

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE MEDICAL CENTER
CLINICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE PROGRAM

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT GUIDELINES

Students in the UT Medical Center clinical laboratory science program are expected to exhibit at all times a high degree of professionalism, personal integrity and mutual respect. To maintain a productive learning environment, students must follow the code of conduct, specified below, which is not exhaustive.

General Program Requirements:

During the first week of the program, students will receive HIPAA guidelines and information on the UTMC Five-Star Experience Customer Service Standards.⁵ Each student must sign a document stating that he or she has read and agrees to abide by the HIPAA guidelines, customer service standards, and all regulations in this policy. In addition, students must abide by policies of the medical center. These will be provided the first day of the program.

1. Students will wear UTMC identification badges while at the medical center.
2. Students must treat all patients, visitors, hospital employees, physicians, and peers with respect, regardless of sex, creed, race, socioeconomic status, or disability.
3. Courteous behavior shall be practiced at all times. Students shall not engage in disruptive conduct, unacceptable conduct to the community, or any conduct which threatens or endangers the health, safety, or well-being of any person.
4. Strict integrity shall be maintained in all matters of personal and professional relationships.
5. Attendance at all program appointments and events shall be met with punctuality.
6. Professional conduct includes academic honesty while in the program. Cheating on academic tests and plagiarism on reports or documents are not tolerated.
7. Safety procedures shall be followed at all times. Personal protective equipment must be used whenever the student is in the laboratory or handling biological specimens.
8. Confidential patient information shall not be disclosed to any unauthorized person, including family, friends, or the public.
9. Unethical behavior such as fraud, deception, dishonesty, falsifying patient test reports, and falsifying laboratory or program records is not tolerated.
10. Forgery, alteration, destruction, or misuse of medical center or program documents, records, or identification is a violation of the professional and ethical policy.
11. An incident report shall be filed and the clinical instructor and program director notified whenever there is an accident involving any potentially contaminated item.
12. No drugs, alcohol, or other chemical substance is allowed on the UTMC campus. Students will abide by the UHS Drug Free Workplace Policy.⁶
13. No firearms, explosives, or other lethal materials are allowed on the UTMC campus.
14. Vandalism, malicious destruction, damage to, or misuse of private or public property, including library material is not tolerated.
15. Laboratory equipment and supplies shall be conserved and handled with care.

16. Compliance with the hospital codes of deportment and dress shall be maintained, as well as program policies.
17. Smoking is allowed only in designated smoking areas of the medical center campus. No smoking is allowed inside any UTMC facility.
18. Eating, drinking, and applying cosmetics are not allowed in the clinical laboratory areas.

Specific Program Requirements:

The following behavior is expected of all students during the clinical year:

1. During lecture presentations, case study sessions, training in clinical areas and in any situation representing the CLS Program, the CLS student must demonstrate professionalism towards the program director, lecturers, instructors, co-workers, patients and visitors, and fellow students.
2. Unprofessional behavior is demonstrated by being disrespectful and/or disrupting class, and will not be tolerated. Disrespectful and disruptive behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Use of cell phones during class or clinical training, other than in an emergency or during breaks;
 - Disrespectful, disruptive and inattentive behavior or actions, such as talking, whispering, exhibiting disrespectful body language, or distracting other students during presentations or class sessions;
 - Sleeping in class sessions, student laboratory, or during clinical rotations;
 - Use of computers activities unrelated to the program or course requirements;
 - Confrontational, argumentative, or disrespectful discussions, actions, or body language with the program director, instructors, patients, visitors, hospital staff, or peers;
 - Inappropriate dress as defined in the Dress Code Policy;
 - Use of foul language while on the UTMC campus or clinical sites.

EFFECT OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT ON GRADES:

Professionalism and ethics are addressed in the program “Affective Objectives”. Assessment of professionalism is a major part of the clinical evaluation given in each laboratory section. Evaluation of professional behaviors is structured so the faculty can assess behavioral and professional traits. Results of this evaluation are used in professional development assessment and coaching, as well as in grading of clinical courses.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:

1. If a student is exhibiting any form of unprofessional behavior as defined above, he or she will be asked to leave the classroom, student laboratory, clinical area, or UTMC campus.
2. An instructor will present written documentation of the behavior, ask that it be signed by the student, and a conference with the program director will follow. This signed document / written warning will become a part of the student's permanent record. The student may be placed on probation, depending on the seriousness of the violation.
3. If, after one documented incident of unprofessional behavior, the student continues to display unprofessional behavior, further disciplinary steps will be taken. Depending on the seriousness of the violations, two or more incidences of unprofessional behavior may result in the student being placed on probation, or the student may be dismissed from the program.
4. A student who is dismissed from the program for unprofessional conduct is not eligible for re-admittance into the program at any time.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

As an affiliate of the University of Tennessee, the UTMC Clinical Laboratory Science Program abides by the Standards of Conduct, including the Honor statement and Code of Conduct as specified in *Hilltopics*,⁶ University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These standards apply to all students in the program (both 3+1 and 4+1).

The UT Code of Conduct states:

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

- Each student is responsible for his/her own personal integrity in academic life. While there is no affirmative duty to report the academic dishonesty of another, each student, given the dictates of his/her own conscience, may choose to act on any violation of the Honor Statement.
- Each student is responsible for knowing the terms and conditions of the Honor Statement.
- Academic honesty includes plagiarism as well as academic honesty.
 - Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else's words

or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. Specific examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
- Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge)
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor's approval;
- Submitting work, either in whole or in part created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g. paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

CONSEQUENCES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

1. If an instructor believes a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty or has plagiarized material, the instructor will award a grade of zero (0) for that assignment. The student will not be able to make up the failing grade.
2. If the occurrence of academic dishonesty is during an examination, quiz, or assigned paper, the student will receive a zero (0) for that examination and must leave the room. The student will not be able to make up the failing grade.
3. Any student committing an act of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will receive a written warning in her/his permanent student file and will be placed on probation.
4. If a student is caught cheating a second time, s/he will be dismissed from the program. The student will not be eligible for readmission into the program.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR:

1. A student who violates HIPAA regulations concerning patient confidentiality will receive a written notice of probation. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, the student may be dismissed from the program upon the first offense.
2. A student who falsifies any laboratory information or documents, including patient reports, program documents, or other laboratory logs or documents will receive a written notice of probation. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, the student may be dismissed from the program on the first offense.

3. Any student found in possession of firearms, explosives, or other lethal material, or endangering the health of another student, employee, or patient will be dismissed from the program.
4. The second incident on unethical behavior as specified in items 1 and 2 above will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
5. A student who is dismissed from the program for violating ethical codes of conduct will not be eligible for readmission into the program.
6. Patient care is of utmost priority at UT Medical Center. The CLS program at UT Medical Center reserves the exclusive right to dismiss a student who does not fulfill the requirements of the program or violates the standards of professional or ethical behavior as specified by the program.

GRIEVANCES:

A student who feels she or he has been treated unfairly should follow the CLS Program Student Appeals and Grievance Policy.