specimens and other substances.
2. Performing analytical tests of body fluids, cells, and other substances.
3. Recognizing factors that affect procedures and results, and taking appropriate actions within predetermined limits when corrections are indicated.
4. Performing and monitoring quality control with predetermined limits.
5. Performing preventive and corrective maintenance of equipment and instruments or referring to appropriate sources for repair.
6. Applying principles of safety and universal precautions.
7. Demonstrating professional conduct and interpersonal communication skills with patients, laboratory personnel, and other health care professionals, and with the public.
8. Recognizing the responsibilities of other laboratory and health care personnel and interacting with them with respect for their jobs and patient care.

9. Applying basic scientific principles in learning new techniques and procedures.

10. Relating laboratory findings to common disease processes.

1.7 Entry Level Competencies

At entry level, the medical laboratory scientist 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, Immunochemistry/blood banking, Microbiology, Urine and body fluid analysis and Laboratory Operations, 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.

At entry level, the medical laboratory scientist will have the following basic knowledge and skills in:

1. Application of safety and governmental regulations and standards as applied to clinical laboratory science.

2. Principles and practices of professional conduct and the significance of continuing professional development.

3. Communications sufficient to serve the needs of patients, the public and members of the health care team.

4. Principles and practices of administration and supervision as applied to clinical laboratory science.

5. Educational methodologies and terminology sufficient to train/educate users and providers of laboratory services.

6. Principles and practices of applied study design, implementation and dissemination of results.

7. Establishing and maintaining continuing education as a function of growth and maintenance of professional competence.

1.8 Faculty and Staff Contact Information

Division Chair of Science and Assistant Professor of Biology

Deana Baker, MS Pharmacy, MS Science Education

Email: dbaker@thomasu.edu

MLS Program Director and Clinical Coordinator

Leslie A. Cooper MS, MLS(ASCP)^{CM}

Phone: 229-227-6969

Email: lcooper@thomasu.edu

Adjunct Instructor

Dr. Phyllis Ingham EdD, MEd.
MT(ASCP)^{cm}

Email: pingham@thomasu.edu

Adjunct Instructor

Wendy Arneson MS, MLS(ASCP)^{cm}
warneson@thomasu.edu

Adjunct Instructor

Jessica Hoernemann MS, MLS(ASCP)^{cm}
jhoernemann@thomasu.edu

Adjunct Instructor

Georgia Smith MBA, MLS(ASCP)^{cm}
gsmith@thomasu.edu

MLS Advisor

Stacie Reilly
sreilly@thomasu.edu

MLS Fax Number

229-584-2421

Section 2 – Program Information**2.1 Admission**

Before admission, students must submit:

1. Application to Thomas University
<http://admissions.thomasu.edu/>
2. Application to the MLS program

3. Official transcripts from all institutions attended (send to admissions)

4. Application for financial aid:
www.fafsa.ed.gov

5. Signed clinical support form (2+2 only--signed by employer)

6. Signed health waiver (2+2 only--signed by employer health representative or Human Resources)

7. MLS student application packet

8. Essential Functions (found in MLS application packet)

9. Signed FERPA form (allowing Thomas University to submit required documents for clinical training)

2.1.1 2+2 MLT to MLS Online Route

MLT-MLS (2 + 2) students enter the University as a junior, with a declared interest in the Medical Laboratory Science Program for the purpose of advisement. Any student interested in the MLS Program should communicate with the MLS Program Director before admission to the University. Program acceptance is granted during the spring, summer, and fall semesters.

Consideration for admission into the MLS Program is based on the following criteria:

1. Associate Degree from a NAACLS approved CLT/MLT (Clinical Laboratory Technology) Program.

Note: If you did not graduate from a NAACLS accredited program with an A.A. degree in MLT/CLT then you MUST apply as a Route B campus based student.

2. Transfer GPA of 2.75 or higher

3. National MLT Certification

Note: conditional acceptance may be granted to a student for a max of two semesters while waiting to take the certification exam. After two semesters, students will be diverted to the biomedical science route if interested in continuing their education.

4. On-going employment in a medical laboratory that meets appropriate testing requirements and is willing to serve as a clinical site. We do not locate clinical sites for the 2+2 students.

Note: conditional status may be granted while awaiting employment for a max of two semesters. After two semesters, students will be diverted to the biomedical science program if interested in continuing their education.

Once all transcripts are received in admissions and the applicant packet submission is complete, you will receive a formal acceptance letter from the program director via email.

Once you receive this letter you should:

1. Contact the MLS Program Dept. to determine a curriculum plan for program completion.

2. If ENG 101 and ENG 102 are not completed, an exam will be required to access reading and writing skills.

Your advisor will register you for courses that you select together. The MLS Program Director reserves the right to limit the amount of MLS courses taken per semester in conjunction with individual student course success history, the amount of core studies remaining, and previous academic performance.

2.1.2 Traditional Campus Based Route

The traditional campus-based MLS program is designed for students who have not completed a NAACLS accredited CLT/MLT program. Students interested in this program must complete all core requirements before beginning the MLS courses. A maximum of 15 students are accepted each fall semester. Once accepted, students will begin a structured curriculum that includes online courses and supervised clinical experience. Students graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Laboratory Science will be eligible to sit for the national certification examination at the MLS level.

NOTE: All Route B students must reside within a 50 miles radius of Thomasville, GA due to labs conducted on campus. Students who miss more than two labs during a semester will be academically dismissed from the MLS program

Consideration for admission into the MLS Program is based on the following criteria:

1. Cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher in science courses (16 hrs biomedical science/12 hrs chemistry/6 hrs math (including statistics))

Note: First selection deadline is May 31st

Upon acceptance into the program, students will be asked to attend an orientation in which they must submit:

1. Physical exam documentation within the last 6 months
2. Immunization record to include Hepatitis B series or deferral form and a flu shot.
3. Drug Screen (Program director will notify you of the date)
4. Criminal Background Check

Note: No student will be accepted to the MLS program with ANY felony or misdemeanor that resulted from drugs, alcohol, or violence. The ability to obtain clinical placement or future employment in any medical field is dramatically decreased and nearly impossible with these convictions. Any "pending" case will also limit your competitive admission process for acceptance.

5. Signed FERPA form

Once all transcripts are received in admissions, applications are reviewed. Selection for interviews will be based on academic rank. Only complete application files will be considered. Formally accepted MLS candidates will receive an acceptance letter from the program director no earlier

than June 1st. Once you receive this letter you should:

1. Confirm your acceptance in the MLS program
2. Contact the MLS Program Dept to determine the curriculum plan for program completion.

2.1.3 Alternate Status

Currently, the maximum number of MLS students accepted in each cohort is 15. Students will be admitted in order selected rank. If more than 15 students apply to a cohort, an alternate list will be generated. Students may be admitted as alternates provided they have met previously listed requirements. Any student who has been academically dismissed from the MLS program must compete with the current year's cohort for readmission into the MLS program. If the MLS program receives more than 15 applications for consideration, students who were previously dismissed will only be readmitted as an alternate.

2.2 Clinical Training

Clinical training consists of clinical rotations through the different departments of clinical laboratories. New affiliates are added each year depending on the location of students. Clinical sites are limited, and sites will be awarded at the discretion of the Program Director and/or Clinical Coordinator based upon GPA, student rank in the cohort, and professionalism. Not all listed clinical affiliates accept Route A and Route B students.

The program director will initiate the formal contract process and provide information on what is expected of the clinical site.

2.2.1 Traditional Option and Current Affiliates

If you are granted a clinical internship site, you must accept the rotation awarded to you. The MLS program director is not responsible for procuring an alternate clinical rotation site.

Due to the fact that students cannot exceed the student to clinical instructor ratio of 1:1, students may be placed on a wait list for clinical completion, based on program GPA.

Travel to and from these sites is entirely the student's responsibility. Some clinical sites are exclusive to a single student, and are not available for additional students.

Current Clinical Affiliates

- Emory Johns Creek Hospital
- Fort Madison Community Hospital
- John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital
- K&S Diagnostics
- Laboratory Corporation of America
- Floyd Medical Center
- Meadows Regional Health System
- Miller County Hospital
- Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center, Inc.
- Piedmont Healthcare, Inc.
- Quest Diagnostics
- South Georgia Medical Center
- Starr Medical Center
- Tallahassee Memorial Hospital
- Tanner Medical Center
- Taylor Regional Hospital
- Tift Regional Health System
- Valley Health

2.3 Immunizations and Insurance

Hepatitis Vaccine

Healthcare personnel are among those at increased risk for contraction of Hepatitis B virus infections due to their frequent contact with human serum and other body fluids. Immunization against the Hepatitis B virus is the principal means of preventing infection. For the student's protection, it is

strongly recommended (but not mandatory) 2.4 Curriculum

that all students be immunized with the recombinant Hepatitis B virus vaccine.

2.4.1 **2+2 Option** (*Required Courses)

A student who wishes to be immunized may receive the injections from his or her family physician. Such immunizations should begin as early as possible. The vaccine is administered in a series of three injections given at appropriate intervals over a six-month period. Students who choose NOT to receive the vaccine must indicate so in writing. See the Hepatitis Deferral Form in the form section of the handbook

Other Immunizations

Required documentation of the following testing / immunizations include tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), varicella zoster, influenza, and tuberculosis (PPD).

Insurance

Professional liability insurance is needed to protect you as a student training in the hospital setting. Thomas University provides coverage to each student. Certificates of liability insurance for each clinical site are provided to the clinical site and a copy of each is accessible through the MLS Program Director.

Personal medical insurance is not required for program admission. However, if a student is injured in a clinical site, he/she is personally responsible for any costs incurred as a result of that injury.

Lower Division Courses: 61 Total Hours

Science/Math: 13 Hours

* Biology I or Equivalent	3/4
Anatomy & Physiology I	4
Anatomy & Physiology II	4
MTH 120 Math Modeling or	3
MTH 140 College Algebra	

Related to Program: 18 Hours

* CHM 101 General Chemistry I	4
CHM 102 General Chemistry II	4
* CHM 107 Survey of Organic Chem ⁴	
CHM 201 Biochem MLS Tract	3
* MTH 250 Intro to Statistics	3

Upper Division Courses: 39 Total Hours

MLS 405 Parasitology	3
MLS 411 Urinalysis and Body Fluids II	3
MLS 414 Immunology & Molecular II	3
MLS 421 Clinical Microbiology II	4
MLS 431 Hematology and Coagulation II	4
MLS 441 Clinical Immunohematology II	4
MLS 451 Clinical Chemistry II	4
MLS 452 Research Methods & Project	3
MLS 460 Senior Seminar	3
MLS 470 Lab Management	3
MLS 495 Adv Clinical Internship	4

Total Lower Division Courses 61 Hours

Total Upper Division Courses 37 Hours

Transferred Credits 24 Hours

Total for MLS 2+2 Program 122 Hours

Cultural Foundations: 9 Hours**Creativity: 6 Hours**

See the Thomas University Catalog for specific acceptable courses.

2.4.2 Traditional Option**Core Curriculum to include:****Core Skills: 18 Hours**

ENG 101 Composition I	3
ENG 102 Composition II	3
SPE 105 Oral Comm for Professionals	3
CSC 120 Microcomputer Applications	3
University Studies (1st year)	3
MTH 120 Math Modeling or	
MTH 140 College Algebra	3

Science: 15 Hours

Biology I or Equivalent	3/4
Anatomy & Physiology I	4
Anatomy & Physiology II	4
BIO 409 Pathophysiology	3
BIO 310 Cell/Molecular MLS Tract	3
BIO 312 Genetics, MLS Tract	3

Related to Program: 15 Hours

* CHM 101 General Chemistry I	4
CHM 102 General Chemistry II	4
*CHM 107 Survey of Organic Chem	4
CHM 201 Biochemistry MLS Tract	3
BIO 270 Microbiology	4
*MTH 250 Intro to Statistics	3

Upper Division Courses: 64 Total Hours

MLS 301 Clinical Lab Methods	3
MLS 405 Parasitology, Virology, Mycology	3
MLS 311 Urinalysis Body Fluids I	3
MLS 314 Immuno/Molecular I	3
MLS 321 Clinical Microbiology I	4
MLS 421 Clinical Microbiology II	4
MLS 331 Hematology and Coag I	4
MLS 431 Hematology and Coag II	4
MLS 341 Immunohematology I	4
MLS 441 Immunohematology II	4
MLS 351 Clinical Chemistry I	4
MLS 451 Clinical Chemistry II	4

MLS 452 Research Methods	3
MLS 460 Senior Seminar	3
MLS 470 Lab Management	3
MLS 400 Internship I	5
MLS 401 Internship II	5

Total MLS Trad Program 125 Hours

Section 3 – Financial Information

3.1 Tuition

Undergrad Tuition	\$630.00/hour
MLS - 2+2 only	\$504.00/hour

You should refer to the tuition and fees website for more detailed information:

3.2 Fees and Expenses

Undergraduate Application Fee	\$ 35.00
International Application Fee	\$ 125.00
Undergraduate Graduation Fee	\$ 175.00
ProctorU Fee	
\$25.00 per proctored exam	
Internship fee (per semester)	
\$75.00 for MLS 495, 400, 401	

3.3 Financial Aid

Types of Financial Aid Assistance

Grants, loans, scholarships and the federal Work-Study Program are available through the financial aid office to help defray students' educational expenses.

Grants and scholarships do not have to be repaid. Loans must be repaid. Federal Work Study Program awards are available for qualified students during the period of enrollment. Students must be enrolled at least half-time to receive the Federal Stafford Loan or Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS). Students must be enrolled full-time (12 or more hours) to receive the Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant (GTEG) and some scholarships offered by Thomas University. Other Federal assistance programs, such as the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work Study are available.

Scholarships

A number of partial scholarships are funded through the general funds of Thomas University. Award amounts may vary each semester depending on the amount of funds available. Institutional scholarships can be applied to tuition, fees and books and are awarded only after all Federal and State grants have been applied to a student's charges. Only one institutional scholarship per student, per semester, is permitted. Institutional scholarships carry no cash award. Recipients must be full-time students, in good academic standing, and have applied for all applicable state and

federal grants. Scholarship awards are based on one or more of the following guidelines: academic performance, moral character, community or citizenship activities, financial need, and potential for benefiting from enrollment at Thomas University. Scholarship applications are available from the financial aid office. The deadline for all Thomas University scholarship applications (excluding athletic) is June 1st.

Federal Grants

Federal Pell Grant

The Federal Pell Grant is a need-based grant with no repayment required and is designated for undergraduate students working toward a first bachelor degree. The amount of the grant is determined by the cost of attendance, the expected family contribution shown on the Student Aid Report, and the enrollment status. A Federal Needs Analysis is required. The Federal Pell Grant is intended to be the first and basic component of an undergraduate student's financial aid package. Students are encouraged to apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov, however, paper FAFSAs are available in the Financial Aid Office if needed.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

The FSEOG is a need-based grant with no repayment required and is designated for undergraduate students working toward a first bachelor degree. Priority goes only to those students who qualify for Federal Pell. A Federal Needs Analysis is required.

FSEOG is a limited fund and priority will be given to those who have completed files by May 1.

State Grants

Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant (GTEG)

The GTEG is a non-need-based grant that provides funding for eligible Georgia residents attending qualified private colleges in Georgia. Students must be enrolled full-time (twelve or more credit hours).

Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally (HOPE) Scholarship

Georgia high school students who graduate with a "B" average or better and attend an eligible private Georgia college full-time may receive up to \$3,000 per school year for full-time (12 hours) enrollment, or \$1,500 for part time (6-11 hours) enrollment. This scholarship is renewable based upon a review of the student's academic record at predetermined intervals. Should a student fall below the 3.0 cumulative GPA at the end of each review period he/she may continue to attend college; however, they will not be eligible for the HOPE Scholarship (the student will continue to receive the GTEG). A student who loses his/her scholarship will be given opportunities to have it renewed if he/she has not passed the last GPA checkpoint at 90 attempted hours. All students attending Thomas University who receive the HOPE Scholarship must apply for the Federal Pell Grant or, if applicable, submit an "Alternate Application" form.

HOPE scholarships may be applied only to tuition and mandatory fees.

Federal Loans

Federal Direct Loan

The Federal Direct Loans are a low interest loans, made available to students by a lender such as a bank, credit union, savings and loan, or the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

The Federal Government pays the interest on the subsidized loan for as long as she/he is enrolled at least half-time. Loan eligibility is based on established financial need and state/lender restrictions. Loan repayments for most loans begin six months after the student leaves school or drops below half-time student status. The loan request must be completed before the Direct Loan can be processed. If the student falls below half-time enrollment, the grace period begins. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Georgia Student Finance Commission when he/she leaves school. The amount of the monthly payment will be determined by the lender and is based upon the cumulative loan amount and Federal regulations.

Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

PLUS loans provide additional funds for educational expenses for parents of dependent undergraduate students. Application is made through a lender such as a bank, credit union, or savings and loan. Loan eligibility is based on the Cost of Attendance minus any other aid the student may receive.

The Federal PLUS repayment begins sixty days after the funds are disbursed. The lender may offer deferred principal and interest payments or interest only payments while the student is enrolled at least half-time. Check with the lender for options and eligibility. Federal Pell Grant and Federal Stafford Loan eligibility must be determined before Federal PLUS applications can be certified.

Important Information for Federal Family Educational Loan Program Participants

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: First time borrowers must receive loan counseling prior to receiving their first disbursement on any Federal Loan at Thomas University. Stafford entrance counseling can be completed online at <http://mapping-your-future.org>.

A first-time borrower cannot receive the first disbursement of a Federal Stafford Loan until 30 days after the first day of class. A first time borrower is a student who attends a college or university for the first time.

Students who receive Federal Loans are required by law to complete the loan exit interview (upon leaving Thomas University (graduation, transferring, or dropping out). You can find the Exit Counseling link at www.studentloans.gov. You will need a Federal PIN for the log-in process. If you need to retrieve your PIN of apply for one, go to www.pin.ed.gov If you have any questions or problems completing exit counseling or if you need any assistance with financial aid, you may contact:

Office of Financial Aid: 229-227-6925;
 finaids@thomasu.edu

Section 4 – Academic Information

4.1 Scholastic Requirement

Thomas University Medical laboratory science students must attain a minimum grade of “C” (2.0) throughout the program. A student receiving a grade of “D” (1.0) or lower in a course may be allowed to retake that course the next time it is offered. Most Medical Laboratory Science courses are offered once a year. Therefore, a grade of “D” would delay graduation by at least one year provided a “C” or better is achieved the second time. It is not possible to graduate with a grade of “D” or lower in any course applied toward the Medical laboratory science program. If a student earns a grade less than a “C” in two MLS courses while in the program, he/she will not be allowed to continue in the program. The student may formally request readmission, but will only be granted readmission if there is proof that the reason for poor performance has been rectified, and is also based upon available space in the program cohort.

4.2 MLS Grading Policy

The current grading scale at TU:

A = 90 – 100	Outstanding
B = 80 – 89.9	Above average work
C = 70 – 79.9	Average work
D = 60 – 69.9	Marginal performance
F = Below 60	Failure to meet minimum requirements

See the College Catalog for explanation of grades of WF, W, V, K, I, and E.

Final course grades are letter grades. The final grades are available online through the

TU Hawklink function on the school web page. Grades are not provided via the telephone or e-mail.

4.3 Testing Policy

Online MLS courses require one or more assessments be proctored by ProctorU, an online proctoring service. Refer to the Fees and Expenses section for a breakdown. Tests are available for students only during the dates posted on the syllabus. Appointments must be made with ProctorU for the designated proctored exams. Refer to your individual syllabi for detailed instructions.

4.4 Withdrawal, Readmission, and Appeal Policies

Withdrawal

A “W” will be assigned by the Registrar to any student who formally withdraws from any class after the last day of the drop/add period, and prior to the last day to drop a course without academic penalty.

A “WF” will be assigned by the instructor to any student who formally withdraws from any class or from college while doing unsatisfactory work after the last day to drop. The “WF” will be used in the determination of the grade point average.

Grounds for withdrawal from the program include:

- A grade of “D” or below in two MLS courses
- A grade of “D” or below in ANY clinical rotations
- A Professional Eval Grade of 2.0 or below
- Assignment of “WF” in any course
- Unsafe student health practices

Note: Students who leave or are withdrawn from the program must initiate and complete an Exit Interview with the MLS Program Director.

Readmission

A student who is withdrawn for any of the reasons mentioned above may request to be considered for readmission by submitting a typed letter to the Program Director; however, readmission is not automatic. Students may be considered for readmission to the program one time only, under the following conditions:

Space in the class is available.

Student meets the admission requirements effective for the semester for which they are readmitted.

Student meets the specific conditions set by a committee comprised of the MLS Program Director, Division Chair, and the V.P of Academic Affairs. In some cases, students may be required to re-take or audit previously completed courses.

Students who are withdrawn due to poor academic performance must provide sufficient proof that reasons for poor performance have been rectified.

Students who withdraw or are withdrawn because of unacceptable professional behavior issues must provide documentation that corrective actions have been completed.

If 2 semesters or more have lapsed since the student was withdrawn from the program, the student must pass a comprehensive exam in the subjects already completed to measure whether the student has retained the knowledge gained from that course. A laboratory practical may also be required. The student must earn a minimum score of 70 on the exams.

Note: If more than three years have elapsed since withdrawal from the program, the student must reapply for admission as a new student and repeat all professional course work. The student must complete required Medical laboratory science (MLS) courses within three years. Three years begins with completion of the the first MLS class taken.

Appeals

Any matter of appeal should follow the line of communication as follows:

1. Address the concern with the professor directly.
2. If no resolution, you may forward your original communication (email) to the MLS Program Director.
3. If no resolution, please see the Thomas University Catalog for the Appeals process.

4.5 Graduation

Thomas University confers degrees annually in the spring, upon the recommendation of the faculty, to students who have successfully completed all course requirements. All students are required to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Exemptions are permitted by the VPAA only under exceptional circumstances. All students must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 in order to be eligible for recommendation for graduation. At least 25% of all hours earned toward any degree must have been earned at Thomas University. Students must take all MLS courses at Thomas University to award the B.S. in Medical Laboratory Science.

Students who are awarded a bachelor's degree may earn the distinction of graduating summa cum laude (4.0 GPA), magna cum laude (3.75-3.99 GPA), or cum laude (3.5-3.74 GPA). GPAs for graduation honors are calculated using all hours attempted at all institutions attended.

Graduation Procedure:

Students who expect to graduate must:

1. Complete the Intent to Graduate application and submit it to the Registrar by the appropriate date: The deadlines for turning in this form to the Registrar's Office are October 1 (spring semester graduation), December 1 (summer) or March 1 (fall semester). Students who graduate in the fall are eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony the following spring.
2. Complete an exit student questionnaire.
3. Complete the Medical Laboratory Science Graduate Exit Survey (online)
4. Clear all accounts and pay graduation fees.

4.6 Professional Organizations

The Medical Laboratory Science Program at Thomas University provides educational opportunities to individuals that will enable them to obtain the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to succeed as Medical laboratory scientists. The program encourages student membership with professional organizations such as The American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) and The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS). These organizations provide dynamic leadership and vigorously promote all aspects of clinical laboratory science practice, education and management to ensure lifelong learning and ensure excellent, accessible cost-effective laboratory services for the consumers of health care. Applications for membership will be provided to the MLS students upon admission to the program.

4.7 Violations

All students are considered bound by the Honor Code upon admittance to the University. Violations of the Honor Code fall mainly within the categories of cheating, plagiarism, and lying related to any academic matter. Some examples of these categories of violations are presented below, but are by no means an exhaustive list.

1. Cheating – the unauthorized usage of notes, books or other materials on a test, quiz, or examination; copying ideas or facts from another student's writing, whether online or in a face-to-face class; giving or receiving any pertinent information during testing, or giving or receiving, without authorization, test

questions or other related information prior to the test; submitting a paper written for another class without specific permission of the instructor; giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on a paper, project or other assignment; distributing via the internet or other means (whether or not for compensation) any instructor-provided lecture notes or other class materials without the written consent of the instructor; sharing access to online course materials, quizzes, exams, or other course materials without the written consent of the instructor.

2. Plagiarism – the use of facts, ideas, phrases, charts, etc. from any source without giving credit for the information. In a paper, report, or similar graded submission, all un-acknowledged material is assumed to be the original work of the writer. Ideas and information from another source, whether paraphrased or a direct quotation, must be acknowledged using a standard documentation format such as MLA or APA. The downloading of papers from the Internet and submission of the material as work done by the student is one of the most blatant examples of plagiarism. Individual professors are responsible for explaining their referencing policies in each class.

3. Presenting false information or lying – includes consciously furnishing false information to other students, faculty members, or administrators with the intent to mislead. Examples include, but are not limited to Thomas University Policy Manual 17 Volume V, Student Policies misrepresenting activity outside the classroom (reports on fieldwork,

internships, etc.) or improperly seeking special consideration, or privilege (e.g., for postponement of an examination or assignment deadline, etc.).

4. Aiding and abetting a violation of the Honor Code – includes intentionally: (a) providing information or other assistance to another person with knowledge that such aide could be used to commit any of the violations noted above; or (b) providing false information in connection with any inquiry regarding academic integrity.

Any student who is found to commit any violation of academic integrity will at a minimum receive a grade of “F” on the assignment. Multiple or grievous violations will receive an “F” for the course. Any case will also be forwarded to the Honor Council for review.

Section 5 – Conduct and Safety

5.1 Dress Code

MLS students will maintain a neat, groomed, and professional appearance at all times. Proper universal precautions will be taken when body fluids or potentially infectious material is handled, so that the student’s patients, coworkers, and the general public’s health is protected at all times.

5.1.1 Classroom

Students must wear:

- Hunter Green scrubs to class meeting sessions and only approved t-shirts.

- Close toed leather tennis shoes (no “Cros” are allowed)
- Lab coats (disposable and are provided)
- Gloves (provided)

5.1.2 Clinical

The appropriate attire includes:

- Students must wear appropriate uniforms to all clinical assignments. Scrub tops and bottoms are required. Thomas University requires HUNTER GREEN scrubs with the embroidered logo.
- Closed-toe, clean, leather shoes.
- Fluid-proof lab coat, which meets OSHA specifications when working in the laboratory (provided by the facility).
- Eye protection must be worn when the potential for splash of infectious materials exists (provided by the facility).
- Gloves
- Student ID badge must be worn at ALL TIMES
- Hair should be clean at all times and must be placed up and pulled off the face and the shoulders. Hair is a source of cross contamination and must not interfere with the delivery of patient care. Ponytails must be controlled and not drop forward when giving patient care or operating laboratory equipment. Beards and mustaches should not appear in disarray. They should be clean and neatly groomed.
- Makeup worn in moderation
- Fingernails harbor microorganisms and must be kept reasonably short. No false fingernails are allowed in the clinical area.
- A watch, wedding bands or simple rings, and simple earrings (hot hanging) are permitted. No other jewelry or body ornamentation is permitted. This includes piercings! One set of conservative earrings in the lobes are allowed. Additional piercings are NOT allowed.
- Tattoos must be covered – if you have tattoos on the arms, neck, or other areas that could potentially be visible, you MUST wear undergarments (turtleneck, long sleeves etc.) to insure they are not exposed or visibly noted.
- Good personal hygiene is of the utmost importance when working with other people. Please consider the following:
 - Teeth and breath – brush and floss daily. Use a mouthwash as needed.
 - Perspiration and body odor – daily bathing and use of deodorant is recommended.
 - Perfume/cologne – do not wear. This is highly important to asthmatic and other respiratory distress patients.

- Do not chew gum, use tobacco products, or apply makeup in the clinical setting.
- Undergarments may not be visible through scrubs by pattern or design at any time.
- The student must meet any additional regulations of the clinical affiliate that are not covered in this handbook.

5.2 Conduct Expectations

As a student in this profession, one of the most important responsibilities is in the area of personal conduct. The impression you make on the patients and others reflects not only upon yourself, but also on the department and the university.

Unprofessional conduct will not be tolerated, and will result in dismissal from the program.

There will be no cell phone use while in the clinical site.

Any student under the influence of non-prescriptive drugs or alcohol in the classroom or clinical site will be dismissed from the program.

The university offers MLS students the opportunity to apply theory and laboratory testing at an MLS level under direct clinical supervision. In order to obtain a consistently high level of training in clinical laboratory science, with a positive impact on patient care, the following code of conduct should be maintained.

Professionalism is graded using the Professional Evaluation Form, which can be found in the form section of the handbook.

5.3 Code of Conduct

Recognizing that my personal and professional conduct can impact the quality of health care delivery, I will:

- Treat patients, classmates, instructors, and healthcare personnel with respect, care, and thoughtfulness.
- Demonstrate compassion and kindness toward colleagues and patients.
- Maintain honesty, initiative, enthusiasm, and adaptability in action and attitude.
- Safeguard patient information as confidential, and in adherence with state and federal laws and regulations.
- Perform duties in a dependable, accurate, precise, timely, and responsible manner.
- Function as a collaborative team member within the college and clinical laboratory setting.
- Communicate effectively and appropriately.
- Be cognizant of and adhere to channels of authority.
- Demonstrate physical and psychological stability under stress.
- Accept responsibility for my own work and results.
- Display an appropriate level of confidence, while recognizing limitations.

- Maintain appropriate professional appearance and hygiene.
- Strive for increased efficiency and quality by using organizational skills.
- Prudently use laboratory resources.
- Continue to study, apply, and advance medical laboratory knowledge and skills and share such with my colleagues, other members of the healthcare community, and the public.

5.4 Safety Guidelines

5.4.1 Standard Precautions

With the implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Universal Blood and Body Fluid Precautions and Blood-Borne Pathogens standards, the risk of transmission of infection of blood-borne illnesses has been minimized. All clinical affiliates are in strict compliance with OSHA's Universal Precautions guidelines. Since medical history and examination cannot reliably identify all patients infected with HIV, Hepatitis B or other blood-borne pathogens, Standard Precautions should be consistently used for all patients, blood, and body fluids.

5.4.2 Hazardous Substances

Students should be aware that biological substances that may be potentially hazardous will be handled routinely in the course of clinical laboratory work. All reasonable safety precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of students. The

students will be instructed on the University's Exposure Control Plan and each affiliate will instruct the students as to their specific Safety and Exposure Control Plan. The ultimate responsibility for following such procedures and complying with safety guidelines lies with the student. Potentially hazardous materials that will be handled include:

- Pathogenic microorganisms
- Human blood, urine, feces, and body fluids which may be possible sources of infectious diseases (i.e., hepatitis B virus, HIV)
- Radioactive material
- Corrosive and hazardous chemicals

Medical laboratory science students are expected to work with these materials, as these will constitute the basis for the bulk of work in clinical laboratories. No exceptions (other than a specific medical reason) will be permitted.

5.4.3 General Rules

The following are safety rules that must be followed during clinical rotations. Please refer to your clinical affiliate safety guidelines for any additional policies.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be used routinely to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure.

Gloves

Fluid-proof gloves must be worn when working with laboratory specimens and

reagents; when in direct contact with non-intact skin of patients; and when handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluid. Gloves especially must be used when cuts or abrasions are apparent on the hands. Gloves should fit properly so as not to impede dexterity. If allergic to certain gloves, please notify the supervisor of the department.

Non-sterile gloves are used unless sterile gloves are indicated. Gloves should be changed when visibly soiled with blood / body fluids or if damaged. Gloves should not be washed or reused. Contaminated gloves are discarded in the biohazardous containers. Hands should be immediately washed after gloves are removed.

Lab Coats

Fluid-proof, knee-length, long-sleeved lab coats must be worn while performing laboratory procedures. Clinical affiliates provide.

Face Protection

Students must wear face protection (mask, goggles, face shield, or work behind splash shields) when handling biological specimens or hazardous chemicals, including human blood and manufactured reagents made from human blood.

Hand Washing

Hand and other skin surfaces should be washed immediately and thoroughly (including under fingernails) if contaminated with blood and other body fluids. Hands must be washed after removing gloves, contact with blood or body

fluids, and/or contact with equipment and work surfaces. Always wash hands before leaving any laboratory and before eating, drinking, or smoking.

Clean-Up and Disposal Procedures

A 1:10 dilution of household bleach is always available for cleaning spills and work areas. Clean up with 10% bleach is an effective disinfectant for HIV and other viruses. If a spill occurs, wear gloves to clean up. Wipe most of the spill with absorbent paper towels and discard in biohazards waste container. Apply a generous amount of 10% bleach to the spill area, wipe with paper towel and discard in biohazards container. When all laboratory work is completed for the day, clean the entire work area with 10% bleach and discard in biohazards container. Biohazard bags and containers are marked with the universal biohazard symbol label. Biohazard bags are placed in puncture-resistant containers with lids. Notes:

- Spill kits are available for large biohazard spills.
- Report any accident / spill to the instructor immediately.
- Microbiology plates for disposal are to be placed in the large bio hazardous containers.
- All sharp objects (needles, glass slides, glass test tubes, etc...) are to be placed in the red sharp containers. .
- All contaminated non-sharp waste (bloody gauze, contaminated paper

towels, gloves etc...) should be placed in the biohazard bags.

- All non-contaminated waste (syringe wrappers, note paper etc...) should be placed in the regular trash. Do not place in the biohazard bags or containers.
- No eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum, or applying makeup in the laboratory.
- No pipetting by mouth.
- Never recap, bend, or deliberately break or remove needles from syringes.
- Use universal precautions when handling all blood, body fluids, and reagents. Aerosol Precautions should be taken when uncapping a specimen tube to avoid aerosol and exposure to mucous membranes of mouth, nose, and eyes.
- Precautions should be taken to avoid injuries with sharp objects (broken slides, needles, tubes etc...). Should any such injury occur, notify your instructor IMMEDIATELY.
- Long hair must be pinned up or pulled away from face and neck. Refer to Clinical Dress Code.
- Closed-toe, clean, leather shoes must be worn.
- Avoid wearing chains, bracelets, excessive amounts of rings, or other

loose hanging jewelry. Refer to Clinical Dress Code.

- Students are responsible, after proper instruction, for locating and interpreting SDS sheets.
- Follow the manufacturer's and the hospital's instructions when operating any laboratory equipment. All equipment must be handled with care and properly cleaned after each use. Report any broken, frayed, or exposed electrical cords to the instructor immediately. Report any broken glassware or damaged equipment to the instructor immediately.

Section 6 – Clinical Rotation Manual

6.1 Service Work Policy

Students are encouraged to develop confidence and independent work skills in every phase of their training. With qualified supervision and guidance from the clinical instructor employed by the clinical affiliate, students who have satisfied competency requirements for various test procedures can perform actual patient work; however, ALL student results must be verified before leaving the lab area by the clinical instructor.

The affiliated laboratory may not, under any circumstances, use the student to perform work (service work) in lieu of a regular employee. This would violate NAACLS accreditation standards for the University's MLS Program. Service work by students in clinical settings outside of regular academic hours must be

noncompulsory, paid, supervised on site, and subject to employee regulations.

6.2 Clinical Experience

6.2.1 Affiliates

The MLS Program Director will secure clinical sites for all candidates (traditional program only) that are eligible for clinical internship. Students WILL be dismissed from the program if they are found to be acting on behalf of Thomas University to secure their own personal clinical site. Clinical affiliation agreements are formal contracts that are entered into on behalf of Thomas University and the institution. These contracts can be denied by either party for a number of reasons, and will be negotiated by the MLS Program Director ONLY. MLS students should be aware that on occasion, they may be put on a wait-list for the next available slot.

Travel to and from a clinical site and the expenses involved are the sole responsibility of the student.

6.2.2 2+2 Scheduling

The MLS Program at Thomas University is a NAACLS accredited program that does not require a set minimum hours of training and 2+2 clinicals are competency based. Students will be placed in a clinical site upon completion of the major didactic coursework.

No internship will be allowed until all theory/lab portions are passed with a 70% or higher for the following courses: MLS 405, 411, 414, 421, 431, 441, 451, and 470.

MLS 495 Internship : Preceptors may judge the initial experience of students and begin training at an appropriate point. Preceptors may also determine that additional time is needed for student to demonstrate competence. 2+2 clinical sites will determine competence and sign forms. There is no set number of hours for 2+2 clinical rotations.

6.2.3 Traditional Route Scheduling

The MLS Program at Thomas University is a NAACLS accredited program that requires a set minimum hours of training on all disciplines that comprise our field. Students will be placed in a clinical site upon completion of the major didactic coursework. No internship will be allowed until all theory/lab portions are passed with a 70% or higher for the following courses: MLS 301,385, 311, 314, 321, 421, 331, 431, 341, 441, 351, and 451.

The internship portion of these disciplines requires the following:

640 TOTAL HOURS :

- 80 hours in Urinalysis & Body Fluids
- 160 hours Microbiology
- 160 hours Hematology
- 160 hours Clinical Chemistry
- 160 hours Immunohematology
- 40 hours of Immunology / Molecular Diagnostics
- 40 hours of Phlebotomy

A schedule must be worked out between the Program Director and the clinical instructor. Students are expected to attend all designated sessions scheduled. A 40 hour work week is expected. Absence from the internship exceeding 2 days (including tardy, late, request to leave early etc.) will result in dismissal.

Clinical hours are record using the Trajecsyst system. If the student cannot attend the scheduled times, the clinical instructor and program director must be informed of the absence 90 minutes prior to the beginning of the scheduled shift. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the appropriate individual(s) at the university and hospital.

Any student that fails to be present for the schedule that was agreed upon, and is dismissed from the clinical site, will be immediately dismissed from the program.

Students are NOT allowed to “re-negotiate” the schedule AT ANY TIME. Any report from a preceptor regarding schedule changes or special alteration of schedule requests will be dismissed.

6.3 Student Responsibilities

Traditional students only will keep a time sheet, noting the time of day clocked in and clocked out for each rotation. Students are responsible for getting the clinical supervisor’s initials on the time sheets and turning in to the

clinical course instructor at the end of each rotation. Fraud of the time record is grounds for immediate dismissal.

If it is necessary for the student to be absent or tardy during the scheduled rotation, the student must notify the clinical affiliate supervisor and the MLS Clinical Coordinator.

Students are responsible for turning in all assignments as specified in the course syllabus and competency list by the due date, which is usually the last day of the rotation. Failure to do so will result in a 10% grade reduction for the course.

Students will complete and turn in an evaluation of each clinical rotation to the Program Director in the last semester of attendance. See a copy of these forms in the form section of the handbook.

6.3.1 Professional Behavior

Students are to maintain an agreeable and professional attitude at all times. If a student’s behavior is unprofessional and disruptive to the flow of work in the clinical laboratory, the clinical supervisor will first counsel the student. If behavior continues following reasonable warning, the supervisor may ask that the student leave for the day, and must immediately notify the MLS Clinical Coordinator. If a student is dismissed from a clinical site due to unprofessional behavior, or excessive

absences/tardiness, the MLS Program Director will withdraw the student from the MLS Program and awarded an “F” for the clinical rotation.

6.4 Drug Screen Policy and Procedure

Drug screening(s) are required of all students in the MLS program. As applicable, students/accepted applicants who do not pass the drug screening may be unable to complete degree requirements or may be denied admission to or suspended or dismissed from the degree program.

Rationale

1. Health care providers are entrusted with the health, safety, and welfare of patients; have access to confidential and sensitive information; and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student’s or accepted applicant’s suitability to function in a clinical setting is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in health care services.

2. Clinical facilities are increasingly required by the accreditation agency Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), to provide a drug screening for security purposes on individuals who supervise care, render treatment, and provide services within the facility.

3. Clinical rotations are an essential element in certain degree programs’ curricula. Students who cannot participate in clinical rotations due to a

positive drug screening are unable to fulfill the requirements of a degree program. Therefore, these issues must be resolved prior to a commitment of resources by the University or the student or accepted applicant.

4. Additional rationale include (a) meeting the contractual obligations contained in affiliation agreements between TU and the various health care facilities; (b) performing due diligence and competency assessment of all individuals who may have contact with patients and patient specimens (c) ensuring uniform compliance with JCAHO standards and agency regulations pertaining to human resource management; (d) meeting the public demands of greater diligence in light of the national reports on deaths resulting from medical malpractice and medical errors.

Timing and Procedures of the Drug Screening

Accepted applicants in designated programs must complete the following prior to the start of internship.

Submit to a chain of custody drug screen

Successfully pass the drug screen with sufficient time for the vendor to provide clearance documentation to the respective college/program designee.

Note: Should the vendor report that the screening specimen was diluted or tampered with, thereby precluding an accurate drug screen test, the student/

accepted applicant will be not be accepted into the internship and may be dismissed from the program.

Period of Validity

Drug screening will generally be honored by TU for a period of one year but may be required on a more frequent basis depending on the requirements of a clinical rotation site. Students who have a break in enrollment may be required to retest before they can re-enroll in any courses. A break in enrollment is defined as non-attendance of one full semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) or more.

Drug Screening Panels

The drug screening shall include testing for at least the following drug panels:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Amphetamines | 7. Marijuana (THC) |
| 2. Barbiturates | 8. Methadone |
| 3. Benzodiazepines | 9. Methaqualone |
| 4. Cocaine | 10. Propoxyphene |
| 5. Opiates | 11. Meperidine |
| 6. Phencyclidine | 12. Oxycotin |

Reporting of Findings and Access to Drug Screening Report

An “offense” under this policy is any instance in which a drug screening report shows a positive test for one or more of the drugs listed above in the Drug Screening Panels section.

Accepted internship candidates with a positive drug screen will not be allowed to begin classes unless, in case of a questionable/indeterminate result, the vendor provides clearance documentation to the college or program designee. Students should be aware that failure to pass drug screening, as determined by each facility, will prevent the student from participating in that clinical experience and will prevent the student’s completion of the degree program requirements or prevent the student from completing the degree program.

Current Students in Clinical Facility

Any clinical affiliate reserves the right to demand a random drug screen of any students using their facility for clinical rotations. Failure to submit to a drug screen, or a positive result will be grounds for dismissal from the clinical facility. Should a student be dismissed from a clinical site for failing a drug screen, it is not the responsibility of the MLS program or its faculty to provide another clinical site.

Falsification of Information

Falsification of information will result in immediate removal from the accepted applicant list or dismissal from the degree program.

Confidentiality of Records

Drug screening reports and all records pertaining to the results are considered confidential with restricted access. The results and records are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

[FERPA] regulations. For additional information on FERPA, please see <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

Records will be shared with the assigned clinical affiliate at their request.

6.5 Background Check Policy

All applicants accepted into the internship/practicum portion of the MLS Program must submit to and satisfactorily complete a criminal background check (CBC) as a condition to matriculate into the professional program. Students who refuse to submit to background checks may be dismissed from the program, or diverted to the Biomedical Science program if interested in completing the degree option.

Students enrolled in the MLS Program shall self-disclose to the Program Director and Clinical affiliate criminal history record information NO later than five (5) business days following the charge of any crime. Failure to disclose information which is subsequently found on a background check will result in dismissal from the University. Criminal activity that occurs while a student is in attendance at the University may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, and will be addressed according to the Academic and Professional Standards of the University and Clinical Affiliate.

Background check reports will be kept in the student's confidential "personal" file located in the MLS Program, not in the academic file kept in the Registrar's office. Access to these reports is not bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

(FERPA) requirements. The information contained in this file will be shared with the student's assigned affiliated clinical agencies for approval before entering that clinical facility. It is the right of the clinical affiliate to determine whether the student is acceptable for training in that facility.

A student who has a break in their enrollment is required to complete a new background check. A break in enrollment is defined as non-enrollment of at least one semester. An officially approved leave of absence is also considered a break in enrollment.

Rationale

Medical Laboratory Science students are entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of patients, have access to confidential information, and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student or applicant's suitability to function in such a setting is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in health care services.

Clinical facilities are required in standards by accreditation agencies, such as Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), to mean they are required to perform background checks for security purposes on individuals who provide services within the facility and especially those who supervise care and render treatment to vulnerable populations. To facilitate this requirement, and maintain opportunities for students to have entrance into clinical facilities, health professional education institutions have agreed to have

these background checks required for students.

Clinical rotations and early experiential rotations are essential elements in MLS curricula. Students who cannot participate in clinical rotations due to criminal or other adverse activities that are revealed in a background check will be unable to fulfill the requirements of the program.

Additionally, many healthcare licensing agencies require an individual to pass a criminal background check as a condition of licensure or employment. Therefore, it is in everyone's interest to resolve these issues prior to a commitment of resources by the university, the student, or applicant.

The MLS Program is obligated to meet the contractual requirements contained in affiliation agreements between the university and the various healthcare facilities.

Criminal Background Checks

If an accepted applicant's or student's report contains adverse findings, the Human Resource manager at the clinical facility will review the file and may request the applicant or student to submit additional information related to the finding (such as court documents and police records) at the student's or applicant's expense.

The HR manager will review all information available to him/her and determine whether the student is ineligible for admission or whether the student should be excluded from participation in clinical rotations in their facility. An inability to complete the clinical rotation portion of the

program will result in dismissal from the program.

The criminal background check will include a review of the student's or accepted applicant's criminal history for at least the seven (7) years prior to the date of acceptance. The CBC will include a check of the cities and counties of all known residences, date of birth, all names and alias ever used, verification of prior employment, verification of residence, etc. The scope of the CBC may include any or all of the following items:

- Social Security number validation
- Felony convictions
- State and national criminal history search, including;
 - * Misdemeanor or felony convictions, deferred adjudications, or judgments involving crimes against persons (physical or sexual abuse), Misdemeanor or felony convictions, deferred adjudications, or judgments related to moral turpitude (prostitution, public lewdness/exposure, etc.)
 - * Felony convictions, deferred adjudications or judgments for the sale, possession, distribution, or transfer of narcotics or controlled substances, and involving crimes against persons (physical or sexual abuse)
 - * Pending criminal charges involving felonies, Class A, Class B, or Class C misdemeanors, or

- * Expunged criminal records
- * Violent Sex Offender and Predator Registry search
- * Office of the Inspector General (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals/Entities
- * General Services Administration (GSA) List of Parties Excluded from Federal Programs
- * Employee Misconduct Registry
- * U.S. Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and List of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) search
- * Nationwide Healthcare Fraud and Abuse scan
- * Interpol or country of origin checks for international students
- * Applicable State Exclusion list

Students and accepted applicants have the right to review the information reported by the designated vendor for accuracy and completeness and to request that the designated vendor verify that the background information provided is correct. Prior to making a final determination that may adversely affect the applicant or student, the MLS Program will inform the student or applicant of their rights, how to contact the designated vendor to challenge the accuracy of the report, and that the designated vendor was not involved in any decisions made by the MLS Program.

