

Certificate

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 exceeds 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. Completion of Clinical Assistant Program Admission Packet, including official transcripts.
2. Applicants must be able to meet technical standards as listed in the Program Admission Packet.
3. Applicants must complete all general education and prerequisite courses with a grade of "C" or better, and must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.
4. Proof of medical insurance coverage is required for internship.
5. Prior to internship, students must submit proof of Tuberculosis testing and Hepatitis B vaccination, or sign a waiver refusing vaccination.
6. Some clinical facilities may require random drug screen testing or background checks prior to acceptance into internship.
7. The CA program is a limited enrollment program. Program admission for the upcoming fall semester will be granted beginning in May.
8. Admission packets may be obtained from the Allied Health Division Office, Cabell Hall 314 after February 1st.

Major Code – CH60

FIRST YEAR¹	
<p>First Semester</p> <p>AH 151 Medical Terminology (EDGE)..... 3</p> <p>BIOL 257 Intro Anatomy/Physiology..... 3</p> <p>MAT 145 Applications in Algebra¹..... 3</p> <p>CLA 201 Laboratory Safety, Ethics, and Law 2</p> <p>CLA 202 Laboratory Calculations¹..... 2</p> <p>CLA 204 Intro to Point of Care Testing..... 4</p> <p>CLA 205 Intro to Automated Instrumentation⁵ 2</p> <p>TOTAL CREDITS..... 19</p>	<p>Second Semester</p> <p>AH 207 Infection Control for Health Professionals² 4</p> <p>CLA 203 Specimen Collection and Processing⁴ 4</p> <p>CLA 206 Intro to Physician Office Lab⁶ 2</p> <p>CLA 299 Clinical Assistant/POCT Internship..... 4</p> <p>TOTAL CREDITS 14</p>
HOURS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION: 33	

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:

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1. MAT 145 has a prerequisite of ACT 19, MAT 097, or PLAC 100.
 2. AH 207 has a prerequisite of AH 151.
 3. CLA 202 has a prerequisite of MAT 145.
 4. CLA 203 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257 or BIOL 260.
 5. CLA 205 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257, BIOL 260, or BIOL 265.
 6. CLA 206 has a prerequisite of BIOL 257, BIOL 260, or BIOL 265.
 7. 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