Technical Standards
Essential Functions in Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS)
Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences
LSU Health Sciences Center

Technical Standards (Essential Functions) are the non-academic standards that a student must be able to master to participate successfully in the CLS program and become employable*. Examples of this program's essential functions are provided below. *If you are not sure that you will be able to meet these essential functions, please consult with the Admissions Chair for further information and to discuss your individual situation.*

Visual and Observation Skills: A student in the CLS program must possess sufficient visual skills and skills of observation to perform and interpret laboratory assays, including the ability to:

- Observe laboratory demonstrations in which lab procedures are performed on patient samples (i.e. body fluids, culture materials, tissue sections, and cellular specimens).
- Characterize the color, consistency, and clarity of biological samples or reagents.
- Use a clinical grade binocular microscope to discriminate among fine differences in structure and color (i.e. hue, shading, and intensity) in microscopic specimens.
- Read and comprehend text, numbers, and graphs displayed in print and on a video monitor.
- Recognize alarms.

Motor and Mobility Skills: A student must possess adequate motor and mobility skills to:

- Perform laboratory tests adhering to existing laboratory safety standards.
- Perform moderately taxing continuous physical work. This may require prolonged sitting and/or standing, over several hours and some may take place in cramped positions.
- Reach laboratory benchtops and shelves, patients lying in hospital beds or patients seated in specimen collection furniture.
- Perform fine motor tasks such as pipetting, inoculating media, withdrawing a blood sample from a patient, 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 Skills: A student must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate with individuals and groups (i.e. faculty members, fellow students, staff, patients, and other health care professionals) verbally and in recorded format (writing, typing, graphics, or telecommunication).

Behavioral Skills: A student must possess adequate behavioral skills to:

- 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.
- Possess the emotional health necessary to effectively apply knowledge and exercise appropriate judgment.
- Be able to provide professional and technical services while experiencing the stresses of task-related uncertainty (i.e., ambiguous test order, ambivalent test interpretation), emergent demands (i.e. “stat” test orders), and 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 biological.
- Support and promote the activities of fellow students and of health care professionals. Promotion of peers helps furnish a team approach to learning, task completion, problem solving, and patient care.
- Be honest, compassionate, ethical, and responsible. 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 individuals of different age, ethnic background, religion, and/or sexual orientation.
- Exhibit professional behavior by conforming to appropriate standards of dress, appearance, language and public behavior. (For example, body piercing other than ears and visible tattoos are **not** considered professional appearance. This includes tongue piercing.)

***Certain disabilities may limit employment opportunities. Moreover, immunocompromised individuals may put themselves at personal risk due to exposure to infectious agents that occurs in all aspects of the laboratory.**