

MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine Student Handbook 2026-2027



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Purpose of the MLS Student Handbook

This handbook is intended for use as a resource of information for students in the MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine (NOTE: The titles “MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine” and “the MLS Program” will be used interchangeably throughout this handbook). The information and policies presented have been specifically adapted for the MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine.

All policies are subject to change by the MLS Program Administration as deemed necessary. Students will be notified of significant content changes via email.

Program Overview

The Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT) to Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Program of Maine was created as a collaborative effort between the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI) and the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA). Medical Laboratory Science is an online four or seven-semester program leading to a Baccalaureate Degree of Science in MLS, awarded by the home campus, for those students who have successfully completed a NAACLS or ABHES-accredited CLT/MLT program (or equivalent coursework), hold current national certification as an MLT, and wish to continue with their education. The four-semester track requires students to take courses full-time, whereas the seven-semester track allows for part-time study.

The program is fully online with no required clinical practicum component. The clinical practicum has been replaced with applied learning experiences and discipline-specific seminars that require critical thinking and analytical skills that the students will acquire throughout the didactic courses of the program.

Upon completion, graduates are eligible to take the MLS certification exam administered by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) or the American Medical Technologists (AMT).

Program Accreditation

The MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine is applying for accreditation and student eligibility to take some certification examinations may depend on whether or not the program achieves “serious applicant” status. The program is seeking accreditation from:

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) 5600 N. River Road, Suite 720 Rosemont, IL 60018. For more complete information about NAACLS and accreditation program status, you can visit the accreditation organization website at: [National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science](#) or call 773-714-8880.

Vision and Mission Statements and Program Overview

Vision: “Providing Quality MLS Education to Communities Across the State of Maine and beyond.”

Mission: The MLS Online Program of Maine seeks to prepare graduates to provide consistent, quality patient care, including the following entry-level skills:

- Apply knowledge of theory and principles,
- Perform laboratory and quality assurance procedures safely, accurately, and efficiently,
- Evaluate laboratory findings to aid in patient diagnosis and treatment,
- Think critically to recognize errors during each phase of laboratory testing.
- Communicate sufficiently to serve the needs of the patient, public and healthcare team and,
- Make appropriate professional decisions that demonstrate a commitment to the patient and career.

Program Goals

The MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine is committed to providing quality instruction to certified Medical Laboratory Technicians for professional development, career growth opportunities, and increased technical knowledge to provide patient-centered care.

To fulfill the mission of the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program and University as well as meet the needs of the medical laboratory community, the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program will:

1. Produce graduates who are effective communicators with all members of the health care team.
2. Produce graduates that will demonstrate the technical skills of an entry-level scientist in an ethical and professional manner.
3. Maintain a quality program through continuous assessment, evaluation, and revision.
4. Maintain qualified faculty that pursues life-long learning and continued professional development.
5. Encourage students to be lifelong learners as they seek to maintain professional competency and continuing education for career growth.
6. Develop in our students creative and critical thinking skills needed to promote sound and independent judgments.
7. Foster leadership through personal examples and to provide a source of leadership knowledge and guidance in medical laboratory science.
8. Use innovative educational methods to deliver an exceptional curriculum which best suits the needs of a diverse population.
9. Facilitate transfer of knowledge and skills to adapt to a current and evolving scope of practice.
10. Foster an environment which develops critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and creative problem solving.
11. Develop and investigate innovative educational methods to contribute to best practices in laboratory science education.
12. Provide students with opportunities to develop interpersonal attitudes needed to work independently and professionally with patients and other healthcare professionals.

Program Learning Outcomes

MLS BS 1. Graduates apply knowledge of theory and principles of related content to the clinical laboratory setting to providing patient-centered care.

MLS BS 2. Graduates apply critical thinking to identify, troubleshoot and solve pre-analytical, analytical and post analytical problems.

MLS BS 3. Graduates demonstrate personal and professional development through life-long learning.

MLS BS 4. Graduates apply leadership principles in the professional setting to achieve organizational goals.

MLS BS 5. Graduates understand, value, and practice ethical principles, moral reasoning, and professional responsibilities in science and the regulation of clinical laboratories.

MLS BS 6. Graduates communicate laboratory information effectively to a variety of audiences.

Program Assessment Policy

The MLS Program faculty recognizes the importance of ongoing assessment for validation of quality, and for identification of areas that require improvement. For more information, please refer to the Program Assessment and Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.

Entry-Level Competencies

At entry-level, the medical laboratory scientist will possess the entry-level competencies necessary to perform the full range of medical laboratory tests in areas such as Clinical Chemistry, Hematology/Hemostasis, Immunology, Immunohematology/Transfusion medicine, Microbiology, Urine and Body Fluid Analysis and Laboratory Operations, and other emerging diagnostics, and will play a role in the development of and evaluation of test systems and interpretive algorithms.

The medical laboratory scientist will have diverse responsibilities in areas of analysis and clinical decision-making, regulatory compliance with applicable regulations, education, and quality assurance/performance improvement whether laboratory testing is researched, developed or performed.

At career entry-level, the medical laboratory scientist will have the following professional competencies:

They will have the ability to

A. Professional Behaviors and Communication

- Demonstrate professional and ethical behavior along with effective interpersonal communication skills when engaging with various stakeholders.
- Establish effective interprofessional working relationships with other health care professionals, demonstrating comprehension of and respect for their roles and patient welfare.
- Recognize and appreciate the importance of engaging with an inclusive workforce through collaboration.
- Value and advocate for a workplace environment that fosters inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

B. Safety and Compliance

- Comply with government regulations and accreditation standards relevant to the respective discipline.
- Adhere to prescribed protocols for overall laboratory safety, biohazard containment, and waste disposal.
- Implement quality assurance principles to ensure the validity and accuracy of laboratory-generated data.

C. Education and Research

- Acknowledge and respond to individual requirements for continuing education and development to foster growth and maintain professional competence.
- Provide instruction to users of laboratory services regarding appropriate procedures, test utilization and interpretation.
- Evaluation clinical research studies and data sets to assess applicability and validity.

D. Laboratory Operations

- Employ a logical and systematic problem-solving approach when identifying errors and/or technical issues with laboratory procedures and instrumentation.
- Apply principles of data security to safeguard laboratory and hospital information systems.
- Apply principles of quality assurance to ensure validity and accuracy of laboratory data.
- Recognize principles and practices of laboratory management as applied to clinical laboratory science.

E. Pre-Analytical Competencies

- Evaluate specimen collection, processing, and storage procedures in accordance with operating procedures.
- Ensure specimen integrity is maintained throughout the sample procurement process.

F. Analytical Competencies

- Adhere to written policies, processes, and procedures for analytical testing, analysis, and instrument maintenance.

- Evaluate and provide rationale for troubleshooting protocols in analytical testing when appropriate.
- Perform routine procedures in accordance with standard operating procedures.
- Apply quality control principles to analytical testing procedures, including instrument calibration, statistical analysis of control results, Westgard rules, and verification of reference ranges.
- Perform basic calculations, dilutions, and statistical analyses for procedures and analytical testing in the respective discipline.
- Apply theoretical principles of instrumentation to current methods of analysis.

G. Post-Analytical Competencies

- Perform all post-analytical procedures in accordance with quality assurance protocols and regulatory standards.
- Evaluate results for accuracy and relative to quality control, patient history, specimen integrity, and overall clinical correlation.
- Report test results, including abnormal, STAT, and critical values, in accordance with the laboratory's standard operating procedures.

Reference: *NAACLS Standards* updated 10/2025.

Technical Standards

The MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine has established minimum essential requirements (separate from academic standards for admission), which every student must meet, with or without reasonable accommodation(s), in order to participate fully in all aspects of training and eventual employment in the clinical laboratory setting. These essential requirements are divided into observational, movement, communication, intellectual, and behavioral categories.

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

- Observe laboratory demonstrations in which biologicals (i.e. body fluids, culture materials, tissue sections, and cellular specimens) are tested for their biochemical, hematological, immunological, microbiological, and histochemical components.
- Characterize the color, odor, clarity, and viscosity of biologicals, reagents, or chemical reaction products.
- Employ a clinical binocular microscope to discriminate among fine structural and color (hue, shading, and intensity) differences of microscope specimens.
- 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.

- Move freely and safely about a laboratory.
- Reach laboratory benchtops and shelves, patients lying in hospital beds, or patients seated in specimen collection furniture.
- Travel to clinical laboratory sites for practical experience.
- Perform moderately taxing continuous work, often requiring prolonged sitting or standing, over several hours.
- Maneuver phlebotomy and culture acquisition equipment to safely collect valid laboratory specimens from patients.

- Possess finger and manual dexterity necessary to control laboratory equipment (i.e. pipettes, inoculating loops, test tubes), adjust instruments to perform laboratory procedures, such as handling small tools and/or parts to repair and correct equipment malfunctions, and transferring drops into tubes of small diameter.
- 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.

- Read and comprehend technical and professional materials (i.e. textbooks, magazine and journal articles, handbooks, and instruction manuals).
- Follow verbal and written instructions in order to correctly and independently perform laboratory procedures.
- Clearly instruct patients prior to specimen collection.
- Effectively, confidentially, and sensitively converse with patients regarding laboratory tests.
- Communicate with faculty members, fellow students, staff, and other health professionals verbally and in recorded format.
- 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.

- Possess these intellectual skills: comprehension, measurement, mathematical calculation, reasoning, integration, analysis, comparison, self-expression, and criticism.
- Be able to exercise sufficient judgment to recognize and correct performance deviations.
- 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, the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with faculty, fellow students, clinical instructors, patients, and other members of the healthcare team.

- Manage heavy academic schedules and deadlines.
- Be able to manage the use of time and be able to systematize actions in order to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic constraints.
- Demonstrate appropriate judgment and effectively employ intellect under conditions of stress.
- 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).
- Be flexible and creative and adapt to professional and technical change.
- Recognize potentially hazardous materials, equipment, and situations and proceed safely in order to minimize risk of injury to patients, self, and nearby individuals.
- Adapt to working with unpleasant biologicals.
- Support and promote the activities of fellow students and of healthcare professionals. Promotion of peers helps furnish a team approach to learning, task completion, problem-solving, and patient care.
- 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 her or his own performance, accept constructive criticism, and look for ways to improve (i.e. participate in enriched educational activities). The student must be able to evaluate the performance of fellow students and tactfully offer constructive comments.
- Show respect for diversity: works well with individuals of different age, ethnic background, religion, sexual orientation and/or educational backgrounds.

- Exhibit professional behavior by conforming to appropriate standards of dress, appearance, language, and public behavior.

MLS students will review the Technical Standards during the Program Orientation. Each student will be required to sign the Technical Standards and a copy will be maintained in the student's file.

Admission Requirements

- Hold an associate's degree from a NAACLS or ABHES-accredited CLT/MLT program, or equivalent coursework
- Submit proof of current ASCP MLT certification
- Have earned a GPA of 2.0 or better in your original MLT degree program
- Submit official transcripts from all schools attended

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MLS Program Fee

There is a one-time cost, non-refundable program fee for the MLS program. For the full-time cohort the fee is \$250 and for the part-time cohort the fee is \$500. If a full-time student moves to become a part-time student, they will be charged the \$250 program fee a second time.

MLS Program Required Coursework

Please see the following MLS Program degree plans and course descriptions. The UMPI MLS transcript audit sheet and the UMA MLS Checksheet indicate the required coursework for degree completion at each University and are also used for student advising.

All MLS courses are fully online asynchronous with the exception of one required live session on a

conferencing platform to present the case study capstone project in MLS 430. Some MLS courses include applied learning experiences that simulate laboratory activities and are used to assess psychomotor skills.

For specific University general education requirements outside of what is listed on the degree plan, please see the requirements of a baccalaureate degree. [UMA Requirements](#). [UMPI Requirements](#).

Degree Plans

Medical Laboratory Science, B.S. Full-Time Plan (Four Semesters)

Fall (12 credits total)

- MAT 201 (UMPI) or MAT 115 (UMA) 3 credits
- SWK 105 (UMPI) or PHI 351 (UMA) 3 credits
- Gen ed classes 6 credits

Spring (15 credits total)

- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 300 Hematology 3 credits
 - MLS 310 Clinical Immunology 3 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 305 Clinical Chemistry I 3 credits
 - MLS 330 Immunohematology 3 credits
 - MLS 320 Body Fluids 3 credits

Summer (12 credits total)

- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 315 Clinical Microbiology I 3 credits
 - MLS 335 Molecular Techniques 3 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 340 Clinical Microbiology II 3 credits
 - MLS 325 Clinical Chemistry II 3 credits

Fall (11 credits total)

- Full 14 Week Semester
 - MLS 430 Senior Seminar 3 credits
- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 415 Immunohematology Seminar 2 credits
 - MLS 425 Chemistry Seminar 2 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 410 Hematology Seminar 2 credits
 - MLS 420 Microbiology Seminar 2 credits

**Medical Laboratory Science, B.S.
Part-Time Plan (Seven Semesters)**

Spring (6 credits total)

- MAT 201 (UMPI) or MAT 115 (UMA) 3 credits
- SWK 105 (UMPI) or PHI 351 (UMA) 3 credits

Summer (6 credits total)

- Gen Eds

Fall (6 credits total)

- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 300 Hematology 3 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 310 Clinical Immunology 3 credits

Spring (9 credits total)

- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 305 Clinical Chemistry I 3 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 330 Immunohematology 3 credits
 - MLS 320 Body Fluids 3 credits

Summer (6 credits total)

- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 315 Clinical Microbiology I 3 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 325 Clinical Chemistry II 3 credits

Fall (10 credits total)

- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 315 Clinical Microbiology II 3 credits
 - MLS 425 Chemistry Seminar 2 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 335 Molecular Techniques 3 credits
 - MLS 420 Microbiology Seminar 2 credits

Spring (7 credits total)

- Full 14 Week Semester
 - MLS 430 Senior Seminar 3 credits
- First 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 415 Immunohematology Seminar 2 credits
- Second 7 Week Semester
 - MLS 410 Hematology Seminar 2 credits

Medical Laboratory Science Program Course Descriptions

MLS 300 Hematology

Subjects include normal physiology and morphology of blood cell development. The analysis and clinical correlation of quantitative and qualitative variations in blood including the pathophysiology and associated laboratory tests of anemias, benign leukocyte disorders, hematological malignancies, abnormal morphological characteristics of blood cells, as well as bleeding and clotting disorders. 3 credits

MLS 305 Clinical Chemistry I

Principles of the physical and chemical analysis of medically significant organic and inorganic substances found in human body fluids and tissues. This course covers the study of chemical and analytical techniques used in clinical laboratory analysis, as well as laboratory mathematics, phlebotomy, and quality control/quality assurance. Medically relevant biochemistry of proteins, enzymes, carbohydrates, and lipids will be discussed. 3 credits

MLS 310 Clinical Immunology

Topics include normal physiology of the immune system and its components, immunogens, immunoglobulins, as well as infection and immunity, hypersensitivity, autoimmunity, immunodeficiency, transplant and tumor immunology, immunological techniques, and flow cytometry. This course will focus on human immunity and disorders involving the immune system as well as examining current approaches to diagnose, monitor, and treat illness of the immune system. Emphasis will be placed on the correlation of abnormal findings and disease states. 3 credits

MLS 315 Clinical Microbiology I

Clinical Microbiology I focuses on the principles and methodologies for the recovery of bacteriological agents from complex biological specimens, biochemical identification, general practices in infection control, and the laboratory's role in developing policies and procedures during global events and new threats from emerging pathogens. 3 credits

MLS 320 Body Fluids

The applied principles of body fluid analysis including clinical evaluation of the physical and chemical constituents, the morphological identification of cells, quality control, laboratory safety, and clinical correlation shall also be covered. This also includes the normal and abnormal physiology of the body's process in creating body fluids. 3 credits

MLS 325 Clinical Chemistry II

Principles of the physical and chemical analysis of medically significant organic and inorganic substances found in human body fluids and tissues. Medically relevant biochemistry of electrolytes and arterial blood gases (ABGs), nonprotein nitrogenous substances, organ testing (renal, gastrointestinal, hepatic, cardiac, endocrine), minerals, vitamins, trace metals, therapeutic drug monitoring, toxicology, and tumor markers will be discussed. 3 credits

MLS 330 Immunohematology

The fundamentals of immunohematology with an emphasis on the identification of blood group antigens and antibodies, standard testing procedures, and problem-solving in antibody identification, decision criteria for component selection, tissue banking, and regulatory practices of transfusion services. 3 credits

MLS 335 Molecular Techniques

The Molecular Techniques course will introduce the fundamentals of molecular diagnostic testing, interpretation, and quality control. Emphasis will be placed on the application of molecular diagnostic techniques in the identification and diagnosis of diseases. 3 credits

MLS 340 Clinical Microbiology II

Clinical Microbiology II focuses on the principles and methodologies for the recovery of fungal, parasitic, viral, and bacterial agents from complex biological specimens, biochemical identification, and advanced principles in clinical sensitivity and specificity to determine the predictive values for technical methodologies. 3 credits

MLS 410 Hematology Seminar

Students will need to use the theoretical knowledge gained in previous courses to work through troubleshooting scenarios that are commonly experienced in the hematology laboratory, as well as patient case studies. Students will also practice their skills identifying microscopic cellular elements found in blood and bodily fluids. Skills necessary for an oral presentation as well as for effectively reading and interpreting scientific literature will be exercised. 2 credits

MLS 415 Immunohematology Seminar

Students will need to use the theoretical knowledge gained in previous courses to work through problem-solving scenarios that are commonly experienced in the immunohematology laboratory, as well as patient case studies. Skills necessary for an oral presentation, as well as for effectively reading and interpreting scientific literature, will be exercised. 2 credits

MLS 420 Microbiology Seminar

Students will need to use the theoretical knowledge gained in previous courses to work through troubleshooting scenarios that are commonly experienced in the microbiology laboratory, as well as patient case studies. Students will also practice their skills identifying microscopic bacteria and cellular elements found in routine cultures. Skills necessary for an oral presentation as well as for effectively reading and interpreting scientific literature will be exercised. 2 credits

MLS 425 Chemistry Seminar

Students will need to use the theoretical knowledge gained in previous courses to work through troubleshooting scenarios that are commonly experienced in the chemistry laboratory, as well as patient case studies. Skills necessary for an oral presentation as well as for effectively reading and interpreting scientific literature will be exercised. 2 credits

MLS 430 Senior Seminar

Through a multidisciplinary approach, students will apply knowledge previously acquired to demonstrate advanced comprehension in the key concepts, theories, and principles covered in the MLS program. FDA randomized clinical trials, leadership skill development to include basic management principles, regulation and accreditation, LEAN management, personnel management, financial management, compliance, and continuing education, and academia will be explored. Certification preparation will be emphasized. 3 credits

MLS Program Academic Policies

Due to the rigor and pace of the MLS courses, students will be introduced to new material and assessed during the last week of each class.

Minimum Grade

In all MLS courses the minimum required grade is 77% or C+ with a minimum GPA of 2.33. The minimum cumulative GPA required for graduation is 2.00.

Repeating a Course

A student may repeat a course only one time. If a course is repeated, the second grade stands and is calculated in the grade point average. If an MLS student fails to earn a passing grade after the second attempt, they will be dismissed from the program.

Readmission for Academic Withdrawal

A student may withdraw due to poor academic performance, illness or personal reasons. Students who withdraw are not guaranteed readmission. A student may apply for readmission only **once** due to academic failure. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 is required for readmission.

Readmission for Nonacademic Withdrawal

Students are not guaranteed readmission into the program. Readmitted students will be allowed to take the remainder of their MLS classes on a space-available basis.

Certification Eligibility

Successful completion of the MLS Program and the awarding of the baccalaureate degree in Medical Laboratory Science is NOT contingent on passing an external certification examination.

Progression in the MLS Program

The MLS curriculum is sequential in nature and classes are offered in summer, fall or spring semesters and typically only once per year. In order to successfully progress through the MLS Program, the student must:

- Achieve a minimum grade of 77% or C+ in all MLS.
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.
- Satisfactorily meet course objectives.
- Comply with all policies of the University and in the MLS student handbook.
- Consistently meet affective domain requirements.

Grading

The syllabus for each course is posted on Brightspace on or before the first day of class and contains course objectives, course guidelines and specific criteria for grade calculations. Grading criteria is outlined in the course syllabi.

The MLS courses use the following scale for determination of final grades.

UMA:

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 74-76

C- = 70-73

D+ = 67-69

D = 64-66

D- = 60-63

F = <60

UMPI:

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 74-76

C- = 70-73

F = <60

All MLS courses require a minimum of 77% or C+ for progression in the MLS Program. Assignments must be submitted into Brightspace on the specified due date.

Late Policy

Late assignments are not accepted except for extenuating circumstances that need to be communicated to the instructor prior to missed due dates.

Academic and Ethical Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

AI should not be used as a substitute for learning the fundamental concepts of clinical laboratory science. The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) **is permitted** in the MLS Program courses for the following activities with proper citations:

- Brainstorming and refining ideas.
- Drafting an outline to organize thoughts and
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is **not permitted** in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as using AI to compose discussion board responses to prompts or questions.
- Completing group work that was assigned to the student.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.
- Solving problems or providing solutions for a graded assignment or assessment.

Advising Policy for the MLT to MLS Online Program

University and MLS Faculty Responsibilities:

Each University provides each student with both a faculty advisor and a professional advisor.

The faculty and professional advisors assist students with advising and degree program questions, goal setting, course registration, referral to campus resources and other services designed to optimize the student's academic experience and contribute to their success.

When each University announces the official period for advising for registration purposes, the MLS Program Administration will be available to meet with students for advising purposes during regularly scheduled office hours or via appointment. No students will be permitted to register for MLS courses without instructor permission.

Each University has a variety of resources for supporting student success. Faculty and professional advisors can direct students to services as requested by the student.

MLS Program student files will be maintained using reasonable safeguards to protect the security and confidentiality of student records and information. Records will be protected against unauthorized access or use of student information.

MLS Student Responsibilities:

The student responsibilities in the advising process are as follows:

- Know your degree program and graduation requirements.
- Learn how to access your academic information in MaineStreet including the degree progress report function.
- Schedule an advising appointment or learn to use the MaineStreet wish list function and email your

advisors when your wish list needs to be approved.

- Meet with your advisors if you experience academic difficulty.
- Talk to your advisors before dropping a course, changing majors, transferring to another institution, or withdrawing from the University.

Professional Behavior

Code of Ethics

Medical professionals and their patients depend on technical skills, knowledge, honesty, and integrity from everyone on the healthcare team. Those engaged in laboratory medicine add to these attributes by exercising careful attention to detail, accuracy, and precision.

Producing reliable and quality test results is the province of the clinical laboratory. Educators are responsible for producing ethical, well-trained graduates. Therefore, in addition to the technical curriculum, the MLS Program emphasizes professional ethics and attitudes.

Unethical practices can result in legal action and/or endangering patients. Clinical laboratories cannot tolerate dishonesty and unsafe or unethical behavior. The MLS Program will dismiss students who demonstrate such behaviors as plagiarizing, falsifying lab results, destroying/misusing equipment, and failing to adhere to safety policies. The program adheres to the Code of Ethics of the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP). ASCP publishes principles and standards for clinical laboratory professionals.

MLS students pledge the following:

- To treat patients, instructors, and colleagues with respect and thoughtfulness;
- To perform laboratory work in an accurate and responsible manner;
- To use laboratory resources properly;
- To abide by laws and regulations and disclose illegal or improper behavior to the appropriate authorities;
- To study the Medical Laboratory Science body of knowledge conscientiously throughout their training.

Continuing to update theoretical knowledge and technical skills throughout a career in laboratory medicine is ethical behavior. Program instructors will convey this concept of responsibility. MLT students will review the Code of Ethics during the Program Orientation. Each student will be required to sign the Code of Ethics and a copy will be maintained in the student's file.

Professional Behavior

The Faculty of the MLT To MLS Online Program of Maine has an academic, legal, and ethical responsibility to protect members of the public and of the healthcare community from unsafe or unprofessional practices. MLT students, while representing the MLT Program of Maine at any clinical affiliate, must conduct themselves in an ethical, professional, and safe manner. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their actions and will be held accountable for them. Students will abide by the University and clinical affiliate policies during each clinical experience.

Confidentiality Guidelines

In compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), information will be provided to students on maintaining confidentiality regarding patient privacy and data security as it relates to healthcare workers.

All patient medical and financial records, and any other information of a private or sensitive nature are considered confidential. Confidential information should not be read or discussed by students unless pertaining to their learning requirements. Under HIPAA regulations, patient information can only be discussed if it is directly related to treatment, and even then, it is required to limit the disclosure of any patient information to the

minimum necessary for the immediate purpose. Discussion of confidential information must take place in private settings. Students must not discuss confidential information to family members or friends, or other parties who do not have a legitimate need to know. Disclosure of the patient's presence in any healthcare agency may violate confidentiality. Students are not allowed to enter the clinical laboratory setting until they sign a Confidentiality Agreement for the MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine. A copy of the signed agreement will be kept in the student's file.

Any unauthorized disclosure of protected health information may subject the student to legal liability. Failure to maintain confidentiality is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

Use of Social Media

When publishing information on social media sites, the student needs to be aware that information may be public for anyone to see and can be traced back to them as an individual. There is no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, ask your faculty. Social media typically enables two-way communications with the audience therefore an individual has less control of how materials will be used by others. Social media may be used to investigate student behavior.

As a student in the MLS Program, you may encounter confidential information within the classroom or clinical settings. It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the following policy related to social media.

Policy

- All social media postings must be made within the guidelines of the policies outlined in the program handbook, Rules of Conduct and Behavior and Code of Ethics.
- All postings to social media platforms must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), applicable facility policy, and state law.
- Do not share, post, or otherwise disseminate any information, including images, about a patient, faculty, clinical instructor, other students or information gained as a result of your presence in a MLS course including the clinical practicum setting.
- Do not identify patients by name or post or publish information that may lead to the identification of a patient (examples include but not limited to: date of care, facility name, diagnosis, and treatment). Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.
- During the practicum, any use of electronic devices (cell phones, laptops, etc.) must be within the guidelines of facility program policies.
- Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones.
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients or former patients blurs the distinction between a professional and personal relationship.
- Students must have permission from the faculty to videotape or audiotape in the classroom. The University policy for requesting and granting official accommodations will be followed.

Consequences

1. Violations of patient privacy with a portable electronic device/use of social media platforms will be subject to HIPAA guidelines and consequences.
2. Students who violate policies outlined in the MLS student handbook, through the use of social media platforms do so at the risk of disciplinary action that can result in failure of the course and/or dismissal from the program.

Progressive Discipline: Academic Probation

The faculty is committed to assisting students to be successful in the program. To afford students due process, MLS students who are not meeting course objectives in class, successfully passing exams and competencies,

and/or not meeting established professional guidelines will be advised of their performance status using the progressive discipline process.

Step 1: Initial 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, study habit techniques, and seeking assistance from University support services.

At the discretion of the instructor and depending on the situation, this step may be skipped and a conference done.

Step 2: Conference/Discussion Form

The student meets with the instructor in a formal conference to review the performance deficit. A written MLS Program Discussion Form will identify specific concerns and a remediation plan or agreement. The plan will include deadlines for completion to assist the student to correct the deficit and successfully remain in the program. If at any time the student does not comply with all terms outlined in the discussion form, the student will be advanced to step 3 or step 4 of the discipline process.

Step 3: Final Written Warning

Final written warning is implemented for:

- Unsatisfactory academic performance.
- Unethical and unprofessional behavior.
- Failure to comply with all terms outlined in the conference/discussion form.

Following a written warning is a trial period in which the student must improve or be withdrawn from the program.

The student meets with the Program Administration. A representative from the Dean of Students Office may be asked to participate. The student and faculty will review and sign a final written warning explicitly stating expectations that must be followed during the trial period.

Step 4: Dismissal from the Program

If at any time during the trial period, the student fails to meet any of the conditions of the final written warning, the student may be dismissed from the program. Accordingly, if at the end of the trial period the student has not met the criteria for satisfactory performance as outlined, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

A student who receives a final written warning for unsafe or unprofessional conduct will be withdrawn from the program for any subsequent safety or professional conduct violations and will receive a course grade of "F".

Some situations do not allow for the progressive discipline process due to the severity or nature of the timing of their occurrence. Incidents of this nature may require the student to be immediately placed on a final written warning or withdrawal from the program. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- Violations of patient confidentiality.
- Academic dishonesty.
- Falsification of documentation.
- Unprofessional behavior/unsafe behavior

General Policies

MLS Teach-Out Plan:

In accordance with NAACLS accreditation requirements, the MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine maintains policies and procedures for a teach-out plan in the event of an unexpected program closure, including a catastrophic event or an intentional closure.

For catastrophic events, the University will notify students and affiliates as soon as information becomes available. In the event of an intentional closure, notification will be sent immediately via email to all current students. The teach-out plan will be submitted to NAACLS within thirty days of the official closure announcement.

Program closure information will also be posted on the MLS program websites at both universities.

Current Students:

- If an unexpected disruption (e.g., a disaster or faculty illness) prevents UMPI and UMA from operating the MLS program, the unaffected campus will assume responsibility for continuing instruction.
- If both campuses experience an interruption, the program will attempt to deliver instruction through the Brightspace online learning system. Faculty have remote access to the MLS program's shared drive, allowing courses to continue with minimal interruption.
- If Brightspace is also unavailable, coursework will be delivered with an alternative technology and the course schedule will be adjusted as needed.
- In the event of an intentional program closure, currently enrolled students will be notified and given the opportunity to complete the program.
 - The Program Director will continue to approve students for eligibility to take the certification examination.

Prospective students:

- In the case of intentional closure, applicants will be notified that no additional students will be admitted to the MLS Program.

Communication:

The student@maine.edu email will be the official email that the instructor will use to communicate with

students as well as through Brightspace announcements. Students are expected to check their maine.edu email account and Brightspace announcements regularly for class-related updates.

Emails to the instructors will be answered within 24 hours Monday through Friday when classes are in session and no later than noon on Monday for communication received on weekends, holidays, and breaks.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The following statement concerning student records maintained by the University of Maine System is published in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The release of information to the

public without the consent of the student will be limited to that designated as directory information. Directory information includes name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in activities, dates of attendance, degrees, certificates and awards, name of the previous educational institution attended, student classification and enrollment status. **Any student objecting to the release of all or any portion of such information must submit a request to suppress directory information form to the Registrar's Office.** The request will be honored until such time as the student requests otherwise in writing. In the event that such written notification is not filed, the University assumes that the student does not object to the release of the directory information.

FERPA Release

Each student is required to sign the release form allowing the Program Administration to discuss student information with NAACLS volunteers during the accreditation process.

Student Records

The University accords all the rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 to its students. In addition to the official records kept elsewhere in the University, students' files or electronic records are maintained by the MLS Program Administration. Pertinent academic information for each MLS student is maintained permanently in these files. While the student is in the program, current files are kept which include formative and summative evaluations, advising records, copies of official letters, records of grades, and any reports.

Each student is required to notify The MLS Program Administration and the University through Mainstreet also keeps a record of students' contact information. It is the student's obligation to notify both the MLS Program Administration and the University of any changes.

Students can access their academic information files by arranging an appointment with the MLS Program Administration. Copies of these files will be made available per the University's FERPA policy.

Student Impairment/Substance Abuse

Illegal or unauthorized manufacture, sale, possession or use of alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances by students while engaged in any part of educational experiences poses an unacceptable risk and is strictly prohibited. Any behavior resulting in the impairment of the student's judgment or motor coordination resulting from an unmanaged medical condition is also included under the terms of this policy.

Students are expected to adhere to the University of Maine System Student Code of Conduct and the Substance Abuse Policy which is available online. Violation of either policy will result in further disciplinary actions.

This policy shall not limit or be in lieu of any other University discipline in accordance with all other University policies governing student behavior and conduct.

Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Retaliation Policy (Title IX)

The University is committed to providing an environment free of violence and harassment based on sex and national origin, etc. If you or someone else within the University community is struggling with sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault relationship violence, or stalking you can find the appropriate resources for UMA students: [University of Maine Augusta Title Nine Information.](#) For UMPI students: [University of Maine Policy Manual](#)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability which may affect your ability to participate fully in this course, it is your responsibility to request accommodations promptly. Contact the Learning Support Services Office, or Coordinator of Student Services at your campus or center to discuss possible assistance. Accommodations are not provided retroactively.

Non-Discrimination Notice

The University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means that a student's work is the product of his/her own effort. Violations of academic integrity include such behaviors as cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism, and are described more fully in the home University student handbook which is available online. Each student is responsible for learning the standards of academic integrity, and ensuring that his/her work meets these standards. Failure to do so may result in appropriate sanctions.

If you have any questions about the academic integrity process, please contact your instructor or the Student Services Coordinator at your local center.

Complaints and Appeals

Complaints from external parties or individuals, including clinical sites, employers, or the public, related to the program, faculty or students should be forwarded to the Program Administration. The Program Administration will review the nature of the complaint and determine the appropriate response. The Program Administration will respond to legitimate complaints in a timely fashion by phone, email or in person.

Issues involving wider university policies will be discussed by the faculty and brought to the attention of the appropriate University administrator. The MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine follows University policy for complaints and appeals. These policies are available online. The Program Administration will place all complaints eliciting a response from program faculty or University administration in a secure file.

Reference Request

Students and alumni of the MLT to MLS Online Program of Maine must submit a signed reference release form prior to release of any information to employers, educational institutions, or organizations that provide awards or scholarships.

Religious Holidays

Students may request accommodation for their observance of a religious holiday. Instructors may grant time accommodations such as excusing an absence, rescheduling a project deadline, or adjusting the exam schedule as long as it is deemed reasonable by the instructor. Students who anticipate a conflict must notify their instructor within two weeks of the official start of the academic term to make arrangements. In the case of an internship or clinicals, students should consult course faculty per the program policies as soon as possible.

Professional Conduct

The courses taken prior to clinical practicum are an integral part of the professional curriculum. One aspect of building a professional behavioral pattern is to be dependable and reliable. It is the expectation students will turn in assignments when due.

Respondus Proctoring Software

Respondus will proctor your exams this semester. Respondus is an online proctoring service that allows you to take your exam from the comfort of your home. You DO NOT need to create an account, download software or schedule an appointment in advance. Respondus is available 24/7, and all that is needed is a computer, a working webcam/microphone, and a stable internet connection.

Here is the [Student Quick Start Guide](#) and a [brief video overview](#) of how to use Respondus.

Please note that although Respondus is available 24/7, your instructor is not. If you have any issues you can check out the [Respondus Support Page](#) and send your instructor an email. Communication with your instructor will follow the usual communication protocols as outlined in the communication section.

System requirements for Respondus

- **Windows:** 11 and 10 [Details](#)
- **Mac:** macOS 10.15 to 14.0+
- **iOS:** 12.0+ (iPad only). Must have a compatible LMS integration. [Details](#)
- **Chromebook:** [Details](#)
- Web camera (internal or external) & microphone
- A broadband internet connection

Inclement Weather

If there is a cancellation at the campus of origin for a course (for example, MLS 300 originates from UMA) then anything due on the day of the cancellation shall have the due date moved. Communication as to the new due date will be sent via course announcements in Brightspace. Please sign up for closure and emergency alerts through the university and check the university website for information on campus closures.

Technical Difficulties

If there are technical difficulties, students should call IT support at 1-800-696-4357 and notify their instructors. Every attempt should be made to rectify the technical problem; however, all lectures are recorded for later viewing. The student will be expected to view the missed lecture prior to the following lecture or lab session.

Participation

Each student is encouraged to become involved in the classroom discussions. We welcome questions and discussions centered on course content. Team exercises will be utilized as necessary and students are expected to participate.

You are expected to be an active participant in your learning. We are committed to your success and it starts with you being actively engaged in all activities.

Course Information and Recommendations

Instructional Methodology

The instructional methods used in MLS courses include the following:

- Prerecorded Lectures
- Brightspace Learning Management System (quizzes, exams, resources)
- Applied Learning Experiences
- Software/Internet Resources: MediaLab

Time Commitment

According to “Hints on How to Succeed in College Classes”, time should be budgeted per week for a four-credit course 14-week course as follows:

- Reading assigned text 1 to 2 hours
- Homework assignments 3 to 6 hours
- Time for review and test preparation 3 to 6 hours
- Total study time per week 7 to 14 hours **PER WEEK**

However, you are taking seven-week courses so you’ll want to double these hours! This program will take as much time as a part-time job so please plan accordingly.

Preparation for Written Examinations

Exam questions are created from the course objectives. One helpful way to study is to create a study guide by writing or typing the objective and then record the information pertaining to that objective.

No single study strategy works for everyone, but the best approach is to be active and to make studying a daily process. Keep up with assignments, review any lecture or lab session material within 24 hours of class and review it consistently and in small increments. Regularly studying the material in small increments will result in more effective learning. Best practice shows that 2-3 hours per week should be dedicated for such review.

Examinations are the property of the MLS program and will NOT be returned to the students. Students may review exams via Brightspace during allotted times.