Medical Laboratory Science

Bachelor of Science

Pre-Medical Concentration
Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT) - Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Articulation

http://www.uis.edu/Medicalabscience
Email: mls@uis.edu (cls@uis.edu)
Office Phone: (217) 206-8651
Office Location: SLB 16

MLS Goals and Objectives

A Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Laboratory Science provides exciting opportunities for individuals with an interest in science who wish to pursue a career in a health/medical profession or other laboratory-related field. This major recently changed its name from Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS) to Medical Laboratory Science. Medical laboratory scientists analyze blood and other body fluids using a variety of methods and sophisticated biomedical instruments. The results of these analyses are used to determine the presence or absence of disease, help determine appropriate medical treatment, monitor therapy, and assess health. Medical laboratory science encompasses such disciplines as hematology, clinical chemistry, immunohematology (blood banking), microbiology, immunology, and molecular diagnostics. Medical laboratory scientists are proficient at problem-solving, integration, organization, and quality management. In addition to performance and interpretation of laboratory procedures, medical laboratory scientists may be involved in the selection of lab methods or analyzers, as well as training, supervision, and consultation with other health care professionals.

An MLS education provides an excellent preparation for medical and graduate schools, and also prepares the graduate for employment opportunities outside the hospital setting. Recent graduates have gone on to medical school, law school, and programs in physical therapy, pathologists' assistant, and public health. Diverse job opportunities include employment in research laboratories, forensic science laboratories, veterinary laboratories, fertility centers, and employment as laboratory computer specialists, educators, and laboratory consultants.

Completion of the degree leads to eligibility for certification as a Medical Laboratory Scientist by the Board of Certification of the American Society of Clinical Pathology. Issuing of the degree is contingent on passing any type of external certification or licensure examination. The UIS MLS Program has 100% employment of graduates seeking jobs in medical laboratories. The UIS Medical Laboratory Science Program is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), 5600 N. River Rd., Suite 720, Rosemont, IL 60018 (773) 714-8880. UIS' full ten-year accreditation is the result of two consecutive accreditation cycles with no deficiencies.

Program Features/Requirements

The Medical Laboratory Science curriculum at UIS provides outstanding preparation for certification as a medical laboratory scientist. The first two years of the four-year major are considered the PreProfessional Phase. During this time, the student completes the general education requirements of the university and the prerequisites for the Professional Phase. The last two years, including the summer between the last two years, are considered the Professional Phase of the MLS Program which is accredited by NAACLS (see above).

Both UIS students and transfer students must submit an application for the Professional Phase of the MLS Program. Students must meet the Essential Functions and health requirements (including immunizations) outlined on the MLS website in the MLS Student Handbook. The admissions packet is available from the department office staff. See the BACHELOR'S DEGREE (p. 1) section for the Admissions requirements and processes.

Initial academic work provides students with a strong liberal arts general education and background in fundamental sciences. As the program proceeds, students receive theory and laboratory experience in all areas of medical laboratory science. The students' clinical education encompasses practical rotations through the various clinical specialty areas of affiliated medical laboratories and is under the joint supervision of faculty at the University of Illinois Springfield and practicing professionals in affiliated hospital laboratories. These practicum courses integrate the theory and practice of prerequisite campus courses with the professional practice and sophisticated instrumentation at the medical laboratories. Enhancement experiences are available in areas of interest to the student. A list of the current affiliated medical laboratories can be found on the MLS website. All facilities where students rotate are accredited. The program concludes with courses such as Health Care Management and a capstone Clinical Correlations course.

All students are required to have a criminal background check and drug screen completed prior to participating in clinical rotations. A background check that is not "clear" precludes rotations at some hospitals and prevents employment at most healthcare facilities.

Honors in Medical Laboratory Science (Department Honors)

MLS majors with a cumulative GPA equal to or greater than 3.25 in the MLS Program and one semester in residency at UIS may elect to participate in the MLS honors option. In addition to the MLS Program requirements, honors students must:

1. maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25,
2. earn a minimum grade of B- for each course in the MLS Program,
3. successfully complete three credits of CLS 400 Applied Research or CLS 499 Tutorial, and
4. present their findings in a formal paper and public presentation.

Students must apply for participation in the honors program to the MLS Program Director and obtain approval of a faculty research advisor prior to their final semester. This is not connected with the CAP Honors Program. Details can be found in the MLS Student Handbook.
Advising

All students are encouraged to meet with the MLS Program Director or a MLS advisor before initial registration and periodically thereafter in order to plan their courses of study to ensure that all requirements are met in the minimum amount of time. There is no advance placement and no credits for experiential learning.

Students are advised to be familiar with the current MLS Student Handbook and ask a MLS advisor for help if they do not understand the MLS policies and procedures.

The transfer option provides for the continuing education of students who have completed the first two years (60 semester hours) of lower-division work (preferably with the A.A. or A.S. degree). The MLS program has two + two articulation agreements with several community colleges; however, transfer students from other two-year and four-year institutions are also encouraged to apply. See the MLS Program Director regarding questions about transfer of credits.

Students should consult with college advisors for specific guidance regarding completion of general education requirements. In MLS, the clinical practicum courses (MLS 421, MLS 422, MLS 423, MLS 424) fulfill the requirement for the ECCE Engagement Experience (six hours).

For best outcomes in the Program and on the national certification exam, part-time status is not recommended. Because the MLS Program proceeds in cohorts, off-sequence students will need to reapply for the cohort with which they will do the full-time clinical practicum courses.

Grading Policy

Since the curriculum includes laboratory work done under professional supervision, the degree candidate not only must satisfy the customary expectations of academic work but also must meet the high-quality standards demanded of a professional medical laboratory scientist. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 at UIS. Medical Laboratory Science students are required to maintain a grade of C- or better in all required courses.