

## I. Writing Plan Cover Page

*Please fill in the gray areas on this form.*

**October 7, 2016**

Subsequent Edition of Writing Plan: previous plan submitted Summer/2014, First edition submitted Summer/2013

Medical Laboratory Sciences Program (formerly Clinical Laboratory Sciences)

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WEC Unit Name

Center for Allied Health Programs

Academic Health Center

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Department

College

Donna J. Spannaus-Martin

Professor

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WEC Faculty Liaison (print name)

Title

spann003@umn.edu

612-625-4418

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Email

Phone

### Writing Plan ratified by Faculty

*Note: This section needs to be completed regardless of Writing Plan edition.*

Date: October 7, 2016

If Vote:  $\frac{11}{\# \text{ yes}}$  /  $\frac{11}{\# \text{ total}}$

*Process by which Writing Plan was ratified within unit (vote, consensus, other- please explain):*

Planned was discussed at a faculty meeting on September 30, 2016. Revisions were made, additional feedback was obtained via e-mail and the final approval was obtained by an e-mail vote.

**II. Unit Profile: Medical  
Laboratory Sciences**

*Please fill in the gray areas on this form.*

**Number of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty:**

<u>1</u>	Professors
<u>0</u>	Associate Professors
<u>2</u>	Assistant Professors
<b><u>3</u></b>	<b>Total</b>

**In addition to the tenured and tenure-track faculty, the  
 MLS Program has eight additional non-tenure track faculty**

<b>Major(s)</b> <i>Please list each major your Unit offers:</i>	<b>Total # students enrolled in major as of Fall/2016</b>	<b>Total # students graduating with major 2015-16</b>
Medical Laboratory Sciences	99	31
<b>Total:</b>		

<b>WEC Implementation Process</b>	<b>Semester/Year- Semester/Year</b>	<b># participated</b>	<b>/</b>	<b># invited</b>
Meeting with MLS faculty/staff	August 22, 2014	7	/	10
Meeting with MLS faculty/staff	October 24, 2014	8	/	10
MLS Writing Test Workshop	November 14, 2014	7	/	10
Meeting with MLS faculty/staff	February 13, 2015	9	/	11
MLS Rubrics Workshop	April 9, 2015	7	/	11
Meeting with MLS faculty/staff	May 8, 2015	10	/	11
Meeting with MLS faculty/staff	December 4, 2015	10	/	11
Mapping meeting with MLS faculty/staff	June 16, 2016	11	/	11
Ratings meeting with MLS faculty/staff	August 18, 2016	10	/	11
Meeting with MLS faculty/staff	September 30, 2016	10	/	11

### III. Signature Page

*Signatures needed regardless of Writing Plan edition. Please fill in the gray areas on this form.*

If this page is submitted as a hard copy, and electronic signatures were obtained, please include a print out of the electronic signature chain here.

#### WEC Faculty Liaison

Donna J. Spannaus-Martin

Professor

WEC Faculty Liaison (print name)

Title

  
Signature

October 7, 2016

Date

#### Department Head/Chair

Janice Conway-Klaassen

Program Director

Print Name

Title

  
Signature

October 9, 2016

Date

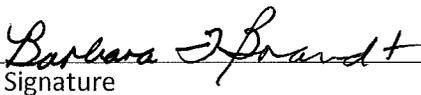
#### Associate Dean

Barbara Brandt

Associate Vice President for Education

Print Name

Title

  
Signature

October 10, 2016

Date

## IV. Writing Plan

### Narrative, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

#### Introductory Summary:

*Briefly describe the reason(s) this unit (department, school, college) become involved in the WEC project, the key findings that resulted from the process of developing this plan, and the implementation activities that are proposed in this Writing Plan, with particular attention to the following questions: what is new in this 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Writing Plan? What, if any, key changes have been made to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition? What key implementation activities are proposed in this edition of the Writing Plan? (1 page maximum)*

The Medical Laboratory Sciences Program (MLSP), formerly the Clinical Laboratory Sciences Program (CLSP), is a relatively small undergraduate program located in the Center for Allied Health Programs in the Academic Health Center. Since the MLSP began its participation in the WEC Program, we have also undergone a transformation from a traditional medical laboratory educational program to a hybrid, flipped classroom model of education. When the switch from CLSP to MLSP was made, one of the changes implemented was the addition of three junior year MLSP courses. Prior to this, all CLSP courses were taken in the senior year, which gave the faculty very little time to develop the writing skills required by the profession. The addition of junior year courses, including the addition of a second writing intensive course in the Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) major, the modification of all MLSP courses to the flipped classroom model, and the need for improved student writing skills made the decision of the MLSP faculty to join the WEC program a natural one.

Since the second edition of the MLSP Writing Plan was presented, the program has continued its review of the types of writing errors made by students and differences between the writing of native and non-native English speaking students. In the summer and fall of 2015, three multilingual specialists and two MLS professionals coded writing samples from senior MLS students for number and types of writing errors made. Although no significant differences were found between the ratings of MLS professionals and multilinguals specialists, the study did reinforce the findings discussed in the second edition of the writing plan, which showed that although multilingual writings tended to make more errors, the types of errors made were essentially the same for native and non-native English writers. Based on this information, changes in MLSP 5011W: Professional Issues in the Health Care Community have included the use of TurnIt-In as a tool for students to identify and correct these errors in their own writing, and having students keep error logs identifying the types of errors they are making for the three major writing assignments in this course. The use of TurnIt-In as a learning tool for students is now also being utilized in other MLSP courses, but its use in the junior year writing intensive course has been successful in getting students to edit their own writing before submitting it.

In order to support the efforts discussed in this writing plan, faculty are asking for a continuation of support for workshops from the WEC staff, in particular as faculty continue to work on rubric development. Faculty are also asking for monetary support for a research assistant or instructional designer to help in the development of effective writing assignments and activities that will support the goals and objectives of the program. The faculty are also asking for monetary support for a videographer and honoraria for MLS practitioners to develop videos faculty can use in their courses to help emphasize to students the importance of effective writing in the medical laboratory.

## **Section 1: DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC WRITING CHARACTERISTICS**

*What characterizes academic and professional communication in this discipline?*

X There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.

There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

As a healthcare professional, a medical laboratory scientist must be able to address a variety of audiences. For the entry-level practitioner, most often the communications will be short and directed to another healthcare professional regarding laboratory testing that has been requested or performed. As with the testing, this communication must be done clearly and accurately. As a profession, we often say that the results can only be as good as the sample that has been collected. For this reason, the entry-level practitioner must also be able to provide clear explanations to patients as to how the patient may need to collect a specimen. The graduates of our program are also often quickly moved into supervisor or managerial roles, so they must also be able to effectively communicate the status of the laboratory to administrators and accrediting bodies. This would include business letters, annual reports, and budget requests.

The following writing characteristics have been identified by faculty and medical laboratory scientists as being important for successful written communication within the discipline.

- **Explanatory:** Scientific and administrative information is explained logically and at levels of detail that are appropriate for the particular audience being addressed (health care providers, management, peers, and patients)
- **Descriptive:** Can describe procedures, microscopic objects, and results in an accurate and unambiguous manner; medical and scientific terminology is appropriately used
- **Distilled:** Conveys information in a thorough, yet precise and concise manner; without unnecessary information
- **Persuasive:** Can explain reasoning used to make a decision or develop a plan of action
- **Organized in correct format:** Can write in established formats, including those prescribed by regulatory and accrediting organizations, as well as reports for administration and scientific reporting
- **Multi-modal:** Can present information accurately in hand-written formats, as well as electronic formats, including test result reports, proposals, posters, and Powerpoint presentations
- **Informative and Constructive:** Can write in a manner that is clear, helpful and educational to the reader e.g., employee performance appraisals
- **Timely:** Can provide written communications in a timely manner
- **Correct in grammar and spelling**

## **Section 2: DESIRED WRITING ABILITIES**

*With which writing abilities should students in this unit's major(s) graduate?*

There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.

X There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

MLS faculty have continued their efforts to define the desired writing abilities of MLS graduates. The list below is the most recent version developed during a faculty meeting and continued revisions through a shared Google doc.

Concise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrates and revises collaborative and individual writings for concision, logic, and readability</li> </ul>
Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deciphers and presents information in an accurate and precise manner, being mindful of circumstantial details</li> <li>Writes clearly and effectively to the appropriate audience in a variety of media</li> </ul>
Contextual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepares appropriate documentation when necessary</li> <li>Conveys information using audience appropriate language</li> <li>Writing in the appropriate tone and in a professional manner</li> <li>Uses graphics and figures to convey complicated ideas accurately</li> <li>Effectively utilizes current and emerging communication technologies to appropriately collect and disseminate information</li> <li>Describes quantitative analyses accurately (e.g., statistical results and mathematical solutions)</li> </ul>
Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conveys information using professional and audience-appropriate language</li> </ul>
Meaningful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates visuals using graphics and figures to convey complicated ideas</li> <li>Writes clearly and effectively in a variety of media</li> <li>Evaluates and demonstrates synthesis</li> <li>Demonstrates mastery and proper application of terminology, tools, and jargon</li> </ul>
Reflective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluates and effectively revises their own writing</li> </ul>
Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates and edits team-written documents for concision, unity, and readability using collaborative authorship</li> </ul>
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses correct mechanics, structure and spelling</li> <li>Follows formatting instructions for documents</li> <li>Correctly uses industry-standard formats</li> </ul>

Faculty continue to struggle with the development of a list of criteria that can be used a menu of items utilized as part of a common MLS rubric. The difficulties stem in part from the wide range of genres in which student writing occurs, from lab reports to job descriptions, and letters to legislators, and the wide range of audiences, from patients to physicians. Although some characteristics are common to many genres (mechanics, clarity), the characteristics of what is good writing for a patient’s chart (concise, accurate) are very different from the characteristics of good writing in describing a laboratory issue to a legislator (descriptive, persuasive). Faculty would like to have a usable menu of criteria for common rubric that all faculty can use in their courses by the end of the time period covered by this third edition of the MLS writing plan.

**Section 3: INTEGRATION OF WRITING INTO UNIT’S UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM**

*How is writing instruction currently positioned in this unit’s undergraduate curriculum (or curricula)? What, if any, course sequencing issues impede an intentional integration of relevant, developmentally appropriate writing instruction?*

- There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.
- There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

Over the past two years, the MLS Program has been working with two writing specialists to map the current writing assignments in all MLS courses. This work was completed in June, 2016. These writing specialists met with each course director to discuss the writing assignments for each MLSP course, with the exception of MLSP 1010, a one credit course for non-majors that serves to introduce these students to the MLS major and MLSP 5012, a one credit course for entry-level students in health care professional programs. MLSP 5012 currently involves over a thousand students in the Academic Health Center and is directed through the AHC's 1Health initiative to provide students with interprofessional experience. For each course, the learning outcomes, learning activities and objectives, course assessments, percentage of students achieving the competency level, resources available, and other notes were included. For some courses, these discussions resulted in substantial additions and revisions in written assignments. These revisions included clarification of expectations for writing assignments, development or improved grading rubrics, and modification of assignments to reflect the writing skills expected of an MLS graduate.

On June 16, 2016, the MLS faculty met with Virginia Wright-Peterson, one of the writing specialists to hear a summary of the writing mapping project and the recommendations of the writing team. At this meeting, writing in the entire MLS curriculum was reviewed. One of the recommendations of the writing team was for the MLS faculty to create more direct alignment between course writing goals, objectives, and specific writing activities and assignment objectives. Another recommendation was to provide students with examples of the quality of writing that is expected in assignments and assessments. This includes including short answer questions on exams, providing students with examples of both satisfactory and unsatisfactory written answers for sample exam questions, and providing a rubric for this type of questions so students know what is expected of them. Many of the writing assignments in MLSP courses are lab reports. The writing team recommended that faculty utilize these assignments to allow students not only to provide the "answer" to specific questions, but to apply the results they obtained to a broader context by asking questions such as "What implications does this finding have for the patient?" The MLS faculty have already come to understand the value of short writing assignments as a way of helping students improve their learning of the material. These short writing assignments have also been helpful to faculty in identifying topics or concepts that are unclear to students.

The Medical Laboratory Science Program is fortunate in that as a professional program, students progress through their courses as a cohort. This makes scaffolding writing assignments within the curriculum an easier task. One of the strategies that has been implemented is the use of TurnIt-In as a learning tool for students in their junior year. TurnIt-In helps students evaluate and correct mechanical errors in their writing. When students are able to correct grammatical errors on their own, faculty are able to concentrate on the content of the writing instead of playing the role of "grammar police." The writing intensive course in the junior year has utilized introduces students to TurnIt-In as a learning tool. In this course, students also maintain error logs of the types of writing errors they make in each of the three main writing assignments in the course. Results so far indicate that by the end of their junior year, students have been able to self-edit and reduce the number of mechanical errors in their writings.

The conversion of MLS courses to a flipped classroom model has made the incorporation of short, low-stakes writing activities into classroom activities relatively easy. For most of the MLSP courses, recorded lectures are provided through Moodle course sites. Faculty can use in-class time for other learning activities, which can include activities such as a five minute writing workshop, a short reflective writing piece, or a writing-to-learn activity. Some faculty have been developing these low stakes, writing-to-learn activities into their courses already. With this edition of the writing plan, the MLS program plans to take a closer look at these types of activities, how these activities align with program writing goals and course objectives, placement of these activities within the curriculum, and the best places in the curriculum to use additional writing assignments and activities in order to build the specific writing skills addressed in each goal.

#### **Section 4: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT WRITING**

*What concerns, if any, have unit faculty and undergraduate students voiced about grading practices?*

*Please include a menu of criteria extrapolated from the list of Desired Writing Abilities provided in Section II of this plan. (This menu can be offered to faculty/instructors for selective adaptation and will function as a starting point in the WEC Project's longitudinal rating process.).*

- There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.
- There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

The MLS faculty have continued to struggle with the development of a menu of criteria extrapolated from the list of Desired Writing Abilities used for the rating of student writing and the development of grading rubrics. This list has undergone at least three revisions, and the faculty are still not satisfied with the results. The faculty realized the 2013 criteria were too specific to individual faculty assignments, and did not address some of the types of writing that will be required of MLS graduates. The items utilized in the 2016 Rating of MLS Upper-Division Writing of Graduate Majors are given below:

- Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by a healthcare provider, laboratory professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences
- Is free of grammar/usage/proofreading issues that will distract readers or confuse meaning
- Demonstrates proper formatting and mechanics (margins, font, spacing)
- Stays within expected organization such that readers are able to follow logic
- Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion
- Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed
- Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information
- Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information
- Demonstrates appropriate use of terminology

The 2016 MLS ratings of student writing are given in Appendix A of this document. A comparison of the ratings from the 2013 student writings was not a straight forward task, as the criteria for rating were modified between 2013 and 2016. In addition, because the MLS program does not have a capstone writing project, most of the assignments used in the 2013 ratings were not used in the 2016 ratings. In 2013, student writings were evaluated by two MLS raters and one writing specialist. However, due to the technical nature of the writings to be evaluated, it

was decided that the student writings should be evaluated by three MLS raters (two faculty raters and one outside MLS professional). For most items, the ratings between these two groups was similar. However, it is interesting to note that the one area in which the MLS professional rated students lower than the MLS faculty was in the students grammar and use of terminology. This is an area that faculty are beginning to see improvement from previous years, so we will continue to utilize the TurnIt-In features that allow students to view and correct their own grammatical and mechanical errors.

The First Week of Clinicals assignment was the only assignment rated in both 2013 and 2016. Rating scores from 2013 to 2016 were inconsistent in that some areas showed improvement, while others appeared to have gotten worse. Scores improved in the areas of mechanics (grammar, spelling, etc.), formatting, and organization, which may be the result of the incorporation of error logs and self-evaluation using TurnIt-In during the junior year. However, scores decreased for criteria that looked at accuracy and concision. However, this may be because this sample was a reflective writing assignment, so students were likely not as concerned with keeping the writing concise as they were with just describing their own observations of the clinical laboratory.

The 2016 ratings did point out areas of insufficiency in student writing to the faculty. Scores were low for mechanics and clarity in formal business letters to legislators, and for concision in the case studies assignment. The use of short, low stakes writing assignments may help students in the development of these skills.

#### **Section 5: SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PLANS, including REQUESTED SUPPORT, RELATION TO PREVIOUS IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES, and SUSTAINABILITY PLANS**

*What does the unit plan to implement during the period covered by this plan? What forms of instructional support does this unit request to help implement proposed changes? What are the expected outcomes of named support?*

MLS faculty are committed to helping students develop the skills necessary to be a successful medical laboratory professional. Over the next two years, faculty will continue to revise the grading criteria in order to develop consistent common grading criteria so students know what the expectations of faculty are with regard to their writing abilities. Faculty are requesting additional workshops/guidance on rubrics as they continue to work on the development of standard grading criteria. In addition, we are requesting support for a research assistant or instructional designer to assist faculty with the development of new writing assignments that align with the writing goals and objectives of the program. This person would work with each of the faculty who have courses during that semester to develop new writing assignments that aligned with the program writing goals and course objectives. There are usually five course directors teaching each semester, so the research specialist/ instructional designer would be able to spend four hours at least twice a semester, and more likely three times during the semester to develop the writing assignments and activities. Over the course of the year, each course should have at least one or more new writing activities that work together with activities in other courses to help students develop the writing skills they need to be successful.

Students continue to look at writing as unimportant for a medical laboratory professional. Faculty would like to provide short videos of MLS professionals talking about the writing they do in their jobs and the importance of writing in the profession. These videos could be placed in any of the MLS courses, but they would be particularly important in the two writing intensive courses in the major, both of which are online courses.

*How do the implementation plans of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Writing Plan relate to implementation activities from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Writing Plans? What has been successful? What was not successful? How do implementation plans build*

*on what was learned from the first year of implementation? How do implementation plans anticipate the ongoing application of this final edition Writing Plan?*

The first stage of mapping writing in the MLSP curriculum was completed in the second edition of the writing plan. With the third edition of the writing plan, faculty would like to take a closer look at the writing assignments and begin designing assignments with the intention of better alignment to the writing goals and objectives of the program. This includes a plan for scaffolding assignments in order for students to continue to build their skills.

One of the tools that the MLS faculty have found to be very useful, especially for multilingual writers is using TurnIt-In as a learning tool for students rather than just as a plagiarism monitor. Students receive instructions in their junior year writing intensive course concerning how to use TurnIt-In to correct their mechanical and grammar errors in their writing. They are also given instruction as to how to interpret the error codes provided in TurnIt-In. In addition, one of their assignments in this writing intensive course is to maintain error logs, tracking the number and types of errors they are making so they can begin to see patterns and self-correct their errors. Faculty have seen improvement in student writing, and more MLS faculty are now using TurnIt-In in ways that allow students to see the results, make corrections, and resubmit their work before the faculty grade the assignment. Students seem to have improved their skills and faculty spend less time trying to grade grammar, and more time concentrating on the content of the writing.

In this writing plan, faculty have also asked for continued support through focused workshops for MLS faculty by the WEC staff. As a faculty, we have not been successful in developing clear criteria for the writing expectations we have for our students. We plan to continue to work on this over the coming years, and would like to continue to utilize Pamela Flash and the WEC staff as we develop common criteria for MLS rubrics. As we begin to develop writing assignments that have better alignment with program goals and course objectives, faculty would like additional workshops on using writing as a learning tool, and how to effectively and efficiently grade student writings

Although views are slowly changing, many students continue to question the need for good writing skills as a medical laboratory professional. Although faculty can emphasize the importance of good writing and communication skills, students often don't see its importance until they get out into their clinical experience, which they do in their very last semester of the program. At this point it is usually too late for them to develop the skills to the extent they will be needed. Faculty would like to create short videos of recent MLS graduates and other MLS professionals to describe how they use writing in the profession, the importance of developing good communication skills, and the risks to the patients when those writing and communications skills have not been adequately developed.

*How will the unit move toward ownership of the implementation process after the end of eligibility for WEC funding? When needed, what will be sources of funding and resource support? How will ongoing evaluation and improvement of the Writing Plan take place?*

The Program Director intends to continue to dedicate at least one faculty meeting per year to a review of the writing plan, and a review of current status of student writing. For this writing plan, there is an expectation that

every course will include at least one of the program's writing goals, include at least one course objective that aligns with that program goal, develop an activity or assignment to help students meet that objective, and develop an assessment in order for the program to assess how well students are obtaining competency for that objective. This will be an ongoing process that will be evaluated each year once these writing objectives, activities and assessments are in place.

**Section 6: PROCESS USED TO CREATE THIS WRITING PLAN**

*How, and to what degree, were a substantial number of stakeholders in this unit (faculty members, instructors, affiliates, teaching assistants, undergraduates, others) engaged in providing, revising, and approving the content of this Writing Plan?*

The revised writing plan was developed by MLS WEC liaison Donna Spannaus-Martin, in collaboration with Program Director Janice Conway-Klassen. The plan is the result of several discussions during MLS faculty meetings. Changes and additions from the previous writing plan are based in part on 1) data presented and recommendations given by writing specialists regarding the mapping of writing in the program; 2) comments about writing in the profession provided by students in MLSP 5014W: Laboratory Operations & Management in Health Care Systems, which is the writing intensive course taken in their final semester in the program; and 3) recommendations from WEC Director Pamela Flash. The revisions to the writing plan were discussed at a faculty meeting on September 30, 2016. The final version was e-mailed to faculty, final revisions made, with the final version being approved by an e-mail vote.

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**Section 7: CONNECTION TO  
 STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*Briefly describe how the ideas*

*contained in this*

*Undergraduate Writing Plan address the University's Student Learning Outcomes (<http://www.slo.umn.edu>).*

At the time of receiving a bachelor's degree, students:

<p>Can identify, define, and solve problems</p>	<p>Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by a healthcare provider, laboratory professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences                  Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed                  Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information                  Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information</p>
<p>Can locate and critically evaluate information</p>	<p>Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information</p>
<p>Have mastered a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry</p>	<p>Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by a healthcare provider, laboratory professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences                  Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed                  Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information</p>
<p>Can communicate effectively</p>	<p>Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by a healthcare provider, laboratory professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences                  Is free of grammar/usage/proofreading issues that will distract readers or confuse meaning                  Demonstrates proper formatting and mechanics (margins, font, spacing)                  Stays within expected organization such that readers are able to follow logic                  Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion                  Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed                  Demonstrates appropriate use of terminology</p>

## V. WEC Research Assistant (RA) Request Form

*This form is required if RA funding is requested. If no RA funding is requested please check the box below.*

No RA Funding Requested

RAs assist faculty liaisons in the WEC Writing Plan implementation process. The specific duties of the RA are determined in coordination with the unit liaison and the WEC consultant, but should generally meet the following criteria: they are manageable in the time allotted, they are sufficient to their funding, and they have concrete goals and expectations (see below).

RA funding requests are made by appointment percent time (e.g., 25% FTE, 10% FTE, etc.). Appointment times can be split between two or more RAs when applicable (e.g., two 12.5% appointments for a total of 25% FTE request). Total funds (including fringe benefits when applicable) need to be calculated in advance by the liaison, usually in coordination with administrative personnel<sup>i</sup>.

Please note that, outside of duties determined by the liaison, WEC RAs may be required to participate in specific WEC activities, such as meetings, Moodle discussion boards, and surveys.

RA Name (Use TBD for vacancies): TBD

RA Contact Information: email \_\_\_\_\_, phone \_\_\_\_\_

Period of appointment (Semester/Year to Semester/Year): Spring 2017 and Fall 2017

RA appointment percent time: 10%

Define in detail the tasks that the RA will be completing within the funding period:

RA will work directly with course directors in the development of short, low stakes writing assignments that align with program writing goals and course objectives. This may include reading through student writing samples to determine which ones could be used as effective examples for five minute writing workshops. The RA will spend approximately 4 hours each week with one of that semester's course directors on the development of writing assignments, which should allow them to meet with each course director at least twice. By the end of the semester, each course should have at least one new writing assignment incorporated into the curriculum.

Define deadlines as applicable (please note that all deadlines must be completed within the funding period):

R By the end of the semester, each course should have at least one new writing assignment incorporated into the curriculum.

Describe how frequently the RA will check in with the liaison:

The liaison and the RA will communicate via e-mail monthly. A face-to-face meeting should occur at the beginning and end of each semester.

Describe in detail the RA's check-in process (e.g., via email, phone, in-person, etc.):

The liaison and the RA will communicate via e-mail monthly. A face-to-face meeting should occur at the beginning and end of each semester.

## VI. WEC Writing Plan Requests

Unit Name: **Medical Laboratory Sciences**

**Financial Requests** (requests cannot include faculty salary support) *drop-down choices will appear when cell next to "semester" is selected*

**Total Financial Request:** **\$14,800.00**

Semester 1: Spring 2017		Semester 2: Summer 2017		Semester 3: Fall 2017	
Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost
		Research Assistant/Instructional Designer (about 10%)	\$4,100.00	Research Assistant/Instructional Designer (about 10%)	\$4,100.00
				Videographer	\$2,000.00
				Honoraria for five MLS professionals	\$500.00
<b>Semester 1 Total:</b>		<b>Semester 2 Total:</b>		<b>Semester 3 Total:</b>	
\$0.00		\$4,100.00		\$6,600.00	

### Rationale for costs and their schedule of distribution

Faculty request a research assistant/ instructional designer for approximately 4 hours/week for one year to assist in the design of effective writing assignments. Faculty would also to develop short videotapes of MLS graduates discussing the role of writing in the profession. These videos can be placed in Moodle course sites to help students understand the importance of writing for an MLS professional.

### Service Requests

*drop-down choices will appear when a cell in the "service" column is selected*

Semester 1: Spring 2017		Semester 2: Summer 2017		Semester 3: Fall 2017	
Service	Qty	Service	Qty	Service	Qty
Workshop	1	Consultation		Workshop	1
Consultation				Consultation	

### Description and rationale for services

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Faculty request additional workshops on creating rubrics. As faculty begin to focus on alignment of writing goals, objectives, and assessments, we would also request guided workshops in these efforts and consultations with course directors for the development of focused writing activities.

Semester 4: Spring 2018

Semester 5: Summer 2018

Semester 6: Fall 2018

Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Research Assistant/Instructional Designer (about 10%)	\$4,100.00				

Semester 4 Total: \$4,100.00

Semester 5 Total: \$0.00

Semester 6 Total: \$0.00

Semester 4: Spring 2018

Semester 5: Summer 2018

Semester 6: Fall 2018

Service	Qty	Service	Qty	Service	Qty
Workshop	1			Workshop	1

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Office of Undergraduate Education

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October 31, 2016

To: Donna Spannaus-Martin  
From: Robert McMaster, Office of Undergraduate Education  
Subject: Decision regarding WEC plan and funding proposal

The Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences recently requested the following funding to support its Writing Enriched Curriculum:

Summer 2017	Research Assistant/Instructional Designer (~10%)	\$ 4,100.00
Fall 2017	Research Assistant/Instructional Designer (~10%)	\$ 4,100.00
Fall 2017	Videographer	\$ 2,000.00
Fall 2017	Honoraria for 5 MLS professionals	\$ 500.00
Spring 2018	Research Assistant/Instructional Designer (~10%)	\$ 4,100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 14,800.00</b>

The Office of Undergraduate Education and the Campus Writing Board thank you for your continued dedication to the Writing Enriched Curriculum program and applaud your ongoing efforts to integrate writing into your department. We do ask that you consider meeting with the RA more frequently than once per month. Experience has shown that results and RA satisfaction tend to be better when more opportunities to check in are provided.

All items above have been approved by the Office of Undergraduate Education, for a total of \$14,800.00. Please email Pat Ferrian (ferri004@umn.edu) and Molly Bendzick (mollyb@umn.edu) within 30 days of the receipt of this letter with the EFS account string in your department that will receive these funds. **Pat will transfer \$14,800.00 at the start of FY18.**

CC: Suzanne Bardouche, Molly Bendzick, Gina Danyluk, Dan Emery, Pat Ferrian, Pamela Flash, Sarah Hobbie, Rachel Rodrigue, Leslie Schiff

# APPENDIX A

## Medical Laboratory Sciences

### Rating upper-division writing of graduating majors

June 6, 2016

**Method:** A team of three independent raters (two from inside the department and a disciplinary specialist from outside the department) scored capstone-level writing collected from this unit against criteria provided by unit faculty (this list is drawn from MLS’s Writing Plan). Raters used a four-point criterion-referenced scale, assessing student work as “insufficient (0),” “approaching sufficiency (1),” “sufficient (2),” or “more than sufficient (3)” for each criterion. Prior to rating student writing, raters were provided a training session by a faculty member drawn from inside the unit. During this session, criteria were discussed and anchor papers were rated. After the rating session, raters were debriefed on the student work and rating process.

**Results:** Where 0 indicates complete (three-rater) agreement on “Insufficient” and 3 indicates complete agreement on “More than Sufficient.” Each rating represents an average of all raters’ scores for all writing samples for each criterion.

Case Studies		2016 <sup>1</sup>	2016 MLS Raters only	2016 Outside Rater only
#	Criteria			
1	Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by healthcare provider, lab professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences.	1.65	1.74	1.48
2	Is free of grammar/usage/proofreading issues that will distract readers or confuse meaning.	1.90	2.11	1.48
3	Demonstrates proper formatting and mechanics (margins, font, spacing)	2.09	2.13	2.0
4	Stays within expected organization such that readers are able to follow logic	2.09	2.17	1.91
5	Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion	1.23	1.09	1.52
6	Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed	1.29	1.09	1.70
7	Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information	1.39	1.41	1.35
8	Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information	1.51	1.54	1.43
9	Demonstrates appropriate use of terminology	1.80	2.17	1.04

<sup>1</sup> Samples collected from MLSP 5313, Spring 2016, N = 23

Legislative Letters		2016 <sup>2</sup>	2016 MLS Raters only	2016 Outside Rater only
#	Criteria			
1	Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by healthcare provider, lab professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences.	1.91	1.97	1.78
2	Is free of grammar/usage/proofreading issues that will distract readers or confuse meaning.	1.28	1.33	1.17
3	Demonstrates proper formatting and mechanics (margins, font, spacing)	2.28	2.31	2.22
4	Stays within expected organization such that readers are able to follow logic	1.94	2.08	1.67
5	Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion	NA	NA	NA
6	Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed	NA	NA	NA
7	Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information	2.09	2.0	2.28
8	Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information	1.74	1.72	1.78
9	Demonstrates appropriate use of terminology	2.13	2.31	1.78

First Week of Clinicals		2016 <sup>3</sup>	2016 MLS Raters only	2016 Outside Rater only
#	Criteria			
1	Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by healthcare provider, lab professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences.	2.35	2.29	2.47
2	Is free of grammar/usage/proofreading issues that will distract readers or confuse meaning.	1.89	1.76	2.16
3	Demonstrates proper formatting and mechanics (margins, font, spacing)	2.23	1.92	2.84
4	Stays within expected organization such that readers are able to follow logic	2.12	1.95	2.47
5	Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion	NA	NA	NA
6	Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed	2.28	2.18	2.47
7	Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information	2.12	1.95	2.47

<sup>2</sup> Samples collected from MLSP 5014W, Fall 2015, N = 18

<sup>3</sup> Samples collected from MLSP 5014W, Fall 2015, N = 19

8	Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information	2.14	1.95	2.53
9	Demonstrates appropriate use of terminology	2.19	1.95	2.58

## Longitudinal Analysis of Ratings: Medical Laboratory Sciences

The 2013 MLS rating session did not include Case Studies or Legislative Letters, so the only longitudinal data available pertains to the First Week of Clinicals.

First Week of Clinicals		2013 <sup>4</sup>	2016 <sup>5</sup>
#	Criteria		
1	<b>Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by healthcare provider, lab professional, patient, or other appropriate audiences.</b> <i>2013: Explains test principles to another laboratory professional</i>	1.79	1.65
2	<b>Is free of grammar/usage/proofreading issues that will distract readers or confuse meaning.</b> <i>2013: Avoids distracting or confusing grammatical errors</i>	1.49	1.90
3	<b>Demonstrates proper formatting and mechanics (margins, font, spacing)</b> <i>2013: Conforms to standard English usage (spelling and mechanics)</i>	1.62	2.09
4	<b>Stays within an expected organization that enables such that readers are able to follow logic</b>	1.83	2.09
5	<b>Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion</b> <i>2013: Describes concisely in chronological order what an individual needs to do to perform their role in a procedure</i>	1.73	1.23
6	<b>Precisely describes observations in order to clearly convey what is being observed</b> <i>2013: Describes materials related to testing (specimen characteristics, cell structure, electrophoretic patterns, etc.) clearly, using accurate terminology</i>	1.70	1.29
7	<b>Summarizes essential content; is concise and free of unnecessary information</b> <i>2013: Summarizes information to describe laboratory experiences accurately</i>	1.67	1.39
8	<b>Access, select, critically evaluate, and convey information</b> <i>2013: N/A</i>	NA	1.51
9	<b>Demonstrates appropriate use of terminology</b> <i>2013: N/A</i>	NA	1.80

<sup>4</sup> Samples collected from CLSP 4601W, Summer 2012 and Fall 2012, N = 21

<sup>5</sup> Samples collected from MLSP 5313, Spring 2016, N = 23

# Responses: Medical Laboratory Sciences

## From RATING SESSION DEBRIEFING

At the conclusion of the rating session, raters completed an online survey. This survey asked for impressions of students' writing strengths, weaknesses, and reactions to criteria. Responses were discussed further during a short debrief session. The information below was drawn directly from the surveys and from transcriptions of the subsequent discussion.

### 1. Now that you've worked through a significant number of individual writing samples from a specific college/department, what patterns of strength and/or weakness did you notice?

#### Strengths:

- Mechanics, sentence structure (all agree)
- Students were able to put their thoughts down on paper in a logical way (all agree)
- Writing appropriately for designated audiences (all agree)
- In explaining or persuading (i.e. case study or leg letter) selecting important information to bring forward (all agree)
- First week of clinicals reflections:
  - It was heartwarming to see that students conveyed a sense of pride in their profession and appreciation for their training (both classroom training and clinical training). They conveyed the sense that they take clinical rotations seriously and understand the implications of accurate testing. (all agree)
  - They did a good job of describing their observations: both technical and reflective. This was their strongest piece of writing. They were able to relate classroom experience to clinical.

#### Weaknesses:

- Proofreading, missing words, missing articles (possibly first language interference) and careless errors (capitalization, spelling...) resulting, perhaps, from an overreliance on spell check (all agree)
- Word choice issues. "Mostly we could get the sense of what they meant, but that's not something I want patients to have to deal with when getting this information."
- Case studies:
  - Included factual inaccuracies (all agree) (An example: A1c is NOT a measure of glucose amount.)
  - Drew faulty correlations when connecting test to results, for example: If this, then this... (all agree)
- Legislative letters
  - (Analogous to connecting test to results reference above) many students made unfounded connections between given information and legislation; they leapt to these inferences and made surface statements with nothing to back them up. Unclear or incorrect relationship between claim and evidence. (all agree)

### 2. Were any of the items on the rating guide difficult to interpret/use? If so, which were they? What sorts of questions did these items provoke?

Criterion 1: Explains subjects within laboratory medicine such that they can be clearly understood by healthcare provider, lab professional, or other appropriate audiences

- Understandable does not mean accurate.

Criterion 4: Stays within expected organization such that readers are able to follow logic observed

- First week reflections may not require an element of logic.

Criterion 5: Records information in an accurate and unambiguous fashion

- What does *record* mean? Transcription of facts? If so, how are we to understand accuracy?

Criterion 6: Precisely describes observations in order to convey what is being observed

- How are we to understand “observations?” What is seen? Insights? Is this where we should ding students for jumping to conclusion and overgeneralizing suppositions? Concrete descriptions versus interpretations/diagnoses.

Criterion 7: Summarizes information to describe laboratory experiences accurately

- Not applicable to all types of writing in CLS (such as the SOP samples)

**3. Did you find yourself wishing that you could address writing issues that were not contained in the rating guide? If so, what were they?**

- Unfounded assertions; conclusion based on very little (if any) data; overgeneralizing (and *hasty* generalization)
- Accurate explanation of medical tests and procedures