# UIS MLS Logo

# Student Handbook

# 2023-2024

The Student Handbook details the current curriculum, policies, and procedures of the Medical Laboratory Science Program at the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS). Other resources for program and university policies include the [University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) Catalog](http://catalog.uis.edu/), the [UIS Student Handbook](https://www.uis.edu/student-affairs/student-handbook), and applicable orientation materials distributed by clinical affiliates. Students are responsible for adhering to all UIS, MLS, and affiliate policies and procedures.

A UIS student may declare the MLS major at any time. However, students must be accepted to the MLS Professional Phase via a secondary admissions process before they are able to enter the MLS Program. Students should complete and submit an MLS Program application by February 1st for best consideration for the upcoming MLS cohort beginning in the Fall semester. Applications may be submitted until the beginning of the Fall semester, but availability cannot be guaranteed.

Students with questions regarding program or university policies and procedures should consult their advisor, the MLS Program Director, and/or the Office of Student Services. Students who need an accommodation to meet the MLS Program requirements contained herein should notify the MLS Program Director prior to entering the Program.

Andrea L. Jensen, EdD, MPH, MLS(ASCP)cm, Program Director

Medical Laboratory Science Program

School of Health Sciences

University of Illinois Springfield

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The UIS Medical Laboratory Science Program is fully accredited through April 2026 by:

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science

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## Medical Laboratory Science

Medical Laboratory Scientists play an integral role in the interdisciplinary spectrum of healthcare by: performing and interpreting a wide array of testing; investigating and correcting incidences of patient misidentification; researching and developing evidence-based testing algorithms; selecting and implementing new testing platforms; and validating, maintaining, and troubleshooting analytical instrumentation. Medical Laboratory Scientists serve as a valuable resource for the diverse healthcare workforce by providing guidance in the collection, selection, and interpretation of laboratory testing. Medical laboratory professionals must evolve continuously in the unpredictable and innovative healthcare atmosphere; carrying on rigorous continuing education programs throughout their careers. In order to effectively address the challenges of such a profession, laboratory science students must be developed into knowledgeable, skillful, and versatile laboratory professionals.

Medical Laboratory Science has experienced several nomenclature changes throughout the history of the profession; beginning with Medical Technology (MT), then on to Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS), and finally, an amalgamation of the two, Medical Laboratory Science (MLS). For this reason, the professional laboratory environment is occupied by a workforce exhibiting all three certification terminologies (i.e., MT, CLS, MLS); though, each reflects the same level of laboratory education.

Medical Laboratory Scientists are healthcare professionals certified by the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP). Upon completion of a laboratory education route approved by the National Accrediting Agency of Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), an individual may sit for the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) MLS examination. A successful score on the ASCP BOC exam bestows a certification upon the individual which is renewed every three years with successful completion of 36 hours of continuing education.

The MLS major is housed in the School of Health Sciences (HSC) in the College of Health, Science, and Technology (CHST). The MLS Program is a two-year upper division Bachelor of Science degree program that prepares students for careers in laboratory science and related fields. The Program at UIS is divided into two distinct phases: the Pre-Professional Phase, and the Professional Phase. The Professional Phase, completed over two years after the fulfillment of UIS general education requirements and programmatic prerequisites in the Pre-Professional Phase, is the NAACLS-accredited medical laboratory science program. Graduates of the MLS Program at UIS are eligible to sit for the ASCP BOC examination via Route 1.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Medical Laboratory Science Program at the University of Illinois Springfield is to offer a premier educational experience through student-centered teaching, experiential learning, professional service, and community engagement to develop responsible, scrupulous, competent professionals who will meaningfully contribute to laboratory medicine.

## Program Goals

1. Graduate knowledgeable, skilled, quality-focused, adaptable, and communicative professionals.
   * UIS Values: Student-Focused Teaching and Learning, Diversity, Accountability
   * UIS Directional Pillars: World Class Teaching, Personal Attention, Experience Engaged
   * MLS Program Student Learning Objectives: SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 6
2. Cultivate research, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving skills.
   * UIS Values: Inquiry, Strategic Thinking
   * UIS Directional Pillar: Liberal Arts Skilled
   * MLS Program Student Learning Objectives: SLO 3, SLO 4, SLO 10
3. Inspire lifelong learning and professional community engagement.
   * UIS Value: Civic Engagement
   * UIS Directional Pillar: Experience Engaged
   * MLS Program Student Learning Objectives: SLO 8, SLO 9
4. Promote integrity, ethical behavior, and leadership.
   * UIS Values: Integrity, Accountability, Strategic Thinking
   * UIS Directional Pillars: World Class Teaching, Experience Engaged
   * MLS Program Student Learning Objectives: SLO 5, SLO 7
5. Nurture community partnerships.
   * UIS Values: Civic Engagement
   * UIS Directional Pillar: Experience Engaged
   * MLS Program Student Learning Objective: SLO 8

## Outcome Measures

| **Outcome** | **Class of 2019** | **Class of 2020** | **Class of 2021** | **Class of 2022** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Graduation Rate** (percent of students who enter the final half of the program and successfully graduate from the program)  NAACLS benchmark: 70% | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |
| **External Certification Results** (percent of graduates who attempt and pass the ASCP-BOC national certification exam within one year of graduation)  ASCP 2022 national certification rate: 69% **NAACLS benchmark: 75%** | **100%** | **100%** | **90%** | **100%** |
| **Placement Rate** (percent of graduates who seek and find employment in the field or closely related field or continue their education within one year of graduation)  **NAACLS benchmark: 70%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

## Student Learning Outcomes

The MLS curriculum is designed to provide a variety of learning experiences that will enable students to develop critical thinking skills and to become responsible, competent, entry-level professionals in medical laboratory science. Graduates of the program will be able to:

### Laboratory Tests and Diagnostics

SLO 1: Perform laboratory tests accurately and efficiently, maintain and troubleshoot commonly used methods and automated instruments.

SLO 2: Demonstrate entry level competency necessary to perform the full range of clinical laboratory tests in Clinical Chemistry, Hematology/Hemostasis, Immunology, Immunohematology, Microbiology, Urine and Body Fluid Analysis, Laboratory Operations, and other emerging diagnostic areas.

### Critical Thinking

SLO 3: Evaluate laboratory test results for correlation with clinical conditions, suggest additional testing, and resolve pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical problems.

SLO 4: Demonstrate competency in the principles and practices of clinical study design, implementation and dissemination of results in order to apply evidence-based research into clinical practice.

### Ethics

SLO 5: Apply ethical, safety, and governmental regulations and standards to the practice of medical laboratory science.

### Effective Communication

SLO 6: Communicate effectively and respectfully in order to serve the needs of patients, the public and members of the health care team from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

### Laboratory Management and Organization

SLO 7: Demonstrate administrative skills consistent with principles and practices of administration and supervision as applied to medical laboratory science, including quality management.

### Education and Lifelong Learning

SLO 8: Exhibit principles and practices of professional conduct and demonstrate readiness to engage in life-long learning through continuing professional development, scholarship, service, and participation in professional organizations.

SLO 9: Demonstrate educational methodologies and terminology sufficient to train/educate users and providers of laboratory services.

### Information Literacy

SLO 10: Discuss research as a process of inquiry and critical thinking; identify and evaluate suitable sources; conduct searches strategically; use and communicate information appropriately; and recognize that information has value.

## Faculty & Staff

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### ****Emeriti Faculty****

Bill Bloemer, PhD, Professor Emeritus

Wayne Gade, PhD, MT(ASCP), Associate Professor Emeritus

Paula Garrott, EdM, MT(ASCP), Associate Professor Emerita

Linda McCown, PhD, MLS(ASCP)cm, Associate Professor Emerita

Jim Veselenak, PhD, Associate Professor Emeritus

## Clinical Affiliates

The MLS Program is affiliated with the following clinical sites for the 23-24 Academic Year:

**Barnes Jewish Hospital** – St. Louis, MO

**Carlinville Area Hospital** – Carlinville, IL

**Decatur Memorial Hospital** – Decatur, IL

**Gibson Area Hospital – Gibson City, IL**

**Hillsboro Area Hospital –** Hillsboro, IL

**HSHS St. John’s Hospital** – Springfield, IL

**ImpactLife** – Springfield, IL

**Jacksonville Memorial Hospital** – Jacksonville, IL

**Lincoln Memorial Hospital** – Lincoln, IL

**Mason District Hospital** – Havana, IL

**McDonough District Hospital** – Macomb, IL

**OSF HealthCare St. Anthony’s Health Center** – Alton, IL

**OSF HealthCare St. Francis Medical Center** – Peoria, IL

**OSF HealthCare Holy Family Medical Center** – Monmouth, IL

**Progress West Hospital** – O’Fallon, MO

**Springfield Memorial Hospital** – Springfield, IL

**Springfield Clinic** – Springfield, IL

**Sarah Bush Lincoln** – Mattoon, IL

**St. Louis Children’s Hospital** – St. Louis, MO

**University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System (UIC)-** Chicago, IL

Each MLS student will be assigned to complete practicum courses at a minimum of two affiliate sites. Additionally, students may be scheduled into short enhancement experiences in other facilities. Students are responsible for transportation and housing during completion of clinical practicum courses.

It may be possible to arrange practicum experiences at other medical laboratories. Students who wish to complete practicum courses at a clinical site other than the affiliates listed above must speak with the MLS Program Director well in advance of their senior year to see if an affiliation may be reached with the site. The MLS Program will make every attempt to establish a new agreement with the requested site. However, requests cannot be guaranteed.

This affiliate list is current as of August 2023. Affiliations may be gained or lost throughout the 2023-2024 academic year.

## Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is composed of individuals from the MLS community and provides input to ensure the relevance and efficacy of the MLS Program. Advice provided by the advisory committee guides programmatic policy, curricular content, assessment methods, clinical affiliate scheduling, etc. The committee meets at least once per year; although, additional meetings may be called, or input may be sought on an electronic basis in between meetings. Members of the 2023-2024 Advisory Committee include:

* Advisory Committee Chair, MLS Program Director
  + Andrea Jensen, EdD, MPH, MLS(ASCP)cm
* MLS Faculty
  + William Wilson, MS, MT(ASCP)
  + Amanda Adams, MS, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + Adjunct faculty
* School of Health Sciences Director
  + Celest Weuve PhD, ATC, LAT
* Medical Advisor
  + Patrick Hemmer, MD
    - Pathologist, Associated Pathologists, Ltd.
* Hospital Administrator Representative
  + Linda Jones, DNS, RN, FACHE
    - Vice President, Ancillary Operations, Memorial Medical Center
* Clinical Liaison Representative
  + Joe Heigert, MLS(ASCP)cm
    - Laboratory Manager, Springfield Clinic – Main Campus
* Academic Professional Representative
  + MLS Academic Advisor, University of Illinois Springfield
* MLS Practitioner Representative
  + Ashley Blankenbaker, MLS(ASCP)cm
    - Medical Laboratory Scientist, Memorial Medical Center
* Laboratory Science Community Representatives
  + Andrew Wilber, PhD
    - Associate Professor in the Department of Medical Microbiology, Immunology and Cell Biology; Director of the Public Health Laboratory Sciences graduate program, SIU School of Medicine
  + Kristin Goldesberry, MPH, MLS(ASCP), CIC
    - Laboratory Manager, Division of Laboratories – Springfield, Illinois Department of Public Health
  + Charity Noreuil
    - Laboratory Director, Springfield Forensic Science Laboratory, Illinois State Police
* Recent MLS Graduate Representative
  + Anna Woods, MLS(ASCP)cm
    - Reference Laboratory Technologist, ImpactLife
* Junior MLS Student Representatives
  + Elected MLS junior
  + Appointed MLS junior
* Senior MLS Student Representatives
  + Uriel Lamothe
  + Peter Salvo

## Clinical Liaison Council

The Clinical Liaison Council advises the MLS program as to delivery, content, and scheduling of clinical practicum courses. The council meets at least once per year. Advice on issues that arise in between meetings may be sought through electronic means or by calling an additional meeting. Members of the 2023-2024 Clinical Liaison Council include:

* Council Chair, MLS Program Director
  + Andrea Jensen, EdD, MPH, MLS(ASCP)cm
* MLS Faculty
  + William Wilson, MS, MLS(ASCP)
  + Amanda Adams, MS, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + Adjunct faculty
* School of Health Sciences Director
  + Celest Weuve PhD, ATC, LAT
* Clinical Liaisons
  + Barnes Jewish Hospital
    - Jeanne Anderson, MBA, MLS(ASCP)cm, DLM(ASCP)cm
  + Carlinville Area Hospital
    - Myrna Marfell
  + Decatur Memorial Hospital
    - Jennifer Minton, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + Gibson Area Hospital
    - Patrick Bean, MLS(ASCP)
  + Hillsboro Area Hospital
    - Alicia Murzynski, MHA, MLS(ASCP)
  + HSHS St. John’s Hospital
    - Erica Hostetler, MLS(ASCP)cm
    - Jonathan Stegner, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + ImpactLife
    - Denise Parbs, MLS(ASCP), SBB(ASCP)
  + Jacksonville Memorial Hospital
    - Misty Farris
  + Lincoln Memorial Hospital
    - Lori England
  + Mason District Hospital
    - Jeff Miller
  + McDonough District Hospital
    - Brittany Doll
  + Progress West Hospital
    - Sandra Hueser, MLS(ASCP)
  + Springfield Memorial Hospital
    - Kim Cruise, MLS(ASCP)
  + OSF St. Anthony’s
    - Rebecca Plasmeier, MLT(ASCP)
    - Sarah Braundmeier, MHA, MLS(ASCP)
  + OSF St. Francis
    - Anna Weisbruch, MPH, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + OSF Holy Family
    - Brittany Carlson, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + Sarah Bush Lincoln
    - Dave Sowers
  + Springfield Clinic
    - Joe Heigert, MLS(ASCP)cm
  + St. Louis Children’s Hospital
    - Jeanne Anderson, MBA, MLS(ASCP)cm, DLM(ASCP)cm
  + University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System (UIC)
    - Debbie Gillen
* Junior MLS Student Representatives
  + Elected MLS junior
  + Appointed MLS junior
* Senior MLS Student Representatives
  + Uriel Lamothe
  + Peter Salvo

## Essential Functions

Students entering the MLS Program must be able to meet the physical, mental, and psychological demands of the Program and subsequently the practice of medical laboratory science. If there is any change during the Program in the ability of the student to perform these functions, the Program Director must be notified immediately as this could affect the student’s safety as well as the safety of others. Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodation must notify the Office of Disability Services (217-206-6666) and the MLS Program Director prior to beginning the program. The following list is to be used by potential students, counselors, and/or physicians to determine if an individual can perform these functions:

1. Communication skills
   1. Communicate effectively in written and spoken English with faculty, other students, patients and members of the health care team
   2. Comprehend and respond appropriately to both formal and colloquial English, person to person, by telephone, and in writing
   3. Appropriately assess nonverbal and verbal communication
   4. Independently prepare papers, prepare laboratory reports, and take paper, computer, and laboratory practical examinations.
2. Large and small motor skills
   1. Move freely from one location to another in physical settings such as the clinical laboratory, patient care areas, corridors, and elevators
   2. Possess sufficient eye-motor coordination to allow delicate manipulations of specimens, instruments, and tools (e.g. manual pipetting, specimen collection from vein and capillaries)
   3. Grasp and release small objects (e.g., test tubes, pipette tips, microscope slides and coverslips); twist and turn dials/knobs (e.g., on microscopes, balances, centrifuges, spectrophotometers)
3. Other physical requirements
   1. Safely work at laboratory benches and at patients’ bedsides or specimen collection seats, and work with laboratory instrumentation
   2. Reach laboratory bench tops and shelves, patients lying in hospital beds or patients seated in specimen collection furniture.
   3. Travel to clinical sites
   4. Prolonged standing (a couple of hours at a time), prolonged sitting (i.e. at a microscope)
   5. Use computers and keyboards
   6. Lift and move objects of at least 20 pounds
   7. Possess a sense of touch and temperature discrimination
   8. Visual acuity
      1. Identify and distinguish object by observing fine structural detail and shadings macroscopically and microscopically (using a binocular clinical microscope)
      2. Read charts, graphs, and instrument scales-readout devices, computer/video screens
      3. Characterize the color (esp. intensity), clarity, and viscosity of biological samples and chemical reactions
   9. Ability to smell. Ability to tolerate smells and unpleasant substances.
   10. Must not be subject to episodic incapacitation that occurs without warning such as fainting spells or convulsive disorders due to requirements to handle potentially dangerous substances and objects.
4. Professional and application skills
   1. Follow written and verbal directions
   2. Possess and apply mathematical skills
   3. Work independently
   4. Work under stress including time constraints
   5. Work with others to accomplish common tasks and solve problems. Supports a successful work/health care environment.
   6. Prioritize requests and work concurrently on at least two different tasks
   7. Maintain alertness and concentration during a normal work period
   8. Apply knowledge, skills, and values learned from course work and life experiences to new situations
   9. Work safely with potential chemical, radiologic, and biologic hazards using universal precautions, using and wearing safety equipment mandated for laboratories (i.e. gloves, lab coats, masks).
   10. Develop algorithms and suggest appropriate follow-up tests
   11. Clearly instruct patients and health care professionals (e.g. specimen collection)
   12. Perform professional skills while experiencing the stresses of task-related uncertainty (i.e. ambiguous test ordering, ambivalent test interpretation), emergent demands (i.e. “stat” orders), and a distracting environment (i.e. high noise level, crowding, complex visual stimuli)
5. Valuing skills
   1. Show respect for self and others.
   2. Project an image of professionalism including appearance, dress, and confidence
   3. Be honest, ethical, and responsible. The student must be forthright about errors or uncertainty. The student must be able to critically evaluate his or her own performance, accept constructive criticism, and look for ways to improve. The student must be able to evaluate the performance of others and tactfully offer constructive criticism.
   4. Exhibits compassion. Remembers the health care mission.
6. Stability and Intellect
   1. Possess intellectual skills at a technical and professional level: comprehension, measurement, reasoning, comparison, integration, evaluation, synthesis, self-expression, and criticism
   2. Apply knowledge and skills previously learned to new situations
   3. Exercise sufficient judgment to recognize and correct performance deviations by self or others
   4. Possess the psychological health required for full utilization of abilities
   5. Possess the emotional health and maturity necessary to effectively deal with others and exercise appropriate judgment.
   6. Recognize emergency situations and take appropriate actions.

\*Other health conditions may also require evaluation. Please let the Program Director know if you have an allergy to latex.

Adapted in part from: Fritsma, GA, Fiorella BJ, and Murphy, M. *Essential Requirements for Clinical Laboratory Science.*  1996. Clinical Laboratory Science.  Vol 9, No. 1, 40-43.

## Student Advising and Guidance

It is critical that students complete MLS coursework in a deliberate and systematic fashion in order to graduate on time. Courses in the MLS major are offered once per academic year. Therefore, missing one required course would result in a delay in graduation by at least one year. Students completing courses extraneous to MLS (e.g., minors, premed concentration, etc.) should thoughtfully schedule the completion of these courses. MLS faculty advisors are available to provide guidance for appropriate Pre-Professional Phase and Professional Phase course registration. An assigned UIS Academic Advisor is available to provide guidance for appropriate Pre-Professional Phase courses and transfer requirements.

All MLS faculty are available to advise students as to: comprehension of and compliance with program policies, academic issues, professional goals, or personal issues. All advising and counseling sessions are confidential. All decisions are made impartially. If a student is experiencing a challenge that is impacting academic performance, whether it is an illness, a financial crisis, or some other concern, the student should speak with the Program Director as soon as possible. The Program Director will guide students toward applicable policies which may address issues affecting academic performance.

Students are encouraged to use UIS facilities and personnel for professional counseling.

* [UIS Health Services](https://www.uis.edu/healthservices/) provides health care that allows individuals to perform optimally, both physically and mentally, in order to achieve their academic and intellectual potential and to minimize interruptions in their academic careers.
* [The Counseling Center](https://www.uis.edu/counselingcenter/) provides counseling, outreach and psychological consultation to UIS students free of charge.

Both the MLS Program and the University of Illinois Springfield are committed to impartiality and confidentiality of formal and informal information shared by students. In accordance with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the MLS Program will not respond to communications or inquiries regarding student learning experiences and/or requirements unless they come directly from the student. Family members, friends, etc. should never contact the MLS Program regarding a student’s courses, academic performance, behavior, outstanding requirements, etc.

## Record Retention

In accordance with governmental and university regulations, the university and the MLS Program maintain and store appropriate student information. UIS keeps a permanent record of: student’s legal name, dates of attendance, courses, credit hours, grades, and degrees. The MLS Program retains student files which include: application materials, MLS-required immunization and/or laboratory test documentation, requests for recommendation, and documentation of disciplinary action. Other information (e.g., practicum schedules, course syllabi) may not be stored by the program and, therefore, may not be available to satisfy future content inquiries. In the event that such information is required as proof of completion and/or content for state licensure, international employment, etc., students are advised to retain syllabi, schedules, and practicum information. Records of advising or counseling sessions are retained temporarily and in a confidential manner solely for aid in future advising.

## Standardized Grading Scale

Students in MLS courses will be graded according to the following standardized scale:

| Letter | % |
| --- | --- |
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 62-66 |
| D- | 60-61 |
| F | ≤ 59 |

## Curriculum

The MLS major consists of two distinct academic phases: the Pre-Professional Phase and the Professional Phase. During the Pre-Professional Phase, the Freshman and Sophomore years, the students complete UIS general education requirements and MLS prerequisites. The Pre-Professional Phase student must complete a secondary admissions process and be accepted by the MLS Program before they may begin the Professional Phase. During the Professional Phase, the Junior and Senior years, students complete the MLS core courses and obtain clinical experience during practicum courses.

### Pre-Professional Phase

* 90 quarter hours or 60 semester hours of lower-division courses
* UIS general education requirements
* Two semesters of General Chemistry for science majors with lab
* One semester of Organic Chemistry for science majors with lab
* Two semesters of Biological sciences
* One semester of Statistics
* One semester of Microbiology with lab

### Professional Phase

#### Junior Fall Semester

* MLS 301: Foundations in Medical Laboratory Science- 1 Hour
* MLS 311: Laboratory Operations- 2 Hours
* MLS 341: Physiologic Processes- 3 Hours
* MLS 382: Hematology I- 3 Hours
* MLS 448: Introduction to Immunology- 3 Hours
* MLS 449: Introductory Immunology Lab- 1 Hour
* UNI 301: ECCE: Speaker Series- 1 Hour

#### Junior Spring Semester

* MLS 383: Medical Microbiology I- 4 Hours
* MLS 384: Clinical Chemistry I- 4 Hours
* MLS 442: Hematology II- 4 Hours
* MLS 468: Immunohematology- 4 Hours

#### Junior Summer Semester

* MLS 331: Evidence-Based Inquiry- 2 Hours
* MLS 443: Medical Microbiology II- 3 Hours
* MLS 444: Clinical Chemistry II- 3 Hours

#### Senior Fall Semester

* MLS 477: Molecular Diagnostics- 2 Hours
* MLS 497: Senior Seminar I- 2 Hours
* MLS 487: Practicum I- 6 Hours
* U.S. Communities or Global Communities ECCE elective (3 Hours)
  + Students should select an online ECCE offering and should complete this requirement during the Fall semester

#### Senior Spring Semester

* MLS 481: Education and Management- 2 Hours
* MLS 488: Practicum II- 6 Hours
* MLS 496: Special Topics Practicum- 1-6 Hours (typically register for 2 Hours)
* MLS 498: Senior Seminar II- 2 Hours

\*Course descriptions are available in the [UIS catalog](http://catalog.uis.edu/).

\*Students must earn a minimum of 120 credit hours and meet all other requirements for graduation.

### Pre-Medical Concentration

Students can formalize their preparation for medical or professional schools by earning the MLS Pre-Medical Concentration. This designation will appear on the transcript. Students are not required to complete the Pre-Medical Concentration in order to apply to medical school or other professional school. In recent years, MLS graduates have pursued graduate studies and careers as physicians, physical therapists, physician assistants, pathologists' assistants, and researchers.

Pre-medical students are advised to take Introduction to Psychology and Introduction to Sociology to satisfy 2 of the 3 UIS general education social science requirements. A student who would like to earn a Pre-Medical Concentration in MLS should consult the MLS Program Director or MLS advisor. If a student intends to attend medical school or another post-baccalaureate program, the student should research the entrance requirements for all programs to which they plan to apply to ensure adequate preparation and eligibility.

In addition to all MLS Professional Phase courses, an MLS major seeking the Pre-Medical Concentration must complete the following courses:

* MAT 115: Calculus- 4 Hours
* ASP 201: University Physics I- 4 Hours
* ASP 202: University Physics II- 4 Hours
* CHE 268: Organic Chemistry I Laboratory- 1 Hour
  + This course is required for admission to the MLS Program
* CHE 269: Organic Chemistry II- 3 Hours
* CHE 271: Organic Chemistry II Lab- 1 Hour
* Electives (select at least four hours from the following):
  + BIO 311: Cell Biology- 4 Hours
  + BIO 381: Genetics- 4 Hours
  + BIO 428: Human Disease- 4 Hours
  + BIO 429: Human Anatomy and Physiology I- 4 Hours

### MLT Articulation

Special opportunities to accelerate the clinical practicum courses are available for individuals who have completed an associate degree medical laboratory technician (MLT) program and who have passed the ASCP BOC MLT certification examination. MLS faculty, in collaboration with department specific clinical affiliate staff, will determine the appropriate practicum duration based on individual student proficiency. Articulation students must complete a minimum of one credit hour per practicum course.

Articulation students must also complete UIS graduation requirements to earn a Bachelor of Science degree.

### Minors

Students interested in pursuing a minor should discuss this with their MLS advisor and the advisor/chair in the department of the desired minor. All or most of the courses towards the minor will, most likely, need to be completed before entrance into the MLS Program or, if completed during the Professional Phase, very strategically scheduled. Students should not plan to finish a minor after completion of the MLS Professional Phase as this would delay graduation and, therefore, eligibility for the ASCP BOC MLS certification exam. A declared but unfinished minor will delay graduation, even if all MLS Professional Phase courses and UIS Bachelor of Science requirements have been met.

### Transfer of Credits & Substitution of Courses

Students may submit a request to the MLS Program Director for courses successfully completed (C- or higher) at other institutions to be substituted for courses required in the MLS Professional Phase. The course must have been completed within three years of acceptance into the MLS Program. Courses will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A course syllabus and course schedule of labs and assignments must be presented so that the MLS Program can determine if the previous course included all necessary content. If a course is considered to be equivalent to a required course in the MLS Professional Phase, the student will be allowed to substitute the external course for the course required by the MLS Program.

Students who have successfully completed (C- or higher) courses required in the MLS Professional Phase greater than three years prior to acceptance into the MLS Program may submit a request to the MLS Program Director to competency out of the equivalent course in the MLS Professional Phase. A course syllabus and course schedule of labs and assignments must be presented so that the MLS Program can determine if the previous course included all necessary content. If a course is considered to be equivalent to a required course in the MLS Professional Phase, the student’s didactic and/or practical competency will be assessed by a discipline-appropriate faculty member. If the student is found to be competent, the student will be allowed to substitute the external course for the course required by the MLS Program. All graduation requirements must still be met by the student (e.g., minimum of 120 credit hours). If the student is not found to be competent, the student will be required to complete the MLS Professional Phase course.

### Credits for Experiential Learning & Waiver of Courses

The MLS Program does not award credit for experiential learning. While MLS does not allow the use of Credit for Prior Learning credits (CPL) for program requirements, CPL may be used to satisfy other university requirements.

### Emergency Contingencies

In an emergency, the university’s emergency preparedness plan will be implemented, including notification of faculty, staff, and students. If an unexpected event occurs that results in a temporary or permanent interruption of the university’s ability to operate the MLS Program on campus, the MLS Program will attempt to continue to provide instruction via the Canvas online course delivery system. Should the online delivery system or laboratories also be incapacitated, attempts will be made to accommodate courses at a nearby school, affiliate campus or clinical affiliate site. If laboratory or practicum courses cannot be accommodated at another location, content may be shifted to a later semester. Shifting of content in emergency circumstances may result in a delayed graduation date.

## Clinical Practicum Policies

During the Senior year, on-campus courses are complemented with clinical practicum courses offered at clinical affiliate laboratories. Practica are similar to internships in experiential scope but are entirely educational and unpaid. While the majority of the practicum course requirements will be hosted off-campus, portions of the courses may be delivered online, on-campus or at a third affiliate site. Typically, students will complete clinical course work at a minimum of two different affiliate sites throughout the Senior year.

### Scheduling of Practicum Courses

Scheduling of practicum courses is performed by the MLS Program Director and/or MLS Clinical Coordinator in collaboration with the clinical affiliate liaisons at each site. Individual scheduling may vary for student, semester, and affiliate site. However, each student will complete practicum courses in the four major MLS content areas (i.e., Clinical Chemistry, Hematology, Immunohematology and Microbiology) and will complete scheduled experiences in minor MLS content areas (e.g., Hemostasis, Urinalysis and Body Fluids, Immunology, Point of Care, Molecular Diagnostics, Special Topics). Senior MLS students attend clinical practicum rotations four days a week. Some flexibility is incorporated into the schedule to account for a limited number of expected or unexpected absences.

Scheduling may necessitate completion of practicum courses at a distant site. Students are responsible for transportation, moving expenses, or temporary housing arrangements.

In the unlikely event that there are more students than clinical spots, programmatic GPA may be considered for the purposes of priority scheduling. The MLS Program will make extensive efforts to secure practicum site assignments for all students in time for graduation (e.g., pairing students up, soliciting new affiliate sites). If this is not possible, students who were not able to be assigned prior to graduation will be placed, according to programmatic GPA, at the earliest possible opportunity.

### Eligibility for Practicum Courses

All UIS general education and MLS Junior courses must be successfully completed before a student will be eligible for enrollment into clinical practicum courses.

Orientation is provided at each clinical site and includes the facility’s policies, rules, and regulations, including safety training and review of confidentiality regulations. This includes OSHA bloodborne pathogen exposure training, HIPAA training, etc. Participation in applicable affiliate orientation activities is required regardless of whether a student has already received such training at the university, another clinical site, or their place of employment.

### Background Checks, Drug Testing, and CPR Certification

As required by our clinical affiliates, all MLS seniors who will be going to clinical sites are required to have a background check, drug testing, and CPR certification. The background check and drug screen must be completed through the agency indicated by the MLS Program Director. CPR certification may be obtained through any agency.

Students are responsible for the cost of the background check, drug screen, CPR certification, and anything else required by the clinical affiliate. Students will be instructed to complete the background check and drug screen requirements just prior to the clinical practicum courses, which begin in the fall semester of the senior year. The approximate cost of the background check and drug screen is $101. Students may complete CPR training at any time or utilize an existing CPR certification record, provided the certification is valid for the duration of the senior year. UIS Campus Recreation offers First Aid/CPR/AED training to UIS students for approximately $40.

If the background check reveals a conviction which appears on the [Illinois Health Care Worker Background Check Act list of disqualifying convictions,](https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/health-care-regulation/health-care-worker-registry/disqualifying-convictions.html) please be advised that we may not be able to find clinical practicum spots for you. If we are unable to find clinical practicum spots, you will not be able to complete the requirements of the MLS Program. If we are able to find clinical practicum spots, you may not be able to be employed in healthcare after graduation – however, there may be jobs available in other venues. Also, students must report convictions that occur after the background check to the Program Director.

Students registered with the Illinois Medical Cannabis Patient Program (MCPP) may attend clinical practicum rotations provided 1) the student discloses their MCPP status to the MLS Program prior to clinical practicum scheduling, 2) proof of current MCPP registration is provided to the MLS Program prior to the pre-practicum drug screen, 3) clinical affiliate policies allow attendance by MCPP registrants, 4) proof of current MCPP registration is provided by the student to clinical affiliates upon request, and 5) the student is not under the influence of cannabis or in possession of cannabis, cannabis containing products, or cannabis-related paraphernalia on clinical affiliate properties. As clinical affiliate sites determine their own MCPP-related policies, clinical practicum rotation options for MCPP registered students will be limited to those sites that allow MCPP registrants to attend clinical practicum rotations at their sites.

### Professional Conduct at Clinical Affiliate Sites

Students should approach the completion of the practicum courses and behavior at clinical affiliate sites in a manner which is representative of the clinical affiliate’s culture.

#### Clinical Affiliate Regulations

Students must obey all regulations of the clinical affiliate sites. In addition to routine daily regulations, this may include attendance at orientation sessions, completion of site-specific learning modules, obtaining an identification badge and parking permit, etc.

#### Dress Code

Site-specific dress codes are in effect and strictly enforced, for students and employees alike, at each affiliate site. In addition to affiliate dress codes, MLS students must abide by the following:

* Identification badge must be visible at all times, as applicable
* All apparel is to be neat and clean
* Good personal hygiene is expected
* Hair below the shoulders must be pulled back
* Dangling earrings should not be worn
* Legs must be covered
* Shoes must be close-toed and worn with socks or hosiery
* Lab coats for student use will be available at the affiliate sites
* Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn when handling laboratory specimens, reagents, etc.

#### Communication

In accordance with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), any communication to the clinical affiliate site must come from the student or the MLS Program. Family members, friends, coworkers, etc. should never communicate with a clinical affiliate site regarding a student’s clinical learning experiences. Clinical affiliates have been instructed not to respond to messages or inquiries regarding students’ clinical learning experiences that come from anyone other than the student or MLS Program.

#### Attendance

Attendance according to scheduling is required. In the event of illness or otherwise unavoidable absence during clinical hours, students are expected to notify the clinical liaison and clinical preceptor as far in advance as possible and at least an hour before scheduled arrival time. The clinical liaison and clinical preceptors, in consultation with UIS faculty, will decide whether a student will need to make up time missed due to illness or weather. Extensive illness may necessitate completion of the practicum at a later date which may delay graduation.

Any student who fails to follow the proper call-in procedure or to give appropriate advanced notice for known absences will receive an unexcused absence. Failure to make up missed time and content, as determined by clinical staff and UIS faculty, may result in a grade of incomplete for the rotation. In the event that a student accrues three unexcused absences, action will be pursued according to the disciplinary process. Any disciplinary action will be documented in the student’s file.

Students must report to the clinical preceptor appropriately attired and prepared by the scheduled start time. Arrivals into the department after the scheduled start time will be considered tardy. In the event that a student accrues three unexcused tardies, action will be pursued according to the disciplinary process. Any disciplinary action will be documented in the student’s file.

Students are expected to remain at the affiliate site for the entire scheduled day, typically 8 hours, or until released by the clinical preceptor or clinical liaison. Break times will be determined by the clinical preceptor on a daily basis. Students must take a break when told to do so by the preceptor which will, likely, be at a different time than MLS classmates. In the event that a student leaves the affiliate site early or takes extended breaks without the permission of the clinical preceptor, action will be pursued according to the disciplinary process. Any disciplinary action will be documented in the student’s file.

Clinical sites are not required to make accommodations for special scheduling requests. However, an affiliate may choose to work with a student to obtain a schedule that works for all involved.

Attendance records are to be maintained daily via electronic clocking and, in some cases, an attendance log kept by the affiliate site. These are official records. Falsification or omission of records represents a violation of the UIS and HSC academic integrity policies and will be pursued as such.

#### Transportation

Students are responsible for their own transportation to the clinical sites. If a student’s usual mode of transportation is unavailable, the student, like an employee, is expected to make other transportation arrangements in order to arrive at the affiliate site on time.

As medical facilities, clinical affiliate sites do not shut down in the event of severe weather. Students must attend each scheduled practicum day whenever possible. It is the responsibility of the student to assess the safety of travel to the affiliate site. If a student is unable to safely travel due to weather, the appropriate call-in procedure must be followed. Extensive weather-related absences may be pursued according to the disciplinary process.

#### Scheduling Changes

Within scheduled time at an affiliate site, the clinical liaison may need to rearrange educational experiences to accommodate for staffing or workflow. Flexibility by students is appreciated. UIS faculty should be notified of changes.

Students may be scheduled for an abbreviated evening or night shift rotation to provide exposure to shift-specific testing. Students may be scheduled to arrive very early to observe and participate in quality control, instrument set-up, or routine maintenance.

#### Social Media

According to the HSC Social Media Policy, students are not to interact with clinical affiliate staff via social media during enrollment in the MLS Professional Phase. All professional or academic interactions with clinical staff should be conducted via workplace telephone, email, or through the clinical liaison.

Students must not post any part of their clinical experience (e.g., interactions with clinical staff, interactions with patients, laboratory results) on any social media site.

For a full discussion of social media guidelines for MLS students, the HSC Social Media Policy, located within the HSC Bylaws should be referenced. See an excerpt from the policy below:

Guidelines for Students in the HSC Department:

1. It is prohibited for you to friend, follow or connect with any other form of social media with a UIS instructor, internship facilitator, or practicum preceptor while being instructed by that person.
2. While representing the UIS HSC department via social media pages connected with student involvement, it is prohibited to use profanity, obscenity or anything that depicts you or the organization in unfavorable light to include inappropriate images, inappropriate attire or engaging in illegal activities or any behavior that would make UIS or the HSC department appear in an unfavorable way.
3. It is prohibited for you to share highly sensitive patient/client information to include any details regarding patient/client experiences, diagnosis, treatment, clinical findings.

Incidents of social media interaction with clinical staff and/or posting any part of a clinical experience on a social media site will be pursued according to the disciplinary process, HSC Academic Integrity Policy, and/or HSC Social Media Policy whichever most appropriately applies to the situation.

#### Grievances

Complaints and special requests should be addressed with the site’s clinical liaison first. The liaison’s job is to facilitate student learning at the affiliate site. If a student is not satisfied with the response of the clinical liaison, the student should contact the UIS faculty member responsible for the course or the Program Director.

#### Grading

During practicum courses, clinical preceptors and clinical liaisons assess the students’ performance via practical exams and checklists. Upon completion of the course, all assessments are submitted to the UIS faculty member responsible for the course that tallies and submits final grades to UIS. UIS faculty may also administer quizzes, exams, or additional assignments online or on-campus. See each practicum course syllabi for specific grading and pass criteria.

If a student receives a grade lower than a C- in a practicum course, requirements of the repeat will depend upon: portion of the course that was completed unsatisfactorily and scheduling capabilities of the clinical affiliate. If the MLS Program Director, in consultation with the clinical liaison, determines that the practical and affective objectives were met, a student-centered remediation plan will be developed, and all exams will be retaken. Second attempt exams will be equivalent but not identical to the original exams. If the practical objectives were not met, a repeat rotation may be arranged at a time mutually acceptable to the affiliate and student. Clinical affiliates are not required to accept a student back to make up a course. If one site does not agree to have the student back, every attempt will be made to find another affiliate to take the student. A repeat rotation cannot be guaranteed in time for graduation. In the event that the failing practicum grade is the second failing grade in the Professional Phase, the student will be dismissed from the MLS Program in accordance with the MLS Progression Policy.

#### Confidentiality

Confidentiality in healthcare is critically important and strictly enforced. Students will have access to patient information solely for teaching/learning purposes. Any information used for case studies or other educational purposes must not have any identifying information (e.g., name, ID number, medical record number) that could be linked back to the patient. Note that no patient information or results can be published without the clinical affiliate’s expressed permission and, potentially, institutional review board (IRB) approval.

#### Clinical Data Policy

Confidentiality in healthcare is critically important and strictly enforced at the federal level via the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). During clinical practicum courses, students will have access to patient information solely for teaching/learning purposes. Clinical data from a clinical affiliate site can only be used for MLS curricular requirements. Clinical data cannot be solicited for non-MLS coursework, student organization activities, personal projects, etc. Any information used for MLS educational purposes must not include any identifying information (e.g., name, ID number, medical record number, rare diagnosis) that could be linked back to the patient. Note that no patient information or results can be published or publicly presented without the clinical affiliate’s expressed permission and, potentially, institutional review board (IRB) approval.

#### Service Work

MLS students are to have the status of learner and may not render services for patient care beyond the realm of educational value. Any activity assigned to a student must have an educational value. A student is not to be used as a replacement for an employee. After demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to perform procedures under qualified supervision for the purpose of practice but not as a replacement for laboratory staff. Students are not allowed to perform patient testing or report patient results without a lab professional’s oversight. If a student feels they are being inappropriately used to provide patient service, in place of an employed lab professional, they should report this immediately to the clinical liaison and MLS Program Director.

Students may be employed by the clinical affiliate outside of regularly scheduled class time and should be voluntary and appropriately compensated. If a student is employed by and completing practicum courses at an affiliate site, work responsibilities and educational experiences must be separated. Students are not allowed to be financially compensated for work performed during practicums.

#### Enhancement Experiences and Service Learning

Observation and/or participation in alternative laboratory practice may be completed for credit during MLS 496: Special Topics Practicum. This may include spending time in healthcare departments outside of a routine laboratory, such as histology, respiratory therapy, nuclear medicine, autopsy, etc. This may also include non-healthcare experiences such as public health, crime, environmental, medical research, veterinary, fertility clinic, or pharmaceutical laboratories. These may be arranged by the clinical liaison, medical advisor, UIS faculty, or, with permission, the student.

Purposeful civic learning through experiences that provide service to the community may be completed for credit during MLS 496: Special Topics Practicum. Service learning should be related to the field of laboratory medicine and must be arranged, tracked, and reported by the student.

To earn credit for observation/participation in alternative laboratory practice or service learning the student must secure permission from the responsible UIS faculty member and/or Program Director prior to registration into MLS 496: Special Topics Practicum. MLS 496 is a variable credit hour course (1 to 6 Hours) and may be repeated for credit if the content is sufficiently different.

## Honors in MLS (Department Honors)

MLS majors with a cumulative GPA equal to or greater than 3.25 and one semester in residency at UIS may apply to participate in the MLS honors option. This is not connected with the CAP Honors Program. In addition to MLS programmatic requirements, candidates for Department Honors must:

* Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25
* Earn a minimum grade of B- for each course in the MLS Program
* Successfully complete three credit hours of MLS 400: Applied Research
* Present their findings in a formal paper and public presentation.

To apply to participate in the honors program the student must secure an MLS faculty research advisor and obtain preliminary approval from the faculty advisor for their research topic. After reaching an agreement with the MLS faculty research advisor, the student must submit a written honors proposal. The written proposal must state:

* Desire to pursue Honors in MLS
* Projected graduation date
* Faculty research advisor
* Affiliated research mentor (if applicable)
* Detailed description of research topic
* Projected presentation venue
* Planned semester in which to register for MLS 400: Applied Research

Once the written proposal is received and approved by the MLS faculty research advisor, the faculty advisor will assist the student in obtaining further required preliminary approvals from the MLS Program Director.

Research for MLS Honors must be a substantive effort. The student may complete research under the supervision of an MLS faculty member or outside researcher or professional (e.g., clinical laboratory professional, pathologist, researcher, chemistry faculty member). If an outside individual is directly supervising the research, the MLS faculty research advisor will overseethe process (including IRB process if necessary). The research (and paper) can be on the same topic as a CAP senior project and paper, but the research and paper must specifically relate to laboratory science. Because CAP has substantially different requirements, this means writing two papers.

The paper must be submitted in the format determined to be most appropriate by the MLS faculty research advisor (e.g., ICMJE, MLA, APA)*.* The acceptable length will be determined by the content as judged by the MLS faculty research advisor. An approved copy must be submitted to the Program Director before the end of the final semester and will be kept in the student’s MLS file.

The presentation may be a poster presentation, a spoken presentation, or other official presentation format. Documentation of the presentation must be submitted to the Program Director before the end of the final semester.

The Program Director will notify the HSC Director that the paper and proof of presentation have been submitted and graded. The HSC Director will notify the Registrar that the student has met all departmental requirements for MLS Honors. After final determination of eligibility by the Registrar, departmental honors will appear on the student’s transcript and diploma.

## Progression Policy

### Programmatic GPA

Students are required to maintain a minimum programmatic GPA of 2.5. A programmatic GPA below 2.5 will result in dismissal from the MLS Program. Dismissal from the MLS Program is not equivalent to dismissal from UIS. The student may appeal through the [UIS Student Grievance Code](https://www.uis.edu/policy/student-grievance-code). The student may reapply to the MLS Program for the possibility of readmittance into a future cohort.

### Minimum Passing Grade for MLS Professional Phase Courses

A minimum grade of C- must be earned in all MLS Professional Phase courses. If a student earns a grade lower than a C- in any course in the MLS Professional Phase, the student must repeat the course within one calendar year or at the next time that the course is scheduled, whichever occurs first. MLS Professional Phase courses are regularly offered once per academic year. Therefore, earning a grade lower than a C- may delay graduation by one year or longer.

If a student receives a grade lower than a C- in any two MLS Professional Phase courses or receives a grade lower than a C- twice in any one MLS Professional Phase course, the student will be dismissed from the program. Dismissal from the MLS Program is not equivalent to dismissal from UIS. The student may appeal through the [UIS Student Grievance Code](https://www.uis.edu/policy/student-grievance-code). The student may reapply to the MLS Program for the possibility of admittance into a future cohort.

If a Junior MLS student receives a grade lower than a C- in any single course in the MLS Professional Phase, they must repeat the course within one year or at the next time the course is offered, whichever occurs first, before they will be allowed to continue into the Senior Practicum courses.

If a Senior MLS student receives a grade lower than a C- in a practicum course, requirements of the repeat will depend upon: portion of the course that was completed unsatisfactorily and scheduling capabilities of a clinical affiliate. If the MLS Program Director, in consultation with the clinical liaison and MLS clinical practicum faculty, determines that the practical and affective objectives were met, a student-centered remediation plan will be developed, and all exams will be retaken. Second attempt exams will be equivalent but not identical to the original exams. If the practical objectives were not met, a repeat rotation may be arranged at a time mutually acceptable to the affiliate and student. Clinical affiliates are not required to accept a student back to make up a course. If one site does not agree to have the student back, every attempt will be made to find another affiliate to take the student. A repeat rotation cannot be guaranteed in time for graduation. In the event that the failing practicum grade is the second failing grade in the Professional Phase, the student will be dismissed from the MLS Program.

### Applying for Post-Dismissal Readmission

In addition to satisfying all requirements for regular admission to the MLS Program, applicants for post-dismissal readmission must demonstrate substantive academic and affective improvement since dismissal to be readmitted to the MLS Program. To demonstrate substantive academic improvement since dismissal, applicants for post-dismissal readmission must complete 6-8 credit hours of MLS-relevant courses and earn a grade of “B” or above in each course. Only MLS-relevant courses completed since dismissal will be reviewed to determine whether substantive academic improvement has occurred. To demonstrate substantive affective improvement since dismissal, applicants for post-dismissal readmission will also be required to participate in an interview with the MLS Secondary Admissions Committee.

If a student who was readmitted post-dismissal is dismissed from the MLS Program a second time, the dismissal will be permanent. The student will no longer be eligible for readmittance to the MLS Program after a second dismissal.

### Continuity of Curriculum

The MLS curriculum is designed to be taken in a proscribed order. Therefore, students will not be allowed to register for an MLS course until all course prerequisites have been completed or are in progress. MLS majors who have not completed all Junior courses cannot be designated as MLS Seniors and therefore will not be allowed to progress to the practicum courses in the Senior year.

### Part-Time Enrollment

While part-time completion of the MLS Program is permitted, students are discouraged from completing the MLS Professional Phase on a part-time basis unless absolutely necessary. In order to ensure best possible academic and professional outcomes, the MLS Professional Phase is designed to be taken in a proscribed order for completion in two years. When the curriculum is completed over greater than two years, it may be more difficult to effectively apply all MLS content equally toward satisfactory completion of MLS Practicum courses, the MLS Comprehensive Closure Exam and the ASCP BOC Exam.

### Leave of Absence

Circumstances (e.g., illness, pregnancy, childbirth, military service, finances) may necessitate a student leaving school for a period of time. If the student is in good academic standing and notifies the Program Director in writing by February 1st that they plan to return to the program in the following academic year, the student will be guaranteed a spot in the next student cohort. If the Program Director is notified after February 1st the student will be accommodated as availability allows.

To be eligible to request a leave of absence, the student must be accepted into the MLS Program and currently enrolled in MLS Professional Phase courses.

In the event that a student requests a leave of absence but does not return by the agreed upon reentry semester, the student will no longer be considered an MLS student. If the student wishes to reenter the Program at a later time, the student will need to reapply via the MLS Program’s secondary admissions process.

### Delayed Graduation

Incompletes, missing Pre-Professional or Professional Phase requirements, outstanding charges, declared but unfinished minors or concentrations, etc. will delay graduation. Students are strongly discouraged from planning to delay graduation from the MLS Program to complete a secondary degree, concentration, or minor after completion of the MLS Professional Phase. A delay in graduation will result in a delay in eligibility to sit for the ASCP BOC Exam and, therefore, reduce the chances of successfully passing the exam.

### Academic Probation and Suspension

According to the [UIS Academic Standards](http://catalog.uis.edu/admissions-academic-info-all-students/assessment-info-academicstandards/), academic probation from UIS occurs when a student’s GPA falls below 2.0. Academic suspension occurs when a student has been placed on academic suspension for two consecutive semesters. For UIS policies regarding registration restrictions and appeals refer to the [Records and Registration website](https://www.uis.edu/registrar).

## Academic Integrity

Each student is obligated to be familiar with and adhere to the [University of Illinois Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.uis.edu/academicintegrity/policy/) and the School of Health Sciences Academic Integrity Policy. Review rationale and students’ obligations, as outlined below by the School of Health Sciences Academic Integrity Policy:

Graduates from the academic programs within the School of Health Sciences (HSC) transition into positions of great trust in healthcare or health maintenance professions. Degrees earned through programs of the HSC must reflect legitimate knowledge and absolute honesty in each and every graduate in order to protect the health and safety of patients/ clients, validate the trust of public and professional communities, and maintain the value of the degrees and professional certifications earned. For these reasons, it is the duty of the faculty and students of the HSC department to uphold and demonstrate academic integrity in all educational and clinical activities.

The HSC Academic Integrity Policy is not designed to contradict or supersede the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) Academic Integrity Policy. The goal of the HSC policy is to provide a clear, standard departmental process for faculty and students regarding the management of academic integrity violations and to outline the HSC Department recommended sanctions in accordance with the UIS Academic Integrity Policy. Furthermore, the design and execution of the HSC Academic Integrity Policy reflects stringent certification testing protocols (i.e., zero tolerance of cheating) set forth by professional agencies relevant to the HSC.

The provisions of the UIS and HSC academic integrity policies apply to every learning environment including but not limited to: classroom, laboratory, computer laboratory, exam proctoring center, clinical practicum sites, etc. Any suspected academic integrity violations will be pursued according to the UIS and HSC academic integrity policies. Students found in violation of the UIS and HSC academic integrity policies will be subject to sanctions as detailed in the policies. To ensure safety of practice, trust of the community, and to strengthen the distinction associated with a degree earned from a program of the HSC, members of the HSC faculty are obligated to pursue any and all instances of academic integrity violation.

**Refer to the** [University of Illinois Springfield Academic Integrity Website](https://www.uis.edu/academicintegrity/) **for:**

* Student resources
* Faculty resources
* Forms
* The UIS Academic Integrity Policy

**Refer to the** [University of Illinois Springfield Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.uis.edu/sites/default/files/2021-09/Academic-Integrity-Policy-app-2015-2-20.pdf) **for:**

* Faculty and student responsibilities
  + Section II
* Definitions of academic integrity violations
  + Section IV
* Proper procedure in pursuing suspected violations of academic integrity
  + Section V and Appendix A
* Detailed description of tiered offense classification
  + Section VI
* Examples of possible sanctions
  + Section VII
* Hearing panels and processes
  + Section VIII
* Appeals process
  + Section XI

1. Student Obligations:

* Students enrolled in designated HSC courses must review the UIS and HSC Academic Integrity Policies and submit a signed HSC Academic Integrity Policy Affirmation Form at the onset of the course. Designated courses are determined by each program. As a component of the academic record for the designated course, signed forms will be stored according to assessment retention requirements of relevant accrediting agencies.
  + Throughout enrollment in any HSC program, students will adhere to the UIS and HSC academic integrity policies in all learning environments including but not limited to: classroom, laboratory, computer laboratory, practicum, and internship.
  + Knowledge of Academic Integrity Violations:

If a student becomes aware of any instance of academic dishonesty in an HSC course, the student may feel an ethical obligation to report or respond to the violation. In accordance with Section V:1 of the UIS Academic Integrity Policy, this may be accomplished using one of the following means:

* + 1. Reporting of the incident to the Academic Integrity Council (AIC) via the [UIS Academic Integrity Violation Report Form](https://www.uis.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2015/01/UIS-AI-Violation-Report-Form.pdf) (UIS AIVRF)
       1. Attempts to maintain the confidentiality of the reporting student will be employed, but complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed.
    2. Anonymous report to a faculty or staff member
       1. Student may or may not implicate individual students
       2. Attempts to maintain the confidentiality of the reporting student will be employed, but complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed.
    3. Beginning a discussion with the student in violation
       1. Acknowledging the violation, its impact, and penalties
       2. Offering counsel as to the importance of honest and ethical conduct in academic and professional situations

## Immunization Policy

**Medical Laboratory Science (MLS)** students must provide medical documentation of the following immunizations and laboratory test results to the MLS Program. Students who are unable to obtain immunizations for health or religious reasons must submit an approved waiver to the MLS Program.

### ****Prior to entering the Program****

* [All immunizations required by UIS](https://www.uis.edu/health-services/immunizations/immunization-requirements)
* The Hepatitis B immunization series (3 shots) **or** proof of immunity (IgG titer)
  + The Hepatitis B immunization series is completed over a period of approximately 6 months. Any student who has not yet begun the Hepatitis B immunization series should start immediately.
  + Students will not be allowed to participate in curricular laboratories until proof of complete or initiated Hepatitis B immunization series or an approved waiver has been received by the MLS Program.

### ****Prior to the clinical practicum courses****

* COVID vaccination (two doses of Pfizer/Moderna **or** one dose of J&J)
* Varicella vaccination (two shots), titer, or documented medical history of chicken pox infection
* 2-step T.B. (tuberculosis) skin test series **or** TB QuantiFERON (or equivalent) blood test within the three months prior to beginning clinical practicum courses
  + Students who have had the BCG immunization should get the TB QuantiFERON test instead of the skin test.
  + Students who test positive (or have previously tested positive), must provide medical documentation of a negative chest x-ray and TB questionnaire, depending on requirements of the clinical affiliate.
  + **Do not get TB testing any earlier than 3 months prior to clinical practicum courses**
* Seasonal flu vaccine for the current season must be obtained by November 1st of the clinical practicum year
* Any other vaccines required by the clinical affiliate

In preparation for clinical practicum courses, the MLS Program assures clinical affiliates that students’ immunization requirements have been met. Because of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) the MLS Program cannot provide immunization documentation to a clinical affiliate site if they request it. If a clinical affiliate site requires documented proof of immunization and/or laboratory test results, the student will need to provide documentation directly to the clinical site. Therefore, students are advised to **keep originals of all immunization records.**

### ****Submit immunization documentation to the MLS Program****

**Upload documentation of all MLS-required immunizations to your digital MLS student file on UIS Box – the MLS program director will send an invitation to collaborate on your MLS student file after admission to the MLS Program.**

**You must register for classes at UIS before you can access UIS Box. After registering for classes, visit** <http://go.uis.edu/box> **and click “sign up” to create your UIS Box account – you must use your UIS credentials to sign up for a UIS Box account. If you are a current UIS student who has previously registered for classes at UIS, you should be able to immediately access or activate your UIS Box account.**

## Insurance

Students must have health insurance. The university will assess a fee for group health and accident insurance unless the student shows proof of equivalent coverage. Students have access to the routine and emergency services provided to all students at the university. The University Health Service as described in the online catalog is available whether or not a student is covered by the university-sponsored insurance. Emergency care is available at the clinical affiliate sites when students are on site during the clinical component of the curriculum. The student is responsible for the cost.

In addition to health insurance, the affiliate sites require that each student have current professional liability insurance. Students of the University of Illinois are covered for clinical practicums for which academic credit is currently being earned.

## Student Conduct

Student conduct will be assessed formally and informally throughout the Professional Phase. For a student to secure academic or professional references, consistently mature behavior, both at the university and at the affiliate sites, should be routinely demonstrated.

Infractions of [UIS Student Conduct Code](https://www.uis.edu/policy/student-conduct-code), regulations of clinical affiliate sites, MLS policies, or other disruptive or illegal behavior will result in counseling with the appropriate faculty member and/or administrator and may result in sanctions detailed in the [UIS Student Handbook](https://www.uis.edu/student-affairs/student-handbook).

Multiple infractions, even if they are unrelated to each other, are evidence of unprofessional behavior and will be documented for potential sanctions. Clinical affiliate rules are enforced, and infractions sanctioned by the site in consultation with the Program Director. Clinical affiliates may ask that a student be removed from practicum completion at their site if the infraction is egregiously unprofessional or unsafe. Sanctions may be appealed through procedures detailed in [The Student Grievance Code](https://www.uis.edu/policy/student-grievance-code).

### ****Proscribed Conduct****

The following categories of conduct are specifically prohibited and may form the basis for disciplinary action:

1. Violence, the threat of violence, harassment, or intimidation directed against another person or persons.
2. The intentional obstruction or interference with any person’s right to attend or participate in any UIS activity, program or function.
3. Hazing, which includes causing or encouraging others to cause physical or mental discomfort or injury, embarrassment or ridicule of another for the purpose of initiation, admission, affiliation or as a condition of continued membership in a group or organization.
4. Unreasonable obstruction or disruption of teaching or other UIS activities.
5. Unauthorized possession or use of firearms, explosives, dangerous chemicals or other dangerous weapons on UIS property in contravention of federal, state, or local law or UIS regulations.
6. Trespass, intentional property damage, or theft.
7. Use, possession or distribution of alcoholic beverages by or to underage persons or controlled substances on UIS property in violation of federal, state, or local law or UIS regulation.
8. Intentionally entering false fire alarms or bomb threats; tampering with fire extinguishers, alarms or safety equipment; refusing to follow directions to evacuate a building as directed during any emergency condition.
9. Falsification, forgery, alteration or misuse of documents, records or identification or otherwise providing false or misleading information to a member or agent of UIS acting in the performance of his or her duty.
10. Unauthorized use of UIS’s name, finances, materials, facilities and supplies (including stationery bearing UIS’s letterhead.)
11. Interference or attempted interference with the administration of this Code, such as the initiation of a grievance or complaint knowing that the charge was false, intimidation or bribery of hearing participants, acceptance of bribes, dishonesty or disruption of proceedings and hearings.
12. Falsification of information provided for official university business
13. Acts in violation of Board of Trustees (BOT) and/or University and/or UIS policies, regulations or rules. These include, but are not limited to:
    1. Human Rights Policy
    2. Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy
    3. Alcoholic Beverages Policy
    4. Drug-Free Workplace Policy
    5. Student Housing Policy
    6. Student Employment Policy
    7. Parking Regulations
    8. Tobacco Free Campus Policy

## Disciplinary Process

It is the position of the MLS Program that students must demonstrate, through their actions, their professional fitness for laboratory practice. The Program Director reserves the right to request at any time, for just cause, the withdrawal of students whose attitude, conduct, health, attendance, scholastic record, or clinical experience makes it evident that they should not continue in the program.

Students who accept a position in the MLS Program agree to conduct themselves in accordance with UIS, MLS Program and clinical affiliate policies. Failure to comply with policies will result in disciplinary action. There are three types of formal disciplinary action which MLS Faculty can take, based on the nature and severity of the offense. Disciplinary action may begin at any of the following levels and progress to the next level for repeat offenses:

* verbal warning
* written warning
* dismissal from the program

Clinical sites have the right to refuse to continue hosting a student’s practicum course at any time due to violations of policy, unsafe behavior, or unprofessional conduct. Although the MLS Program urges affiliate sites to follow the MLS disciplinary process, they are not required to do so.

## Standards of Professional Conduct

An important aspect of professional development is the establishment of professional conduct that is considered necessary and appropriate for the efficient, competent, and quality performance of duties in the workplace. MLS students will be formally evaluated in each clinical rotation and informally evaluated in select on-campus MLS courses via the Standards of Professional Conduct form.

If an instructor, preceptor, or liaison has reservations about a student’s professional conduct, they will notify the MLS clinical practicum faculty member, who will schedule a discussion with the student as soon as possible; allowing opportunity for remediation and/or reflection-based improvement. If the problem is serious and/or persists, the student will be counseled by the Program Director and, perhaps, by UIS Student Services. Clinical affiliates have the contractual right to refuse to educate students who demonstrate behaviors including, but not limited to, those which are unsafe, disruptive, illegal, or jeopardize patient confidentiality. Successful completion of all required clinical practicum courses is required to graduate from the MLS Program.

The Standards of Professional Conduct form is based on the following objectives (adapted from S. Peterson, University of North Dakota, 2021):

1. Demonstrate time management skills by completing assigned tasks within scheduled timeframe
2. Follow oral and written directions
3. Demonstrate emotional stability to function effectively under stress, remain flexible, and adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and in unpredictable ways
4. Correlate principles to practice
5. Demonstrate neatness by making the work area and submitted documents presentable
6. Attend, be punctual, and be present for the duration of all scheduled program coursework
7. Maintain consistent, positive work behaviors including initiative, preparedness, dependability, persistence, and follow-through
8. Produce quality work with precision and accuracy in accordance with established protocol
9. Work independently and show self-direction, personal responsibility, and accountability
10. Project an image of professionalism through appearance, dress, hygiene, positive attitude, value of coursework and body language
11. Read, comprehend, initiate and respond to English communications (including person-to person, telephone, electronic, and written forms) in an effective, respectful, and time-sensitive manner
12. Demonstrate appropriate interpersonal behaviors while interacting with others during program-related occurrences, including but not limited to: courtesy and cooperation; receiving and responding to constructive feedback; respect and empathy; and non-threatening conduct
13. Develop organizational, prioritization, and multi-tasking skills throughout all program coursework
14. Abstain from use of illegal, prescription, over the counter, experimental, recreational, or other drugs that have a significant effect upon an individual’s judgment while completing program requirements
15. Comply with all institutional (University and clinical affiliate), department, program, course, and laboratory policies and procedures, including safety standards/policies
16. Demonstrate academic and professional integrity as outlined in departmental policies/procedures/standards
17. Demonstrate responsible and appropriate use of electronic resources and communication systems (including but not limited to: cell phones, computers, tablets, email, instant messaging, social media, blogs, and websites) that is not disruptive or harmful to oneself or others

## Leadership and Service Opportunities

The MLS Program prides itself on providing opportunities for students to be involved in extracurricular professional and university activities. These activities provide excellent opportunities for service and community engagement.

### MLS Club

UIS students can participate as members and elected officers of the MLS Club. The MLS Club allows for MLS majors and other interested students to meet for social, educational, service, and fund-raising activities. Elections are held at the beginning of each Fall semester to designate club officers and student representatives.

### MLS Student Representatives to Advisory Committee and Clinical Liaison Council

Two students from each MLS student cohort (i.e., juniors, seniors) represent the student perspective on both the MLS Advisory Committee and Clinical Liaison Council. During the first semester of the MLS Program, one junior cohort representative is elected by their fellow cohort members. The second junior cohort representative is appointed by MLS faculty. For the sake of consistency, elected and appointed cohort representatives are asked to serve for two years (i.e., the junior and senior years).

### Professional Organizations

Students are encouraged to obtain professional organization membership. The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) offers a [Developing Professional (i.e., student) membership option](https://ascls.org/join/). Developing Professional ASCLS members are eligible to run for ASCLS-IL student forum positions. Students are also encouraged to sign up for a [free student membership](https://www.ascp.org/content/membership/become-a-member) with the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP).

## Financial Assistance

### MLS Student Support Fund

Former MLS Program Director, Paula Garrott, created a fund to help students with expenses related to travel and other requirements during practicum course completion. Applications for support must be submitted to the Program Director. The amount of money awarded depends on the number of students who apply for funding and donor contributions to the fund. Travel support awarded for clinical practicums is loosely based on the distance each student must travel to their furthest rotation. Support funding should not be expected to cover the entire cost of expenses related to the practicums.

### Scholarships

UIS offers several institutional scholarships targeted toward MLS students and students pursuing health professions. The application deadline for scholarships administered by UIS is February 15.

* William and Mary Schnirring Scholarships are available for undergraduate students who have declared a Biology, MLS or other health or science major who have plans to enter a human healthcare profession. Dependent upon scholarship, students must be residents of Illinois or Sangamon County and must have attended an Illinois public high school. Academic performance and financial need may be considered for selection.
* Health Professions Scholarships are available for students enrolled in the MLS Program who are also Illinois residents. Academic performance and financial need may be considered for selection.
* Central Illinois Community Blood Center (CICBC) scholarships are available for full-time junior and senior students enrolled in the MLS Program. Financial need may be considered for selection.
* The Madeline Roy Memorial Scholarship is available for female MLS students who have earned a “B” average.

MLS students may also apply for external scholarship opportunities through professional societies and laboratory vendors.

* [ASCLS](https://www.ascls.org/about-us/awards-and-scholarships)
* [ASCP](https://www.ascp.org/content/about-ascp/ascp-foundation/providing-scholarships)

## ASCLS-IL Annual Meeting

MLS Seniors are expected to attend the ASCLS-Illinois Annual Meeting, typically held in April. Juniors are encouraged to attend. Provided that a student is a member of the MLS Club and participated in fundraising activities, MLS Club funds will cover most of the expenses associated with attendance (i.e., registration, student bowl, accommodations); although, Senior students will receive priority over Junior students. Students are responsible for covering any costs not covered by fundraising activities.

## Programmatic Awards

Each year, MLS faculty select students to honor with MLS awards to be presented at the College of Health, Science, and Technology (CHST) honor ceremony. Selections are based upon academic performance and service to the MLS cohorts, profession, and program. Public recognition of awards at the CHST honor ceremony is limited to two honorees and one student marshal. The MLS Program may choose not to bestow all awards in any given year.

### Medical Laboratory Science Marshal

The student marshal is chosen for excellence in the major and, designated by a gold stole, leads the MLS graduating class through the commencement ceremony. The marshal’s name is included in the official graduation program and is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the Health and Sciences Building (HSB) hallway outside the MLS student laboratory.

### Medical Laboratory Science Student of the Year

The student of the year is a graduating student who embodies the spirit of the MLS program and profession. The name of the student of the year is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the Health and Sciences Building (HSB) hallway outside the MLS student laboratory.

**Reflection Award**

The reflection award is bestowed upon an MLS student who demonstrates depth in reflections completed in MLS courses.

## Graduation

Prior to the beginning of the Senior Fall semester, students should carefully review their degree audit report and take action to resolve any discrepancies and/or register or plan for any missing required courses. During the Senior Spring semester,students are responsible for completing three crucial steps towards graduation: submit an online graduation application, submit an online form indicating their intent to participate in commencement, and purchase a cap and gown.

* The online graduation application deadline is typically in February. Follow the application instructions. Several emails are sent to notify students of the approaching deadline. Do not miss the application deadline. In the event that a student misses the graduation application deadline, graduation and degree conferment will be delayed.
  + If a minor or concentration has been officially declared by the student, it must be completed before the student will be eligible to graduate. If the student has declared a minor or concentration but does not intend to complete it, the student must drop the minor or concentration prior to submitting a graduation application.
  + Students must check their degree audit report to verify that all requirements of the MLS BS degree are completed or in progress. The advisor or Program Director must be notified immediately if any requirements, other than in-process courses, are missing from the degree audit report.
  + Any holds, financial or otherwise, must be resolved prior to submission of the graduation application. Holds will delay graduation.
* The deadline to submit the online intent to participate in commencement is, typically, in March. Do not miss the application deadline. In the event that a student misses the online intent to participate deadline, they will not be eligible to walk in the commencement ceremony.
* Students who will participate in the commencement ceremony must purchase or borrow a black cap and gown. Caps and gowns can be purchased during the UIS Graduate Salute. Dates and times of the Graduate Salute will be announced via email.

## Professional Certification

Graduates of the MLS Program are eligible to sit for the ASCP BOC MLS certification exam via Route 1. While granting of the bachelor's degree is not contingent upon passing an external certification examination or licensure exam, the MLS Program highly recommends certification in order to optimize employment opportunities and demonstrate professional solidarity. The MLS Program also highly recommends completion of the exam as soon as possible after graduation.

Students must apply for the exam, pay the examination fees, and arrange for transcripts to be sent to the BOC. Students should not apply for the exam until approximately six weeks prior to graduation. MLS Faculty will provide guidance as to the earliest appropriate application date. Students should apply via Route 1, enter the UIS school code (**012088),** and allow UIS to receive the exam score. The BOC will send application approval requests to the Program Director. After ensuring graduation eligibility, the Program Director will approve students for the exam which will allow scheduling of the exam within the appropriate three-month testing window.

In accordance with the certification maintenance program, the BOC requires continuing education (CE) in order to maintain MLS certification. All certified MLS must complete and submit 36 hours of CE every three years. Failure to adequately maintain certification may result in de-certification.

### Licensure

Illinois does not, currently, license laboratory personnel. However, some states do require licensure to practice. Most of these states recognize the ASCP BOC certification, but may require extended duration of practicum experiences, additional academic courses, etc. If a student intends to practice in another state, licensure requirements should be researched as early as possible to ensure opportunity to complete all requirements. Refer to the [UIS Federal Licensure Reporting website](https://www.uis.edu/federal-licensure-reporting) for more information on licensure states and whether the MLS Program curriculum meets the academic requirements for licensure by state.

## Request for Recommendation

A Request for Recommendation must be submitted to each faculty member from whom a student may request professional or academic recommendation. The form may be completed to confer permission for recommendation for all instances or for specific instances. The Request for Recommendation can be accessed on the MLS website.