

Medical Laboratory Science Clinical Placement Policy

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The responsibility entrusted to you as a clinical MLS student is significant. Therefore, commitment to a high level of professionalism and clinical skill is an integral part of your obligations to the patients, clinical facilities, MLS profession and yourself.

I. ROTATIONS GENERAL POLICY

During clinical rotations students will be cycled in Clinical Chemistry, Microbiology, Hematology, Blood Bank, Urinalysis, and Point of Care (not available at all sites). These focus areas can be completed at one site or multiple sites.

The MLS program director and/or clinical coordinator have the authority to change a rotation at any time.

Once confirmed, a rotation will not be changed unless it is deemed necessary by the clinical coordinator, MLS program director, or clinical site. Any request to change a rotation must be confirmed by email. The program director will then assess the situation and determine if a change can be made.

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The clinical coordinator will set up the rotation sites for students in both Idaho and at established ISU clinical training sites outside of Idaho. Students shall not negotiate their own clinical placement.

Students may be required to travel during clinical rotations and it is the student's responsibility to pay all travel costs related to program requirements, including clinical assignments.

In some cases, relocation for rotations shall be required. The only exceptions will be for online students who have already obtained clinical sponsorship from an affiliated hospital that has been approved and confirmed by the program director.

If a student desires placement for rotations at a site not already established with the program, the student must first contact the clinical coordinator or program director. The clinical coordinator will then facilitate the development and confirmation of that site. The clinical coordinator reserves the right to not approve a clinical site if the site does not meet minimum standards or program mission/objectives. If a clinical contract cannot be finalized between ISU and the clinical site, the student must perform the rotation at one of the established affiliated sites.

II. CLINICAL PLACEMENT

All MLS students will participate in a preliminary placement interview during the fall semester with the clinical coordinator. The purpose of the interview is to determine the student's preference for placement and to gather information that might be useful in determining the actual placement.

Students may not arrange for their own rotations. Student input can be expressed in the interview but placement decisions will be made by the clinical coordinator.

Students will be scheduled for clinical rotations at one or more of the program's clinical sites and there is no guarantee of a student being placed at a specific site.

Only students in good standing in the MLS Program and who are on track to successfully complete all didactic MLS courses will be placed for clinical rotations. To be eligible for placement, students must have completed all required and necessary prerequisite course work with a C average or higher.

Due to the limited availability of placement sites, the MLS program reserves the right to place a student for rotation during either the summer or fall semesters following completion of required coursework.

III. CLINICAL PRACTICUM/ROTATION FORMAT

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Certification Exam Students:

To be eligible for the MLS certification exam, the clinical rotation must consist of the following semester courses (6 credits total):

- MLS 4491 – Microbiology practicum, 2 credits
- MLS 4492 – Hematology and urinalysis practicum, 2 credits
- MLS 4493 – Transfusion blood bank, 1 credit
- MLS 4494 – Chemistry and automation, 1 credit

ISU registration must be complete during the semester in which the practicum/rotation experience occurs. Rotation credits may be split between different semesters, as assigned by the Clinical Coordinator.

Non-Certification Exam Students:

Students who do not wish to sit for the MLS certification exam are permitted to take the following course:

- MLS 4490 – General Site Practicum, 1-6 credits

Completing this course allows the student to fulfill the MLS practicum requirement for graduation purposes but does not satisfy the practicum requirements for certification.

May Graduation Requests:

Students who will continue their education after completing their MLS degree and require a May graduation date for admittance to their program must notify the MLS program director and clinical coordinator at the earliest possible time. The coordination required for a May graduation is extensive and cannot be accomplished without staff knowledge and prior approval.

IV. CLINICAL SITE POLICIES

During the 12-week clinical rotation, students spend a minimum of 8 hours per day five days a week in the laboratory. Exact times will be arranged by the individual laboratory supervisor. The overall principle for all clinical education is that students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.

All absences during clinical rotations must be documented. **Students should be prepared to show documented evidence of illness or serious emergency upon request.**

In case of emergency, students must notify the lab manager or education coordinator at the affiliate site AND the MLS clinical coordinator or program director before the start of the scheduled work day. Any time missed during clinical rotations must be made up and completed within that rotation.

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Students will be required to **sign in and out** regardless of the policy for employees within the clinical laboratory. The sign-in sheet will be maintained by the student and will be submitted to the clinical coordinator at the completion of the clinical practicum.

Tardiness is defined as arriving more than 5 minutes late or leaving 5 minutes early. Tardiness of one hour or more is considered an unexcused absence.

V. DRESS CODE POLICY

The following policies are established to achieve a professional appearance, protect student and patient health, and appeal to the broadest sensitivity of patients' desires for their health care provider to dress professionally and demonstrate exemplary personal hygiene.

This is a professional program, and students are required to dress professionally and maintain exemplary personal hygiene. Each affiliate site will establish the dress code that is appropriate for that site but unless otherwise specified by the site, business professional attire is expected of all students.

Personal grooming, hygiene and attire reflect the image of the laboratory. Personal neatness, cleanliness and conservative apparel will best convey a professional image. Various methods of dress and appearance are permissible as long as the student is neat, clean and professional in the judgment of the clinical instructor, manager or director.

Specific Requirements:

1. Students are required to follow the dress code of the clinical site.
2. An ISU-provided student identification badge must be worn at all times.
3. Closed-toe shoes must be worn in all analytical areas and in all patient care areas. Athletic shoes must be neat and clean and socks should be worn at all times.
4. Hair must be neat and clean. The clinical site may request that long hair (shoulder length) be tied back. Beards, mustaches and fingernails must be kept trimmed, neat and clean.
5. Street clothes must be professional in appearance. Blue jeans, T-shirts with writing, sweatpants, and athletic pants may not be permitted at certain clinical sites.
6. Clinical facilities have the right to require the removal of jewelry and to ban artificial nails.

VI. INSURANCE

Failure to have health insurance will prohibit a student from clinical rotations.

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Proof of Health Insurance

All ISU students are required to carry their own health insurance. You will be asked to submit a copy of your insurance card, and the following information prior to clinical rotations:

Subscriber/Member ID:	Primary Subscriber's Name:
Insurance Carrier:	Subscriber's Relationship to You:

The University does not pay medical costs resulting from injury during clinical rotations or other curricular activity unless this injury is due to negligence of the University.

VII. REPORTING ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Any accident or incident involving the MLS student should be reported immediately to the lab manager and to the MLS clinical coordinator. The accident or incident needs to be documented promptly and thoroughly on an incident report form. Injuries include any cuts or needle punctures as well as more serious incidents.

VIII. ASCLS CODE OF ETHICS (<http://www.ascls.org/about-us/code-of-ethics>)

PREAMBLE

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

1. DUTY TO THE PATIENT

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

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

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

2. DUTY TO COLLEAGUES AND THE PROFESSION

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

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

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

3. DUTY TO SOCIETY

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

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

IX. PLEDGE TO THE PROFESSION

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

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