

Clinical Assistant

Associate in Applied Science in Allied Health & Life Science

Program Description:

Clinical Assistants (CA) are multi-skilled clinical laboratory professionals competent to perform waived and low-to-moderate complex laboratory testing. As a critical component of the health care team, the clinical laboratory is responsible for approximately 90% of the information physician's use to detect, diagnose, and treat medical conditions and infectious disease. Typically, Clinical Assistants work under the supervision of a Medical Laboratory Technician or Medical Technologist.

The multi-faceted role of the Clinical Assistant includes collection of blood and non-blood specimens, preparation of blood and body fluid specimens for laboratory analysis, as well as laboratory testing in the areas of chemistry, hematology, microbiology, urinalysis, immunology, and blood product screening/component processing. Clinical Assistants perform laboratory testing using low-to-moderately complex automated instruments for specimen analysis, and routinely use Laboratory Information Systems for ordering tests and result documentation. The Clinical Assistant is capable of comparing laboratory test results to normal reference ranges, as well as recognizing abnormal laboratory test results and their relationship to common disease states. Strict adherence to safe laboratory practice and infection control policies is an essential element of this profession. A successful Clinical Assistant must be detail-oriented, possess excellent customer service skills, and be capable of prioritizing tasks in a manner to maintain workflow and productivity.

The A.A.S. Clinical Assistant Degree includes a total of 63 credit hours, of which 24 credit hours focus specifically on the field of laboratory medicine. Successful completion of the CA Program will include a clinical internship at an affiliated health-care facility. Many states require licensure in order to perform laboratory testing. The West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services (WVOLS) currently requires licensure of all laboratorians performing moderate-complex laboratory testing. Upon completion of the Clinical Assistant Program, graduates will be eligible for WV state licensure as a Clinical Laboratory Practitioner-Point of Care Technician, with appropriate documentation as required by WVOLS.

Career Outlook:

Opportunities for job placement in the field of laboratory medicine are excellent. At present, the number of jobs currently available exceed the number of qualified applicants. With steady population growth and implementation of new laboratory tests, employment is expected to grow faster than the average for all other occupations through the year 2014. With the rapid growth of point of care testing, employment opportunities in physician's offices and other ambulatory health care facilities will dramatically increase over the next five to ten years.

Salary Forecast:

Clinical Assistants working in a hospital setting earn an average of \$12-15/hour with full healthcare benefits, retirement, and possible tuition and relocation reimbursement. For those working in phlebotomy positions, the 2003 median hourly wages were as follows: hospitals=\$11.13/hour; physician office laboratories or private clinics=\$10.50/hour.

(Information obtained from the Occupational Outlook Handbook 2006-2007)

Admission Requirements:

1. Students seeking admission into the Clinical assistant program must arrange an appointment with the program faculty prior to submitting the application packet. This is to ensure that students receive current information regarding the program admission requirements and the criteria for selection. Application packets are available at the Allied Health and Life Sciences Division, Cabell Hall Room 304 or call (304)696-6270 for more information. The Clinical Assistant program is a limited enrollment program. Program admission for fall will be granted during the preceding May.
2. Prior to admission to the Clinical Assistant program and/or clinical internships, students may be required to document that they have successfully passed a criminal background check and drug screen. For more information concerning the Allied Health Criminal Background check and drug screen procedure, please contact the Dean of Allied Health and Life Sciences at (304)696-6270

Major Code - CH50

FIRST YEAR¹			
First Semester		Second Semester	
AH 151	Medical Terminology (EDGE).....	3	
ENL 111	Written Communication ¹	3	
EME 105	First on Scene.....	3	
MAT 145	Applications in Algebra ²	3	
BIOL 260	Applied Human Anatomy.....	4	
TOTAL CREDITS.....		16	
SECOND YEAR			
Third Semester		Fourth Semester	
AH 207	Infection Control for Health Professionals ⁵	4	
CLA 201	Laboratory Safety, Ethics, and Law.....	2	
CLA 202	Laboratory Calculations ⁷	2	
CLA 204	Intro to Point of Care Testing.....	4	
CLA 205	Intro to Automated Instrumentation ⁹	2	
ENL 231	Technical Report Writing ⁶	3	
TOTAL CREDITS.....		17	
		COM 112	Oral Communication.....3
		IT 101	Fundamentals of Computers (EDGE).....3
		SCI 220	Introduction to Chemistry ³3
		BIOL 265	Applied Human Physiology.....4
		SS 215	Lifespan Psychology.....3
TOTAL CREDITS.....		16	
HOURS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION: 63			

Employment Opportunities:

- Hospitals
- Health Care Clinics
- Physician's Office laboratories
- Blood Donation/Collection Centers
- Reference Laboratories
- Medical Research Laboratories

Earn A Degree Graduate Early (EDGE):

This program provides students the opportunity to receive credit for their high school EDGE courses.

Contact Information:

Pam Meadows, MT (ASCP) • Cabell Hall, Room 302

Phone: 304-696-3749 or 1-866-N-ROLLED (1-866-676-5533) • E-mail: meadow63@mctc.edu

1. ENL 111 has prerequisites of COM 095, ENL 095, ACT 18, or PLAC 101.
2. MAT 145 has a prerequisite of ACT 19, MAT 097, or PLAC 101.
3. SCI 220 has a prerequisite of MAT 145, MAT 145E, MAT 150, or MAT 150E.
4. AH 205 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257 or BIOL 260.
5. AH 207 has a prerequisite of AH 151.
6. ENL 231 has prerequisites of ENL 111, COM 111, COM 111E, ENG 101, or ENG 101E.
7. CLA 202 has a prerequisite of MAT 145.
8. CLA 203 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257 or BIOL 260.
9. CLA 205 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257, BIOL 260, or BIOL 265.
10. CLA 206 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257, BIOL 260, or BIOL 265.
11. CLA 299 requires completion of all previous CLA coursework with a minimum grade of "C", admission to CA/POCT Program, and permission of program coordinator.

*In order to graduate from the A.A.S. CA Program, students must maintain a minimum grade of "C" or better in all CLA courses. Should a student receive a "D" or "F" in any of the CLA courses, they will be allowed to repeat the course one time before dismissal from the program.

**The cost of tuberculosis testing, vaccinations, and background checks are the responsibility of the student.

***Students are responsible for room and board, as well as transportation during clinical internship.