

Volunteer State Community College

Medical Laboratory Technician

Student Manual



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## Introduction

Welcome to the Medical Laboratory Technology Program at Volunteer State Community College. The faculty and staff wish you success in the pursuit of your educational goals. We are glad to have you in the MLT Program! All students are treated with courtesy and respect. Your success is one of our highest priorities as a health sciences program. Therefore, we are here to assist you in gaining a quality education within the classroom, laboratory, and clinical activities.

The Volunteer State Community College Medical Laboratory Technology Student Manual has been compiled by the faculty to provide information pertinent to students enrolled in the Medical Laboratory Technology program. The purpose of this manual is to detail policies and procedures specific to this program. The manual is constructed to be used as a supplement to the Volunteer State Community College Student Handbook and serves to bridge the overriding policies of the College with the policies specific to this program. The policies and procedures set forth in this manual are designed to support the success of the student.

A copy of the Volunteer State Community College Student Handbook is available at each campus' administrative offices or can be downloaded from the Volunteer State Community College website at <https://www.volstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/StudentHandbook.pdf>.

## Accreditation

Volunteer State Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools <http://www.sacs.org/>. The Medical Laboratory Technology program of Volunteer State Community College is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS <http://www.naacls.org>), 5600 N. River Rd., Suite 720, Rosemont, Illinois 60018: (773) 714-8880. Accreditation by NAACLS assures students that they will be provided with a quality education in laboratory medicine. Upon successful completion of the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Medical Laboratory Technology the graduate is eligible to sit for the national certification exam. Graduation from the program is not contingent upon passing an external certification exam.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

Volunteer State Community College, an AA/EEO employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age (as applicable), status as a covered veteran, genetic information, and any other category protected by federal or state civil rights law. For more information, please refer to the College's [general non-discrimination policy](#).

## Medical Laboratory Profession

The health of all Americans depends upon the educated minds and trained hands of the medical laboratory professional. The practice of modern medicine at the exacting standards currently required would be impossible without the scientific testing performed daily in the medical laboratory. Maintenance of these standards and progress toward improvement in the quality of laboratory services depends on the dedicated efforts of professional practitioners of medical laboratory science. Medical laboratory professionals of the United States make a vital contribution to the quality of health care.

### Description of the Medical Laboratory Technology Profession

Medical Laboratory Technology (also known as Clinical or Medical Laboratory Science) is a profession which combines the challenges and rewards of both medicine and science. Medical Laboratory Technicians perform a wide range of laboratory tests. Tests include, but are not limited to microscopic examination of blood, identification of bacteria and viruses, typing blood to ensure safe transfusions, and measuring the chemical content of blood. This testing helps to monitor patient health, provides diagnostic evidence of diseases (such as AIDS, diabetes, or cancer), and also aids in patient recovery. Medical laboratory science is a dynamic, specialized profession that continually changes as new medical knowledge is acquired.

The Medical Laboratory Technician scope of practice includes, but is not limited to: collection of blood specimens; performing and interpreting tests on blood and body fluids in order to monitor health and to aid in the diagnosis of disease; integrating data generated by the various clinical laboratory departments while making judgments regarding possible discrepancies; operating the latest biomedical instruments; confirmation of abnormal results; verifying quality control results; developing solutions to problems that may occur during testing; and communication with the entire health care team to help ensure quality patient care. Medical Laboratory Technicians conduct work in a variety of disciplines including immunohematology/blood bank, hematology, clinical chemistry/toxicology, coagulation/hemostasis, molecular diagnostics, urinalysis, and clinical microbiology. Employment opportunities are available in hospital labs, physician office labs, point of care testing, reference laboratories, and clinical research.

Clinical laboratory professionals practice independently and collaboratively, being responsible for their own actions, as defined by the profession. They have the requisite knowledge and skills to educate laboratory professionals, other health care professionals, and others in laboratory practice as well as the public. Therefore, the ability to relate to people, a capacity for reasoned judgement, and a demonstration of commitment to the patient are essential qualities. Communication skills extend to consultative interactions with members of the healthcare team, external relations, customer service, and patient education. Laboratory professionals demonstrate ethical and moral attitudes and principles that are necessary for gaining and maintaining the confidence of patients, professional associates, and the community.

### ASCLS Code of Ethics

#### Preamble

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

## **I. Duty to the Patient**

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

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

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

## **II. Duty to Colleagues and the Profession**

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

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

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

## **III. Duty to Society**

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

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

## **Pledge to the Profession**

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

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



## Program Mission and Goals

The Medical Laboratory Technology Program is designed to prepare students to enter the work force as generalist Medical Laboratory Technicians (MLT). Students learn the theory and principles behind the tests they perform and learn to correlate the results with patient's conditions. Students also earn general education credits including science, math, humanities, and communications which lead to an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) Degree.

### Mission of the Program

It is the mission of the Medical Laboratory Technology Program to provide well trained, professional, knowledgeable, and competent Medical Laboratory Technicians to serve the healthcare community and public at large. The program is designed to prepare students to enter the work force as Medical Laboratory Technicians, knowledgeable and skilled in assisting physicians in the identification, monitoring, and treatment of diseases.

### Program Goals

1. The program will educate and train students to perform as knowledgeable and competent medical laboratory technicians.
2. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the ability to comprehend, apply, and evaluate clinical information relevant to their role as a Medical Laboratory Technician.
3. Graduates will be able to demonstrate entry-level technical competency in all skills necessary to fulfill their role as a Medical Laboratory Technician.
4. Graduates will demonstrate personal behaviors consistent with professional and employer expectations of a Medical Laboratory Technician.
5. Graduates will render both professional and personal services to the patient, physicians, coworkers, other laboratory professionals, and the community.
6. Graduates will possess the necessary knowledge to pass their certification exam which is available through the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Board of Certification or the American Medical Technologist, and meet the criteria for licensure established by the Tennessee Medical Laboratory Board.

## Program Details

### Admission Requirements

Admission to Volunteer State Community College does not automatically qualify a student for admission to the Medical Laboratory Technology program. The number of students admitted to each of the Health Sciences Career Education Programs is limited. There are usually more applicants than spaces available. Admission to each of the programs is based on several factors including successful completion of the admission requirements and interviews with an admissions committee of professionals in the appropriate field. The number of applicants admitted to each Health Sciences program is limited by several factors including: the number of spaces available for clinical training, the predicted number of positions available in the health care industry for graduates, and enrollment limitations imposed by accreditation agencies. In addition, the Medical Laboratory Program class size is governed by the Tennessee Medical Laboratory Board.

Students wishing to enter any Health Sciences Degree/Certificate program must have the following on file in the Office of Admissions and Records:

- Completion of high school or GED equivalent
- Application to the College. See <https://www.volstate.edu/admissions/apply>
- ACT or SAT scores if under 21 years of age
- All high school transcripts or HSE scores
- Transcripts from other colleges attended
- Appropriate Placement Test results (if applicable)
- Other requested documents, records, and tests.

For specific information regarding admission to the Medical Laboratory Program, please see the PROGRAM ADMISSION policy.

In addition to these College specific admission requirements, the Medical Laboratory Program requires that the student be able to pass a Drug Screen and a Criminal Background Check. Students must pass a background check and demonstrate immunity to Hepatitis B or show proof of receiving the first Hepatitis B vaccine or sign a waiver refusing the vaccine before starting clinical rotations. Further information can be found within the BACKGROUNDS INVESTIGATION AND DRUG SCREENS policy. The program also requires additional health documentation, such as proof of health insurance and vaccination status. Further information can be found within the DOCUMENTATION FOR THE PROGRAM policy.

### Location of the Program

All in-person MLT courses except the clinical rotations are taught on Volunteer State Community College's main campus in Gallatin, TN. The program director and clinical education coordinator have offices on the main campus in Gallatin. Clinical rotations take place in area hospitals or clinical facilities.

### Time Course of the Program

The Associate of Applied Science degree in Medical Laboratory Technology is a "one-plus-one" program of study. The first year the student is considered a Health Sciences AS major, and coursework consists of general education courses including MLAB 1301 Introduction to Medical Laboratory course (PLA substitution may be awarded). Students apply for admission to the Medical Laboratory Technology Program while in the semester in

which all general education course requirements will be met or after all general education courses requirements are met. The Medical Laboratory Program consists of either a full-time or part-time course of study.

**Full-Time Program** – The program begins in May each year and students graduate the following May. Students take an average of 12-13 credit hours each semester. It is highly recommended that student work no more than 20 hours per week while in the program. All program applications must be received by March 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

The MLT program application can be located at <https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/medlabtech/application>. Students must submit a minimum of three references forms by April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year they apply to the program. Professional and/or academic references are preferred. The reference forms can be found within the Medical Laboratory Program Information Packet, which can be found online at <https://www.volstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/healthsciences/MLTInformationPacket.pdf>

After admission into the program, students are considered to be MLT students and will begin the second year. The second year is a three-semester, full time program of study starting in May of each year. The summer and early fall semesters involve didactic courses and student laboratories. There may be more than one section of each lab course offered. Registrations for lab courses are first come first serve and registration will be honored.

The late fall and spring semesters are spent in clinical practicum rotations along with didactic courses. Clinical practicum rotations consist of 16-32 hours/week at area clinical laboratories. Students are involved in the educational training for a period of twelve months to meet requirements of the program and to fulfill requirements of the Associate of Applied Science Degree.

**Part-Time Program** - The program begins in January each year and students graduate the May of the following year. Students take an average of 9-10 credit hours each semester. It is highly recommended that student work no more than 30 hours per week while in the program. All program applications must be received by October 15<sup>th</sup> each year. The MLT program application can be located at <https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/medlabtech/application>. Students must submit a minimum of three references forms by November 1<sup>st</sup> of the year they apply to the program. Professional and/or academic references are preferred. The reference forms can be found within the Medical Laboratory Program Information Packet, which can be found online at <https://www.volstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/healthsciences/MLTInformationPacket.pdf>

After admission into the program, students are considered to be MLT students and will begin the second year. The second year is a four-semester, part-time program of study starting in January of each year. The spring and fall semesters involve clinical practicum rotations, didactic courses, and student labs. The summer semester only involves didactic courses and student labs. There may be more than one section of each lab course offered. Registrations for lab courses are first come first serve and registration will be honored.

Clinical rotations consist of 16-22 hours/week at area clinical laboratories. Students are involved in the educational training for a period of 17 months to meet requirements of the program and to fulfill requirements of the Associate of Applied Science Degree.

## Sample Schedule

Completion of or current enrollment in the following general education courses with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 in those courses and a C or higher in the individual course.

**Required General Education and Major Core Courses:**

FALL- 1st year	Course	Hrs
ENGL 1010-or higher	English Composition I	3
BIOL 2010	Human Anatomy & Physiology I (Lecture and Lab)	4
MATH 1010-or higher	College Algebra	3
PSYC 1030-or higher	General Psychology	3
Elective	*See college catalog for options	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

SPRING- 1st year	Course	Hrs
Fine Arts/Humanities	*See college catalog for options	3
BIOL 2020	Human Anatomy & Physiology II (Lecture and Lab)	4
Science Elective: <u>Choose one</u>	BIOL 2230-Microbiology (Lecture and Lab) CHEM 1030-Fundamentals of Chemistry (Lecture and Lab), or a higher-level Chemistry	4
MLAB 1301	Intro to Medical Laboratory (PLA substitution may be awarded)	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

**Courses after acceptance into the Full-Time MLT Program:**

SUMMER- 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2401	Clinical Chemistry	4
MLAB 2402	Hematology/Hemostasis	4
MLAB 2403	Clinical Microbiology	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

FALL- 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2201	Clinical Immunology	2
MLAB 2202	Urinalysis and Body Fluids	2
MLAB 2301	Immunohematology/ Blood Bank	3
MLAB 2130	Seminar I	1
MLAB 1510	Clinical Practicum I	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

SPRING- 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2270	Seminar II	2
MLAB 1520	Clinical Practicum II	5
MLAB 2510	Clinical Practicum III	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>Program Total</b>	<b>67</b>

### Courses after acceptance into the Part-Time MLT Program:

SPRING- 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2401	Clinical Practicum I	5
MLAB 2402	Hematology/Hemostasis	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

SUMMER- 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2401	Clinical Chemistry	4
MLAB 2403	Clinical Microbiology	4
MLAB 2130	Seminar I	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

FALL- 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2202	Urinalysis and Body Fluids	2
MLAB 2301	Immunohematology/ Blood Bank	3
MLAB 1510	Clinical Practicum II	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

SPRING- 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Course	Hrs
MLAB 2201	Clinical Immunology	2
MLAB 1510	Clinical Practicum I	5
MLAB 2270	Seminar II	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Program Total</b>	<b>67</b>

All course descriptions can be found on the college's online catalogue. <http://catalog.volstate.edu/> (All program courses have the prefix 'MLAB.')

### Entry Level Competencies

At career entry, the Medical Laboratory Technician will possess the entry level competencies necessary to perform routine clinical laboratory tests in areas such as clinical chemistry, hematology/hemostasis, immunohematology/transfusion medicine, clinical microbiology, urinalysis, body fluid analysis, laboratory operations, and other emerging diagnostics as a primary analyst making specimen-oriented decisions on predetermined criteria, including a working knowledge of critical values. Communication skills will extend to frequent interactions with members of the healthcare team, external relations, customer service and patient education. The level of analysis ranges from waived and point of care testing to complex testing encompassing all major areas of the clinical laboratory. The Medical Laboratory Technician will have responsibilities for information processing, training, and quality control monitoring wherever clinical laboratory testing is performed.

Upon graduation and initial employment, the medical laboratory technician should be able to demonstrate entry-level competencies (also known as pre-clinical competencies) in the areas of professional practice listed below:

1. Collecting and processing biological specimens for analysis;

2. Performing analytical tests on biological samples
3. Recognizing factors that affect procedures and results, and taking appropriate actions within predetermined limits when corrections are indicated;
4. Performing and monitoring quality control within predetermined limits;
5. Performing preventive and corrective maintenance of equipment and instruments or referring to appropriate source for repairs;
6. Applying principles of safety and governmental regulations compliance;
7. Demonstrating professional conduct and interpersonal communication skills with patients, laboratory personnel, other health care professionals, and with the public;
8. Recognizing the responsibilities of other laboratory and health care personnel and interacting with them with respect for their jobs and patient care;
9. Applying basic scientific principles in learning new techniques and procedures;
10. Relating laboratory findings to common disease processes;
11. Establishing and maintaining continuing education as a function of growth and maintenance of professional competence.

Reference:

- NAACLS Guide to Accreditation, National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), revised 6/2022.
- Standards for Accredited Programs, National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), revised 6/2022.

For more information regarding entry level competencies, please see the SKILLS AND COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT policy.

## Program Policies

Policy:

Academic Misconduct

Reviewed: June 7, 2024

Approved: Eileen Ricker

**Honesty, as the basic component of trust, is essential to both individual and institutional integrity.** Academic integrity is an essential component of professional behavior in Health Sciences programs. Since dishonesty harms the individual, fellow students, and the integrity of the program, policies on academic dishonesty must be strictly enforced. Any documented incident of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct will result in probation or dismissal from the program. If the dismissal is for academic dishonesty, the student will not be eligible for readmission into the program.

Academic work submitted by students shall be the result of their own thought, research or self-expression. For purposes of these regulations, academic work is defined as, but not limited to exams and quizzes, whether taken electronically or on paper; projects, either individual or group; papers; classroom presentations; and homework. When students borrow ideas, wording or organization from another source, they shall reference that information in an appropriate manner.

Definition: Actions constituting violations of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

- having a copy of the examination outside the time and place of test administration or test review
- lying about or misrepresenting care given, clinical errors, or any action related to clinical experience
- falsifying data in a patient health record or didactic classroom examination
- using unauthorized notes or other study aids during an examination
- using unauthorized technology during an examination; only approved calculators may be used; no cell phones, calculators that retain formulas, or PDS's for calculation
- improper storage of prohibited notes, course materials and study aids during an exam such that they are accessible or possible to view
- looking at other students' work during an exam or on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed
- attempting to communicate with other students to get/give help during an exam or on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed (i.e. competency check offs)
- obtaining an examination prior to its administration
- unauthorized entry (hacking) into test banks or examinations
- altering graded work and submitting it for re-grading
- allowing another person to do one's work and submitting it as one's own
- submitting work done in one class for credit in another without the instructor's permission
- recording, taping, or taking pictures without consent from instructor

**Cheating:** Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or test/examination. Examples include but are not limited to copying another's work; obtaining or giving unauthorized assistance; unauthorized collaboration or collusion with another person; having another person take a test for a student; and the use of unauthorized materials or devices. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.

**Plagiarism:** The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper attribution. Examples include but are not limited to copying of passages from works of others into one's own work without acknowledgment; summarizing or paraphrasing ideas from another source without proper attribution, unless such information is recognized as common knowledge; and using facts, statistics graphs, representations, or phrases without proper attribution.

**Fabrication:** Falsifying, fabricating, or misrepresenting data, research results, citations, or other information in connection with an academic assignment. Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Additional information, including appeals procedures, is outlined in Volunteer State's student handbook, pages 37, and 40-49 (<http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook>).



Policy:

## Additional Program Costs

Reviewed: June 7, 2024

Approved: Eileen Ricker

Students are responsible for all additional cost. These costs include but may not be limited to the following:

- Students admitted into the Medical Laboratory Program are required to wear professional clothing or scrubs for all the clinical courses, so they must purchase sufficient numbers of these uniforms.
- Textbooks may be purchased at the VSCC Bookstore. Students are not limited to where they purchase textbooks.
- A background check must be completed and passed before clinical practicum rotation begin.
- A Drug Screen must be completed and passed before attending clinical practicum rotations.
- Immunizations must be current, and the student's general good health must be documented.
- Appropriate insurance (health and professional liability) must also be purchased. If health insurance is obtained through the Affordable Care Act, **pay attention to enrollment deadlines (often in February)**.

Estimated program costs are subject to change:

<b>1. VSCC Application Fee</b>		free
<b>2. Books (estimated)</b>	Summer semester	\$600.00
	Fall semester	\$400.00
	Spring semester	\$300.00
<b>3. Clinical costs (estimated)</b>		
	Physical examination	possibly no cost
	Disease screening (titers)	\$ 80.00
	Hepatitis B immunization/ titer	\$250.00
	Measles, Mumps, Rubella Vaccination	\$ 70.00
	Chicken pox Vaccination	\$125.00
	Tuberculosis (TB) QuantiFERON	\$100.00
	Color blindness test	possibly no cost
	Malpractice Liability Insurance	\$ 13.00
	Health Insurance	TBD by provider
	BLS Certification	\$60.00
	Lab Coat	No cost
	Background check	\$ 46.50
	TN State Training License	No cost
	Drug screen	\$31.00
	Professional dress/scrubs	\$200.00
<b>4. Professional Fees</b>	National Board Certification exam (only one of the following is required):	
	ASCP	\$225.00
	AMT	\$220.00
	State Professional License (optional)	\$120.00
	State Background check (optional)	\$ 45.00

Due to the structure of this program, regular and prompt participation in classroom, laboratory, and clinical courses is required. Participation is also a professional issue. Employers look at class participation as an indication of job participation, thereby affecting employment decisions. Habitual absenteeism and tardiness will result in lowering of the overall course grade and may be a cause for probation and dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to always come to class (lectures, if applicable, student labs, and clinical practicums) and be prepared for the lesson or assignment. This includes bringing the correct textbook, paperwork for the laboratory, submission of any assignments which are due, materials for note taking, calculators and supplies to be used in lab or clinical practicum. A student may be dismissed from class or clinical practicum if not prepared. Routine medical or dental appointments, well child check-ups, vacations etc., should be scheduled outside of course time.

**Class Participation**—Students are required to participate in every meeting of the Medical Laboratory Technology courses for which he/she is registered. Students are expected to be on time for class. Students are required to notify the instructor of absence due to illness or emergency. Additional assignments may be given for absences. **It is the student's responsibility to meet with the instructor to schedule make up activities. It is up to the discretion of the instructor to determine whether make up activities will be offered for the absence.**

**Laboratory Participation** - Laboratory schedules require a “building block” approach in which skills learned in one lab are utilized as the “building block” of another. The skills learned in student laboratory are essential for entry into the clinical practicum rotations in a clinical laboratory to develop competency. Absences from student laboratory sessions are not able to be made up. Alternate activities may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Clinical Participation**—Students are required to attend clinical practicum rotations each semester for which they are assigned for all the hours scheduled. Clinical participation must be recorded and tracked utilizing the Trajecsys or a similar system.

- Each missed clinical practicum must be made up before the beginning of the subsequent semester.
- **ON TIME** participation is required at all scheduled clinical practicums.
- If a student chooses to use their mobile device to “clock in/clock out”, they **MUST** utilize location services.
- Proper record keeping and time keeping is a professional issue. Failure to consistently “clock in/out” will be evaluated by the clinical coordinator and could result in a lowering of clinical grades.
- If an error has been made with timekeeping, it is the student's responsibility to fill out a corrected time exception and have it approved by the clinical coordinator.
- Any absence must be **reported by phone** to the **clinical site** prior to the beginning of the scheduled clinical session **and** to the clinical coordinator by 9:00 am on the day that is missed.
- Excessive absenteeism, which is 3 or more absences during the semester, may result in a lowering of the final clinical rotation grade and may result in probation or dismissal from the program.

**Class Cancellation** – When classes on the Vol State Campus are cancelled due to inclement weather, clinical education courses are also canceled, and hours do not need to be made up. Information on closings will be available on all local television and radio broadcasts and Vol State’s homepage ([www.volstate.edu](http://www.volstate.edu)), Vol State’s Facebook page and on the recorded message by dialing 615-452-8600. As a courtesy to clinical sites who may not have access to Vol State’s response to inclement weather, students must call their clinical site to inform them that clinical rotation hours are canceled for that date due to inclement weather. Students should follow up with the inclement weather policy of the class/laboratory/clinical according to the policies set forth in the course syllabus.

Policy:

## Background Investigation and Drug Screens

Reviewed: June 7, 2024

Approved: Eileen Ricker

The purpose of student criminal background investigation and drug screens is to assure patient safety and protection by requiring that students meet the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization's standards. In the MLT program, **ineligibility for clinical rotations through a failed background check or drug screen may result in dismissal from the program. You may be required to pass more than one drug screen during the program.**

**Background Investigation:** Each student, at his/her expense, will be responsible for acquiring the background check report and authorizing the submission of the results to the College by the due date. Students are required to utilize the True Screen company for both background checks and drug screens. The background check **MUST** include the following:

1. Name and Social Security number verification
2. Seven-year, multi-county or statewide felony and related misdemeanor criminal record search
  - a. Violent Sexual Offender and Predator Registry Search
  - b. Tennessee Abuse Registry maintained by TN Department of Health pursuant to T.C.A. Section 68-11-1004
3. Employment verification, if applicable
4. HHS/OIG list of excluded individuals/entities
  - a. GSA list of parties excluded from federal programs
  - b. US Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)
  - c. List of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN)
5. Education verification
6. Healthcare licensure/certification verification, if applicable

The results of your background check will be sent by the outside agency to both you and the College. The College will receive only a pass/fail notification. The student will receive the full report. Students receiving a satisfactory report from the agency and having fulfilled all other Program pre-requisites will be eligible to participate in any clinical requirements of the Program. Additional information on the requirements & expectations for the agency performing the background check is available upon request.

Ineligibility for clinical rotations through failure to acquire the background check report by the due date or a failed background check may result in dismissal from the program. Reasons for clinical experience ineligibility and subsequent dismissal from the program include:

1. Students/faculty with a history of any **felony conviction within the last seven** years who are not eligible for clinical placement in the hospital.
2. Students/faculty with a **misdemeanor conviction related to physical violence, abuse or assault who** are not eligible for clinical placement in the hospital.
3. Students/faculty with **other misdemeanor convictions are subject to a case-by-case review** by the hospital as to acceptance for clinical placement.
4. Failure to acquire the background check by the due date.

## Student Background Investigation Instructions

A background investigation and drug screen are requirements of your program of study. Failure to complete these requirements will prevent you from participating in clinical rotations, and thus may lead to dismissal from the program.

Below are step-by-step instructions for accessing Application Station: Student Edition to authorize and pay for a background investigation.

1. Click the link below or paste it into your browser: <http://applicationstation.truescreen.com>
2. Enter the Code: **VSCCMLT** in the Application Station Code field.
3. Click the "SIGN UP" button to create an account.
4. Follow the instructions on the Application Station web site.

Note – please store the username and password created for Application Station in a secure location. This information is needed to enter Application Station in the future which includes obtaining a copy of your background investigation report.

If you encounter issues with the Application Station: Student Edition or have questions regarding the site, please contact Truescreen's Help Desk at 888-276-8518, ext. 2006 or [itsupport@truescreen.com](mailto:itsupport@truescreen.com).

Background Investigations are completed, on average, within 3 to 5 business days. Once completed, you will receive an email from Truescreen, [studentedition@truescreen.com](mailto:studentedition@truescreen.com). Follow the link in the email to access Application Station: Student Edition to view the report. To access the site, use the same username and password created at the time you submitted your background check. Application Station includes instructions for disputing information included in the background check should you feel anything is incorrect.

The initial background investigation consists of the search components listed below. All records are searched by primary name and all AKAs, a student's primary address, and all addresses lived within the past seven years.

- Social Security Number Validation and Verification
- County Criminal Records Search – all counties of residence lived in the past 7 years
- National Criminal Database Search
- National Sexual Offender Registry Search
- Sanctions Base Search (includes TN Abuse Registry)
- OIG/SAM
- Employment Verification – Contact most recent employer in past 7 years

The cost of the Background Investigation is \$46.50. Truescreen accepts credit cards and PayPal. Payment is collected within Application Station: Student Edition.

### Drug Screen

Each student, at his/her expense, will be responsible for acquiring a drug screen and authorizing the submission of the results to the College.

- The drug screen must be completed no more than 30 days before the beginning of clinical rotations.

Below are step-by-step instructions for accessing Application Station: Student Edition to authorize and pay for a drug screen.

1. Click the link below or paste it into your browser: <http://applicationstation.truescreen.com>
2. Enter the Code: **VSCMLT015-DRUG** in the Application Station Code field.
3. Click the "SIGN UP NOW" button to create an account.
4. Follow the instructions on the Application Station web site.

Note –Please store the username and password created for Application Station in a secure location. This information is needed to enter Application Station in the future which includes obtaining a copy of your drug screen report.

If you encounter issues with the Application Station: Student Edition or have questions regarding the site, please contact Truescreen’s Help Desk at 888-276-8518, ext. 2006 or [itsupport@truescreen.com](mailto:itsupport@truescreen.com).

*If none of the collection sites listed are convenient (within 30-minute drive), please contact True Screen’s Occupational Health Screening Department (i.e. TriTrack and Scheduling Hotline) for assistance with locating an alternate location; phone number 800-803-7859.*

If the initial drug screen is reported as positive/non-negative, you will receive a call from True Screen’s Medical Review Officer (MRO). The MRO will obtain medical proof as to why you test positive. If you are taking any form of prescription medicine, it is wise to proactively proof from your physician to be provided to the MRO when contacted. This will speed up the process of reporting drug test results.

All drug screens conducted for Volunteer State Community College are 12-panel and tests for:

- Amphetamines
- Barbiturates
- Benzodiazepines
- Cannabinoids
- Cocaine
- Fentanyl
- Heroin
- MDMA
- Meperidine
- Methadone
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine
- Propoxyphene

You will receive an email from True Screen, [studentedition@truescreen.com](mailto:studentedition@truescreen.com), once drug test results are available. Follow the link in the email to access Application Station: Student Edition to view the report.

The cost of the Drug Screen is approximately \$40.00. Truescreen accepts credit cards and PayPal. Payment is collected within Application Station: Student Edition.

The Medical Laboratory Technology Program requires that the student participate in clinical patient care experiences. Clinical course work allows students to apply the knowledge and skills obtained in the didactic component of the curriculum to real life experience in a clinical laboratory. The clinical courses are to provide students with clinical experience in area hospitals and clinic laboratories. Students may also be provided with real or computer simulated learning activities.

Training students is a very time-consuming endeavor due to the nature of the training required at the bench. Training students slows down the work process in the department during the days that a student is onsite. Students should consider clinical training experiences to be a privilege not a right. Local hospitals, laboratories, and clinics extend the privilege of gaining clinical experience in their setting. Students are to behave according to the professional and affective domain standards of the VSCC MLT program during their clinical rotations. Students will be held to the highest level of work ethics. Excellent participation, reviewing of lecture notes, laboratory procedures, textbooks and attentiveness to instruction provided are high among the expectations.

All student rotations are designed such that students attain entry-level competency in specific laboratory skills. The ultimate goal of each rotation is that the student is able perform entry-level work at the bench with minimum supervision in most areas, regardless of the time or location of the rotation. The Program limits the number of students it accepts so that all students starting the second year will be guaranteed a clinical assignment.

- Personal relationships with clinical personnel are strictly forbidden.
- Students may request their preferred clinical site. A reasonable effort is made to honor all requests. A request in no way guarantees assignment to any particular rotation site. The Medical Laboratory program reserves the right to assign students to clinical sites where there is available space for clinical experience.
- Proposed clinical rotation schedules are sent to the sites during the summer semester, prior to the beginning of clinical rotations. Clinical sites reply to the proposed schedules by indicating the availability of clinical rotation assignments for the upcoming school year.
- Policies and guidelines for each facility must be followed by the student. If policies are not followed, the student may be removed from the clinical site.
- Any work or conduct at the clinical site that is detrimental to the patient will constitute removal from the clinical course and possible dismissal from the program.
- Removal from a clinical site due to student misconduct or failure to follow the facility policies and guidelines can result in program dismissal.
- Clinical sites may be two hours of travel time from the college.
- Students are responsible for transportation to and from clinical sites. Any parking or transportation fees are the responsibility of the student.
- The Clinical Coordinator will visit each clinical site and will complete a Clinical Coordinator Evaluation form for each student.
- Each clinical site will advise the student as to the starting time each day.
- Students must sign in and out daily with the Trajecsys or similar system. Recorded participation must be approved by the clinical instructor.

Current clinical sites include:

Centennial Medical Center  
Greenview Regional Hospital  
Livingston Regional Hospital  
Northcrest Medical Center  
St. Thomas Hospital Midtown  
St. Thomas Hospital West  
Southern Hills Medical Center  
Summit Medical Center  
Vanderbilt Wilson County Hospital  
Vanderbilt Bedford County Hospital  
Tennessee State Laboratory  
Laboratory Mgmt Services, LLC.

Cookeville Regional Medical Center  
Hendersonville Medical Center  
Macon Community Hospital  
Pathgroup Laboratories  
St. Thomas Hospital Rutherford  
Skyline Medical Center  
Stonecrest Medical Center  
Sumner Regional Medical Center  
Horizon Medical Center  
Graves Gilbert Clinic  
Med Center Health-BG, Franklin, Scottsville

Clinical instructors will evaluate students on their performance, attitude, interest, patient care delivery, knowledge of the skills performed, and participation. Clinical instructors will have specific evaluation sheets for each course and student, and this data will become part of the final clinical rotation grade for the term.

Students will be provided material to create study documents for each clinical department rotation. Rotation exams will be available on-line through eLearn. All exams must be completed before the end of the department rotation and before beginning in the next department rotation. **Students must earn a passing grade of 75% for each clinical practicum and a “B” on each evaluation in order to progress to their next rotation.** Failure to maintain this academic standard may result in the student being placed on probation or in dismissal from the program.

During clinical rotations, students are not to be substitutes for licensed medical laboratory personnel. Students will have adequate supervision to perform laboratory procedures. Please see the Service Work policy for further information.



The Medical Laboratory Technology Program follows institutional disciplinary guidelines. Disciplinary measures shall be imposed for conduct which adversely affects the institutions and programs pursuit of educational objectives. Offenses and sanctions are outlined in the Student Handbook. (See VSCC Policy III: 00:05, <http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook/> or <http://www.volstate.edu/Policies/>)

The goal of the disciplinary guidelines of the Medical Laboratory program is remediation and restoration. It is important for both the student and program official to recognize that correction is meant for the betterment of the student and/or the profession. An action plan including needed remediation will be created and followed to correct the deficiency. If the action plan does not result in correction, program probation follows.

Faculty is committed to assisting student success in the program. To afford students due process and an opportunity for remediation, Health Science students who are not meeting courses objectives in class, clinical/practicum or lab will be apprised of their performance status using the following recommended steps. The progression of these steps is not required. A student's academic or disciplinary misconduct, or performance can be addressed beginning with probation or dismissal if warranted.

### Step One: Warning

The instructor provides the student with a verbal warning or written feedback as to their status. The instructor counsels the student regarding criteria for successful completion of the course and makes recommendations for improvement. Recommendations may include but are not limited to - utilization of peer study groups, tutors, computer-assisted instruction, seeking assistance of the Health Sciences Faculty or a clinical counselor. At the discretion of the instructor and depending on the situation, this step may be bypassed, and a conference initiated. If the situation warrants probation or dismissal, the instructor will consult with the program director to determine the appropriate disciplinary measure.

### Step Two: Probation

The program sets forth academic and behavioral standards for students. These standards are aimed at ensuring the academic and professional success of program graduates. When standards are not met, students are given a chance to correct themselves through the implementation of an action plan. If correction does not occur, a student may be dismissed by the program. In rare instances, some offenses are so grievous that correction is not attempted.

A student may be placed on probation for any violation of the policies, standards, or provisions outlined in this handbook, the College's Student Handbook/Code of Conduct, or the policies of a clinical affiliate. Probation is a specified time frame in which the student must improve or will be dismissed from the program.

Once the determination is made to place a student on probation, the student will meet with the instructor and program director. Probation requires a written document stating the standard being considered, the student's offense in relation to the standard, a plan for corrective action, a timeline for the student to meet the standard, the consequence if the student does not meet the standard by the stated deadline, and the signature of both the student and program director with the date. The student is given the opportunity to comment on their probation.

## Step Three: Dismissal from the Program

If at any time during the probation period, the student fails to meet any of the conditions of the probation contract, the student may be dismissed from the program. Accordingly, if at the end of the probation period the student has not met the criteria for satisfactory performance outlined in the probation contract, the student may be dismissed from the program.

A student who is placed on probation for unsafe clinical practices or behavior that violates the standards of the profession will be dismissed from the program for subsequent safety or professional conduct violations at any time during the program, even if the probationary period was completed successfully.

Before a student can be dismissed from the program under this provision, a meeting must be held with the student to inform them verbally and in writing, of the reasons for the dismissal, and to provide them an opportunity to respond, either verbally or in writing. If probation results in dismissal, dismissal from the program is not the same as dismissal from the College, and the student may later petition for readmission into the program. Reapplication does not guarantee acceptance. Admission will be based on individual circumstances.

## Reasons for Immediate Probation or Dismissal

Some situations may require an immediate response without recourse to the progressive steps set forth above. In response to severe or extremely dangerous behavior, or additional adverse behavior that occurs while the student is awaiting resolution of previous incident(s), the student may be immediately placed on probation or dismissed from the program. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- Unsatisfactory clinical performance.
- Unsatisfactory clinical participation and punctuality.
- Inability to maintain the ability to perform the technical standards and essential functions of the program.
- Unethical, unprofessional behavior, and/or unsafe clinical practice.
- Refusal to participate with a procedure.
- Unsafe or unprofessional clinical practice that compromises patient or staff safety.
- Behavior which compromises clinical affiliations.
- HIPAA violation that cannot be remediated with additional training or guidance.
- Violation of the social media and Electronic Device Policy that is egregious, substantially disrupts the educational or clinical environment, or is harmful to a patient's safety.
- Violations of patient confidentiality.
- Academic dishonesty or misconduct.
- Falsification of documentation.
- Dishonesty or unethical behavior towards a college official.
- Unprofessional behavior/unsafe behavior that seriously jeopardizes patient, student, staff, or preceptor safety.
- Unprofessional behavior that seriously jeopardizes clinical affiliations.
- Violation of the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Failure to report changes to criminal history after the admissions background check is completed. (Please see criminal background section.) Any off-campus conduct that results in criminal charges that are not aligned with the clinical agencies standards, or the professional and ethical standards of the College or Health Sciences programs may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

## Appeal Process

Students have the right to appeal decisions and/or policies implemented by the College. The appeal should be filed with the office, department or division that implemented the policy or caused the need for an appeal action to be considered. Unless otherwise instructed, an appeal should be submitted in writing to the appropriate office for review. For additional information regarding appeals and or grievances refer the VSCC Student Handbook (<http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook>) section *Statement on Grievances*, page 10, *Complaints Not Resolved at Volunteer State Community College*, page 11, and *Student Conduct and discipline Policy Statement*, pages 31-33. Be aware that there is a limited amount of time to appeal a decision. Refer to the section on *Disciplinary Procedures* for details on due process, pages 44 – 49 for more details.

As mandated by the clinical affiliates, all MLT students are required to meet all the health compliance requirements in order to attend and participate in clinical education courses. This includes but is not limited to, immunizations, titers, basic life support certification (adult and infant), tuberculous screenings, criminal background checks, drug screenings, and any of other site-specific requirements. Students cannot attend clinical education courses until all health compliance requirements have been met, documented, and approved by the Clinical Coordinator.

During the course of the program several health compliance requirements may expire. It is the student's responsibility to maintain compliance with all requirements for the entire duration of the program. Failure to maintain compliance may result in the student not being allowed to attend clinical courses.

Once a student has been accepted into the Medical Laboratory Technician Program, the student **must** complete the following forms and submit them via TrueScreen prior to the first day of class (unless otherwise indicated) in order to participate in the program:

1. Copy of health insurance card. (Be mindful of the enrollment deadline for health insurance available through the Affordable Care Act.)
2. Professional Liability Insurance (required PRIOR to clinical rotations).
3. Signed copy of the signature page of the Student Manual.
4. Emergency contact form
5. FERPA Waiver for clinical affiliates
6. State-issued Trainee permit (coordinated through the program)
7. BLS certification (coordinated through the program)
8. VSCC Division of Health Sciences Medical Health Form which includes:
  - a. Separate verifications of immunizations and immunity (MMR, Hepatitis B, Varicella, TDAP)
  - b. Documentation of a routine physical examination/good health
  - c. Hepatitis B Form. Unless waiving immunization, the first immunization in the series must be done **PRIOR** to beginning the program.
  - d. TB QuantiFERON Gold test (Date of this annual test must extend through the completion of clinical rotations.)
  - e. Color-blindness test (coordinated through the program) \*
  - f. Flu shot (Immunization required prior to clinical rotations.)

\*If the student has an abnormal color-blindness test, they are assessed to determine if they are able to successfully complete the program. The student will be dismissed from the program if it is determined through the assessment that they are not able to successfully complete the program. The student will be made aware that color-blindness testing is a requirement for some clinical laboratories and may affect employment.

Electronic devices include CELLULAR PHONES, PAGERS, iPad, LAPTOPS, etc.

- Cell phones and pagers **should be turned off or set to vibrate** in the classroom or in clinicals unless they are being used for educational purposes under the direction of an instructor.
- Text messaging, for reasons unrelated to a course, is not permitted during class time or student lab time.
- During clinical practicums, cell phones can only be used during scheduled breaks. During rotations, phones should be left in lockers and clean areas at all times.
- Calculators on phones may be used in the classroom at the discretion of the instructor.
- No items used in a dirty, biohazardous area (i.e. the student lab or clinical lab) shall be used in a clean area (i.e. outside the student lab or the clinical lab) unless they are decontaminated before being brought into a clean area.
- No ear buds are allowed in student lab or clinical rotations.
- Recording of lectures are allowed with the permission of the instructor.
- Images captured on an electronic device must be free of protected patient identifier information.

### Social Media

All postings to social media platforms must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)/Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH), applicable facility policy, and state law. Any social media posting or comment to any online forum or webpage that violate HIPAA guidelines and jeopardize a patient's privacy or safety may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Do not share, post, or otherwise disseminate **any** information, including images, about a patient or information gained as a result of your presence in a clinical/practicum setting or as a result of a student/patient/client relationship.

- Do not identify patients/clients by name or post or publish information that may lead to the identification of a patient/client (examples include but not limited to date of care, facility name, diagnosis, and treatment/surgery). Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.
- Do not take photos or videos of patients, families, personnel or clinical facility areas on personal devices, including cell phones.
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients/clients or former patients/clients blurs the distinction between a professional and personal relationship. You should not have any online contact with a current patient/client outside the communication methods allowed within the clinic/program.
- Personal phone conversations or texting are NOT allowed at any time while in patient/client areas or in the classroom. If the student needs to respond to an emergency text or call during class, the student is asked to leave the classroom.
- A first-time violation of this policy that can be remediated with additional training and guidance will result in placement on probation.
- Any social media comments or postings to any online forum or webpage that substantially disrupt the program, violate professional conduct standards, or indicate a potential danger or threat to a student, patient, or staff member, may result in immediate dismissal.

Policy:  
Reviewed: June 9, 2024

Equal Opportunity  
Approved: Eileen Ricker

Policies for admission, promotion and graduation shall be implemented without discrimination or bias.

Volunteer State Community College is an equal opportunity affirmative action educational institution.

- No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the College because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or handicap.
- **Due to the nature of the MLT profession, the ability to distinguish colors shall be assessed before admission into the program.** The MLT profession requires the ability to distinguish between certain colors, and students without that ability will require further assessment and may be encouraged to pursue a different profession.

### Students with Disabilities

Students who have learning, psychological, physical and/or other disabilities may be eligible for accommodations that provide equal access to educational program and activities. It is the student's responsibility to self-identify with the VSCC Access Center to receive accommodations and services in accordance with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADA/AA). Students who provide appropriate documentation and who are registered in the Access Center will receive appropriate accommodations. For further information, please contact Access Center staff at (615) 230-3472, or visit the office which is located in the Ramer Administration Building, room 143.

Essential Functions, as dictated by leading professional organizations in the field of laboratory science, represent the non-academic requirements of the program that **all students must master** to successfully participate in the program and become employable. **Before beginning the MLT program**, all students are expected to have the following abilities upon which the program can build:

**Observational** - Ability to participate actively in all demonstrations, laboratory activities and clinical experiences in the professional program component. Such observation and information require functional use of visual, auditory and somatic sensations.

- a) Observe laboratory demonstrations in which biological (i.e., body fluids, culture materials, and cellular specimens) are tested for their biochemical, hematological, and immunological components.
- b) Characterize the color, odor, clarity, and viscosity of biological, reagents, or chemical reaction products.
- c) Employ a clinical grade binocular microscope to discriminate among fine structural and color (hue, shading, and intensity) differences of microscopic specimens.
- d) Read and comprehend text, numbers, and graphs displayed in print and on a video monitor.

**Movement** - Sufficient motor ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective performance of duties.

- a) Move freely and safely about a laboratory.
- b) Reach laboratory bench tops and shelves, patients lying in hospital beds or patients seated in specimen collection furniture.
- c) Travel to numerous clinical laboratory sites for practical experience.
- d) Perform moderately taxing continuous physical work, often requiring prolonged sitting or standing, over several hours.
- e) Maneuver phlebotomy and specimen acquisition equipment to safely collect valid laboratory samples.
- f) Possess finger and manual dexterity necessary to control laboratory equipment (i.e. pipettes, inoculating loops, test tubes) and adjust instruments to perform laboratory procedures.
- g) Use a computer keyboard to operate laboratory instruments and to calculate, record, evaluate, and transmit laboratory information.

**Communication** - Ability to communicate effectively in English using verbal, non-verbal and written formats with faculty, other students, clients, families and all members of the healthcare team.

- a) Read and comprehend technical and professional materials (i.e. textbooks, magazine and journal articles, handbooks, and instruction manuals).
- b) Follow verbal and written instructions in order to correctly, efficiently, and independently perform laboratory test procedures.
- c) Clearly instruct patients prior to specimen collection.
- d) Effectively, confidentially, and sensitively converse with patients regarding laboratory tests.
- e) Communicate with faculty members, fellow students, staff, and other health care professionals verbally and in a recorded format (writing, typing, graphics, or telecommunication).
- f) Transmit information to clients, fellow students, faculty and staff, and members of the healthcare team.
- g) Independently prepare papers, prepare laboratory reports, and take paper, computer, and laboratory practical examinations.

**Intellectual** - Ability to collect, interpret and integrate information and make decisions.

- a) Possess intellectual skills: comprehension, measurement, mathematical calculation, reasoning, integration, analysis, comparison, self-expression, and criticism.

- b) Be able to exercise sufficient judgment to recognize and correct performance deviations.
- c) Apply knowledge to new situations and to problem solving scenarios.

**Behavioral** - Possess the emotional health and stability required for full utilization of the student's intellectual abilities, the exercise of professional judgment, and the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities. Possess the emotional health and stability to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with faculty, fellow students, clinical instructors, patients, and other members of the health care team.

- a) Manage heavy academic schedules and deadlines.
- b) Be able to manage the use of time and be able to systemize actions in order to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic constraints.
- c) Possess the emotional health necessary to effectively employ intellect and exercise appropriate judgment under conditions of physical and emotional stress.
- d) Be able to provide professional and technical services while experiencing the stresses of task-related uncertainty (i.e. ambiguous test ordering, ambivalent test interpretation), emergent demands (i.e. "stat test orders), and a distracting environment (i.e. high noise levels, crowding, complex visual stimuli).
- e) Be flexible and creative, as well as, adapt to professional and technical change.
- f) Recognize potentially hazardous materials, equipment, and situations and proceed safely in order to minimize risk of injury to patients, self, and nearby individuals.
- g) Adapt to working with unpleasant biologicals.
- h) Support and promote the activities of fellow students and of health care professionals. Promotion of peers helps furnish a team approach to learning, task completion, problem solving, and patient care.
- i) Be honest, compassionate, ethical and responsible. Accept responsibility and accountability for one's own actions. 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 performance (i.e. participate in enriched educational activities). The student must be able to evaluate the performance of fellow students and tactfully offer constructive comments.
- j) Works within environments of cultural diversity: Works well with a variety of ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds.

Adapted from: Fritsma, G.A., Fiorella B. J., and Murphey, M. Essential Requirements for Clinical Laboratory Science.

CLS 1996. Vol. 9, pp 40-43



Each instructor will inform students of the grading procedures and expectations for the Medical Laboratory Technology courses they are teaching. The policies will be contained in the course syllabuses.

**This program is skill and knowledge based, performance is crucial to evaluation and grading.** Students will be evaluated on a regular basis with written exams and quizzes, oral quizzes, and skill evaluations when appropriate.

A uniform grading policy, as indicated below, has been adopted by the Medical Laboratory Technician Program.

90 - 100%	= A
80 - 89%	= B
75 - 79%	= C
< 75%	= F

**A course grade of C (minimum 75%) at the midpoint and at completion of the course must be achieved in all MLT program courses. A midpoint grade below 75% in any of the MLT program courses will result in academic probation for the remainder of the course. A final grade below C (75%) in any of the MLT program courses will result in dismissal from the program.**

Students have the right to appeal a grade received in a course. Procedures for such an appeal are outlined in Volunteer State Community College's Student Handbook.

<http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook>

The requirements for an associate degree at Volunteer State are outlined in the on-line catalog. Students must meet those basic college requirements, complete all MLT courses with a grade  $\geq$  "C" (GPA 2.0), maintain an MLT program course average  $\geq$ 75% and complete all clinical hours. **It is the student's responsibility to apply for graduation.** Application and fees must be submitted to the Office of Admissions by the specified date posted for a spring graduation. The awarding of a degree does NOT require passing a discipline-specific certification exam.

### Competency Requirements for Graduation

MLT objectives and competencies needed for graduation are clearly defined. The list of competencies that are required were developed by standardized, accepted norms in the medical laboratory community, NAACLS requirements, and recommendations from our faculty/advisory committee.

Each student **must demonstrate** his/her knowledge in each of the following areas by written and/or practical examination or clinical experience **prior to** graduation from this program:

- 1) Blood bank/ Transfusion medicine including:
  - a) blood bank skills including blood type, antibody screen and identification, DAT, crossmatch,
  - b) blood products and transfusion practices
  - c) weak D procedure
  - d) HDFN
- 2) Hematology including:
  - a) blood smear preparation and evaluation of normal and abnormal blood smears
  - b) routine hematology and coagulation tests including automated cell counts, spun hematocrits, body fluid cell counts using a hemocytometer, PT/INR, aPTT, and DDimer
  - c) clinical lab findings in normal physiology, anemia, leukemia, and bleeding/clotting disorders
- 3) Clinical Chemistry including:
  - a) general medical knowledge including normal and abnormal analyte and enzyme ranges
  - b) correlating test results to diseases
  - c) pipetting and preparing dilutions
  - d) instrumentation to include theory, maintenance and troubleshooting
- 4) Medical Microbiology including:
  - a) sterile technique and specimen set-up
  - b) identification of medically significant bacteria, fungi, and parasites
  - c) susceptibility testing
- 5) Immunology and Special techniques
  - a) cellular and humoral immunity including antibodies, complement, and histocompatibility.
  - b) the ability to follow procedures such as those found in immunology/serology kits
  - c) serology of autoimmune and infectious diseases
  - d) molecular science and techniques as applied to healthcare
  - e) flow cytometry
- 6) Urinalysis and Body fluids including:
  - a) routine urine analysis to include physical, chemical and microscopic evaluation as well as confirmatory tests
  - b) body fluid analysis including synovial fluid, semen, serous fluids, amniotic fluid, stool, and CSF specimens
- 7) General Lab Operations including:
  - a) pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical components of laboratory services
  - b) phlebotomy and specimen processing

- c) infection control
  - d) quality control and quality assurance
  - e) instrumentation to include routine maintenance and troubleshooting
  - f) laboratory mathematics
  - g) lab safety and governmental regulations compliance
- 8) Demonstrate professional and ethical expectations in the medical laboratory including appropriate conduct, continuing professional development, and communication sufficient to serve the needs of patients, the public and the health care team.

Guests and children in class will only be permitted into MLT lecture class if permission is granted by the course instructor. The conduct of the guest or child is the sole responsibility of the MLT student. The instructor reserves the right to dismiss guests if their behavior is disruptive to the class.

Guests and children are NOT permitted to attend labs. Due to the nature of the program, exposure to blood, body fluids, and chemicals are likely. Therefore, for the safety of the guests, only MLT students are permitted to attend MLT labs.

### Clinical Visitation

Students are permitted in the hospital in the role of “MLT Student” only during the designated clinical rotation and clinical preparation times. Additional time in the clinical laboratory must be arranged with the clinical instructor. When not in the role of “MLT Student,” students assume the role of visitor and abide by hospital and clinic regulations. Uniforms, lab coats, or name tags should not be worn while the student is in the role of visitor.

Guests and children are NOT permitted at the clinical sites. Patient privacy and safety issues forbid it.

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. In order to protect the freedom of students to learn, as well as enhance their participation in the life of the academic community, students should be free from exploitation or harassment.

The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community. Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) institutions have developed policies and procedures which provide and safeguard this freedom. A further discussion is available in the VSCC Student Handbook.

If a student feels harassed in a classroom, student laboratory, or clinical site, he or she should not ignore the situation, hoping it goes away. If the threat is immediate and may involve bodily harm, campus security or police should be contacted. If the situation is not immediate or threatening, the student should visit with the instructor or the program director. If the situation involves program personnel, the student should speak to either the Dean of Health Sciences or the VP of Student Services.

These are the steps for harassment: pages 70 and 71 of student handbook.

#### **Student Complaints Related to Discrimination or Harassment**

Students may report complaints of discrimination and/or harassment to the Title IX/EEO Coordinator and/or the Vice President for Student Services or designee. Refer to the Discrimination and Student Handbook Harassment Policy and the Sexual Misconduct Policy for information and procedures concerning complaints involving discrimination and/or harassment.

Students with disabilities seeking to file a disability-based discrimination or harassment complaint should contact the College's Title IX/EEO Coordinator and/or the Vice President for Student Services, or designee. Students with disabilities should follow guidelines and procedures listed in the Access Center Handbook concerning complaints about the instructional accommodations they are receiving.

Records of discrimination/harassment complaints shall be maintained in the Title IX/EEO Coordinator's office.

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy**

The Medical Laboratory Technician Program is dedicated to a college environment that is free from acts of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances, demands for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is considered to be misconduct and is subject to disciplinary action. Any questions about this policy may be directed to the Program Director. For additional information, see VSCC Student Handbook (<http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook>) pages 62-69.

Interactions with patients in the health care system involve inherent risks to both the patient and caregiver, including, but not limited to, communicable diseases. In the curriculum students will be given information regarding known risks for various diseases and measures to decrease these risks.

All students are expected to provide appropriate care to all assigned patients in any setting. These assignments may include patients with medical diagnoses of tuberculosis; hepatitis A, B, or C; AIDS; or other infectious diseases. Students are expected to implement standard precautions and appropriate barrier protection in the care of all assigned patients.

### Requirements

Due to the health risks mentioned above, all students must meet the health policies as established for the Medical Laboratory Technology program. It is the responsibility of the individual student to complete all program health requirements before classes begin, or by the specific requirement deadlines mandated by the program.

Medical Laboratory Technician Program health requirements are:

1. Students must provide emergency contact information.
2. Students must show proof of MMR and Varicella (chicken pox) immunity.
3. Students must show proof of flu shot before beginning the fall clinical course.
4. Students must show proof of a negative TB QuantiFERON gold test or other proof of non-active TB.
5. Students must provide verification of immunity to Hepatitis B\* or sign a waiver stating he/she has been informed of the health risk and has chosen not to receive the vaccine.
6. Students must be assessed for colorblindness.
7. Students must have a routine physical /proof of good health
8. Students must pass a background check and drug screen before beginning the fall clinical course.

\*Hepatitis B is a lethal virus more easily contracted than HIV (which causes AIDS). We strongly urge all students to complete the Hep B vaccine series. If a student chooses not to obtain the vaccine, that student must sign a waiver stating he/she has been informed of the health risk and has chosen not to receive at this time.

Vaccination against COVID 19 may be a clinical site requirement. It is not a requirement of the college. If a student chooses not to obtain the vaccine, they will need to file for an exemption directly through their clinical site, and the exemption status decision cannot be influenced by the college. If a student is not vaccinated and is denied exemption from their assigned clinical site, a reasonable effort to find alternate clinical rotations will be attempted by the college. If a student is unable to attend clinicals, they will be unable to complete the program and will therefore be dismissed.

## Health Insurance

Neither the clinical sites nor VSCC assumes the responsibility for medical expenses that may be charged to students for incidents that occur during clinical education (i.e. puncture wounds, exposure to contagious diseases, etc.) It is required that students have some type of health insurance coverage prior to beginning clinical courses. If using the Affordable Care Act to access health insurance, be mindful of the enrollment deadline.

## Communicable Disease Policy

A communicable disease is an illness transmitted through contact with microorganisms. There are many different types of communicable illnesses, including mild, acute infections and more complex chronic diseases. Colds and influenza are two very common viral infections. Other communicable diseases include chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella, viral hepatitis, HIV, tuberculosis, and COVID-19.

A student who has a communicable disease, or who is a carrier of one, may attend and participate in clinical experience courses whenever, through reasonable accommodation, there is no significant risk of transmission of the disease to others. A student who believes he/she has contracted a communicable disease will contact a physician immediately and not participate in clinicals until the physician states that it is safe to do so. They should also present a written statement from the physician that indicates the student's fitness to continue clinical education. Students will be permitted to make up clinical time missed due to a communicable disease.

### PATIENTS WITH COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Due to increasing concern about the care of patients with infectious diseases or patients that are especially susceptible to infectious diseases, students are required to comply with the exact procedures established by the clinical sites when caring for these patients.

## Student Accident Procedures

1. Provide first aid for the student sufficient to get the situation under control.
2. If the accident occurs on campus, campus police and Environmental, Health & Safety are notified.
3. If the accident occurs in the clinical area, faculty responsible for the course in which the student is injured must be notified immediately of the incident. Exposure incidents at a clinical site will follow the biohazard exposure plan of the site itself.
4. Complete the Student Exposure Incident Form for needlestick injuries that are obtained during school-related activities, including clinical practicums. Return the form to the clinical coordinator.
5. If a student experiences a needle stick during school-related education, including clinical practicum sites, the procedure for the practicum site must be followed in addition to completing a Student Exposure Incident Form for Vol State.
6. If it appears that a physician should see the student, he/she may choose to see his/her own physician, go to a minor emergency center, or be transported to a hospital. The student will be required to pay the cost/bill at the time of treatment.
7. The program will be responsible for all appropriate documentation. All accidents are signed off by the program's safety officer, campus Occupational Health and Safety, and the program's Medical Director.

Further information and safety policies/procedures can be found the MLT Safety Manual.

You will be participating in classroom, laboratory, or clinical activities in which learning requires student subjects as part of the training procedures and demonstrations. As part of your learning activities, you may be asked to perform a specific skill or be asked to be the subject of specific skills practiced by other students. Learning activities that use student subjects will be conducted under the direct supervision of the instructor who has been assigned to teach a Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) course.

### Benefits

The experiences listed below have been selected because they are skills essential to the learning process and that realistic practice is essential for optimum learning. Participation will enhance the learning process and the acquisition of technical skills. Clinical sites expect students to come in with basic blood collections skills and, at a minimum, have performed actual “live” venipunctures and capillary punctures on adult subjects. An alternative experience may not provide as realistic an opportunity to practice; therefore, may result in less effective learning.

### Risks/Discomforts

Participation may create some anxiety for you. Some of the procedures may create minor physical discomfort. Specific risks/discomforts are listed.

### Your Rights

You have the right to withhold consent for participation and to withdraw consent after it has been given. If you withhold consent, you will be required to participate in an alternative learning experience. If you do not participate in either the planned or the alternative activity, ***you will not be able to successfully complete the program.*** You may ask questions and expect explanations of any point that is unclear.

### Venipuncture

Students will be required to be the recipient of numerous venipunctures performed by fellow students under the direct supervision of MLT course instructor(s).

1. Benefits
  - a. Gain experience and expertise in performing venipuncture procedures using a variety of collection devices prior to performing the procedures on actual patients in the clinical setting.
  - b. Develop the interpersonal skills necessary to appropriately interact with patients.
2. Possible Risks and Discomfort
  - a. Slight temporary pain with puncture.
  - b. Minimal risk of damage to a nerve, muscle or other soft tissues.
  - c. Minimal risk of introduction of infection into body tissues or vessels.
  - d. Bleeding that could result in a hematoma.

### Capillary/Dermal Puncture

Students may be required to be the recipient of one or more capillary punctures performed by fellow students for the purpose of obtaining capillary blood specimens under the direct supervision of MLT course instructor(s).

1. Benefits
  - a. Gain experience and expertise in performing capillary punctures prior to performing the procedures on actual patients in the clinical setting.
  - b. Develop the interpersonal skills necessary to appropriately interact with patients.



2. Possible Risks and Discomfort

- a. Minimal possibility of infection if the area is not kept clean.
- b. Slight temporary pain with puncture

Policy

Reviewed: June 9, 2024

## Liability Insurance

Approved: Eileen Ricker

All students are **required** to carry Professional Liability Insurance during for the Medical Laboratory clinical courses.

- Coverage is only in effect while enrolled in Med Lab courses.
- Policies must have a \$1 million minimum and at least a \$3 million maximum coverage.
- The cost of liability insurance is the responsibility of the student.
- Liability insurance is provided to the student as part of the Volunteer State Community College umbrella policy. Cost per student is \$13/semester.
- Proof of current professional liability insurance must be handed in to the program director before the start of clinical rotations.
- Contact the Program Director for further information.

The majority of MLT major course exams and quizzes will be given through D2L and will be timed. Exams and quizzes that are taken virtually may require an online proctoring service. In this case, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have access to all the necessary equipment, such as a microphone and webcam. Some course exams, particularly laboratory practicals, will be conducted in class. Unless otherwise stated, no unauthorized study materials or outside resources are allowed during an examination. Students must complete an examination in one sitting AND within the posted time limit. Specific protocols and expectations for taking course examinations will be outlined in each course syllabus. The Program's Disciplinary Guidelines policy will be implemented at the appropriate level if examination policies are violated.

Make-up exams/quizzes will be given at the discretion of the instructor.

- If a make-up exam is allowed, the exam may be cumulative.
- Documentation of the reason for an absence is required unless waived by the instructor.
- Acceptance of late assignments and associated deadlines is at the discretion of individual instructors.

All records and personal information about patients are **ABSOLUTELY confidential**. It is **IMPERATIVE** that students not divulge any information about patients to anyone, including the patient. Students are required to adhere to legal, ethical, and professional standards as established by state and federal regulatory agencies.

- If a student is questioned by a patient regarding his/her exam results, the student should refer the question to the physician.
- Students are expected to adhere to the written policies of the clinical sites as well as to the policies of this program.
- HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) has strict guidelines that—if violated—may require a clinical site to dismiss a student.
- Students must take great care to assure that all patient identification is removed/deleted/protected when turning in assignments, such as case studies from the clinical affiliation sites.
- Failure of the student to comply with the guidelines for confidentiality is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.

Students who have successfully completed a formal phlebotomy program may waive the phlebotomy rotation assignment. The student must provide documentation of the completion of a NAACLS accredited or equivalent program. The documentation must include the number of classroom and clinical hours.

Students with one or more years of full-time employment as a phlebotomist may waive the phlebotomy rotation assignment. Documentation from the employer on institution letterhead must be provided.

**These students will still be required to complete the competency examination and skills log sheets associated with the phlebotomy clinical rotations.** Once a student has completed the necessary tasks of the rotation, they may complete the additional clinical hours in another area of the laboratory, if approved by the clinical site.

Faculty of the Volunteer State Community College and the Health Sciences Programs have an academic, legal, and ethical responsibility to protect members of the public and of the health care community from unsafe or unprofessional practices. Actions as a Health Sciences student directly affect the lives of other. For this reason, the highest standards in honesty and integrity are mandatory. Dishonesty and unethical behavior in any form will result in corrective actions or disciplinary measures and may result in dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to behave as responsible members of the Medical Laboratory Technology Program in the classroom and laboratory, and as responsible professional members of the medical team in the clinical setting. Students must conduct themselves in an ethical, professional, and safe manner, and shall abide the professional conduct standards of the profession as defined by state law. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their actions and will be held accountable for them. Students are expected to avoid any conduct that would be in violation of the policies of the College (See VSCC Policy III: 00:05, <http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook/> or <http://www.volstate.edu/Policies/>) or the Medical Laboratory Technician Program.

The student will—in classroom, laboratory, and clinical rotations:

1. Arrive on time to all scheduled learning activities (class, lab, rotations, etc.).
2. Communicate in a consistently pleasant, polite, professional manner, and conveys respect in interactions with instructors, healthcare providers, other students, and patients.
3. Not engage in rumors, gossip, lying or slander.
4. Not commit a misdemeanor or felony.
5. Not commit acts which violate the rights of others.
6. Assume accountability for personal behavior as a representative of the VSCC Medical Laboratory Technology Program.

Failure to adhere to the code of conduct may result in verbal and/or written warnings and if not corrected, dismissal from the program.

The professional organization, American Society of Clinical Pathologists, has also issued guidelines for professional/ethical behavior, which the MLT program students are to observe.

1. Treat patients and colleagues with respect, care and thoughtfulness.
2. Perform my duties in an accurate, precise, timely and responsible manner
3. Safeguard patient information as confidential, within the limits of the law.
4. Prudently use laboratory resources.
5. Advocate the delivery of quality laboratory services in a cost-effective manner.
6. Work within the boundaries of laws and regulations and strive to disclose illegal or improper behavior to the appropriate authorities.
7. Continue to study, apply and advance medical laboratory knowledge and skills and share such with my colleagues, other members of the health care community and the public.

Professionalism is a broad topic. See related policies on participation, patient confidentiality and professional appearance.

All Medical Laboratory Technician students are required to follow the professional appearance code while at clinical sites. A neat, clean, and professional appearance is expected at all times.

- Properly fitting, clean, VolState approved scrubs with logo must be worn during all on-campus activities, labs, classes, and clinical practicums. Appropriate undergarments should be worn and be undetectable through clothing. Fit of scrubs should allow for required movement of job performance without exposure of abdomen, chest, cleavage, or low back. Students may wear a solid color white or blue, long sleeve, light weight knit top under their scrub tops if weather or lab temperatures are lower than the student finds comfortable, or if the student needs coverage of tattoos.
- Feet and legs must be protected at all times during the program. (i.e. closed-toed shoes, and socks). Leather-type tennis or similar shoes are strongly recommended. Shoes with canvas or porous mesh material, clogs, crocs or other types of shoes with no back or holes in the top are not allowed.
- Hair must be clean and neat. A clinical site may object to certain dyed hair styles, and this should be respected. If the hair's length is at or below the shoulder, or if it has a tendency to hang in the face, it must be drawn back; such as in a clip or band. Facial hair should be kept neat and trimmed.
- Working closely with patients requires that students maintain strict personal hygiene standards.
- Fingernails must be kept short, clean, and filed. Artificial nails and nail jewelry are not to be worn. Chipped nail polish is not permitted.
- Students will also wear a VSCC or site-issued name badge while at clinical rotations.
- Jewelry- two posts per ear only. Wedding rings and wrist watches are allowed. No other body jewelry (i.e. nose rings, lip rings) are allowed.
- NO perfume or cologne is allowed due to patient allergies or sensitivities.
- Tattooing of arms, legs, etc. may be considered unacceptable by clinical sites. Patient populations vary, and some segments find body piercing or tattooing offensive. Tattoos will be covered at all times in the clinical setting.

Failure to adhere to the professional appearance code will result in a warning, and, if not corrected, can result in dismissal from the clinical setting. If a student is asked to leave a clinical site due to dress code violations that will be considered an unexcused absence and can result in grade deductions. Repeated violations can lead to probation or dismissal from the clinical site and program.

Admission to Volunteer State Community College does not automatically qualify a student for admission to the Medical Laboratory Technology program. Admission to the program is limited and on a competitive basis. Acceptance is contingent upon completion of the general education core and a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 in those courses. In addition, the student must have achieved a C or greater in each general education course listed below. Eligible candidates must participate in an interview.

To be considered for admission into the MLT program, the following criteria must be met:

1. Completion of or current enrollment in the following general education courses with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 in those courses and a C or higher in the individual course:

FALL- 1st year	Course	Hrs
ENGL 1010-or higher	English Composition I	3
BIOL 2010	Human Anatomy & Physiology I (Lecture and Lab)	4
MATH 1010-or higher	College Algebra	3
PSYC 1030-or higher	General Psychology	3
Elective	*See college catalog for options	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>
SPRING- 1st year	Course	Hrs
Fine Arts/Humanities	*See college catalog for options	3
BIOL 2020	Human Anatomy & Physiology II (Lecture and Lab)	4
Science Elective: <u>Choose one</u>	BIOL 2230-Microbiology (Lecture and Lab) CHEM 1030-Fundamentals of Chemistry (Lecture and Lab), or a higher-level Chemistry	4
MLAB 1301	Intro to Medical Laboratory (PLA substitution may be awarded)	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

2. Application to the MLT program by completion of the on-line MLT Application Form (<http://www.volstate.edu/MedLabTech/application-form.php>). **Application must be submitted on-line no later than the March deadline to be considered for the full-time MLT program beginning in May and no later than the October deadline to be considered for the part-time MLT program.**
3. Completion of an interview for screening purposes. Applicants will be contacted at the end of March to arrange interview dates.
4. Initial health requirements. Hepatitis B vaccination (or waiver), proof of health insurance, color blindness test results, and a satisfactory physical examination are needed before students can begin MLT student labs. Additional health documentation is needed for progression in the program, but these are not needed prior to the first day of the program.

#### SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION

The following is used to determine eligibility for the program and then acceptance into the program

- submission of program application by the deadline
- completion of prerequisite/core courses with a C or better
- minimum general education course cumulative GPA of 2.7
- acceptable performance in MLAB 1301 including final grade or grade at time of interview
- interview
- recommendation letters



A selection committee will review applications. A range of 15-40 students are accepted each year into the MLT full-time and part-time program. Students will be notified of acceptance in writing. Following acceptance into the program, students must respond in writing within 2 weeks of issuance of the acceptance. A student who fails to respond by the deadline will forfeit his/her place in the class.

Applicants denied admission may appeal the decision. See the VSCC Student Handbook, page 17. (<http://www.volstate.edu/StudentHandbook>)

The MLT Program has a continuing system for reviewing program effectiveness, as well as identifying concerns and areas in need of improvement. The program uses various methods to ensure that program performance is consistent with stated goals and standards.

### Outcomes

Data is collected through course/instructor evaluations, course grades, surveying current and former students, employer surveys, resource surveys, clinical site visits, national certification exam results, and licensure rates. Placement rates and graduation rates are also collected. Student input is sought on a regular basis. Course/instructor evaluations are conducted each semester and for each course. Clinical site visits monitor the student's progression through rotations while providing them an opportunity to evaluate their clinical experiences. Students are evaluated by their clinical instructor during each clinical rotation. Informal discussions during clinical seminar class allows for timely responses to problems. Combined, this data can be used to evaluate not only each individual student, but also the effectiveness of the didactic instruction in preparing students for their clinical education.

### Analysis

The program is evaluated under the College's multi-faceted Institutional Effectiveness evaluation system. Employer satisfaction, graduate placement, satisfaction, and certification achievements are all monitored annually under this system. The program also monitors the graduation rate and graduate licensure rate. A report is submitted every year to the College in which annual goals are identified; linked to Program, College and Tennessee Board of Regents goals; measured and analyzed.

The program also has an internal "learning outcomes" analysis used in conjunction with the Institutional Effectiveness plan. Program officials meet annually with the Advisory Committee and clinical instructors for planning and discussion of program effectiveness. All outcome data are evaluated by the Advisory Committee annually. The Program Director and Health Sciences Division officials meet regularly to review the program's status. Annual faculty evaluations contain the information from the following components: student evaluations, peer evaluations, self-evaluation, and supervisor evaluation.

National certifying exams are an important benchmark for the VSCC MLT Program. These exams are tracked yearly, and particular attention is paid to first time passage rates and individual topic scores. If the program's average on any individual topic falls below the national average, the corresponding MLT course is scrutinized and adjusted. Blinded results are shared and analyzed by the Advisory Committee. In the absence of data from other certifying exams, the program analyzes Tennessee medical laboratory personnel licensure rates because national certification is one of the requirements for Tennessee licensure. Though an indirect measure of overall certification exam passage rates, licensure rates still provide helpful information with which to analyze graduate achievement. Blinded results are shared and analyzed by the Advisory Committee.

Students are enrolled in the MLT training for a period of twelve months for the full-time program and seventeen months for the part-time program to meet requirements of the program and to fulfill requirements of the Associate of Applied Science Degree.

1. During the first year, the student is a Health Sciences A.S. major and courses consist of general education and prerequisites.
  - During the first year, enroll in MLAB 1301 - Introduction to Medical Laboratory course.
  - Students apply for admission to the MLT program by the March deadline for the full-time program and October deadline for the part-time program.
2. Upon admission into the program, students will switch their major to the Medical Laboratory Technology A.A.S. and will begin the second year.
3. Full-time program
  - The second year is a three-semester, full time program of study starting in May of each year. The summer and early fall semesters involve didactic courses and student laboratories. There may be more than one section of each lab course offered. Registrations for lab courses are first come first serve and registration will be honored.
  - The late fall and spring semesters are spent in clinical practicum rotations along with didactic courses. Clinical practicum rotations consist of 16-32 hours/week at area clinical laboratories. Students are involved in the educational training for a period of twelve months in order to meet requirements of the program and to fulfill requirements of the Associate of Applied Science Degree.
4. Part-time program
  - After admission into the program, students are considered to be MLT students and will begin the second year. The second year is a four-semester, part-time program of study starting in January of each year. The spring and fall semesters involve clinical practicum rotations, didactic courses, and student labs. The summer semester only involves didactic courses and student labs. There may be more than one section of each lab course offered. Registrations for lab courses are first come first serve and registration will be honored.
  - Clinical rotations consist of 16-22 hours/week at area clinical laboratories. Students are involved in the educational training for a period of 17 months in order to meet requirements of the program and to fulfill requirements of the Associate of Applied Science Degree.
5. Throughout the didactic/student laboratory coursework, students must demonstrate competency in key laboratory skills to progress in the program. (See the *SKILLS ASSESSMENT* policy for more information.)
6. A criminal background check must be passed before clinical rotations can begin.
7. A drug screen must be passed before clinical rotations can begin.
8. A grade of "C" or better in all MLAB courses is required for progression through the program.
9. An average of 75% or better in each MLT program course, is required to successfully pass any MLAB course or clinical rotation and for progression through the program.
10. Each clinical rotation includes a subject exam. Students must earn  $\geq 75\%$  for the end of course grade and a "B" on the clinical evaluation in order to progress to their next rotation or to successfully complete the program.
11. Unacceptable or unlawful behavior at clinical sites may result in dismissal from the program.
12. The awarding of a degree is NOT contingent on passing a certification exam.
13. Failure to meet the academic and behavioral standards above may result in dismissal from the program.

## Enrolled Students

In addition to official transcript information maintained at the Office of Records and Registration, the program has a file on each current MLT student. These files are securely kept in the Program Director's office or on a secure electronic site, My Record Tracker. They include the student's application to the program, class selection information including interview scores and transcripts, correspondence between the student and the program, the student's TN Laboratory Trainee Permit, pre-clinical competencies, and any paper copies of evaluations/exams. Evaluations and exams are shredded/deleted after students graduate. Other documents are securely maintained in the Program Director's office or on a secure electronic site, My Record Tracker for minimum of 10 years per Rules of The Tennessee Medical Laboratory Board Division of Health Related Boards, Chapter 1200-06-02-.06, April 2022. <https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/1200/1200-06/1200-06-02.20220413.pdf>, page 11.

## Program Graduates

Official transcripts are maintained permanently in the Office of Records and Registration.

According to VSCC Policy III: 15:03, "The education records of current and former students at Volunteer State Community College are maintained as confidential records pursuant to State and Federal laws. (T.C.A. #15-305 and 20 U.S.C. #1232g). Students have the right to access to their own educational records as hereinafter set forth, and personally identifiable education records of students are not released to persons, agencies, or organizations without the consent of the student unless release is authorized by the law and by the college."

### CUSTODIAN OF RECORDS

1. Education Records--The College Registrar is the designated custodian of all education records.
2. Test Scores—The Director of Testing is the designated custodian of scores and other test records administered by the testing office.
3. Disciplinary Records—Vice President of Student Services is the designated custodian of disciplinary records.

To review any of the listed records a student must contact the designated custodian. See also the Program's Documentation policy.

Volunteer State Community College has safety policies and procedures established for both employees and students. The Health Sciences Program identify safety as a basic human need. A safety need can be identified as physical, biological, and/or emotional in nature. Therefore, safe practices are a requirement of each program.

The MLT program ensures the safety of students through the following steps:

- No infectious blood or body fluids are used in the student labs until after students have started the program (i.e. not in MLAB 1301).
- Students must pass a background check and a drug screen before starting their clinical practicums.
- Safety manual and appropriate safety equipment is available in the student labs.
- First aid kits are available in the student labs.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided to students free of cost.
- MSDS sheets are available in the student lab and/or through My Volstate's "MSDS Online."
- Clothing requirements for students and instructors (enforced by the instructor):
  - Close-toed shoes in student labs and at clinical practicum rotations.
  - Hair back away from their face during labs and at clinical practicum rotations.
  - Clothing that fully covers their legs in student labs and at clinical practicum rotations.
  - Proper use of PPE.

### Health screening and insurance

- Before students can test human blood or body fluids, students must provide proof of health insurance and either hepatitis immunization or a signed waiver refusing the hepatitis immunization.
- Shortly after the start of the program, students must provide the rest of their health screening documentation. (See related Documentation and Health policies for the full list.)

### Training:

- MLAB 1301 covers the basics of safety concerns and practices with regards to biohazards, chemicals, fire and electrical safety.
- During program orientation, safety procedures and policies used in the program are covered. Students are given a copy of all program policies, and students must sign and return an acknowledgement and agreement to follow these policies.
- Each course instructor must include safety training related to the techniques, material, and equipment being used in the course. Instructors must enforce proper use of PPE and engineering controls.

### Safety during Clinical Rotations

Unsafe clinical/practicum practice shall be deemed to be behavior demonstrated by the student which threatens or violates the physical, biological, or emotional safety of the patient, caregiver, students, staff, or self. Unsafe or unprofessional clinical practice may result in implementation of a corrective action or disciplinary measure outlined in this Student Manual.

- Students must turn in all required health and liability documentation and completed the clinical site's orientation before starting rotations.
- Students must correctly identify all patient(s) prior to initiating care.

- Students should never perform testing without appropriate supervision and should always seek help when needed.
- In case of an accident or exposure to blood/body fluids, the clinical site provides emergency care (paid for by the student or his/her insurance) and related counseling. Student may choose to follow up with their regular health provider. An injury report must be filed within 48 hours at the College through the MLT program director and the Director of Environmental Health and Safety.

Competency assessment is used to determine that the student has the necessary knowledge and skills to perform a basic laboratory test accurately. Each competency assessment has a written set of specific criteria which must be performed to demonstrate that competency has been achieved. The student will be provided with the assessment criteria and will receive feedback from the instructor.

Post course competencies must be completed successfully to advance in this program. If the student has an unsuccessful competency assessment, an action plan will be developed which will include remediation. Remediation can include demonstration of skills by the instructor, discussion of specific errors the student made and how to correct them, and additional practice opportunities. A failed competency will result in initiation of the Corrective Actions/Disciplinary Measures Policy. The student will be allowed a total of three competency assessment attempts per procedure. If a student is unable to demonstrate competency after three attempts the student may be withdrawn from the program.

Competency exams are also performed during the student's clinical practicum rotations. Clinical preceptors must document that the student has completed a certain number of procedures, as designated by the competency forms and that the student is competent to perform that testing with 99% accuracy. If a certain test or assay on the form is not available at that clinical site, the student is not required to demonstrate competency for that assay.

Students are advised against full-time employment while enrolled in the full-time MLT Program. If employment is necessary, the full-time program recommends **no more than 20 hours of work per week** and **no more than 30 hours per week** for the part-time program to allow sufficient time for class, study, and personal needs. **This is an accelerated, highly specialized course of study.** Dividing one's attention between school and work usually causes one or the other to suffer. No special consideration will be afforded students with regard to their employment.

Students enrolled in the program may choose to be employed in a clinical laboratory setting. The following guidelines for employment have been established.

1. The employment is a relationship between the student and the employer. The College will not act as an intermediate between the student and the employer.
2. Employment is to take place **ONLY** at times considered outside of the scheduled classes, including clinical schedule.
3. Scheduled paid working hours cannot be substituted for clinical education hours.
4. Clinical evaluations cannot be completed during paid working hours.
5. Students should inform the program director if and when employment with the clinical site begins.

### Service Work

Medical Laboratory Technology students are not expected to perform service work and are not allowed to take the place of qualified staff during any clinical rotation. Any service work is noncompulsory outside of scheduled class or clinical hours.

The use of students as substitutes for licensed medical laboratory personnel is not allowed according to the Tennessee State Medical Laboratory Board's rules and regulations. Students (trainees) must have adequate supervision and shall not be substituted for licensed medical laboratory personnel. Additionally, a licensed medical laboratory scientist/technologist or technician must check all laboratory reports before they can be released to a patient's medical record.

A clinical institution which employs a currently enrolled MLT student as a laboratory assistant or phlebotomist will schedule the student for work during non-instructional hours.



## Advising

Medical Laboratory Program faculty are available to advise students as needed. The College's advising office on campus has academic advisors available for guidance. Student concerns related to tests, course content, performance, etc. can be addressed during scheduled meetings with instructors. The Program Director is also available for counseling assistance for issues related to the MLT Program. All counselling is conducted with confidentiality and impartiality.

## Career Services

The Office of Career Services assists students in understanding how their academic experiences can be utilized and transferred to the types of career activities. Services offered to students include:

- Resume Basics
- Interview Skills
- Career Fairs
- Job Search Strategies
- Professional Letter Writing skills
- Career Coaching

## Students with Disabilities

Students who have learning, psychological, physical and/or other disabilities may be eligible for accommodations that provide equal access to educational program and activities. It is the student's responsibility to self-identify with the VSCC Access Center to receive accommodations and services in accordance with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADA/AA). Students who provide appropriate documentation and who are registered in the Access Center will receive appropriate accommodations. For further information, please contact Access Center staff at (615) 230-3472, or visit the office, which is located in the Ramer Administration Building, room 143.

## Library

Students have access to the Volunteer State Learning Resource Center during posted hours of operation. Several library resources may also be accessed on-line at any time. All required textbooks are on reserve in the main campus' library. The Medical Laboratory Tech Program also maintains a reference library in the Program Director's office, and books may be checked out through the Program Director.

## College Bookstore

The College bookstore sells textbooks, school supplies, and other items. All required texts will be available in the college bookstore.

## Financial Aid

Information pertaining to financial assistance is available from the financial aid office at Volunteer State and is outlined in the Volunteer State Community College on-line catalog. If a student is receiving Title IV financial assistance (Pell Grant, Student Loan or SEOG Grant), he/she must regularly attend class (a minimum of the first full week) or be subject to repay PART or ALL of the Federal Financial Aid received for the semester.

### Withdrawal from the MLT Program

If a student must withdraw from any required course for any reason, he/she must follow withdrawal procedures outlined by the College. He/she should contact the Program Director as soon as possible to be considered for readmission. Readmission is on a space available basis and cannot be guaranteed.

### Readmission to the MLT Program

Students must meet with the Program Director as soon as possible to begin the readmission process. Students must reapply to the program and be approved for readmission by program faculty. **Request for readmission does not guarantee readmission.**

With the exception of the MLT Introduction Course, competency in all previously taken MLT courses must be demonstrated upon readmission to the program. Auditing previously taken MLT courses may be part of the demonstration of competency.

Course work must be completed within a maximum of 5 years from the original admission date.

## Signature Page

Please read each statement below. INITIAL each statement in the space indicated to signify your agreement to abide by the policies and procedures in this Student Manual. Print, sign, and date in the space below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I have read and agree to comply with the student policies and procedures as outlined in the Student Manual. Furthermore, I will agree to and will comply with the course requirements as listed in each syllabus and the student policies of the Medical Laboratory Technology Program.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that while performing my regularly assigned duties, I may be exposed to blood, body fluids, or tissues. I will use the appropriate personal protective equipment required when there is an inherent potential for mucous membrane or skin contact with blood, body fluids or tissues, or a potential for spills or splashes of them. I understand that if I fail to use available personal protective equipment, I may be subject to disciplinary action.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I have been informed regarding the inherent health/safety hazards in the health care field and release Volunteer State Community College from any liability for such hazards.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to completing the criminal background check process.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I must maintain at least a 75% course average in every course to remain in the program.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I will be required to carry health insurance coverage while attending clinical training.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I will be required to provide documentation of a negative drug screen prior to attending clinical practicums.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I will complete all required clinical education training modules and submit signed documentation to the Program as required.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ By enrolling in a class with a clinical component, I acknowledge that Volunteer State Community College may be required as a condition of my participation at an affiliated clinical site, to send certain information regarding me to a clinical affiliate, in compliance with rules, policies, and protocols of the clinical affiliate in an encrypted, secure format. Such information may include my social security number, immunization records, personal or educational information about me that is reasonably required by the clinical affiliate's standard rules, policies, and protocols that apply to its employees. I knowingly consent to such a requirement, and hereby authorize Volunteer State Community College to send such personal and educational information as may be reasonably required to the clinical affiliate.

Unless you are seeking clarification to assist in understanding these expectations, you must print, sign, date and return this form by the state deadline. Failure or refusal to sign and return this form by the state deadline may result in a corrective action or disciplinary measure for failure to abide by a Program requirement. Failure to sign and return this form does not excuse a student's responsibility to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this manual.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_