

Marshfield Clinic Health System - Marshfield Labs

Histology Technician Practicum

Student Handbook

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Table of Contents

Program Summary	1
Accreditation and Outcome Measures	1
Program Mission.....	1
Program Goals and Competencies.....	1
Behavior & Professionalism Expectations	2
Admission Policy.....	3
Academic Requirements	3
Application Process	3
Essential Non-academic Requirements	4
Student Selection	4
Tuition/Fees	4
Student Policies and Procedures	5
Curriculum.....	5
Academic Calendar.....	5
Student Lab Activities / Practical Instruction.....	6
Clinical Courses.....	6
Lectures.....	7
Competency Assessment Checklist.....	7
Student Performance Reviews / Evaluations.....	7
Journal Reports and Presentations.....	8
Graduation	8
Academic Dismissal	8
Library	8
Viewing Autopsies.....	8
Teach-out Plan.....	8
Student Information.....	9
Student Hours	9
Absences	9
Student Storage.....	10
Student Communications.....	10
Student Email.....	10
Student Clinic Devices	10
Program Coordinator	11
Professional Activities.....	11

Program Summary

Marshfield Clinic Health System – Marshfield Labs provides a 9-month training for students seeking to become certified Histology Technicians. The practicum is designed to expose students to the everyday workings of a histology laboratory and teach them the knowledge and skills necessary to work as a Histology Technician.

Affiliated – Students can enroll in a program at one of the affiliated universities and complete their pre-requisites as part of a predetermined degree path. Students will spend the equivalent of their senior year at Marshfield Labs. On completion of the practicum, students receive a Bachelor of Science Degree from their affiliated university and a Certificate of Practicum Completion. They are eligible to take the Board of Certification exam. Marshfield Labs is affiliated with:

- University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
- University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh
- Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI

Non – Affiliated – Students must possess, or be eligible for, an associate degree or higher upon completion of the practicum. On completion of the practicum, students receive a Certificate of Practicum Completion. They are eligible to take the Board of Certification exam.

Accreditation and Outcome Measures

The Histology Technician program at Marshfield Labs was established in 1951 and is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS). Information regarding program accreditation status may be obtained from NAACLS at 5600 N. River Rd., Suite 720, Rosemont, Illinois, 60018-5119, Ph. 773-714-8880, or at www.naacls.org.

Current outcome measures are available on the Lab Education [website](http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/education/StudentPrograms/Pages/Histotechnician-Program.aspx).
(<https://www.marshfieldclinic.org/education/StudentPrograms/Pages/Histotechnician-Program.aspx>)

Program Mission

The mission of the Marshfield Labs Histology Technician Program is to provide a quality educational experience for students completing a practicum in Histotechnology. In keeping with the mission of Marshfield Labs, the program will provide didactic and practical training that will promote high standards of patient care and medical practice.

Program Goals and Competencies

By the end of the practicum, the goal is to produce an entry-level laboratory professional that can demonstrate the ability to complete the following procedures according to documented policies and procedures for routine and specialized areas of the Histology laboratory. As students, they are expected to participate in the supportive functions of quality control,

instrument operation, troubleshooting, and problem resolution. By graduation, the student is expected to exhibit qualities of leadership and professionalism. The students will be expected to:

- Receive, record, identify and charge all specimens coming into the histology laboratory.
- Operate and maintain a microtome to adequately cut surgical sections at a rate of 2.5 minutes per slide/block. Multiple slides and levels at 3 minutes per block.
- Process, embed, cut, stain and coverslip all tissue specimens submitted.
 - Embed surgical specimens at a rate of 1.0 minutes / block
 - Embed biopsy specimens at a rate of 2.0 minutes / block
- Cut, stain and coverslip frozen sections at a maximum of eight minutes per specimen followed by routine cryostat maintenance.
- Operate and troubleshoot tissue processors to adequately process a day's workload.
- Identify correct tissue structures and staining characteristics through routine and special staining.
- Maintain all equipment and work areas according to the total quality assurance requirements of the department.
- Observe and practice all safety rules keeping in mind personal safety, that of co-workers and the laboratory space and equipment integrity.
- Communicate (within and outside the Histology laboratory and other allied health professionals) in a caring, knowledgeable, responsible, and confidential manner.
- Exhibit an interest in self-development by participation in continuing education activities.
- Uphold the quality of the product by adhering to quality control technical procedures and the overall institutional quality assurance program.
- Demonstrate professionalism by being punctual, honest, and working as a member of a team.

After demonstrating competency, students may be permitted to perform procedures under qualified supervision. By the conclusion of the practicum, students are expected to have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to function as entry-level Histology professionals.

Behavior & Professionalism Expectations

Behavior is how a student responds to specific circumstances or situations in the workplace.

- Mutual respect, courtesy, and kindness.
- Conduct yourself to the highest ethical standards – Act fiscally responsible by using the organization's resources efficiently, including using work time appropriately.
- Work as a team member by fulfilling responsibilities of the job.
- Share information and good ideas – Attend and actively participate in staff/workgroup meetings, review meeting minutes when unable to attend.
- Be open to input.
- Seek help when you need it and give help when asked.

- Be work-focused, dependable, accountable, and productive. Adhering to scheduled start times and finish times.

Professionalism is the way we conduct ourselves and the qualities that characterize us as a laboratory professional.

- Conduct and complete tasks proficiently.
- Essential characteristics are HONESTY and ACCOUNTABILITY.
- Maintain a positive attitude – willing and flexible.
- Aspire to excellence – Accept change and adapt to new structures, procedures, and technology.
- Value your competence and the competency of co-workers.
- Professional courtesy – informing teammates.
- Take pride in this organization AS IF YOU OWN IT.

Admission Policy

Academic Requirements

Applicants must meet all the following requirements in order to qualify for admission to the program.

1. A recommended grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. A GPA of 2.75 in the sciences is recommended.
2. Specific college course requirements:
 - a. Medical Terminology
 - b. Chemistry – freshman level
 - c. Anatomy and physiology – two semesters so that all the body systems have been studied.
3. Applicants must possess or be eligible for an associate degree or higher upon completion of the practicum.
4. Pre-tests will be administered covering the prerequisite courses during the first week of clinical orientation. A minimum score of 60% on each test is required. Students failing to achieve the minimum score will be required to complete remedial work and will continue at the program's discretion.
5. Applicants who wish to count college credit from a foreign university or who have completed the academic requirements prior to seven years ago should contact the Program Director concerning additional requirements.

Application Process

Instructions for Application to the Student Program and Application and Reference Forms (PDF format) are available electronically on the web site.

(<https://www.marshfieldclinic.org/education/StudentPrograms/Pages/Histotechnician-Program.aspx>)

The following documents should be received in the Laboratory Education office before February 1 to be considered for entry into the class beginning the following September:

- A completed application form.
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.
- Three letters of reference.

Completed applications are reviewed by the Program Director, Program Coordinator, and Histology Operations Manager. Personal interviews are scheduled with qualified candidates.

Essential Non-academic Requirements

- Applicants must demonstrate sufficient physical and emotional health to successfully participate in the program and become employable.
- A specific list of essential functions is found on the fourth page of the Application Form. Applicants with special needs should inform the Program Director.
- Students admitted to the program will be required to complete a Health Information Report documenting their current immunization status prior to beginning the practicum. A caregiver background check will be conducted by the student's university or the program.

Student Selection

All applicants who meet the requirements for admission and have completed the application process will be considered for admission to the program. A score sheet is completed for each applicant to facilitate the selection process. Applicants are ranked based on their application materials, academic performance, letters of reference, and personal interview. Applicants from affiliated institutions will be given selection preference over equally qualified candidates from other institutions. A letter of acceptance or rejection notifies applicants of their selection status.

Admission to the Marshfield Labs Histotechnician Program is competitive with a limited number of student positions available. Attendance at an affiliated institution does not guarantee placement in the program.

Admission shall not be denied to any person because of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, or parental status.

In the unlikely event of program closure, either at the laboratory or the university, any student formally notified of acceptance into the program is assured of being able to complete clinical training the following year. [Refer to the Teach Out Plan below.](#)

Tuition/Fees

- Tuition - Students enrolled at a university during their practicum year pay tuition directly to the university. The university then reimburses a part of the tuition to Marshfield Labs. Students not enrolled at a university during their practicum year pay a fee directly to Marshfield Labs. The current fee is \$5750. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the fee is due prior to the beginning of the practicum. The balance is due two

months after the practicum's start date. This fee is reviewed annually and is subject to change.

- Textbooks – The cost of the required textbook is \$250 and is the responsibility of the student.
- ASCP Board of Certification Examination – The cost of national certification examinations is the responsibility of the student.
- Room and Board – The cost of all housing, meals, and travel during the practicum year, is the responsibility of the student.
- Student Withdrawal – In the event of withdrawal, students enrolled at a university will be subject to the refund and withdrawal policies of their university. Students not enrolled at a university during the practicum will receive a 50% refund of their tuition if notice of withdrawal is received by the Program Coordinator in writing before November 1. After November 1, no refund is given.
- Financial Assistance – Students who need financial assistance are encouraged to visit their university's Office of Financial Aid and apply for scholarships, grants, and/or student loans.
- Health Insurance – Students are responsible for their own medical care needs and their own health care costs. They are fully responsible for all costs related to general medical or emergency care including, but not limited to, immunizations, tests, procedures, office visits, and hospitalizations. Students may use the services of the Urgent Care Department, Emergency Department, or may seek care from a provider of their choice at their own expense. Marshfield Clinic Health System does not provide health insurance for students.
- Professional Liability Insurance - students must be covered by professional liability (malpractice) insurance. Appropriate coverage may be purchased on-line from a company called HPSO for ~\$40/year. The policy is effective for one year from date of purchase.

Student Policies and Procedures

Please refer to the Lab Education Policies and Procedures Guide for policies pertaining to all students within the Marshfield Clinic Health System Lab Education programs. This HT Student Handbook is a supplemental document meant to provide information specific to the Histology Technician Practicum.

Curriculum

Academic Calendar

Classes run from the Tuesday after Labor Day to approximately the second week in May, annually.

Student Lab Activities / Practical Instruction

During the first three (3) months, you will receive a detailed schedule for each week. This will consist of the times you will receive lectures, demonstrations, directed practice time, exams, etc. The remainder of the practicum will be scheduled monthly.

Clinical Courses

Each section rotation is considered the equivalent of an advanced-level university course. Rotations may include a student lecture and/or lab component. All rotations address the theory, principles, methodologies, and clinical correlations specific to the area. Application of knowledge and skills is emphasized. Performance of manual and automated procedures is required. After demonstrating competency, students may be permitted to perform procedures under qualified supervision. By the conclusion of the rotation, students are expected to have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to function as entry-level HT professionals.

Courses Include:

Introduction to Histology

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 3 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 6 weeks

Microtomy

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 3 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 11 weeks

Tissue Processing

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 4 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 3 weeks

Normal Histology/Microscopic Anatomy

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 4 credits.

Includes student lecture.

Duration: 3 weeks

Embedding

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 4 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 8 weeks

Histochemistry of Special Stains

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 5 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 6 weeks

Immunohistochemistry

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 4 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 4 weeks

Capstone

Suggested Credit Equivalent: 3 credits.

Includes student lecture and/or laboratory component.

Duration: 4 weeks

Course titles and credit values may vary according to the affiliated university.

Faculty of the program include the Program Director, Program Coordinator, pathologists, pathologist's assistants, laboratory managers, practicing certified histotechnicians and histotechnologists, and other laboratory professionals.

Lectures

Lectures are included in the normal eight-hour day, Monday through Friday. Attendance is required at all lectures and is not the option of the student. Habitual absence or tardiness will be considered as possible grounds for dismissal from the program.

Illness or special circumstances acceptable to the Program Coordinator will be the only basis of absence from lectures. Failure of the lecturer to arrive within ten minutes of the scheduled time the lecture was to begin, may cancel the lecture. Students will then return to assigned sections without delay. Occasionally, some lectures are given in conjunction with the students in other programs. Students should seek out instructor to confirm lecture time, postponement, or cancellation.

Competency Assessment Checklist

Students will receive a check-off list during their first week. It is the faculty's responsibility to provide the experience, and the *student's* responsibility to have the competencies signed off by the preceptor. It is recommended that students take the initiative to have their check-off list reviewed quarterly by the Program Coordinator for progress. A final grade is awarded and becomes part of the student's permanent record. Points below 70% will be considered "Not Competent" and the student year may be extended OR the student may not graduate.

Student Performance Reviews / Evaluations

Each student's performance will be evaluated and documented by their immediate instructors. An evaluation will be done after each course to monitor student progress. Documentation of the review will be made, and the student will be given an opportunity to add their comments. These will be given by the lead faculty for the course. At three (3) months, six (6) months and nine (9) months, the students will have an opportunity to give feedback on their experiences in the program.

Journal Reports and Presentations

Each student will read and submit eight journal reports. Reports may address any subject relating to the medical/health field. Length of report will be one page, double-spaced. Additional opportunities may surface to receive credit for written reports. Each student will present a 20-30 minute presentation during the final month of the practicum.

Graduation

The program awards a certificate of completion to students completing the program. The awarding of the certificate is not contingent upon passing any external licensure or certification examination. Students enrolled at an affiliated university during the practicum receive a baccalaureate degree from their university.

Academic Dismissal

The clinical course of study may be terminated prior to graduation for any one of the following reasons:

- Failure to maintain a grade level of 70% in classroom or practical instruction.
- Failure to comply with program, hospital, or clinic policies.
- Documented evidence of academic misconduct.
- A single breach of confidentiality.
- Conduct or attitude that is deemed objectionable or detrimental, or threatens the health, safety or welfare of any patients, invitees, or employees at the facility.
- Voluntary withdrawal.

Library

The George Magnin Medical Library is available for student use. It is in the Laird Center. Guidelines include:

- Open 24 hours with badge access. (Not staffed 24 hours.)
- Following the posted Library Rules.
- Check with the librarian whenever you are in doubt about a policy.

Viewing Autopsies

Students may see one (1) autopsy during the year, time and opportunity permitting. These are not scheduled, as there is no way of knowing when one will be requested. If the Pathologist on call is willing to take a student, then viewing will be permitted.

Teach-out Plan

If Marshfield Labs HT Program cannot continue the educational program at the current Marshfield Labs facility (e.g., in cases of man-made or natural disaster), a Teach-out Plan would be executed.

Possible location to finish out the HT practicum is Marshfield Clinic Eau Claire Regional Center, Eau Claire, WI.

Current HT students would be contacted electronically through e-mail and followed up with formal written documentation to include:

- Reason for not completing practicum at current site.
- Dates for completion of practicum.
- Location site for completion of practicum.
- Expenses that may be incurred due to new location.
- Same or current curriculum would be followed with help by Program Director.

Student Information

Student Hours

The practicum for Histology Technician students is thirty-six (36) consecutive weeks. The student day is eight hours long. Beginning and ending times are determined by each section and will vary. Start times are anywhere from 4:30 am to 9:30 am. Occasionally, hours may be altered to better coincide with instructors' hours and/or give the student maximum experience in a section. Hours may also be altered due to laboratory workload or other circumstances that may arise in the laboratory. Students should confirm beginning and ending times for each day in each rotation with the lead instructor(s) in the section.

Thirty minutes are allowed for lunch each day. One 15-minute break in the morning and another 15-minute break in the afternoon are allowed if time/workload permits. The lead instructor in each section will indicate to the student the times at which the student may leave the area for lunch and breaks.

Meals may be purchased in the Marshfield campus cafeteria, or on campus Subway. Lunches carried in must be eaten in the cafeterias, break rooms, or student classroom. Food and beverages are not allowed in the laboratories.

Rotation schedules are provided to students in advance. Each student is responsible for reporting to their assigned section 2-5 minutes before the designated time.

Absences

Tardiness:

- Tardiness is defined as not being present and prepared. Students are expected to be on time and prepared for the day indicated by their rotation schedules.
- Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated and is grounds for dismissal.

Lateness/Absences:

Same-Day Absences: Students who will be unavoidably late or absent due to illness, transportation problem, or other reason, must telephone the Histology Department as soon as possible. Students must telephone and speak directly with a staff member

who will convey a message to the lead instructor and Program Coordinator regarding the situation.

Advance Notice Absences:

- Students who know in advance they need time off for a personal appointment, job interview, or other reason, must request the time off from their Program Coordinator by e-mail as far in advance as possible.
- The lead instructor and Program Coordinator will make the decision as to whether to allow the requested time off. Students will be informed of their decision by return e-mail.

Unexcused Absences:

- “Unexcused” means no notification was received by the section or Program Coordinator and the whereabouts of the student could not be determined.
- Two consecutive unexcused absences will be considered grounds for dismissal.

Missed Work:

- All work missed due to absences for any reason must be made up by the student. The work missed must be made up, not the time missed.
- The lead instructor will determine when and how the work will be made up and will inform the Program Coordinator of the plan.
- Excessive absences may require the student to spend additional time in a section at the end of the practicum year.

Student Storage

All students will be assigned a locker in the student classroom. Student lockers are for “clean” storage. Please refrain from storing any biohazard or dirty items in your student lockers. Any items that need to be secured should be stored in lockers.

Student Communications

Student Email

At the beginning of the practicum, all students will be given a Marshfield Clinic Health System email address. This is considered the primary email for all official communications from the program. Students should check their clinic email daily and respond to requests promptly.

Student Clinic Devices

All practicum students will be issued a Marshfield Clinic Health System laptop computer to be used during their practicum. Health System devices should be used in accordance with the Student Computer Use Policy and should always remain secured.

Program Coordinator

Students may visit the Program Coordinator's office at any time. Please check the dry erase board on the door for availability. The student may also seek assistance from the Lab Education Programs Coordinator – Lori Bruggeman, 3rd floor.

Professional Activities

During the practicum, students are encouraged to attend the Wisconsin Histology Meeting. Contingent on budgets, some expenses may be paid. Car-pooling and room sharing keeps costs to a minimum for the students. More information may be found at <https://www.whs.wildapricot.org>. Students are encouraged to join the State Society, \$5.00/year.

Students are encouraged to be members of the American Society for Clinical Pathologists (ASCP), the national professional society for laboratory professionals. Membership is free for students and available at: <http://www.ascp.org>.

Learn more about our national society (NSH) and apply for (\$80.00 for 2 yrs.) membership at <http://www.NSH.org> and programs at <http://www.naacls.org>

Welcome to Marshfield Clinic Health System Histology Practicum