THIS POLICY APPLIES THE REGULATIONS OF THE WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF GOVERNORS (BoG) POLICIES 10 AND 31, AND ACADEMICS RULE 2.5 (FORMERLY POLICY 15).

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Table of Contents

Preamble .........................................................................................................................................................1
Definitions ......................................................................................................................................................2

CHAPTER I ....................................................................................................................................................4
Academic and Professional Standards and Regulations Governing Lecture, Laboratory, and Clinical Assessments within the Medical Laboratory Science and Pathologists’ Assistant Programs in Conformity with West Virginia BoG Policies 10 and 31, and Academics Rule 2.5 ......................................................................................................4

SECTION 1. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE .........................................................4
1.1 Academic Requirements and Professional Standards .................................................................4
1.2 Assessments .......................................................................................................................................4
1.3 Rights and Obligations of the Student .........................................................................................5
1.4 Rights and Obligations of the Faculty ..........................................................................................6

SECTION 2. CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS ...........................................................................................................6
2.1 A Zero, A Lower Grade, an Unforgivable F (UF), an Incomplete (I) Final Grade or Exclusion from Further Participation in the Course, Unit or Clinical Rotation .................................................................6
2.2 Probation .......................................................................................................................................6
2.3 Dismissal .........................................................................................................................................7

SECTION 3. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE (APSC): .........................7
3.1 The Formal Process of Review by the APSC: .............................................................................7
3.2 Criteria to Remain in Good Standing .........................................................................................8
3.3 Probation .......................................................................................................................................9
3.4 Dismissal ...................................................................................................................................... 9

SECTION 4. APPEAL OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY OR ACADEMIC PENALTIES ..........................10

CHAPTER II .................................................................................................................................................11
Professional Standards Governing Student Conduct Outside the Department of PALM Professional Programs (BoG Policies 10 and 31) ...........................................................................................................11

CHAPTER III ...............................................................................................................................................11
Department of PALM Professional Programs Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity .................................11
Preamble

The West Virginia University School of Medicine Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Laboratory Medicine Professional Programs, which includes the Medical Laboratory Science Programs and the Pathologists’ Assistant Program, have an obligation to evaluate students pursuing a degree as thoroughly as possible for their cognitive and noncognitive abilities, their academic and professional knowledge and skills, their integrity, and their suitability for the practice in Medical Laboratory Science or as a Pathologists’ Assistant. Accordingly, this policy incorporates the mandate of the West Virginia Supreme Court that "initial responsibility for determining the competency and suitability of persons to engage in professional careers lies with the professional schools themselves..."[North vs. West Virginia Board of Regents, 332 S.E. 2d (WV 1985)]

This Policy on Academic and Professional Standards is limited to students pursuing the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Degree in Medical Laboratory Science or the Masters of Health Science/Pathologists’ Assistant (M.H.S.) Degree at West Virginia University. This Policy (1) applies Board of Governors (BoG) Policies 10 and 31, and Academics Rule 2.5, (2) covers all behavior and conduct that demonstrates by a preponderance of the evidence that a student lacks the personal qualities necessary for the practice in Medical Laboratory Science or as a Pathologists’ Assistant, (3) gives exclusive authority to the Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Laboratory Medicine Professional Programs in such matters, with exceptions stated in this policy.

Conduct and behavior not relating to and not affecting professional practice are governed by the West Virginia University BoG Policy 31 - University Student Conduct and Discipline Policy (http://bog.wvu.edu/policies). Examples of conduct and behavior relating to and/or affecting professional practice are described in this document, course syllabi, course materials, and lectures.
Definitions

Clinical facility – a term applied to any hospital or clinic to which a student is assigned for the purpose of clinical education.

Clinical rotation – period in which a student is completing competencies in a clinical setting.

Course – a component of the program’s curriculum that can include one or a combination of the following: lecture, laboratory or clinical rotations.

Dismissal – termination from the program in which the student is enrolled

Excused absences - are not reviewed by the Division’s Academic and Professional Standard Committee unless a concerning pattern is identified.

Reasons for excused absences consist of:
   i. Serious illness, such as hospitalization
   ii. Death of a family member
      1. Students may take 3 excused absent days for bereavement of an immediate family member (parent, sibling, grandparent)
      2. Students may take 1 excused absent day for bereavement of an extended family member (aunt, uncle, etc.)
   iii. Major religious holiday – prior notification of an excused absence for a major religious holiday is required
   iv. Professional meetings or events
   v. University sanctioned absences: University activities at the request of University authorities, military training, and mandatory court appearances.
   vi. The Program Director has the right to permit or deny an excused absences for reasons not listed above

First Year - incorporates the Junior year including Fall I – Spring I within Medical Laboratory Science Tracks (Clinical Laboratory Science and Histotechnology).
   - incorporates PGY1 didactic year including Spring I – Fall I within the Pathologists’ Assistant Program.

Good standing – a student has not been assigned academic or professional disciplinary sanctions such as remediation, probation or dismissal.

GPA – Grade Point Average
   Overall GPA incorporates all final grades in courses completed within any accredited institution of higher education.
   
   Semester GPA incorporates all final grades completed within a specific semester, i.e. Fall, Spring or Summer.
   
   Science GPA incorporates overall final grades in science and math courses only. (only considered upon admission)
   
   Program GPA incorporates final grades within the specific program the student is enrolled. (Pathologists’ Assistant Program only)

Grade Penalty – defined by the course instructor in the syllabus
In writing – Electronic written communication (e.g., email) or written communication available for pick up or sent via postal service.

Probation – requires remediation within the program in which the student is enrolled.

Remediation – process of correcting a deficiency.

Second Year - incorporates the Senior year including Summer I – Spring II within Medical Laboratory Science Tracks (Clinical Laboratory Science and Histotechnology).
- incorporates PGY2 clinical year including Spring II – Fall II within the Pathologists’ Assistant Program.

Tardiness – arriving at any point after the established class, student laboratory, or clinical rotation time as documented in the syllabus, clinical rotation materials or set by the program director.
CHAPTER I

Academic and Professional Standards and Regulations Governing Lecture, Laboratory, and Clinical Assessments within the Medical Laboratory Science and Pathologists’ Assistant Programs in Conformity with West Virginia BoG Policies 10 and 31, and Academics Rule 2.5.

SECTION 1. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE
Requirements, Evaluations, Rights and Obligations of Students, Rights and Obligations of the Faculty

1.1 Academic Requirements and Professional Standards

Requirements for admission to the Medical Laboratory Science Programs or Pathologists’ Assistant Program are stated in the West Virginia University Academic Catalog (http://catalog.wvu.edu), program brochures, websites and application materials.

The Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Laboratory Medicine (PALM) Professional Programs requires that all enrolled students:

1) Achieve an integrative mastery of their discipline, maintain the motivation to gain such mastery, develop and demonstrate the required professional skills and responsibility
2) Be considerate toward instructors, staff, technologists and peers
3) Fulfill the criteria and requirements for satisfactory academic progress and successful completion of the Medical Laboratory Science or Pathologists’ Assistant Curriculum as stated in the West Virginia University Academic Catalog (http://catalog.wvu.edu) and in the syllabus of each course
4) Comply with all policies and procedures, including those related to conduct, appearance, and attendance required by the program or faculty coordinating a course, laboratory or clinical rotation
5) Follow the standards of the Department of PALM Professional Programs Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity (Chapter III).

By enrolling in the Medical Laboratory Science Programs or Pathologists’ Assistant Program, the student accepts the above academic and professional standards as criteria for successful completion of the curriculum. It is the student's responsibility to know and meet these requirements and criteria, and promptly inform the Program Director and/or Vice-Chair of Medical Laboratory Science (“Vice-Chair”) of any serious impediment (such as illness, etc.) hindering satisfactory academic progress.

Failure to meet the requirements listed above may lead to academic penalties and/or remedial changes in the student’s curriculum as outlined in Sections 2 and 3. Requirements are subject to change at any time with reasonable notice provided to students.

1.2 Assessments

Academic and professional performance is evaluated by written, computer-based and practical examinations and through the observation of performance in lectures, examinations, laboratories, and clinical rotations. Performance in courses and clinical rotations is described in the course syllabus or by the grades A (excellent), B (good), C (fair), D (poor), F (failure), UF (unforgivable F), Pass, Fail or I (incomplete).

A student must maintain expectations for professional behaviors as defined by the Department of PALM Professional Programs Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity (Chapter III). Professional behavior deficiencies will be presented to the APSC.
1.3 Rights and Obligations of the Student

It is the student’s responsibility to fulfill coursework and degree requirements and to know and meet the criteria for satisfactory academic progress and completion of the program.

Students shall have the right to access:
1) The West Virginia University Academic Catalog (http://catalog.wvu.edu) in which program requirements are stated,
2) The PALM Department Professional Programs Policy on Academic and Professional Standards (this document)
3) BoG Policies 10, and 31, and Academics Rule 2.5
4) The Medical Laboratory Science or Pathologists’ Assistant Student Handbook

Students shall have access to a written description of content, requirements, and grading policy for each course or clinical rotation in which they are enrolled.

The student shall be graded or have his/her performance evaluated solely upon performance in the course or clinical rotation as measured against academic and professional standards. The student shall not be evaluated prejudicially, capriciously, or arbitrarily. The student shall not be graded nor shall his/her performance be unlawfully evaluated on the basis of gender, race, color, sexual orientation, veteran status, religion, age, disability, national origin, creed, ancestry or political affiliation.

Students should immediately report all violations of the Department of PALM Professional Programs Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity that they witness, to the Chairperson of the APSC, or designee.

If any academic penalties are imposed because of failure to meet academic requirements or the provisions of Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity, the student has a right to:

1.3.1 Written notice about failure to meet academic or professional standards and potential penalties
The student shall be informed in writing of (1) the student's failure to meet academic or professional standards and requirements or an alleged violation of standards, (2) the methods, if any, by which the student may correct the deficiencies, and (3) the penalty, if any, to be imposed.

1.3.2 Discussion of the matter with those involved
The student may meet with those who have determined that the student failed to meet academic or professional standards and requirements or violated the Department of PALM Professional Programs Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity (Chapter III).

1.3.3 Appeal
The student may appeal the imposition of any academic penalty, including those imposed as a consequence of violations of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity, as stated in Section 4 of this document in accordance with the West Virginia BoG Academics Rule 2.5 and the West Virginia University Academic Catalog (http://catalog.wvu.edu).
1.4 Rights and Obligations of the Faculty

It is the responsibility of the faculty to evaluate a student's academic and professional performance. This evaluation takes three forms, namely (1) assignment of grades and evaluations by the faculty coordinating a course or clinical rotation, (2) review of behavior, demeanor and adherence to the Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity, and (3) review of academic and professional performance by the APSC.

Evaluations are not restricted to academic grades, but include the assessment of professional skills, demeanor and conduct.

The Department of PALM Professional Programs reserves the right to withhold the B.S. or M.H.S. degree from a student who may have technically met formal curricular requirements but lacks the professional skills, behavior and demeanor considered necessary for the degree or demonstrated unwillingness to accept professional responsibility in the practice of Medical Laboratory Science or as a Pathologists’ Assistant.

Grades and evaluations issued by the course faculty, and decisions or recommendations of the APSC are subject to the provisions of Section 1.3 which describes student rights.

Faculty responsible for a course should issue a written syllabus describing content, requirements, and grading policy for the course or laboratory rotation to each student enrolled in a course or rotation (Section 1.4).

The assignment of a grade and evaluation is the responsibility of the faculty coordinating the course or rotation.

The faculty responsible for a course may impose upon the student the appropriate penalties described in Section 2.1 for failure to maintain academic and professional standards.

Faculty reporting of academic and professional deficiencies is outlined in Section 3.1.

SECTION 2. CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

Upon failing to meet the academic and professional standards or provisions of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity, a student may be subject to the following academic penalties:

2.1 A Zero, A Lower Grade, an Unforgivable F (UF), an Incomplete (I) Final Grade or Exclusion from Further Participation in the Course, Unit or Clinical Rotation

These penalties are imposed by the instructor(s) of a course. The imposition of penalties by the instructor does not preclude further penalties by the Program Director based on the recommendations of the APSC.

2.2 Probation

This penalty is imposed by the Program Director after receipt of recommendations from the APSC (Section 3). The specific remediation requirements associated with the penalty will be stated by the Program Director at the time the student is informed of the penalty in writing (Section 1.3). See Section 3.5 for probation criteria.
2.3 Dismissal

This penalty is imposed by the Program Director after receipt of recommendations by the Department of PALM Professional Programs APSC as a result of academic and professional deficiencies found serious enough to merit dismissal.

After dismissal, readmission in the Medical Laboratory Science Programs or Pathologists’ Assistant Program must be sought through the standard admissions process. See Section 3.7 for dismissal criteria.

SECTION 3. ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE (APSC):

The Department of PALM Professional Programs APSC has been established for the purpose of the evaluation of Medical Laboratory Science and Pathologists’ Assistant students who fail to meet performance standards in one or more of the following areas: academics, academic integrity, clinical education and professional behavior and conduct.

The APSC is comprised of faculty from the Medical Laboratory Science Programs, Pathologists’ Assistant Program, and Health Sciences appointed by the Vice-Chair and is advisory to the Vice-Chair. A quorum consisting of 50% plus one member of the total membership is required to make a recommendation. The Director of the program in which the student under consideration is enrolled must be present before a recommendation may occur.

The APSC reviews the records of any student who fails to satisfy academic and professional standards which include grades or inappropriate professional behavior and conduct. The APSC makes recommendations for disciplinary sanctions and criteria. APSC recommendations for probation or dismissal are based on a comprehensive review of a student’s academic performance, professional behavior and conduct.

3.1 The Formal Process of Review by the APSC:

3.1.1 The faculty responsible for the course in which the student is not adhering to academic and professional standards must meet with the student and document on the appropriate form the following: (1) the problem, (2) meeting date(s) with student, (3) course of action already taken, and (4) recommendations. The form will be provided to the student, Program Director and Chair of the APSC, and a copy placed in the student’s file.

In matters of professional misconduct, any party can initiate a concern in writing to the APSC Chairperson, or designee.

The student may also submit in writing his/her arguments to the APSC Chairperson, or designee.

3.1.2 The APSC Chairperson, or designee, will then call a meeting of the Committee. If the student issue involves one of the APSC members, then that Committee member will not participate in the recommendations made. The vacancy may be filled by another faculty member appointed by the Vice-Chair.

The APSC will have access to all academic and professional materials.
3.1.3
All deliberations of the APSC will be closed and confidential. One Committee or staff member will be assigned to keep written minutes of the Committee meetings which must be signed and approved by all members who participate.

3.1.4
At the discretion of the APSC, a student under review may be invited for discussion of his/her academic deficiencies, professional misconduct or any extenuating circumstances that may have a bearing on the student’s performance.

3.1.5
The recommendations of the APSC will be submitted to the Program Director who may accept, modify, or reject the recommendations. The Program Director will then meet with the student to explain the imposition of any penalties and expected criteria. Decisions regarding dismissal will be reviewed and conveyed to the student by the Program Director. (Section 3.7).

3.2 Criteria to Remain in Good Standing

Recommendations for graduation are contingent upon the successful completion of all required courses, clinical rotations and other requirements. Graduation requires approval by the School of Medicine Faculty, including Medical Laboratory Science and Pathologists’ Assistant.

**Medical Laboratory Science Programs**

A student **must**:
1) Maintain at least a 2.5 overall GPA and achieve a 2.5 semester GPA each semester while in the program
2) Pass comprehensive examination given at the end of the Spring II semester of the second year
3) Maintain appropriate professional behavior, demeanor, conduct, and attendance
4) Successfully complete all clinical rotations
5) Successfully complete a capstone project
6) Complete 50 hours of approved community service

A second attempt will be available for any student who does not pass the comprehensive examination. See Sections 3.3, and 3.4 for probation and dismissal criteria.

**Pathologists’ Assistant Program**

A student **must**:
1) Maintain at least a 3.0 program GPA
2) Pass comprehensive examination given at the end of the Fall II semester of the second year
3) Maintain appropriate professional behavior, demeanor, conduct, and attendance
4) Successfully complete all clinical rotations
5) Successfully complete a presentation or publication
6) Complete 50 hours of approved community service

A second attempt will be available for any student who does not pass the comprehensive examination. See Section 3.3 and 3.4 for probation and dismissal criteria.
3.3 Probation

3.3.1 Admissions Probation
Automatic probationary status will be assigned to any student admitted into the Medical Laboratory Science Programs with an overall and/or science/math pre-requisite GPA less than 2.5. Probation upon admission does not apply to the Pathologists’ Assistant Program.

3.3.2 Program Probation
Medical Laboratory Science and Pathologists’ Assistant Criteria:
Probation will be recommended by the APSC in any case of:
1) A final grade of “D” during the program
2) Evaluations indicating serious gaps in knowledge and clinical skills and/or inadequate integration of the content of the curriculum
3) The appearance of a specific and serious academic deficiency, e.g., an important clinical skill has not been mastered
4) Failure to assume appropriate professional responsibility and behavior including demeanor, conduct, and absences/tardiness
5) A student's overall or semester GPA less than 2.5 in Medical Laboratory Science programs, or a program GPA less than 3.0 in the Pathologists’ Assistant Program
6) An infraction of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity (Chapter III)

When a student is placed on probation, the student must meet established criteria in the timeframe specified by the Program Director. If the student meets the established criteria in the specified timeframe, the APSC will recommend removal from probation. If the student does not meet the criteria within the specified timeframe, an extension of the student’s probationary status will be recommended.

Probationary status can only be assigned for a maximum of two semesters throughout the student’s entire matriculation in the program. It is possible for a student to be placed on probation, meet the terms of the probation by the following semester, be placed on probation again during a subsequent semester and meet the terms of probation again by the following semester. However, no further probationary periods will be allowed and dismissal will be recommended.

3.4 Dismissal

Dismissal may be recommended by the APSC for any case of:
Medical Laboratory Science Programs Criteria:
1) A second final grade of “D” in the first year or a final grade of “D” in the second year
2) Two semesters of an overall GPA less than 2.25 or a second semester GPA less than 2.25
3) An overall GPA less than 2.5 by the end of the Spring II semester of the second year
4) Failure of the comprehensive examination after two attempts given during the Spring II semester of the second year
5) Unsatisfactory evaluations which indicate gaps in knowledge and skills and/or inadequate integration of the content of the curriculum
7) After one semester on probation for failure to assume appropriate professional responsibility, including demeanor, conduct, and absences/tardiness, dependent upon the severity
8) Any infractions of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity (Chapter III)
**Pathologists’ Assistant Program Criteria:**

1. A second final grade of “D” in the first year or a final grade of “D” in the second year
2. Failure of the comprehensive examination after two attempts given during the Fall II semester of the second year
3. Unsatisfactory evaluations which indicate gaps in knowledge and skills and/or inadequate integration of the content of the curriculum;
4. After one semester on probation for failure to assume appropriate professional responsibility, including demeanor, conduct, and absences/tardiness, dependent upon the severity
5. Any infractions of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity (Chapter III)

Dismissal **will** be recommended by the APSC for any case of:

**Medical Laboratory Science Programs Criteria:**

1. An overall GPA less than 2.0 or more than two semesters of an overall GPA less than 2.25 in the Medical Laboratory Science Programs
2. Two final grades of D in the same semester
3. A final grade of “F” or “UF”
4. Meets probationary criteria for more than two semesters (see Section 3.3.2)

**Pathologists’ Assistant Program Criteria:**

1. A program GPA less than 2.75 or more than two semesters of a program GPA less than 3.0 in the Pathologists’ Assistant Program
2. Two final grades of D in the same semester
3. A final grade of “F” or “UF”
4. Meets probationary criteria for more than two semesters (see Section 3.3.2)

The APSC expects every student to meet the requirements stated in Section 1.1 and 1.2 of this policy. Therefore, even without an unsatisfactory grade, a student may incur a recommendation for dismissal for failure to meet these requirements.

Recommendation to dismiss a student for failure to meet academic or professional standards can be made only after documented counseling with the student and Program Director or Vice-Chair.

An APSC recommendation for dismissal, including any documentation provided by the student to the committee, shall be forwarded to the Program Director, and to the student. Within 15 calendar days of receipt of the APSC’s recommendation, the Program Director, shall inform the student of his/her decision. A decision to dismiss shall specify that the dismissal is from the program, not the college, or school.

The student may appeal this dismissal (Section 4). Students who are dismissed, including students admitted as direct admit, may reapply through the standard admissions process.

**SECTION 4. APPEAL OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY OR ACADEMIC PENALTIES**

Due process requirements, appeal procedures and time lines are specified in the West Virginia University Academic Catalog (http://catalog.wvu.edu/), and BoG Policy 31 and Academics Rule 2.5.
CHAPTER II

Professional Standards Governing Student Conduct Outside the Department of PALM Professional Programs (BoG Policies 10 and 31)

Conduct and behavior not relating to and not affecting professional practice are governed by the West Virginia University BoG Policy 31 - University Student Conduct and Discipline Policy (http://bog.wvu.edu/policies). Examples of conduct and behavior relating to and/or affecting professional practice are described in this policy and course syllabi.

Academic dishonesty includes HIPAA violations, plagiarism (intentional or unintentional), cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, projects and laboratories as well as forgery, misrepresentation or fraud as it relates to academic and educational matters.

The process for initiating a charge of academic dishonesty is outlined in the West Virginia University Academic Catalog (http://catalog.wvu.edu).

CHAPTER III

Department of PALM Professional Programs Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity

The practice of the art and science in Medical Laboratory Science or as a Pathologists’ Assistant must be based on reverence for life, compassion and respect for patients, competence, and integrity. Hence the Department of PALM Professional Programs expects students to exhibit professionalism through compassion, consideration and respect towards patients and their families, instructors, staff, and each other, growth of knowledge and clinical skills, and acting honorably at all times.

This Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity incorporates the Policy on Academic and Professional Standards governing the Department of PALM Professional Programs at West Virginia University School of Medicine and governs student behavior in lectures, examinations, laboratories, clinical rotations, all academic settings of the School of Medicine and the University, and all other settings which reflect upon the integrity and suitability of the student to practice in Medical Laboratory Science or as a Pathologists’ Assistant. Successful progression through the curriculum and graduation are contingent upon the student's compliance with this code. Evaluation of student performance under this code follows the procedures established in the Policy on Academic and Professional Standards governing the Department of PALM Professional Programs at West Virginia University School of Medicine.

Specifically, the Department of PALM Professional Programs requires students to adhere to these basic rules of academic and professional integrity:

1. I shall dedicate myself to excellence in patient care.
   I, therefore, shall be conscientious in carrying out my assigned duties, follow the guidance of my instructors, and accept responsibility for my actions.

2. I shall safeguard a patient's privacy.
   I, therefore, shall not access or disclose confidential information about a person without authorization.

3. I shall be considerate and respectful towards patients, their families, instructors, staff, and my fellow students.
I, therefore, shall treat patients with greatest consideration and respect their dignity. I shall be courteous and civil in my dealings with others within the School of Medicine and clinical facilities. I shall respect rules of behavior, professional comportment, and appearance set forth by the School of Medicine, the Department of PALM Professional Programs and clinical facilities. I shall render evaluations of courses and instructors in an objective and civil manner. I shall be professional in all forms of communication.

4. I shall act honorably and with integrity in my pursuit of the B.S. or M.H.S. degree. I, therefore, shall be truthful about my actions as a student and accept responsibility for them. I shall reject academic dishonesty and not falsely claim competence or knowledge. I pledge to refrain from all acts of academic dishonesty. In particular,
   a. I shall not plagiarize and not submit as my own any material taken from other sources without acknowledgement or permission.
   b. I shall not cheat in connection with any examinations, academic assignments and activities, and clinical duties. I especially pledge that:
      • I shall not communicate with others, except proctors, during an examination;
      • I shall not obtain unauthorized help from another person during an examination or graded academic assignment;
      • I shall not give help to another student during an examination or graded academic assignment;
      • I shall not take an examination in place of another student;
      • I shall not gain access to unauthorized material in connection with an examination;
      • I shall not make use of unauthorized material in connection with an examination;
      • I shall not obtain impermissible advance knowledge of the contents of examination;
      • I shall not alter a scored examination or answer sheet and then resubmit it in order to effect a change of a grade or evaluation;
      • I shall not allow another student to submit my work for grading or credit;
      • I shall not falsify instructional or clinical laboratory results;
   c. I shall not engage in forgery, misrepresentation, and fraud. I especially pledge that:
      • I shall not furnish false statements as a witness for any University or School of Medicine disciplinary investigation or appeal;
      • I shall not forge or alter educational records or submit such records to the staff and faculty of the University or School of Medicine for fraudulent purposes;

5. I shall act honorably and with integrity at all times. I, therefore, shall not engage in behavior or conduct that demonstrates a lack of personal qualities necessary for the practice in medical laboratory science or pathologists’ assistant or that may adversely reflect upon the profession, the Department of PALM Professional Programs or the School of Medicine.

6. I shall support this code of academic and professional integrity. I, therefore, shall report to Chairperson of the APSC all violations of this code that I witness.
I have read and understand the Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Laboratory Medicine Professional Programs Policy on Academic and Professional Standards and agree to abide by the academic and professional standards and requirements stated within this document.

Name (Printed): _______________________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________