Essential Functions of
Clinical Laboratory Students
At Central Georgia Technical College

A student in the CLT program at Central Georgia Technical College is expected to meet the following requirements.

Observation Requirements

- Observe laboratory demonstrations in which biologicals (e.g., body fluids, culture materials, tissue sections, and cellular specimens) are tested for their biochemical, hematological, microbiological, and immunologic components.
- Characterize the color, odor, clarity, and viscosity of biologicals, reagents, or chemical reaction products.
- Employ a clinical grade binocular microscope to discriminate among fine structural differences of microscopic specimens.
- Read and comprehend text, numbers, and graphs displayed in print and on a video monitor.

Movement Requirements

- Move freely and safely about a laboratory.
- Reach laboratory benchtops and shelves, patients lying in hospital beds or patient seated in specimen collection furniture.
- Travel to numerous clinical laboratory sites for practical experience.
- Perform moderately taxing continuous physical work, often requiring prolonged sitting, over several hours.
- Maneuver phlebotomy and culture acquisition equipment to safely collect valid laboratory specimens from patients.
- Control laboratory equipment (e.g. pipettes, inoculating loops, test tubes) and adjust instruments to perform laboratory procedures.
- Use an electronic keyboard (e.g. 101-key IBM computer keyboard) to operate laboratory instruments and to calculate record, evaluate, and transmit laboratory information.

Communication Requirement

- Read and comprehend technical and professional materials (e.g. textbooks, magazines, journal articles, handbooks, and instruction manuals)
- Follow verbal and written instructions in order to correctly and independently perform laboratory test procedures.
- Clearly instruct patients prior to specimen collection.
- Effectively, confidentially, and sensitivity converse with patients regarding laboratory tests.

- Evaluate the performance of fellow students, staff, and health care professionals verbally and in a recorded format (writing, typing, graphics, or telecommunications).
- Use computer software (word processor, spreadsheet, database, information systems), the Internet, and the World Wide Web for communication, education, and professional purposes
- Independently prepare papers, prepare laboratory reports, and take paper, computer, and laboratory practical examinations.

Intellectual Requirements

- Possess these intellectual skills; comprehension, measurement, mathematical calculation, reasoning, integration, analysis, comparison, self-expression, and criticism.
- Ability to solve problems and think critically.
- Exercise sufficient judgment to recognize and correct performance deviations.
- Critically evaluate her or his own performance, accept constructive criticism, and look forward to improve (e.g. participate in enriched educational activities).

Behavior Requirements

- Dress to project a neat, well-groomed, professional appearance
- Behave in a professional manner toward fellow students, faculty, and patients.
- Manage the use of time and systematize actions in order to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic constraints.
- Possess the emotional health necessary to effectively employ intellect and exercise appropriate judgments.
- Provide professional and technical services while experiencing the stresses of task-related uncertainty (e.g. ambiguous test ordering, ambivalent test interpretation), emergent demands (e.g. "stat" test orders), and a distracting environment (e.g. 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 potentially offensive specimens, chemicals, biologicals.
- Support and promote the activities of fellow students and of health care professionals.
- Help foster a team approach to learning, task completion, problem solving, and patient care.
- Be honest, compassionate, ethical, and responsible
- Forthright about errors or uncertainty

Adapted from: Fritsma, G.A., Fiorella B. J., and Murphey, M. Essential Requirements for Clinical Laboratory Science. CLS 1996. Vol. 9, pp 40-43