Waiver Rationale for Medical Laboratory Technician Program

The Medical Laboratory Technician Program at South Central College offers an Associate in Applied Science to students. The program consists of 72 credits, which are broken down into 21 general education credits and 51 technical credits. The 21 general education credits are all classes that benefit and prepare the student for the MLT program, future employment and the ability to further his/her education. These classes are all beneficial in covering the essential requirements set up by our industry partners and accreditation. The 51 technical credits prepare our students for employment in the MLT field and for taking the national certification exam.

The program was developed and approved by our industry partners to provide our students with the essential requirements needed for employment in Southern Minnesota and surrounding areas. Attached you will see the program course and sequence for the AAS MLT program. Reducing our credits from 72 to 60 would require cutting vital elements necessary to enable students to graduate from SCC and therefore become beneficial employees in the community. On April 29, 2013 our Advisory board met to discuss the possibility of changing the credit hours and it was unanimously agreed that going any lower in credit number would be harmful to the education the students received. Our student representative also agreed that a reduction would cause the students to feel cheated on their education and due to the great amount of knowledge taught it would be even harder to cram it in to fewer classes. Attached are the meeting minutes from the April Advisory meeting.

NAACLS, the accreditation agency for the MLT program, approved our current curriculum in 2009, stating that all the standards were met or exceeded the requirements.
The MLT program that is currently at 60 credits offers many of the same student learning outcomes with a few differences. Attached is a table of our program’s student learning outcomes and how we compare to the MLT program at 60 credits. As you will see by looking through the table there are some outcomes not addressed by the other program. By including these extra outcomes we can offer our students a broader perspective. When this was addressed to the advisory board the majority of the members felt that by changing the current curriculum it may hurt the outcomes of the students and affect the skills of future medical laboratory technicians.

Our program catalog description:

South Central College’s Medical Laboratory Technician program is a hybrid* program that prepares students for a career as a medical laboratory professional who makes a difference in people’s lives every day. Medical Laboratory Technicians work in all areas of a clinical laboratory providing invaluable information to assist physicians in preventing, diagnosing and treating disease.

(*Hybrid courses blend face-to-face interactions such as classroom activities, student group work and live lectures with online educational technologies such as lectures, assignments, discussions, and other web-based learning tools. These types of courses have significantly reduced seat time, amounting to at least 30% of the course time. For example, the MLT Program technical courses have all lecture-related material online with the student laboratory sessions constituting the face-to-face interactions.)

Medical Laboratory Technicians:

- Are problem solvers
- Like challenges and responsibility
- Are accurate and reliable
- Work well under pressure
- Communicate well
- Set high standards for themselves
- Are fascinated by science

A Medical Laboratory Technician performs routine clinical laboratory tests in all areas of the clinical laboratory. An MLT searches for basic causes to the presence, absence, extent and cause of diseases. Qualifications of this highly skilled individual include being dedicated and self-motivated with a keen commitment to accuracy and precision to ensure quality patient outcomes. MLTs work in a variety of laboratory environments including hospitals, clinics, doctor’s offices, research, technical, sales and reference labs in both private and public sectors.
Job opportunities are excellent in both metropolitan and rural areas of the country and include such places as: hospitals, clinics, research laboratories, reference laboratories, physician's offices, public health agencies, private laboratories, universities and medical sales. US News and World Report put Medical Laboratory Technician on their 50 Best Careers of 2011 list based on job growth projections, salaries and job satisfaction.

The structure of the program is a combination of general education and support courses; online lectures; face-to-face student laboratory sessions; and placement of students in a hospital or clinic internship experience. The program is considered a "hybrid" program because there are required face-to face student laboratory sessions in which a student must physically be present on one of SCC's two campuses in order to fulfill the requirements of the student laboratory sessions.

Additionally, South Central College graduates may continue their education toward bachelor's and master's degrees through articulation agreements with the University of North Dakota. South Central College and UND offer all courses with face-to-face and hybrid online options.

Accreditation:
NAACLS (National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences)
5600 N River Road, Suite 720
Rosemont, IL 60018-5119
(773)-714-8880

Upon graduation from the Medical Laboratory Technician program at South Central College, students are eligible to take a national certification examination given by the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP) and become certified as a Medical Laboratory Technician (ASCP).

Core Competencies

1. Demonstrate standard safety practices designed for the medical laboratory professions.
2. Perform basic phlebotomy procedures that include both venipuncture and capillary techniques.
3. Demonstrate multitasking skills where a wide variety of testing procedures are performed.
4. Demonstrate standard quality assurance practices to ensure quality patient outcomes.
5. Demonstrate proper procedures in maintenance, calibration, operation, and troubleshooting of laboratory analyzers and equipment.
6. Correlate pathologic conditions and the laboratory's role in diagnosis and treatment.