

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCES PROGRAM

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) requires the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program to publish the essential functions of the program. This information is for you to use to become aware and informed of the skills required in the performance of the duties of a Medical Laboratory Scientist (also known as a Medical Technologist or Clinical Laboratory Scientist) and to assess your ability to complete such duties. These essential requirements reflect performance abilities and characteristics that are necessary to successfully complete the requirements of the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program at the University of Connecticut. These standards are not conditions of admission to the program. Persons interested in applying for admission to the program should review these essential requirements to develop a better understanding of the physical abilities and behavioral characteristics necessary to successfully complete the program.

The essential observational, movement, communication, cognitive, and behavioral requirements for Medical Laboratory Sciences students are listed below. If there are changes in the essential requirements, these changes will be published and students will have the opportunity to discuss any changes with the Program Director and instructors in the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program.

The University of Connecticut and Hartford Hospital comply with the requirements and spirit of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The Department of Allied Health Sciences at the University of Connecticut will consider requests that an individual with a disability, who is otherwise qualified, be afforded reasonable accommodation in fulfilling the essential requirements of the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program. To accommodate individuals with disabilities, the University will endeavor to make reasonable accommodation to their students that will not impose an undue burden on the program or fundamentally alter its educational requirements and standards.

If you believe that you will need any accommodations to meet specific requirements, **after acceptance into the program**, contact the Center for Students with Disabilities at the University of Connecticut to facilitate review of the documentation and recommendations for reasonable accommodations.

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Section 1. Essential Observational Requirements

The Medical Laboratory Sciences student must be able to:

- ◆ observe laboratory demonstrations in which biologicals (e.g. body fluids, culture materials, tissue sections, and cellular specimens) are tested for their biochemical, hematological, immunological, microbiological, and histochemical components.
- ◆ describe the color, odor, clarity, and viscosity of biologicals, reagents, or chemical reaction products verbally and in writing.
- ◆ use a clinical grade binocular microscope to discriminate among fine structural and color (hue, shading, and intensity) differences of microscopic specimens.
- ◆ comprehend text, numbers, and graphs displayed in print and on a video monitor or screen.

Section 2. Essential Movement Requirements

The Medical Laboratory Sciences student must be able to:

- ◆ be at different sites and specific laboratory areas, at a designated time, for educational experiences.
- ◆ move safely around a laboratory.
- ◆ reach laboratory bench tops and shelves, patients lying in hospital beds or patients seated in specimen collection furniture.
- ◆ perform moderately taxing continuous physical work, often requiring prolonged standing, over several hours.
- ◆ maneuver equipment to collect blood and other laboratory specimens from patients safely.
- ◆ use and safely control laboratory equipment (e.g. pipettes, test tubes, inoculating loops) and adjust instruments to perform laboratory procedures.
- ◆ use an electronic keyboard (e.g. 101-key IBM computer keyboard) to operate laboratory instruments and to calculate, record, evaluate, and transmit laboratory information.

Section 3. Essential Communication Requirements

The Medical Laboratory Sciences student must be able to:

- ◆ comprehend technical and professional materials (e.g. textbooks, journal articles, handbooks, procedure and instruction manuals).
- ◆ comprehend verbal communications, including lectures, discussions, and conversations with health care professionals and patients.
- ◆ follow verbal and written instructions in order to correctly and independently perform laboratory test procedures.
- ◆ clearly instruct patients prior to specimen collection.
- ◆ effectively, confidentially, and sensitively communicate with patients.
- ◆ communicate with faculty members, fellow students, staff, and other health care professionals in person and in recorded format (writing, typing, graphics, or telecommunication).
- ◆ independently prepare papers and laboratory reports and independently take examinations (written, computer, and laboratory practical exams) to demonstrate content mastery.

Section 4. Essential Cognitive Requirements

The Medical Laboratory Sciences student must:

- ◆ independently possess and demonstrate the following cognitive and problem-solving skills: comprehension, measurement, mathematical calculation, reasoning, integration, analysis, self-expression, and compassion.
- ◆ be able to detect and correct performance deviations in laboratory tests.

Section 5. Essential Behavioral Requirements

The Medical Laboratory Sciences student must be able to:

- ◆ manage the use of time and organize work in order to complete multiple tasks and responsibilities within realistic constraints.
- ◆ independently exercise appropriate judgment and apply cognitive skills in the classroom, laboratory, and health care settings.
- ◆ provide professional and technical services while experiencing the stresses of task-related uncertainty (e.g. ambiguous test ordering, ambivalent test interpretation), emergent demands (“stat” test orders), and a distracting environment (e.g. high noise levels, crowding, complex visual stimuli).
- ◆ be flexible and creative and adapt to professional and technical change.
- ◆ recognize potentially hazardous materials, equipment, and situations and work safely in order to minimize risk of injury to patients, self and nearby individuals.
- ◆ adapt to working with unpleasant biological substances (e.g. urine, blood, feces).
- ◆ foster a team approach by supporting and promoting the activities of fellow students and health care professionals in learning, task completion, problem solving, and patient care.
- ◆ admit when an error has been made, when uncertain about an analytical result, or when unsure about the appropriate response in professional situations.
- ◆ critically evaluate his or her own performance, accept constructive criticism, and seek ways for improvement (e.g. participate in enriching educational activities).
- ◆ evaluate the performance of fellow students, faculty, clinical instructors, and the program and tactfully offer constructive criticism.