



Policy #:	MLS-M-06
Effective date:	08/01/2023
Target group:	All students, faculty, and clinical partners
Section:	Medical Laboratory Science program
Last revision date:	08/01/2024

Medical Laboratory Science Clinical Rotations

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectation of the Medical Laboratory Science program, clinical partners, and students as related to external clinical rotation experiences.

Policy

All traditional Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science (see MLS-M-01 for definition) shall complete 16 weeks of clinical rotation experience at locations external to IU South Bend. Students enrolled in the MLT to MLS Degree Completion track (see MLS-M-02 for definition) have the option to have a supplemental clinical rotation experience. The clinical rotation experience will:

- occur during the last semester of coursework (unless otherwise planned),
- only occur at locations in which IU South Bend has a current affiliation agreement, and
- only occur at locations who have agreed to accept students for clinical rotations during the needed semester.

Clinical Rotation Structure

The 16-week clinical rotation is divided into four, four-week courses that are two credit hours each. These courses are sequential to each other, spanning the full 16 weeks of the semester.

- CLS-E 401 General Externship I (weeks 1-4)
- CLS-E 402 General Externship II (weeks 5-8)
- CLS-E 403 General Externship III (weeks 9-12)
- CLS-E 404 General Externship IV (weeks 13-16)

While all students will enroll in each course sequentially, the experience will vary for each student during each course, depending on the schedule determined by the clinical site and the site's activity menu. The four-part clinical rotation sequence is divided into the following sections, each of which will be the focus of one the four courses for every student.

- Chemistry – including clinical chemistry, immunology, molecular diagnostics, and flow cytometry, specimen collection and processing (if needed)
- Hematology – including hematology, hemostasis, urinalysis, and body fluid analysis
- Blood bank – including blood banking and transfusion medicine

- Microbiology – including bacteriology, mycobacteriology, mycology, and parasitology

MLT to MLS students will have a shortened version of clinical rotation sections, individually or combined, as determined by the student and Program Director.

- CLS-E 406 Supplemental Externship (2 weeks or 4 weeks)

Service Work

Service work is defined as performing the duties expected of an employee who is paid to perform those tasks as an unpaid student. Service work by students is **not required nor permitted** by the program. Students are present in the clinical laboratory to learn the operation of the clinical laboratory. While learning and upon demonstrating proficiency, students may perform clinical tests under the supervision of an instructor who is a certified medical laboratory scientist. As such, students work on actual patient samples but at no time are they expected to, nor allowed to, perform service work without pay.

Students may seek employment at the clinical site in the role of a phlebotomist, laboratory assistant, or other position. However, all work performed in this capacity should occur outside of the established Clinical Externship course schedule.

Expectations of Students

- All Medical Laboratory Science students will enroll in the four-course sequence during the last semester of the program, unless otherwise planned with the Program Director.
- Upon request, students will provide the MLS faculty with top choice clinical site(s) for rotations.
 - Students will understand that their top choice clinical site may not be their assigned location.
- Prior to attending clinical rotations, students will contact the clinical site (contact information provided by the faculty) to ensure they have all required documentation, know when and where to arrive, where to park, and are aware of uniform requirements.
- Prior to attending clinical rotations, students will review and acknowledge understanding of the requirements and expectations outlined in this policy. This acknowledgment will be an initial assignment in CLS-E401 General Externship I and documented in the Canvas course.
- Students will arrive on time at their clinical location (including preparing for weather and traffic challenges).
 - If the student is unable to arrive on time, they must contact the clinical site.
 - If the student is unable to attend clinical rotations, they must contact the clinical site and the MLS faculty assigned to the course.
- Students will adhere to the same laboratory attire and expectations as outlined in *MLS-M-05 Student Laboratory Safety and Expectations*.
- At the clinical site, students will adhere to all safety, policy, and procedural requirements as outlined by the clinical site.
- During clinical rotations, students are representatives of the IU South Bend Medical Laboratory Science program and shall communicate, interact, and present in a professional manner. In the

event that a student is not adhering to these requirements, they will be removed from the clinical site.

- If a student believes there is violation of the service work requirements outlined in this policy, they must notify the MLS Program Director and/or faculty immediately.

Expectations of the MLS Program

- During the semester prior to clinical rotations, the Program Director (or designated faculty) will communicate with the students to receive their top selections for clinical sites and communicate with the clinical sites to determine which will take students and how many.
 - In the event that there are more students seeking clinical rotations than clinical sites available, the Program Director (or designated faculty) will continue to communicate with clinical sites about adding full or partial rotations for students.
 - If this does not resolve the challenge, the Program Director will communicate with students to consider summer clinical rotations and/or supplement with in-house simulated rotations.
- Prior to the end of the semester before clinical rotations, the program will have all clinical sites confirmed with established schedules and communication made between the student and the clinical site liaison.
- The MLS program will assign a faculty member to each of the clinical rotation courses. This individual will act as the liaison between IU South Bend and the clinical site for the duration of the course.
- The faculty will communicate with the students and clinical sites during the course.
- If an on-site visit is needed, the faculty and/or Program Director will establish a day and time to visit, in agreement with the clinical site.
- The MLS program will notify clinical sites of any updates or changes to policy, practices, and/or clinical evaluations.

Expectations of the Clinical Sites

- The clinical sites will designate a clinical site liaison. In accordance with NAACLS requirements, this individual must be a medical laboratory professional with at least one year of experience in the profession.
- If the clinical liaison changes, the clinical site will notify the MLS Program Director and update the *Clinical Facility Fact Sheet*.
- The clinical site liaison will work with the MLS Program Director (or designated faculty) to establish students for clinical rotations and develop a schedule, prior to the end of the semester before clinical rotations.
- The clinical site liaison will coordinate clinical instruction at the site.
- The clinical site will adhere to the service work expectations as described in this policy.
- The clinical site liaison will maintain effective communication with the Program Director and/or faculty.
- If a student is non-compliant with the expectations of IU South Bend or the clinical site or an injury occurs, the clinical site liaison will notify the Program Director and/or faculty. Additional

discussion may include the completion of a *Notification of Opportunity for Improvement in Clinical Externships* form or an *Incident Report* form.

Related Documents

- MLS-M-01 Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science Student Application
- MLS-M-02 MLT to MLS Bridge Program Application
- MLS-M-05 Student Laboratory Safety and Expectations
- MLS-M-07 Medical Laboratory Science Program and Clinical Document Requirements
- MLS-M-08 Substance-free Learning Environment

Policy History

Date	Action
08/01/2023	Combination of DCHS level policies that were moved to program level
08/01/2024	Updated division name, policy numbers, and titles due to campus reorganization