San José State University
Clinical Laboratory Scientist Training Program

What is a Clinical Laboratory Scientist (CLS)

CLS stands for Clinical Laboratory Scientist. The title CLS is equivalent to the title Medical Technologist (but because the California license is a CLS license, we will use the term CLS.) Currently CLS are the only individuals licensed by the state of California to perform tests for diagnosis of human disease. All blood tests, urinalysis, toxicology, and microbiology ordered by health care providers must be performed by a licensed CLS. Seventy percent of the health care decisions are made on the basis of lab test results generated by licensed CLSs. CLSs can also apply their expertise in other fields including biotechnology, veterinary diagnostics and education. For more information about the profession, please visit

http://www.ascls.org/jobs/careeropps.asp or
http://www.ascp.org/MainMenu/AboutASCP/ASCP-Career-Center.aspx

Why would someone want to train as a CLS?

Clinical Laboratory Scientists are in high demand and have starting salaries between $65,000 and $75,000 per year. For information about salaries in your area, please visit http://www.salary.com. As a CLS, you will be performing the tests that directly impact patient care. This career appeals to people with a strong background in the sciences and good critical thinking skills who are interested in helping others. A CLS can work in a variety of environments including hospitals, small clinics, reference labs and blood donor centers. A CLS can also use his/her skills to perform lab testing in veterinary clinics and to do research in the biotechnology and pharmaceuticals industries. They are needed in all parts of the country and are especially scarce in rural areas.

What skills are needed to become a CLS?

A CLS needs to have good laboratory technique, strong critical thinking skills, the ability to work under stressful conditions, and a professional attitude. Any experience that you have had that taught you those skills is useful preparation for the CLS training program. The CLS trainee will need to learn to draw blood and previous experience with phlebotomy is a plus.