

## CERTIFICATE FAQ's (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)

### WHAT DEGREE IS REQUIRED?

A bachelor's degree (B.S. or B.A.) from an accredited college or university is required, preferably in chemistry, biology, biochemistry, microbiology, clinical laboratory science or other related field. All applicants must complete the prerequisite courses listed on the linked document "[Admission Requirements](#)". As the training requires strong laboratory skills, an academic curriculum that includes hands-on laboratory courses is recommended.

### IS A MASTER'S, PhD, or MD ACCEPTED?

A master's, PhD, or MD degree is accepted, but preferential acceptance to the program is not considered due to completion of an advanced degree.

### WHERE CAN I FIND PREREQUISITE CORE COURSES?

Below is information that may provide assistance in finding commonly requested required classes in the San Diego area. Please verify class schedules and enrollment opportunities with each institution.

Analytical Chemistry	UC San Diego & UCSD Extension 'concurrent enrollment'; Chem 100A SDSU; CHEM 251 (lecture + lab, Spring semester) SDSU-Open University; SCI 496 (lecture only, Fall semester) local Junior Colleges-City, Mesa, Miramar; CHEM 251
Immunology	UC San Diego; BICD 140 UCSD Extension; BIOL 40043 SDSU; BIOL 485 (lecture only, Spring semester)
Hematology	SDSU-Open University; BIOL 480 (online, Fall semester)
Medical/Clinical Microbiology	UC San Diego; BIMM 124 SDSU; BIOL 584 (lecture only, Spring semester)

*Note: Some of the SDSU courses are offered as Open University courses. Note that SDSU enrolled undergrad students are given top priority to register.*

SDSU Contact: Marlene DeMers CLS,MT(ASCP)SH  
Clinical Laboratory Scientist Advisor  
[mmdemers@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:mmdemers@mail.sdsu.edu)

SDSU CLS Information: <http://www.sci.sdsu.edu/bioadvise/cls.html>

UCSD Extension Contact Information - <http://extension.ucsd.edu/>

### **CAN I TAKE ON-LINE COURSES?**

Online courses are available at institutions in and outside of the San Diego area, however a hands-on learning environment including laboratory experience is highly recommended. Before registering for any course not listed above, it is advisable to verify acceptability for the course with a program representative.

Please note that Laboratory Field Services, the California agency under the California Department of Public Health (CDPH-LFS) that issues the CLS Trainee Licenses (TRL), will not accept the following courses from Weber State University if completed after June 1, 2014:

- MLS 5810, 5103, 5104 Clinical Microbiology
- MLS 5101 Clinical Chemistry

LFS suggests courses from other sources like: University of North Dakota, UC Berkeley Extension, and other accredited colleges.

### **CAN I APPLY WHILE I AM STILL TAKING COURSES?**

Applicants can apply while prerequisite courses are in progress, but proof of enrollment must be included in the application. Conferring of the bachelor's degree and completion of all courses (including documentation of a passing letter grade) must be granted by June 15. This deadline is required to enable time for CDPH-LFS to review transcripts and issue the TRL CLS Trainee License in a timely manner.

### **IS GENERAL MICROBIOLOGY ACCEPTED?**

No, applicants must take a course in human 'medical' or 'clinical' microbiology. Microbiology includes the study of bacteriology, and at least minimal coverage of parasitology, mycology and virology.

### **ARE DEGREES FROM COUNTRIES OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES ACCEPTED?**

Degrees from countries outside of the United States are accepted, but applicants must submit evaluations of foreign transcripts by agencies approved by the Lab Field Services to the program by the specified due date. Refer to the "[Admission Requirements](#)" document linked from the main webpage. Applicants must also apply for the CLS Trainee License (TRL) prior to application to the program. U.S. citizenship or permanent residency in the U.S. is also required.

### **IS WORK EXPERIENCE IN A CLINICAL LABORATORY REQUIRED?**

Due to the requirement for strong laboratory skills, work experience in a clinical laboratory or similar environment is strongly recommended. Experience in a research or university laboratory is applicable, but applicants should understand the differences between academic and clinical laboratories in regards to goals and work environments. Suggested experience includes working as a laboratory technician, laboratory assistant, phlebotomist and/or volunteering in a clinical laboratory.

### **DOES THE PROGRAM GRANT A DEGREE?**

The San Diego CLS Training Program is a post-baccalaureate certificate program administered by UC San Diego Extension. Successful graduates will receive a certificate of completion that infers competence in clinical laboratory science, and qualifies them to register for the Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS) certification exam offered by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) Board of Certification, and the California (CA) law quiz offered by the California Department of Public Health, Laboratory Field Services. A degree is not conferred.

### **WHAT ARE THE COSTS AND TUITION?**

There is currently no tuition for attending the San Diego CLS Training program, but also no stipend is offered. Applicants accepted into the program are required to cover personal costs such as living expenses, transportation, and other pre-training health requirements. Lab coats and laboratory personal protective equipment are provided by the program. Costs of application for MLS certification and California CLS licensure is the responsibility of the student.

For general information on financial assistance in the form of loans, you may contact the UC San Diego Extension Financial Assistance department at [unex-finasst@ucsd.edu](mailto:unex-finasst@ucsd.edu).

### **IS IT DIFFICULT TO GET ACCEPTED TO THE PROGRAM?**

Over the years, the number of applicants has continued to increase. Over the last 5 years, the program has entertained in excess of 100 applications per year. After a review of the applications, approximately 30 highly qualified applicants are invited to interview in mid-March with the admissions committee. Final selection of applicants is typically complete by the end of March. The program currently admits 15 students per year.

### **IS IT POSSIBLE TO RE-APPLY?**

Applicants may re-apply by submitting a new application, new personal statement, updated resume, and a new letter of recommendation. The application committee will retain transcripts and prior letters of recommendation for the previous one (1) year only. Re-applicants are encouraged to strengthen their applications through laboratory experience and additional relevant coursework.