
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

Department of Biomedical Laboratory Sciences



**STUDENT
CLINICAL EXPERIENCE GUIDE**

Revised August 2022

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I. INTRODUCTION

This clinical experience guide is a roadmap to prepare you for your clinical rotations and assist you throughout your clinical experience.

First of all, we would like to congratulate you for reaching this pinnacle within your program of study. Entering clinical rotations is a major accomplishment and the knowledge and skills you have gained in your didactic courses will continue to grow in depth and breadth as you enter the clinical setting. You will soon realize that the clinical portion of your program of study is very different from the didactic portion. Unlike the didactic courses, the practicum courses take place in a clinical laboratory with hands-on experience as well as daily interaction with clinical preceptors, laboratory technologists, and other healthcare professionals. Keep in mind that you will be supervised at all times and evaluated on your professionalism and technical skills. The clinical rotations can be extraordinarily challenging, but also profoundly rewarding. Every moment of your time with your clinical preceptors will be full of opportunities for your own professional and personal growth. Take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experience they have and learn as much as you can.

This handbook contains policies and procedures you need to know during your clinical rotations. Please consider this as a supplement to your GW BLS Undergraduate or Graduate Handbook (located in the BLS blackboard community). For a smooth transition from didactic classes into the clinical rotations, please read this clinical handbook **before** you enter your clinical practicum course(s), and keep it with you at all times for reference. It can also be accessed on Blackboard in the BLS Student Community. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the GW BLS Program Clinical Coordinators.

On behalf of the entire GW BLS faculty and staff, we wish you the very best as you begin this new learning endeavor.

Sincerely,

The GW Biomedical Laboratory Sciences Clinical Team

Revision of these policies and procedures

The program reserves the right to revise the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook as needed to facilitate the goals and mission of the BLS undergraduate and graduate programs.

Students are expected to remain current on all policies and procedures affiliated with the BLS department programs. This guide does not constitute a contractual obligation on the part of GW or the School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Additional Policies

Understanding and adhering to policies and procedures at The GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences is essential. Students may find a comprehensive list of policies in the Health Sciences website:

<https://smhs.gwu.edu/academics/health-sciences-programs/student-services/policies-forms>

University and Health Sciences policies may be superseded by materials in the BLS Undergraduate and Graduate Student Handbooks.

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II. POINTS OF CONTACT – CLINICAL ROTATIONS

Any questions/concerns regarding clinical experiences should be directed to the appropriate **clinical coordinator**:

- Students attending clinical rotations **within 25 miles of the Washington, DC metropolitan area, and in Virginia and Maryland**, will work with the local site clinical coordinator to schedule their rotations. If you fall within this parameter or are unsure if you do, please contact the local site clinical coordinator.
- Students attending clinical rotations **beyond 25 miles of the Washington, DC metropolitan area and outside of Virginia and Maryland**, will work with the non-local site clinical coordinator during their rotations.
- For questions/concerns regarding clinical practicum courses and the capstone seminar course, please contact the primary course instructor listed in Blackboard.
- For questions/concerns regarding the program, please contact the program director (PD) for your specific program. The PDs are listed in the program official section of this document.
- For questions/concerns regarding registration & graduation, contact the appropriate academic advisor for your program of study.
- For concerns/problems within a clinical rotation, the student should first communicate directly with their contact person/clinical preceptor at the clinical facility. If not satisfied with the response, the student may consult the GW BLS Program Clinical Coordinator and then the Program Director. The clinical instructor should likewise communicate with the student and then the Clinical Coordinator or Program Director, in that order, in reference to concerns and/or problems pertaining to the student.

- For questions/concerns regarding complaints of maladministration or violation of rights, please contact the Program Director. To seek assistance outside of the program, please contact the Health Sciences Student Ombudsperson, Sue Okun. She may be contacted via email at Ombudsperson_HS@gwu.edu.
- Counseling: Students experiencing problems, either academic or personal, are encouraged to discuss these problems with the Program Clinical Coordinator or Program Director. Students who wish to seek counseling outside of the program may contact the Colonial Health Center's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (202-994-5300) for an appointment.

If you are uncertain as to the appropriate line of communication, please contact your academic advisor who will direct you to the appropriate official(s).

III. DEFINITIONS

- **CRIT:** Clinical Rotation Information in Typhon
- **CSV:** Clinical Site Verification
- **Preceptor:** A preceptor is a clinical instructor designated by the clinical site to provide clinical instruction, supervise, and evaluate the student during rotations. Depending on the clinical site, these functions can be performed by one or more laboratory professionals or an educational coordinator. The students should work with their clinical site to determine who their preceptor or preceptors will be.
- **Typhon Group:** The GW BLS Department uses a web-based clinical rotation management system called Typhon Group. Typhon Group is used to record pertinent information related to the clinical semester, to include scheduling, communication, procedures and skills performed, and the end of rotation evaluations. Typhon Group is a student-driven system, with an expectation that students take ownership of their rotation management. Students control information entry in Typhon in documenting their schedules, case logs, and time logs over the course of the clinical experience. If changes to the schedule or preceptor occur, students can adjust this information in Typhon. Students will have access to Typhon for 5 years after graduation.

III. ASCLS CODE OF ETHICS

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

Laboratory Science practitioners, all students must read the Code of Ethics (Appendix-1) prior to entering clinical rotations. GW BLS department students are expected to:

- ✓ *Uphold the legal and ethical standards of the profession and the jurisdiction of their clinical education experiences.*
- ✓ *Uphold all policies and procedures governing the delivery of medical laboratory services at the clinical site.*
- ✓ *Uphold standards of the profession including core values, code of ethics, and standards of practice.*
- ✓ *Integrate and apply all information taught within the academic curriculum.*
- ✓ *Demonstrate professionalism in all interactions.*
- ✓ *Demonstrate effective verbal and written communication skills.*
- ✓ *Demonstrate measurable progress toward clinical and professional competence.*
- ✓ *Abide by all policies of the program outlined in Program Handbook and this Clinical Handbook.*

IV. CLINICAL ROTATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Before the student is eligible to enter clinical rotations, the following requirements must be met:

1. Didactic Coursework Completion - each student must have successfully completed all major didactic coursework prior to entry into the clinical rotations.
2. GPA Requirement:
 - a For undergraduate programs: A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 is required in order to begin clinical practicum courses.
 - b For graduate programs: There is no minimum cumulative GPA required in order to begin clinical practicum courses
3. Health Clearance – all students must have submitted a completed BLS Health Information Release Form, Essential Functions Form (Appendix-2, Appendix-3) Proof of Health Coverage, Physical Exam, Immunizations and 2-step PPD Forms (Appendix-4, Appendix-5).
4. Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen (CBC/DS) - all students, except for active duty military members who are assigned to a military hospital, must have completed a CBC/DS.

5. HIPAA Training – all students must have successfully completed the HIPAA training module in the mandatory student orientation.
6. CRIT – All students must complete CRIT. Please see section D.
7. Affiliation Agreement and CSV – Students who identified their own clinical sites must have submitted a CSV form. An affiliation agreement must be established between GW and the student’s clinical site before a student begins rotations. The program regularly maintains affiliation agreements with its local affiliates. GW will aim to initiate an agreement process with all prospective sites several months prior to the start of clinical rotations at those sites.
8. Practicum Registration Requirement - Students will not be permitted to start a practicum if they are not registered for the corresponding clinical practicum course(s). Students will only be registered for the appropriate clinical courses after their placement is confirmed and approved by the program clinical coordinators. A student’s academic advisor will process practicum registration as part of the managed registration process.
9. Compliance with the Individual Clinical Site’s Requirements (as applicable) - Any compliance requirements unique to the student’s clinical site must be met by the student. For non-local students, it is the responsibility of the student to confirm individual site requirements directly with the site. Local students need to check with the local clinical coordinator for any site specific requirements.
10. Clinical Orientation - all students must complete a clinical orientation.

Important: Students are highly encouraged to maintain their initial clinical site after matriculation into the program due to the significant impact it may have on their program of study (e.g. delay in program completion). Students who change their clinical site must submit a new CSV prior to entering clinical rotations. If needed, the affiliation agreement with the new clinical site will be initiated, which may take a significant amount of time.

Clinical rotations and/or practicum courses not completed by the start of the following semester may delay any additional coursework or clear for graduation.

Penalty for Non-Compliance

Students who do not complete requirements will have a hold placed on their student record until they are compliant. Students who become non-compliant during the course of a term will be immediately removed from all clinical sites and will not be eligible to return until fully compliant with GW’s compliance requirements. Any clinical days missed as a result of non-compliance will be considered unexcused absences and opportunities for making

up absences may not be available. Students may also be subject to other penalties outlined by the course faculty.

A. STUDENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

All students must meet specific health screening requirements before starting clinical rotations.

All costs associated with health screening requirements are the responsibility of the student.

The American DataBank Complio system (ADB Complio)

ADB Complio system is the approved online platform to track and manage individual health screening, background check, drug screen, and other administrative records to ensure compliance with applicable affiliation agreements and program accreditation standards. Compliance monitoring requires student consent. Students must use their GW email address when registering for the ADB Complio account. There is no direct student cost associated with the ADB Complio system. Students will have access to the system for 36 months following initial subscription.

▶▶ *Important Note:* Students must use the GW administrative and health screening forms located in ADB Complio and cannot substitute these forms. All health documents must be maintained until the last day of rotations. Any expired documents must be updated as soon as possible until the final day of clinical rotation attendance. Failure to maintain health documentation will result in suspension of rotations or program dismissal.

1. BLS Department Health Information Release Form (Waiver) – This form should be completely filled out with student name, GWID, signature and date.
2. Physical Exam – Students must have health assessment done within the past year. The expiration date is one year from the date the physical exam is completed.
3. Tdap – Proof of Tdap immunization within the past 10 years.
4. MMR – Proof of 2-dose MMR vaccination or proof of separate measles, mumps and rubella shots (1 & 2) or proof of immunity on a lab report.
5. Varicella- Chicken Pox - Proof of Varicella vaccination 1 & 2 or proof of history of the disease or proof of immunity on a lab report.

If you are in the process of completing series of any shots (for example; Hep B #1 or MMR #1, etc.), you may be granted temporarily compliance to start your rotations. You must complete the remainder of the vaccination and provide documentation to prevent any interruptions of rotations.

6. Meningococcal Vaccine or Waiver – Proof of Meningococcal vaccination. If the 1st dose is administered before the age of 16 a booster is required. For a waiver contact your healthcare provider.
7. Annual Influenza Vaccination – Proof of Influenza vaccine is required only during the flu season (October – April). Outside of the flu season, please provide proof of vaccination within the year.
8. COVID-19 vaccination – Provide documentation of complete FDA EUA Covid-19 vaccination and a booster. Positive antibody titer or history of disease is not acceptable. For additional information refer to GW Covid vaccination policy <https://coronavirus.gwu.edu/vaccine>
9. Tuberculosis Test - - 2-step PPD test or chest X-Ray or IGRA blood test within the last 12 months. Some clinical sites only accept the IGRA blood test. Non-local students should confirm this requirements directly with their clinical site.
10. Health Insurance Coverage – Students must have valid health insurance during clinical rotations. Students have the option to purchase the GW health insurance plan if needed: https://www.universityhealthplans.com/letters/letter.cgi?group_id=476. Students can call the Student Health Center at 202-994-5300 (option 5) to inquire about the health insurance.
11. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification (CPR) – A copy of a CPR card with signatures. CPR course must be a Basic Life Support (BLS) or above. Non-local students should confirm this requirement directly with their clinical site.
12. Essential Functions Form – The form must be signed by the student and the healthcare provider.

▶▶ *Important Note:* If there are any changes in the student’s ability to meet the essential functions requirements during the course of the program, the Program Director and Clinical Coordinator **must** be notified immediately. This is critical in assuring the student’s eligibility for clinical instruction at the affiliate sites and in determining any necessary accommodations at these sites. Failure to disclose any essential function changes may result in program dismissal.

13. Clinical Program Acknowledgment Form of Risk and Personal Responsibility – Students must read and sign this form.

14. Citizenship/ Legal Resident Status – Students must be United States citizens or possess proof of legitimate resident status in the United States.

Clinical compliance requirements may be subject to change to reflect updates to applicable policies.

B. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK and DRUG SCREENS

Criminal background checks (CBC) and Drug Screens (DS) are required post matriculation and to evaluate whether a student possess the character and fitness to participate in clinical education activities. If an updated CBC/ DS is required prior to entering clinical rotations, the order can be facilitated through ADB Complio system. Please contact your clinical coordinator for additional details. The cost associated with CBC/ DS is the responsibility of the student.

GW cannot share any CBC/DS results with clinical sites. The student will need to contact Certiphi Screening at 800-803-7859 to request a report to be delivered to a third party. The report may be retrieved from the Certiphi Screening portal.

Failure of either the CBC or DS may preclude participation in clinical rotations. As a result, the student may not be able to complete the requirements of the education program, may not be eligible for federal or state credentialing required for practice, and may be dismissed from the Program.

Although medical marijuana is legal in some states, it is still illegal federally, so if a student is positive, regardless of their medical issue, it would be grounds for dismissal.

▶▶ *Important Note:* All students admitted to a BLS clinical program are required to disclose misdemeanor or felony convictions, other than minor traffic violations, on the application of admission (if occurred prior to admission) or to appropriate program director if occurrence happened while a student of an SMHS program **within five (5) business days of occurrence**. Non-disclosure or falsification may be grounds for dismissal or degree revocation.

Students are responsible for providing all requested information and documentation to their clinical site(s). The program may not be able to find alternative sites for students who are ineligible to attend clinical rotations at specified sites based on the results of the CBC. If a student is unable to be placed in a clinical facility, they will be unable to

complete their educational requirements and will be dismissed from the program pending the outcome of an appeal, should such right be invoked.

Active duty military students are waived from the CBC/DS requirement, as long as they obtain their clinical experience at a military hospital. If the student leaves the military after starting the program, or is scheduled at a civilian site, they will be required to complete a CBC/DS.

Note: If the student is doing clinical rotations at their place of employment they may be exempt from the repeat CBC/DS. However, they are still required to complete all health screening and administrative requirements.

C. HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY and ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA)/PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) passed by Congress in 1996, requires that healthcare workers be trained in the handling of protected health information (PHI). HIPAA identifies protected health information (PHI). Under all circumstances, students are prohibited from disclosing PHI or disseminating PHI via verbal, electronic or any other means. This act ultimately protects patients' right to privacy and confidentiality. HIPAA certification must be completed before the student begins any clinical education experience. Students should have completed HIPAA training as part of the orientation requirements.

Information contained within a patient's medical record is strictly confidential and may not be released to anyone without written permission from the patient. Students have the right to access specific patient information only as it relates to the generated laboratory result evaluation or screening for the appropriateness of medical laboratory services.

Discussions of patient problems or identifying the patient by name or other PHI will occur with the highest standards of confidentiality and privacy in mind. Students will be aware of the environment and the potential for being overheard and their comments taken out of context. Breaches in patient privacy and or confidentiality may result in the immediate termination and potential failure of a clinical education experience and removal from the program.

Student Documentation in the Medical Record

Some GW Health Sciences students, during clinical rotations within affiliated entities, will be provided the opportunity to document information within a medical record related to their participation in patient care. Following appropriate orientation, HIPAA training

and completion of security/confidentiality consents, students may document in the medical record (e.g. patient laboratory results), under the supervision of a clinical laboratory scientist/ laboratory supervisor.

Review the full policy on [Student Documentation in the Medical Record](#).

D. Entering Clinical Rotation Information in Typhon (CRIT) - Formerly known as the Clinical Rotation Request (CRR)

All students, to include those waived out of all rotations, will need to set up their account in Typhon and, if applicable, enter their clinical site information approximately 6 months prior to the start of the anticipated rotation semester. Students will be provided with instructions by the clinical coordinator via the GW email. Instructions will also be posted in the BLS blackboard community. Reminder emails will be sent and posted in BLS blackboard communities. Failure to update their accounts or the clinical site information in Typhon may result in delaying clinical rotations.

The timeline to for CRIT is as follows:

Clinical Rotation Term	Timeline for CRIT
Fall	01- 31 March preceding the rotation (Fall) semester
Spring	01-31 July preceding the rotation (Spring) semester
Summer	01-30 November preceding the rotation (Summer) semester

E. Typhon Group

Approximately 6 months prior to the start of the clinical semester, students will be registered in Typhon by the system administrator and will receive an automated email with their username and temporary password that is valid for 7 days. If the e-mail is more than 7 days old, the temporary password will not work. In this case, the student should generate a new temporary password by clicking 'Forgot login or password' link on the Typhon homepage.

Students will need to know their clinical site and preceptor for each rotation in order to enter this information in Typhon. If the clinical site or a preceptor are not listed in Typhon, the student should request for the clinical site or a preceptor to be added to the system directly in Typhon. The action on the request will be taken by the system administrator within 2 business days.

Preceptors will be able to login into Typhon. An automated email with login information will be sent to the preceptor's email address on record. Access to Typhon gives preceptors the ability to view student reports, their own schedules, and the history of all prior evaluations. Designated preceptors will review and approve student's case logs and time logs and complete the end of rotation evaluation.

Both preceptors and students can also access the clinical objectives for each of the rotation areas. Clinical objectives are for the student and the preceptor to guide the student's clinical experience. Paper records of the clinical objectives do not need to be returned to the clinical coordinator or uploaded into Typhon.

Students are expected to become familiar with Typhon prior to entering any rotation information or setting up their defaults. Training resources are available within Typhon as well as in the BLS blackboard community under the Typhon Group tab.

Who is required to use Typhon?

All students entering the clinical semester are required to set up their accounts in Typhon.

- a. Students who are waived from all rotations will need to:
 - Update their account information
 - Enter emergency contact
 - Upload waivers. Professional comportment and technical proficiency (P/T) scores from the waivers will be recorded in Typhon and entered into the corresponding practicum course.
- b. Students doing in-person rotations
 - a. Update account information
 - b. Enter emergency contact
 - c. Identify preferred (local students) or approved (non-local students) clinical sites
 - d. Setup default choices (semester/ course/ preceptor/ clinical site)
 - e. Enter rotations on the calendar
 - f. Submit daily case logs
 - g. Submit weekly time logs
 - h. Receive end of rotation evaluation for each rotation

Daily Case Logs

A daily case log is a record of procedures the student observed/ assisted/ or performed in a course of each day. Daily case logs are self-reported by the student and keep the student engaged in their own progress. Case logs are to be approved by the designed preceptor.

Time Logs

Time logs account for student's time during rotations. Each rotation has a required minimum number of hours. Time logs and case logs are interrelated. For each day there is a case log there should be a corresponding time log and vice versa. Time logs are to be approved by the designated preceptor.

My Schedule in Typhon

Students must enter all in-person rotations on the calendar in "My Schedule" in Typhon. Designated preceptors will see student rotation schedule on their calendar. Schedule and evaluations are interconnected. The calendar enables tracking of when the end of rotation evaluation is due. Students should also enter other rotation-related events on the calendar, such as excused absence, conference attendance, research, etc. and should adjust rotation dates, if needed. Students should work on the corresponding practicum course in Blackboard during the in-person rotation timeframe.

F. SIMULATED LABORATORY EXPERIENCE (SLE)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the BLS department implemented a simulated laboratory experience (SLE) for students to complete their clinical experience requirement. If admitted under the Simulated Laboratory Experience (SLE), students are required to continually search for a clinical site in their geographic location. Failure to provide documentation that verifies ongoing clinical site identification will result in becoming ineligible for the SLE. The SLE requires individuals to complete their clinical experience at the Virginia Science and Technology Campus (VSTC) in Ashburn, VA. Students are responsible for all transportation, food, and lodging expenses associated with attending the SLE. SLE does not satisfy the hours required by either CA or NY state. SLE is the last resort and is reserved for extenuating circumstances. Approval to attend the SLE is required. If approved, all clinical requirements must be met prior to participating in the SLE. Contact your clinical coordinator for additional information.

G. CLINICAL SITE VERIFICATION (CSV)

Students residing beyond 25 miles outside the Washington, DC metropolitan area and/or who wish to complete the clinical practicums in their area of residence must have identified an acceptable, accredited (e.g., TJC, CAP, etc.) clinical laboratory willing to provide the clinical instruction. A Clinical Site Verification (CSV) form must be filled out by the laboratory manager/director or the education coordinator of the facility and submitted to the appropriate program clinical coordinator for approval. Even though this process is typically performed at the time of admission, there may be rare instances where a student may have to submit a new CSV form. Students are responsible for securing a new clinical site.

Students admitted under a simulated laboratory experience (SLE), please see [section #F](#).

There may be instances when a new CSV form is required. Submit a new CSV only if:

1. Should a student relocate, they may need to identify a new clinical site in their new geographic area. This includes military students who PCS (permanent change of station) to another duty station.
2. Students who have secured but subsequently lost their clinical rotation site/spot when in Phase I (usually due to administrative changes at clinical sites, legal issues, staffing issues, etc.) must secure a new suitable site.
3. Students whose primary clinical site lacks mandatory procedures must identify a secondary site to complete the missing procedures.
4. Students who are dismissed from their clinical site after starting their rotations for not meeting the expected standards. Depending on the dismissal reason from the site, the program may give the student an opportunity to make arrangements with another site.
5. Students who change their program of study to a different BLS department clinical program may have to submit a new CSV.
6. Any changes that may have occurred on the originally submitted CSV. Students may have to submit an updated CSV should any of the information changes on the CSV they originally submitted.
7. When students who were admitted under the SLE secure a clinical site.

H. AFFILIATION AGREEMENT

An affiliation agreement is a contract between a university and another entity for purposes of providing an educational opportunity for students generally in a supervisory situation such as a clinical experience or an internship program. The purpose of such agreements is to memorialize each party's rights and responsibilities regarding this educational opportunity.

The GW BLS Department Programs are affiliated with many outstanding and diverse clinical sites throughout the nation and internationally. Regardless of the facility type or location, no student will be allowed to start a practicum course (i.e., clinical rotation) unless there is a fully executed affiliation agreement in place between the program and the clinical facility. Affiliation Agreements with clinical sites that the program frequently works with (such as local affiliates) are regularly maintained. The Agreement process is initiated during the first semester after admission. If the student changes their clinical site after admission, the affiliation agreement will be initiated upon receipt and approval of the new CSV form.

The program ensures that all affiliation agreements meet accreditation standards. The Office of General Counsel at GW uses a standard contract template which covers a wide variety of clinical experiences. Establishing an affiliation agreement can be a lengthy process. In rare cases, legal conflicts may prevent GW from establishing an Agreement with prospective sites and the student may be asked to find a different clinical site. This may delay the start day of rotations and consequently, graduation.

I. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

During the practicum course(s), students must comply with the rules and regulations, policies, and procedures of each clinical site to which they are assigned. These regulations and policies will be provided by the clinical site. Each clinical site has specific requirements; these requirements and deadlines will be communicated to students upon finalization of placement. An updated CBC and/or DS, 2-step PPD, Hep C titers, pre-clinical orientation at the site, pre-placement interview, completion of training sessions, etc. are just a few examples of such unique clinical site requirements. Students must comply with BOTH GW's and their clinical site's requirements, and not one or another. Failure to do so may result in delay or suspension of clinical rotations and program dismissal.

Trainee license

Some states require the student to obtain trainee license or a permit before being allowed to complete clinical rotations. Students must contact their clinical site and state health department to determine if a training license/ permit is required. In states that require a training license or a permit, the student must get the training license/ permit application submitted and approved prior to the scheduled start of clinical rotations.

Florida Trainee License: Florida Department of Health requires all medical laboratory science students (aka trainees) to hold a current Trainee License when doing their clinical

rotations in a laboratory located in Florida. “Clinical laboratory trainee” means any person having qualifying education who is enrolled in a clinical laboratory training program. The Florida Board of Clinical Laboratory Personnel is the licensing agency that approves such licenses. Students who reside in Florida must submit an application to the board and obtain a Trainee License and pay for the associated fees prior to clinical rotations. Please visit Florida Board of Clinical Laboratory Personnel website for details: <http://floridasclinicallabs.gov/licensing/trainee/>

In your application, indicate the name of the Training Program (George Washington University MLS Program) and License #: **TP 296**

Note: Active duty military students who are doing clinical rotations at a military hospital may be exempt from some state requirements. Please contact your clinical coordinator for details.

V. ASCP BOARD OF CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PROCESS

Board certification is an important step in professional development and serves as a valuable marker for the highest standard of care. Students are encouraged to start preparing to apply for the ASCP BOC certification exam when they are in their final semester in the program. The ASCP data demonstrates a strong correlation between ASCP BOC exam pass rates and taking the exam immediately after completing the program. The suggested timeline for students who would like to sit for the exam as soon as they graduate is to submit their application **one month** prior to graduation.

Applying for Examination

All applicants are responsible for reading all instructions and information on the application and examination process at www.ascp.org/certification

Carefully follow the instructions on the online application, completing all sections as indicated. A route of eligibility **MUST** be selected when applying for examination.

Choose a route of eligibility:

- If you are applying for Medical Laboratory Scientist, MLS(ASCP) certification, choose "Route 1".

- If you are applying for Technologist in Blood Banking, BB(ASCP) / Chemistry, C(ASCP) / Hematology, H(ASCP) / Microbiology M(ASCP) certification, choose "Route 3". Please download the training documentation form and contact your program director.
- If you are applying for Technologist in Molecular Biology, MB(ASCP) certification, choose "Route 2".

If you have not yet completed your degree at the time of application, indicate when you expect to complete your degree on the application form. In order to determine your eligibility for examination, all required documentation must be submitted to ASCP BOC within forty-five (45) business days of submission of your application or you will be determined ineligible for examination. The board will also contact the program director directly to verify your eligibility for graduation. ***The program director will only verify your graduation after you complete all the degree requirements to graduate from the program.*** This means, you must have successfully completed all your didactic coursework and clinical rotations and exams. (Students who submit their application too early may risk not meeting the 45-day ASCP requirement which may cause you to require a new application and fees).

Upon review of all required documentation, you will be notified of your eligibility status. If you are determined eligible for examination, you will receive notification with instructions for scheduling an appointment to take the examination within the **three-month** period following the date of this notification. Applicants from NAACLS accredited programs are required to submit an official transcript from a regionally accredited college/university bearing the seal of the college/university, the signature of the Registrar and the date your degree was conferred. This transcript must be submitted the ASCP office upon completion of all degree requirements. An official transcript verifying the date your degree was conferred is required before you will be certified and your examination score released to you.

Note: Graduation from GW is not contingent on passing any external certification or licensure examinations.

VI. STATE LICENSURE for MLS

ASCP BOC Exam (certification exam) and state licensure, when applicable, are two different endorsements. While the completion of this program will make graduates eligible to register for an ASCP BOC Exam, this does not automatically guarantee a graduate will also meet

their state's requirements for state licensure (if applicable). Some states have laws or regulations requiring licensure (legal permission) to work in their states. Since each state may have different requirements for licensure, each student is encouraged to contact their state's regulating agency and review these requirements prior to beginning any degree program. State's requiring licensure may require extended duration of practicum experiences, additional academic courses (outside the student's program of study), etc. These additional requirements may require you to take a course or courses outside of GW. In particular, NY and CA have additional requirements for state licensure. Both NY and CA require extended hours for practicum rotations. Students who would like to increase the amount of rotation hours must be able to identify a clinical site that is willing to accommodate such training and obtain appropriate permission from their clinical site and the GW undergraduate or graduate program. Regardless of the state, we recommend each student contact the relevant state Department of Health for more information. It is the student's responsibility that if they intend to practice in a state with licensure, licensure requirements should be researched as early as possible to ensure opportunity to complete all requirements.

Please be aware that the fully online post-baccalaureate certificate programs do not meet the student lab requirement for NY state licensure. Also, for those enrolled in the fully online post-baccalaureate categorical certificates in hematology, microbiology, blood banking, and chemistry, the state of New York does not provide licensure for categorical certification (e.g., Technologist in Microbiology, Technologist in Blood Banking, etc.). We recommend that students who live in New York or plan to relocate to New York do research to determine the NY licensure requirements.

A. CLINICAL ROTATION WAIVER INFORMATION

Individuals who have been working in clinical laboratories may have gained competency equivalent to that of an entry-level Medical Laboratory Scientist via work experience. These individuals may be able to waive out of some or all clinical rotations required for applicable MLS programs* by applying for a Clinical Rotation Waiver (CRW). CRW process enables eligible students to waive out of some or all of the clinical rotations. The CRW process enables eligible students to waive out of some or all of the clinical rotations. The clinical rotations within the BLS department include the following areas:

- Clinical Microbiology
- Clinical Biochemistry
- Blood Banking

- Hematology
- Coagulation
- Urinalysis
- Molecular Diagnostics

Students can request to waive out of some (categorical waiver) or all (full waiver) of the clinical rotation areas. Competency must be demonstrated in all mandatory procedures for the area for which the waiver is being sought. If a student is missing even one mandatory procedure, the entire rotation must be completed.

If applicable, students should work on getting their CRW application completed during the first semester of their program of study. The latest deadline that a CRW application will be considered at the time of CRIT, approximately 6 months prior to the start of the anticipated rotation semester.

Experiences gained through MLT rotations cannot be used towards CRW requests.

Waiver from a clinical rotation means the student will not be required to complete in-person clinical rotations to fulfill program requirements. However, **the student will be required to enroll in the applicable clinical rotation course, complete all other components of the clinical rotation course (e.g., exams, assignments, etc.), and will be responsible for payment of course tuition and fees.**

CRW Eligibility Requirements

- Applicant must have gained competency equivalent to an entry level MLS professional via work experience and must perform all the mandatory procedures as well as most of the optional procedures listed in each area for which they are seeking waiver. An entry level medical laboratory professional must demonstrate proficiency in moderate and high complexity testing including pre- and post-analytical components (e.g., quality assurance) in all areas they apply for CRW. No partial waivers are given.
- Work experience must have occurred within the past 5 years.
- Applicants must meet the below minimum required lengths of time through professional work experience to qualify:
 - Molecular Diagnostic Sciences:
 - Undergraduate: 12 months (1920 hours)
 - Graduate: 6 months (960 hours)
 - Clinical Microbiology – 6 months (960 hours)
 - Clinical Biochemistry – 6 months (960 hours)
 - Blood Banking – 6 months (960 hours)
 - Hematology – 4 months (640 hours)

- Coagulation – 1 month (160 hours)
 - Urinalysis – 1 month (160 hours)
- This is an optional process. Students who are not eligible or who do not want to apply for a waiver will be required to complete the required rotation amount.
- Applying for a CRW is no guarantee it will be approved.

Evaluator/Lab Administrator Qualifications: Evaluator or lab administrator who completes or signs off on the form must be fully MLS certified or certified in the category that they are evaluating with at least 1 year of full-time clinical laboratory experience in the area.

CRW Approval Notification: Decisions will be communicated to the applicant via email by the Biomedical Laboratory Sciences Clinical Team (bls_crw@gwu.edu). Students will need to upload waivers into Typhon prior to the start of the clinical semester.

***Eligible programs include:**

- BSHS in MLS Fully Online
- BSHS in Molecular Diagnostic Sciences Fully Online
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in MLS
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Blood Banking for MLS
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Chemistry for MLS
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Hematology for MLS
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Microbiology for MLS
- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Molecular Diagnostic Sciences
- MSHS in Clinical Microbiology
- MSHS in Laboratory Medicine

CRW Application forms can be found in BLS department blackboard community under Clinical Orientation.

B. CLINICAL ROTATIONS for MLTs (for any rotation without a waiver)

Students who hold a current national MLT (ASCP, AMT, AAB) certification may be able to achieve the given rotation objectives and competencies in a shorter period of time. The

clinical preceptor can sign off on tasks in which the student already displays competence at an MLS level after evaluating the student's current technical proficiency in the provided tasks. Hours may be reduced based on the evaluation. The time spent in training at the clinical site can be decreased by no more than 50% of the standard rotation if all competencies are met at that time. The minimum rotation amount for MLT to MLS track student is as follows:

- Chemistry - 2 weeks (80 hours)
- Hematology/Coagulation/Urinalysis - 2 weeks (80 hours)
- Blood Banking - 2 weeks (80 hours)
- Microbiology - 2 weeks (80 hours)
- Molecular Diagnostics - There are no shortened rotation options for the Molecular Diagnostics programs. Students with prior, documented experience can waive out of the rotation following the waiver process and replace it with an elective.

The purpose of shortened rotations is to reduce the amount of redundant training for MLT certified students. They are not designed to “squeeze” 16 week of training into 8 weeks or to “skip” any procedures.

Approval Process for Shortened Rotations

- MLT certified students in the MSHS in Laboratory Medicine, MSHS in Clinical Microbiology, and Post-Baccalaureate certificate programs who would like to request shortened-rotations must send a copy of MLT certification to their clinical coordinator.
- Work experience as an unlicensed laboratory staff person will not be accepted as qualification toward shortened rotations.
- Students who are scheduled for 8 weeks and subsequently cannot demonstrate competency in all areas will be asked to complete the standard rotation amount.
- In the event that a specific clinical site will not allow shortened rotations, students completing rotation at that site will have to complete the minimum required rotation for that facility or will have to complete the full 16 week rotation.
- Students are allowed to do a combination of shortened and standard length rotations. For example, if an MLT student normally works in Core Lab but not in Microbiology or Blood Banking, then the student may do a shortened rotation in Automated Lab, but complete the standard amount in Microbiology and Blood Bank sections.

VIII. CLINICAL ROTATIONS at GW LOCAL AFFILIATES

Local students who reside within 25 miles of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area typically attend rotations in one of the GW BLS department's primary affiliates, whereas students who live beyond 25 miles of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area secure their own clinical site at the time of admission. Clinical practica conducted within 25 miles of the Washington, DC Metropolitan region are coordinated by the GW BLS Department Local Site Clinical Coordinator.

A. GW Local (Primary) Affiliates

Students who reside within 25 miles of Washington DC area will typically be placed in one of the following local clinical affiliated facilities:

- George Washington University Hospital, DC
- Children's National Medical Center, DC
- Doctors Community Hospital, MD
- Sibley Memorial Hospital, DC
- MedStar Washington Hospital Center, DC
- Washington DC VA Medical Center, DC
- Quest Diagnostic Laboratories, Chantilly, VA
- Virginia Hospital Center, Arlington, VA
- Fairfax County Health Department, VA
- INOVA HealthPlex, Springfield, VA
- INOVA Hospital, Alexandria, VA
- Holy Cross Health, Silver Spring, MD
- Holy Cross Health, Germantown, MD
- Suburban Hospital, MD
- Dimensions Health, MD Walter Reed National Military Center, MD (military students only)
- Anne Arundel Medical Center, MD Patient First, VA & MD

Students attending rotations at GW primary affiliates will follow the GW Standard Rotation Schedule **Monday through Friday, 40 hour per week, and during normal business hours, 8AM – 5PM.** Most of our local affiliates do not offer training on evening/night shifts or weekends. Therefore, students should make appropriate arrangements to make themselves available to attend rotations on a full-time basis. Since multiple students typically use the

same local sites in the same semester, students should plan to attend rotations on a full-time basis and not ask for special accommodations to change their schedules as these requests will not be approved. Students who wish to have more flexible schedules are encouraged to secure their own clinical sites outside of the Washington DC Metropolitan area.

Students will be sent a welcome letter with their rotation schedule by the end of their final semester in the didactic portion (Phase I).

Once a schedule has been determined for a local affiliate, the student is committed to enter and finish the clinical rotations according to the schedule.

Students shall not contact local sites to discuss their rotations or ask questions. The GW BLS Department program local site clinical coordinator serves as a liaison between students and clinical sites and all questions must be referred to the program, and never directly to the clinical site.

▶▶ *Important Note:* Students who are scheduled for a local affiliate and subsequently decide not to enter the rotation at that time will lose the privilege of attending the local affiliate sites and will need to find their own clinical site.

💡💡 *Tip:* At the time of CRIT, students may indicate their preferred rotation site(s). Rotations at a preferred site will be considered but cannot be guaranteed. Students need to prepare themselves to travel to any of the local affiliates to complete their clinical rotation in case if the preferred clinical site is not available during their practicum semester.

Procedures when clinical assignment cannot be immediately guaranteed:

In the event of limited availability of clinical rotations at local affiliates, the GW BLS Department Clinical Coordinator may have to schedule the student's clinical rotation in the semester following the requested semester. In that case, priority placement will be given to the student in the following semester.

B. Other (Secondary) Local Affiliates

Secondary clinical sites may be used on a case-by-case basis when there is availability.

- Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, MD
- University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Regional Medical Center, MD
- Medstar St. Mary's Hospital, MD
- University of Virginia Medical Center and Transitional Care Hospital (UVA), VA

- True Health Diagnostics, Richmond, VA
- Sentara Healthcare, VA
- Danville Regional Medical Center, Danville, VA
- Novant Health, Prince William, VA
- Mary Washington Hospital, VA
- Riverside Healthcare, VA
- Fort Belvoir Army Community Hospital, VA (military students only)
- Augusta Health, VA

Local students who secured their own clinical sites may work with the site's clinical preceptor to set up their rotation schedule. Once the schedule is confirmed by the clinical site, students should add their schedules to the clinical rotation management tool, Typhon.

IX. ROTATIONS at NON-LOCAL AFFILIATES

Clinical rotations conducted beyond 25 miles outside of the Washington, DC Metropolitan area, and outside of Virginia and Maryland, are coordinated by the GW BLS Non-Local Site Clinical Coordinator. Students who live outside the Washington, DC metropolitan area are required to secure a suitable clinical site at the time of admissions.

Students who have secured their own sites should contact their clinical site periodically (at least once every semester) and keep them updated regarding their rotation plans (unless otherwise instructed by the clinical site). If there are any changes to a student's clinical site schedule or placement, please contact the GW clinical coordinator immediately. Students who fail to contact their clinical site or GW clinical coordinator, if needed, may risk losing their clinical spot(s) which may prolong their program of study.

The student and the clinical site may work together to set up a schedule that will best fit their needs. Practicum course hours and dates can be determined by the clinical site. If permitted by the clinical site, students may complete rotations on a flexible schedule, as long as the minimum rotation hours are completed and competencies are covered. The student and the clinical preceptors in each area shall agree upon the dates of the clinical experience

X. CLINICAL ROTATION POLICIES

A. GENERAL CLINICAL ROTATION POLICIES

1. Rotation Schedules

Rotation Start Date: Due to liability coverage, students must be registered in the corresponding practicum course(s) during the semester in which they are completing that clinical rotation(s). Students can only start their rotations on or after the official start date of the semester for which the student is registered for. Students can check the [GW academic calendar](#) to determine the earliest possible start date of their practicum courses. Even though the exact dates will slightly change every semester, the approximate start date for spring rotations is early-January, summer is late-April, and fall is late-August.

Rotation End Date: The official end date of the semester should also be taken into consideration. Rotations in a specific area should ideally be completed by the official end date of the semester. Students whose rotations are not completed by the start of the following term will need a continuous enrollment application for the semester they are finishing their rotations. Students will receive an Incomplete notation until their rotation is completed.

Non-local students may attend rotations on a full-time or part-time basis and complete them in more than one semester. Students splitting their rotations in two semesters are required to speak to their clinical coordinator and academic advisor.

▶▶ *Important Note:* Please only take the number of credits you can feasibly handle. Failure to do so may result in a failing practicum grade.

2. Obtaining the GW ID card (GWorld Card)

For online students whose clinical sites require them to obtain the University ID card (GWorld card), can get more information here <https://online.gwu.edu/gworld-card>.

3. Transportation/Parking

Students must provide their own transportation. Students must work out their parking options with their clinical site.

4. Housing

GW BLS Department students must provide their own housing. For further resources and assistance with housing information, please go to the following websites:

<http://living.gwu.edu> (Academic Year)

<http://summerhousing.gwu.edu/> (Summer Housing)

<https://www.gwoffcampus.com/> (Off-campus Housing)

5. Lunch

Students are required to take a 30 minute break for every 4-6 hours worked consecutively. The time of the lunch period will be determined by the teaching supervisor or technologist with whom the student is working. Breaks will be scheduled at the technologist's discretion. Lunch breaks cannot be counted towards clinical rotation hours.

6. Protecting Personal Belongings

At clinical practicum sites, students should safeguard their belongings at all times. In some clinical sites, lockers may be available for student use; however, this is not always the case. Consequently, students should bring only essential items necessary and minimize bringing expensive items, such as laptop computers. Personal items such as purses, wallets, books, and clothing should be kept in lockers, if they are available. If lockers are not available, the student must identify a location from the laboratory supervisor/manager regarding storage of personal items. Personal items should not be left unattended for even a few minutes. Neither the clinical site nor GW are responsible for the security of personal belongings.

7. Malpractice Insurance/Liability Coverage

The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences will provide general and professional liability insurance coverage for all registered students while they are in clinical practicum courses (clinical rotations). Due to the liability coverage, students will not be permitted to start a practicum if they are not registered for the corresponding clinical practicum at GW.

8. Student Service Work

Students shall not take the responsibility or the place of qualified staff while in clinical rotations. However, after demonstrating proficiency, students, with qualified supervision, may be permitted to perform procedures.

9. Employment

The practicum courses are typically done on a full time schedule. Therefore, they are an intense and demanding learning experience. For this reason, it is recommended that students do not work while completing their practicum courses. If it becomes necessary for a student to maintain or seek employment, it is suggested that students minimize work to no more than 20 hours per week.

▶▶ *Important Note:* Per NAACLS accreditation requirements, students cannot use their work-hours toward clinical rotation hours. Clinical rotation hours must be completely separate from work-hours. Students who are employed at their rotation site must make arrangements with their clinical site to conduct their rotations before/after their regular work hours. Clinical rotations are unpaid.

B. POLICIES ON ETHICAL BEHAVIOR, PROFESSIONALISM AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Professional conduct and professionalism are important in the health care professions. GW Health Sciences is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in education, research and service. All individuals who represent GW Health Sciences, including its faculty, staff, students, and volunteers, will demonstrate the highest standards of ethical behavior in order to promote and maintain a healthy, safe learning environment and honor its organizational values. Members of the GW Health Sciences community adopt and adhere to a set of ethical guidelines published by the University online at:

https://smhs.gwu.edu/sites/default/files/Ethical%20Behavior%20and%20Professionalism%20Policy_MLR%20redline.pdf

Students within GW Health Sciences must demonstrate competency in the intellectual, physical and social tasks that cumulatively represent the essential functions of professional practice within health science-related careers. The functional areas defined within these technical standards and essential functions published by the University online at:

<https://smhs.gwu.edu/sites/default/files/TECHNICAL%20STANDARDS%20and%20ESSENTIAL%20FUNCTIONS%20FINAL%20030618.pdf>

During the clinical practicum courses, students will be evaluated on their professional conduct (see Appendix-11). Participants in patient care environments will consistently demonstrate the following professional behaviors:

- Communicate and interact with patients and families, members of the care team, staff, learners, and volunteers in a courteous, respectful way.
- Refrain from any form of communication or interpersonal interaction that is consistent with harassment, exploitation, verbal or physical abuse, or intimidation.
- Refrain from any form of discrimination, such as on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, age, marital status, cultural beliefs, political affiliation, or employment role.
- Support a culture of safety for all patients and families, health care professionals, staff, learners and volunteers.
- Protect patient privacy and the confidentiality of patient information in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations or policies.
- Recognize one's own limitations in the patient care setting, and seek assistance or guidance from a qualified professional if it is in the best interest of the patient and family.
- Support interprofessional collaborative practice and teamwork in the patient care setting.

- Engage regularly in self-care to promote and maintain personal well-being.
- Abstain from any behavior and substance that potentially impairs one's ability to participate with or provide high quality, safe care.

Students demonstrating unprofessional behaviors will have points deducted from the professional comportment grade, which may result in removal from that rotation and failure of the practicum course.

1. Clinical Practicum Dress Code

It is the program's policy that we, as health professionals, have a responsibility to our patients, co-workers, and the profession to maintain the highest standards with respect to appearance and proper identification. Students must at all times abide by the dress code of the clinical site if it varies from the guidelines below:

- a. Clean lab coats must be worn at all times in the laboratory. Lab coats should be removed prior to leaving the laboratory to go to the cafeteria and at the end of the day. Most labs provide disposable lab coats to students.
- b. Closed-toed, flat or low-heeled shoes must be worn while in the laboratory.
- c. Appropriate street clothes are required at all times. Casual clothes (i.e. jeans, shorts, sweatshirts/pants, sunglasses, hats etc.) cannot be worn in healthcare environment. Jeans and shorts are not permitted.
- d. Due to varying policies among our clinical sites, please abide by the clinical site requirements regarding the wearing of scrubs.
- e. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum. For safety reasons, large, dangling earrings are not permitted. No loose bracelets.
- f. Make-up must be conservative.
- g. Long hair that is below shoulder length must be tied back while in the laboratory. The ends of head coverings worn for religious reasons must be tucked within lab coats.
- h. It is expected that good personal hygiene habits will be demonstrated. Nails must be clean and short.
- i. Identification badges must be worn at all times.
- j. Adhere to specific clinical site requirements regarding appearance, hygiene, and behavior.

2. Clinical Practicum Attendance

Students are expected to complete all of the assignments and attend each clinical practicum for the required number of hours. If a student is unable to attend a scheduled practicum, they **must** notify the GW BLS program clinical coordinator **AND** clinical preceptor of the laboratory to which they are assigned prior to the scheduled starting time. Excessive absences within a practicum will result in a lower professional comportment grade and must be made up; this may extend completion of the program.

Attendance is mandatory for the full schedule of time for all clinical rotations. The clinical experience hours may be adjusted, if necessary, by the clinical preceptor. The clinical coordinator must also be notified.

The clinical experience activities are very difficult to reschedule, therefore any absences are highly discouraged unless there is a documented extenuating circumstance.

Individual work schedules shall **NOT** interfere with the rotation schedule. Students may not request to arrive late or leave early in order to satisfy an employment or any other personal commitment.

Students will not follow the GW Academic Calendar breaks (i.e., Spring Break, etc.) during clinical rotations. Any “time off,” except for true emergencies or sick leaves, must be approved by the clinical coordinator of the GW BLS Department **AND** the clinical preceptor of the laboratory ahead of time. Failure to notify the GW Clinical Coordinator may result in a **5%** deduction from the professional comportment grade.

Holidays: Students will follow the holiday schedule of the clinical site where they are assigned. The final decision rests with the clinical preceptor at the clinical site.

Excused Absence: Examples of sufficiently important reasons for an excused absence from clinical rotations typically are sickness or bereavement. Students may be asked to provide documentation (i.e., physician report, etc.) for their excused absences.

Note: In the event of inclement weather such as snow or ice storms, students need to follow the policies of the clinical site. Students should be informed of these clinical site policies prior to the start of rotations.

Unexcused Absence: All other occurring absences, except for the reasons provided as an excused absence above, will be considered as an unexcused absence. These include but

are not limited to: reasons that do not qualify as an excused absence, absences that were not notified and approved, consistent tardiness, or requesting to leave the lab early.

All excessive absences within a practicum must be made up. Both the GW BLS department clinical coordinator and the clinical preceptor of the assigned lab area must be notified.

Failure to communicate absences or comply with this policy will result in an administrative dismissal from the rotations and/or the program.

Tardiness: Persistent tardiness is one aspect of carelessness and is not compatible with professionalism, dependability, and being a member of the health care team. Uncorrected tardiness may result in the lowering of the professional comportment grade and will ultimately affect the clinical practicum course grade. If a student will be late, they must notify their teaching supervisor prior to the time they are required to report.

3. Incomplete Grade

Students are expected to complete their practicum within the semester they are registered for the experience. A practicum grade of Incomplete (“I”) will be given only in *extenuating* circumstances (i.e., medical emergencies or other serious situations, schedule changes at clinical sites, delays on affiliation agreements, suspended rotations, etc.).

If a student receives an “Incomplete” grade in a practicum course, they may not be able to progress to the next practicum course until the “Incomplete” grade is converted to a final course grade. When a student is approved for incomplete status, a Learning Contract will be drafted by the instructor. All approved learning contracts will be filed in the student’s record.

The Program Director/Dean’s Office will convert the “Incomplete” grade to a “Failing” grade if the student is unable to complete the practicum within one year.

Should a student receive an F grade for the practicum, the student will be required to reregister for the class, pay the associated tuition and fees, and complete a new practicum in order to receive credit for the class. Students who receive a failing grade may be required to secure an alternate site which would delay their program of study.

X. INFECTION CONTROL

A. Safety

Students will be instructed in safety procedures for handling patient specimens, equipment, and supplies during their didactic courses. These procedures will be reinforced throughout the clinical rotations. Students are expected to follow all safety regulations in effect at the clinical site. This includes following the Universal Precautions Policy that regards all patient samples as infectious and all reagents as potentially hazardous. Students will be provided with protective clothing and equipment necessary for maintaining a safe work environment while in the laboratory. The key elements of Universal Precautions include but are not limited to:

- All students must wear lab coats, latex or nitrile gloves and eye protection (glasses or safety goggles) while handling patient samples during the clinical rotation. Additional PPE may be required by a clinical site and all students must follow whatever the site requirements are
- Frequent and thorough hand washing. Hand washing at least 20 seconds with soap and running water.
- Dispose of all sharps in approved puncture resistant containers
- Do not bend, break, or recap needles or other sharps
- Dispose of infectious waste in appropriate infectious waste containers, such as the red biohazard bags.
- Eating (including chewing gum), drinking, and applying cosmetics in laboratory is strictly prohibited

B. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

OSHA requirements specify the protective measures all health care personnel are required to perform in order to prevent the spread of communicable disease. Completion of OSHA training ensures students are able to demonstrate proper hand-washing technique, apply personal protective devices in the presence of potential or confirmed infections, integrate isolation precautions, and provide proof of current immunization records and screening for active tuberculosis. All clinical students are required to know:

- OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standards
- How to recognize tasks which involve occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials.

- How to select appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for a given task including how to don and doff PPE.
- Post-exposure evaluation and follow up procedures.

As a refresher, students are encouraged to review OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standards and other appropriate Safety & Health Topics and CDC guidelines on assessing and reducing their risks for occupational exposure to infectious diseases prior to the start of any clinical experience.

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/laboratory/OSHA3404laboratory-safety-guidance.pdf>

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/healthcarefacilities/infectious_diseases.html#cdc_guidelines

C. Reporting Student Injuries during Clinical Experiences

All occupational exposures (needle-stick injury, splash exposure, musculoskeletal injuries etc.) are required to be reported to the GW BLS clinical coordinator or program director as soon as possible. The place of referral will be influenced by several factors including clinical site, time of day and type of injury. The student should take the below action based on the [GW Policy and Procedures on Health Sciences Clinical Student Occupational Exposures](#):

1. Follow training received on Universal Precautions if exposure to blood and/or body fluids occurs. This includes washing hands and any other affected skin area with soap and water. Flush mucous membranes with water as soon as feasible.
2. Immediately notify the appropriate individual at the clinical site and the GW MLS clinical coordinators after the incident occurs, and seek treatment, if necessary.
3. For students completing clinical experiences outside the local Washington, DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia areas, they should follow the facility guidelines and protocols and seek immediate treatment at the closest appropriate healthcare facility.
4. Regardless of your clinical location, if the exposure occurs between 8 AM and 4:30 PM: Call George Washington University Hospital Employee Health Service, Suite G1092 in the GW Hospital (GW Hospital EHS, not Medical Faculty Associates Employee Health) at (202) 715-4275 and identify yourself as a clinical health sciences student who has had a blood/body fluid exposure. If Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) for high-risk HIV exposure is necessary, it is best to start within 2 hours, so do not delay.

5. All occupational exposures or other injuries are to be reported to the GW BLS Program Clinical Coordinator. The student and the clinical instructor (or other designated clinic personnel) should complete the George Washington University Health Sciences Student Injury Report Form (Appendix 12). This form can be found on the GW Risk Management webpage under “forms”. <https://risk.gwu.edu/workers-compensation-accident-reporting>
6. The Office of Risk Management will follow up with the GW BLS department and/or with the student as needed.
7. Students should carry their health insurance card at all times. Student’s insurance will be billed for services in the GW HOSPITAL ED or other ED outside of DMV area. Students are responsible for charges incurred that are not covered by insurance.

NOTE: Typical clinical affiliation agreements indicate clinical sites shall provide students with access to emergency care if necessary while the student is assigned to the facility. Students will use their health insurance if treatment at an ER or urgent care facility is required or initiated.

XI. CLINICAL EVALUATION GRADING POLICIES and PROCEDURES

A. Clinical Experience Performance Evaluations

Students will be assessed in the clinical practicum courses based on their technical abilities, theoretical knowledge, and affective behaviors exhibited at their respective clinical sites. For this purpose, rotation evaluation forms are designed based on *entry-level* competencies to guide the student regarding the expected level and nature of participation and the required professional conduct while at the rotation site. The objectives in the evaluation forms outline the minimum level of competency expected from the student. Most laboratory rotations will cover more than these minimally required procedures; thus students are expected to take every opportunity to enrich their learning experiences by participating in all activities that each facility has to offer under appropriate supervision.

Each practicum course also has a professional comportment that students will be evaluated on throughout the course.

B. Sample Calculation of Clinical Course Grade

Components of clinical course grade will include:

- Professionalism in the practicum
- Professionalism comportment in the clinical setting
- Technical skills
- Quizzes and/ or assignments
- End of rotation exams

Please see Appendix 12 for the BLS undergraduate and graduate clinical course grading scale.

XII. APPENDICES

If you are a BLS department student, please visit your student blackboard community to find handbook appendices.