Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the CLS program

1. I graduated several years ago without taking the prerequisite courses, or my school doesn’t offer all of the prerequisite classes. How can I take the prerequisite classes?

   - Check the **CLS Pre-requisite courses at Other colleges** list on our home page to see what other institutions offer the courses.
   - At SFSU, you can enroll through the College of Extended Learning as an **Open University** student. You can enroll in credit classes after the semester begins, on a space-available basis, with the instructor’s approval.

2. I have a B.S./M.S./Ph.D. in science, and years of lab experience at work. Do I still need to take all of the prerequisite classes?

   - YES! Without transcripts showing completion of all of the prerequisite courses, you won’t be able to get a CLS Trainee License from Laboratory Field Services (LFS).
   - The prerequisite courses are required by California Administrative Code, Title 17, Section 1033, to obtain a CLS Trainee License.
   - **No substitutions or waivers are allowed.**

3. Can I apply to the CLS program before I have finished the prerequisite courses? Can I take classes while I’m enrolled in the CLS program?

   - No. You should apply after you have completed all the prerequisite courses.

4. The SFSU Biology Department is no longer offering the Clinical Science B.S. degree. Do I need a Clinical Science B.S. degree to get into the program?

   - No, you only need a B.S. degree in Biology or Chemistry.

5. What if I don’t have a science degree?

   - That will be decided on a case-by-case basis by Laboratory Field Services, the state agency that issues the CLS Trainee License.
   - You can call them at (510) 620-5793 or (510) 620-5795.
6. What will make me a more competitive candidate?

- Have a current CLS Trainee license.
- Have a GPA of 3.0 for the last 60 semester units.
- Complete a B.S. degree and ALL prerequisite classes.
- Clinical lab experience.
- Well-written personal statement.
- Positive letters of recommendation.

7. Can I use a basic chemistry class for the Quantitative Analysis requirement?

- No. The only basic chemistry class that has been approved for the Quantitative Analysis requirement is the CHEM 2ABC series from UC Davis.
- If you have questions about whether your chemistry class meets the Quantitative Analysis requirement, call Laboratory Field Services’ CLS Trainee Applications section at (510) 620-5793, or (510) 620-5795.

8. Can I make an appointment to have someone look at my transcripts to tell me whether I’ve taken the right courses?

- No. We do not review transcripts in the office or at advising sessions. See the “CLS Admission Prerequisites” link on the CLS homepage at http://cls.sfsu.edu/.

9. What is the application process for students with a foreign degree?

- You must be a U.S. citizen, or have a permanent resident visa (“green card”).
- See the “Applicants with foreign transcripts” handout on the home page.

10. How many students do you accept each semester? Out of how many applicants?

- Our classes range between 15-30 students. The total number of students accepted depends on how many affiliates are selecting students.
- We typically get around 70-80 applications per semester.

11. What is the current salary of CLSs in the Bay Area?

- Currently, graduates are receiving ~$70-80K in the S.F. Bay Area.

12. Do you have a better chance of getting into the CLS program if you attended S.F. State University?

- No.
13. How can I calculate my GPA for the last 60 semester units or 90 quarter units?

- Use the GPA Calculator on the SFSU Graduate Division website at http://www.sfsu.edu/~gradstdy/gpa-calculator-sfsu.htm.

14. My GPA is below the required 3.0 GPA. How can I raise it?


15. What happens after I apply to the CLS program?

- We review all applications, prioritize them, and contact students for faculty interviews.
- Students who pass the faculty interview will visit clinical labs. They will rank their choice of affiliates on a list.
- Students will be interviewed by the clinical education coordinators at SFSU. At that time, the education coordinators will select their student intern(s).
- Files will remain active in SFSU CLS department for 1 year from the date on CLS program application form.
- Applicants who are not selected by an affiliate can reapply to the program two more times (total of three applications).

16. Do I need a Phlebotomy license to get into the program?

- No. We include phlebotomy instruction in the program. It is required for our students during the first semester of instruction.

17. If I have foreign transcripts, but received a B.S. degree at a U.S. university, do I have to take the TOEFL test?

- No.