

LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

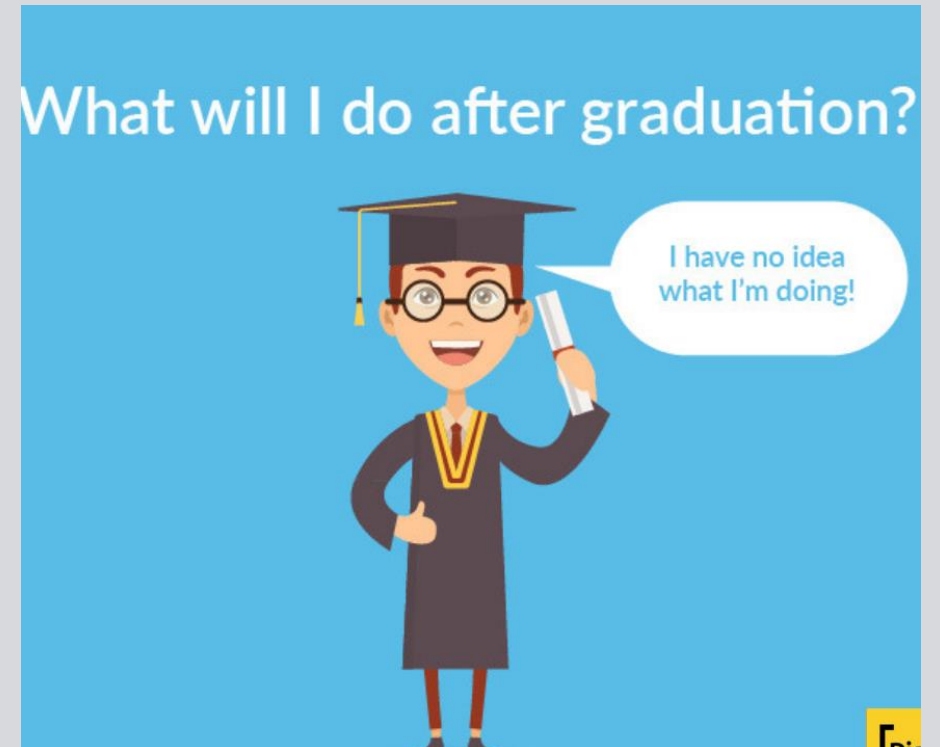


Session Objectives

- Understand the process of taking the BOC (Board of Certification)
- Exam resources and tips
- Interview skills
- Resources to apply for and successfully obtain a job
- Maintaining continuing education credits
- Learn more about ASCLS and the benefits, opportunities, and leadership skills it provides.

Life After Graduation

1. Clinical Rotations
2. Taking the BOC Exam
3. State Licensure
4. The Job Hunt
5. Interview Skills
6. Landing the Job
7. Maintaining CEs
8. ASCLS Membership



#1 Clinical Rotations

Successful tips

- SHOW UP ON TIME!!!
- Be appreciative, respectful, and polite
- Have an open mind
- Take lots of notes
- Be involved
- Internship = “job interview”
- Review notes and other materials at night to be prepared for the next day

#1 Clinical Rotations

Successful tips cont.

- Ask many questions. This is your time to learn!
- Thank your preceptor. They're spending extra time to teach you.
- Get plenty of sleep. You will retain the information better.
- Network with as many people as you can.
- Remember you may use different instruments and LIS systems if you get a job elsewhere, so focus on learning the concepts and principles of things in each dept.

#2 Taking the BOC exam

You are eligible to sit for the exam upon successful completion of the internship term.

1. Before your internship is over, make an account with BOC.
www.ascp.org/content/board-of-certification
2. Sign up for the exam. You will be asked about the MLS program. You can sign up for the exam without your final transcript. The cost of the exam is \$240. **Note:** the sign up process takes a few weeks.
3. You will receive an email from the BOC once they have confirmed that you are eligible to sit for the exam. Sign up at the closest testing center. You can do all of this online at
<https://home.pearsonvue.com/>

#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

4. Select a testing date sooner than later so you have something to work towards. Understand that the testing center has limited spots and specific times, so you may not get your first choice.
5. After completing the exam, you will see either “PASS” or “FAIL” on the screen.
6. **Your final transcript must be sent in order for the BOC to release your score and certificate.**
7. **DO NOT** lose your certificate! You will need it for every future job.
8. Here's the full procedure manual from BOC:

<https://www.ascp.org/content/docs/default-source/boc-pdfs/exam-content-outlines/ascp-boc-us-procedures-book-final-web.pdf?sfvrsn=22>

#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

Exam content

- Blood Bank 17-22%
- Urinalysis/ Body Fluids 5-10%
- Chemistry 17-22%
- Hematology 17-22%
- Immunology 5-10%
- Microbiology 17-22%
- Laboratory Operations 5-10%

Here's the content outline on the ASCP website:

<https://www.ascp.org/content/docs/default-source/boc-pdfs/exam-content-outlines/ascp-boc-us-procedures-book-final-web.pdf>

<https://www.ascp.org/content/docs/default-source/boc-pdfs/boc-us-guidelines/mls imls content guideline.pdf?sfvrsn=6>

#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

How the test is set up

1. 100 Questions
2. Computer adaptive testing
3. Each question is worth a different number of points depending on difficulty.
4. You **MUST** earn 400 points to pass. The highest attainable score is 999.
5. There are no penalties for wrong answers.
6. 2.5 hrs. to complete
7. Answers can be changed at the very end.

#2 Taking the BOC cont.

8. You will be given a whiteboard, pen, and calculator.
9. It's great if you can answer all of the easy questions, but you may not earn enough points to pass.
10. Most questions will test 2 or 3 pieces of knowledge at once. They're like $A + B = C$



#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

Helpful Resources

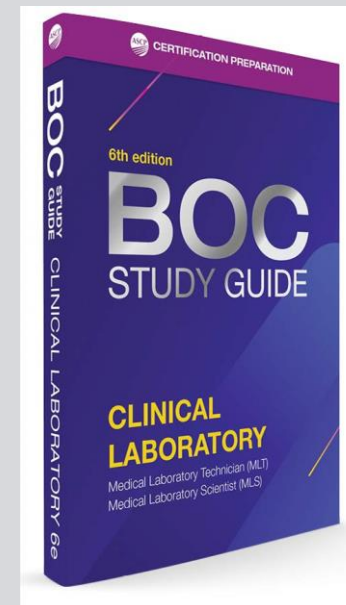
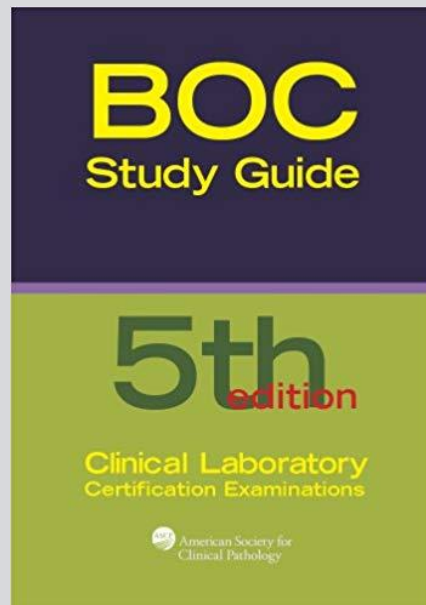
- A Clinical Lab Science Review by Patsy Jarreau, MHS, CLS (NCA), MT (ASCP). This book has a great review section before every set of questions. https://www.amazon.com/Clinical-Laboratory-Science-Review-Approach/dp/0967043425/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1522047810&sr=8-2&keywords=clinical+science+review
- LabCE <https://www.labce.com/>
 - Online quiz system for test preparation.
 - Simulated practice quizzes just like the real exam.



#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

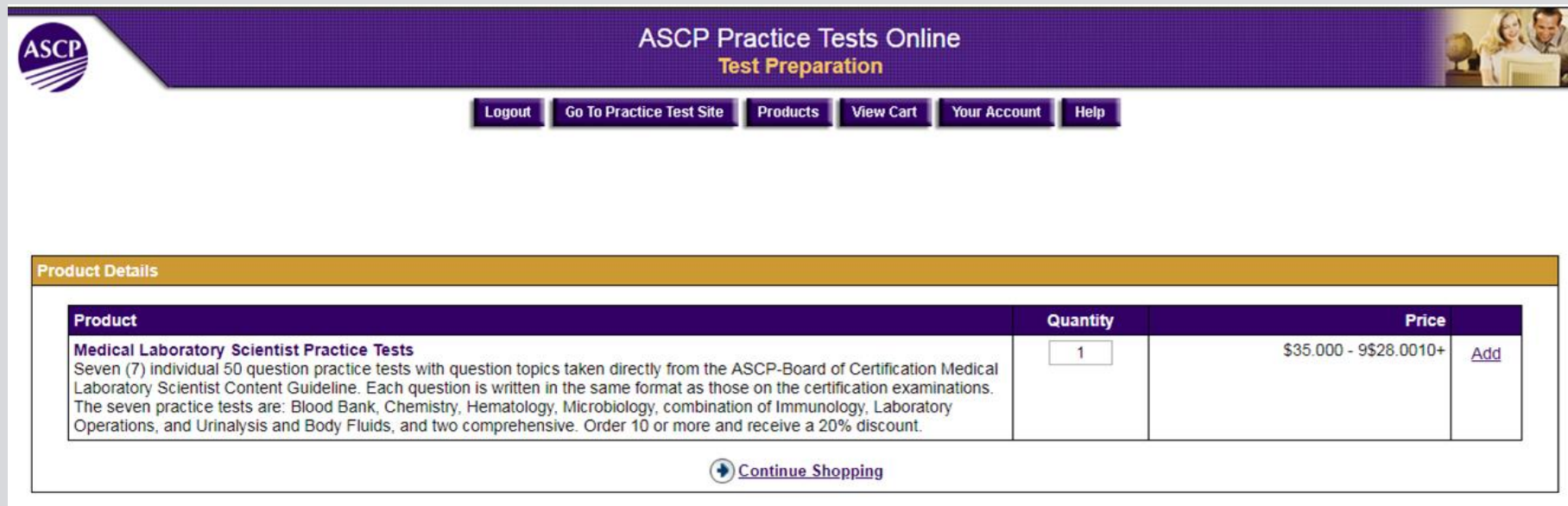
BOC Study Guide

- Really hard questions, no review material.
- Tests whether or not you really know the material.
- Get a used copy or previous edition to help offset the cost.



#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

- Can purchase study guides or practice exams
- <https://www.ascp.org/content/board-of-certification/get-credentialed/#about-the-exam-process>



The screenshot shows the ASCP Practice Tests Online Test Preparation website. The header includes the ASCP logo and navigation links: Logout, Go To Practice Test Site, Products, View Cart, Your Account, and Help. The main content area displays a product listing for Medical Laboratory Scientist Practice Tests, including a description, quantity, price, and an Add button. A Continue Shopping link is located at the bottom of the product listing.

Product	Quantity	Price	
Medical Laboratory Scientist Practice Tests Seven (7) individual 50 question practice tests with question topics taken directly from the ASCP-Board of Certification Medical Laboratory Scientist Content Guideline. Each question is written in the same format as those on the certification examinations. The seven practice tests are: Blood Bank, Chemistry, Hematology, Microbiology, combination of Immunology, Laboratory Operations, and Urinalysis and Body Fluids, and two comprehensive. Order 10 or more and receive a 20% discount.	<input type="text" value="1"/>	\$35.000 - 9\$28.0010+	Add

[Continue Shopping](#)

#2 Taking the BOC exam cont.

Helpful Hints to passing the exam

1. Start with your weakest area.
2. Don't brush over information you don't know. The BOC will probably ask you about it 😊
3. Start studying day 1 of your internship. By the end, you will be ready for the exam.
4. REPETITION!!!!
5. Study smart not hard.
6. When you miss a practice question, seek to understand. Understanding a concept will help you remember it more than just plain memorizing it. You would be surprised how much you can learn from doing this.
7. Go into the test with no regrets. You only want to take it once.

#3 State Licensure

- 11 states require a license in addition to the BOC.
 - California, Hawaii, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Puerto Rico also has licensure as well.
 - Some of these states require an additional exam and fees.
- If you plan to move to another state, you need to contact that state as soon as possible.
- Contact information can be found on the ASCLS website:
<https://www.ascls.org/advocacy-issues/licensure>
- Why licensure?
 - A way for the government to protect the public from potential harm.

A Few FAQs

1. I got offered a job before my internship was over. Should I take the exam before I start working?

Starting a new job can be really stressful while trying to learn everything as you work. If your finances allow, try and take the exam before you start working. If you can't, it's okay! Many laboratory professionals have successfully passed their BOC exams while working.

2. Can I get hired without the ASCP certification?

Yes. Many places require you to obtain the certification within 6 months to a year from your hire date. Some places may have a tighter window. Keep in mind that if you fail the exam, you have to wait 3 months to take it again.

3. I didn't get a job offer after my internship. What's the next step?

Your next step can be to job hunt or study/ take the exam. You may have a few weeks before the term ends before you can sit for the exam. Taking the exam prior to starting a new job might make it less stressful in the long run. If you're able to pass the exam prior to job hunting, you will be more marketable. If you desperately need a job before taking the exam, go for it! You can still get hired.

4. Every open job position requires experience. I have no experience since I just finished school. What should I do?

Apply for them anyway. If a lab is in need, you will have a better chance of getting hired. You never know what can happen. If you don't apply, you won't get it! You need to get your foot in the door.

#4 The Job Hunt

Resources to find job openings

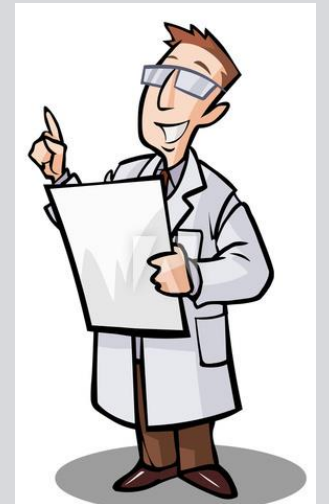
- <https://www.indeed.com/>
- <https://www.monster.com/>
- Individual hospital websites
- Contacts from your internship
- <http://asclsidaho.org/student-corner/employment/>
- ASCLS member community posts
- <https://ascls-jobs.careerwebsite.com/>
- ASCLS network contacts!



#4 The Job Hunt

As a medical laboratory scientist, you can...

- Work as a generalist at a hospital or clinic
- Work at a specialized lab or department such as ARUP, Lab Corp, Mayo Clinic, etc.
- Work for a vendor company like Sysmex, Ortho, Immucor, Stago, etc.
- Teach at a college or university
- Go on to medical school, dental school, etc.



#5 Interview Skills

Things to think about before going into an interview

- Relax, take a deep breath
- Wear appropriate clothing
- No flip flops or jeans
- First impressions are everything
- Your interview may consist of lab managers AND supervisors

Resume Tips

- Include the instruments you worked on during your internship
- Include lab managers, supervisors, and preceptors as references from your internship
- Keep relevant topics on your resume

#5 Interview Skills

The Interview

- Types of questions you may be asked:
 - Icebreaker questions
 - Ex. “Tell me about yourself.”
 - Traditional questions
 - Ex. They want to gather information about your experience, skills, goals, personality, etc.
 - Situational questions
 - You’ll be asked what you would do in a specific situation.
 - Behavioral based questions
 - Ex. “Tell me about a time.... “ This shows how you behave and handle certain situations.
 - Culture-fit questions
 - These are designed to see if you’d fit well in the job or company

#5 Interview Skills

Example interview questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why should I hire you?
- What are your strengths/ weaknesses?
- Tell me a time when you didn't agree with your supervisor or coworker and what did you do to fix it?
- Why did you choose this profession?
- What motivates you?
- How do people describe you?
- How do you deal with conflict?
- Be able to interpret lab values and what may be going on.
- Do you have any questions?

#5 Interview Skills

There are a few things that employers are going to be looking for when hiring such as:

- Do you have the skills to do the job?
- Would you make a good fit?
- How do you stack up with the competition?
- Do you have the right mind-set of the job/company?
- Do you want the job?

#5 Interview Skills

Response strategies:

- What makes you memorable?
- If you need a second to think about your response say, “Let me think for a minute” rather than just saying, “Umm, umm, etc.”
- Give examples!!!
- Be clear and concise
- Make sure to ask questions of the interviewers
- Remember you are also assessing whether the job is right for you too!

#6 Landing the job

- Know the difference between SOP/protocol and your trainer's workflow
 - If you train with multiple people and you see them do things differently, make sure to differentiate or clarify with your trainers what are specific SOP things that need to be done a particular way vs. an individual's workflow to get the task done
- Be engaged! Ask questions! Don't forget about critical thinking!

#6 Landing the job

- Try to understand ‘the why’ behind things, it will help you know why you are doing something or help answer questions that providers may have; don’t just be robotic
- More than just a job, it’s a profession
- Remember there are people behind those samples!



#7 Maintaining CE's

- Required to renew your certification every 3 years and have 36 continuing education credits (CEs)
 - Don't wait until the very end to do all your CEs, you are required to have them in a variety of categories and also need to submit your renewal about a month before it's due
- Certification Maintenance (CM) in title
 - Ex. Mary Poppins, MLS(ASCP)^{CM}
- ASCLS linked to ASCP to upload CE credits

#7 Maintaining CE's

- Ways to obtain CEs
 - Attend ASCLS Conventions! (State, Regional, and/or National)
 - Vendor or institutional sponsored webinars
 - Educational opportunities through your work
 - Purchase packages online:
 - <http://www.ascls.org/certification-maintenance-packages>
 - <https://www.labce.com/>
 - https://www.ascp.org/content/learning/access-online-courses/#ce_packages

#8 ASCLS Membership



Mission Statement:

The mission of ASCLS is to make a positive impact in health care through leadership that will assure excellence in the practice of laboratory medicine.

Critical Objective:

ASCLS exists to advance the expertise of clinical laboratory professionals who, as integral members of interprofessional healthcare teams, deliver quality, consumer-focused, outcomes-oriented clinical laboratory services through all phases of the testing process to prevent, diagnose, monitor and treat disease.

#8 ASCLS Membership



ASCLS: American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

Website: ascls.org

What's ASCLS?

- Laboratory professional society
- Grassroots organization formed in 1933
- Gives a voice to all medical laboratory professionals to help advance our interests
- Provides leadership opportunities, scholarships, research grants, professional awards, educational conventions
- Join at the state level
- 10 regions

ASCLS Regions



Region I

Region IV

Region VII

Region II

Region V

Region VIII

Region III

Region VI

Region IX

Region X

#8 ASCLS Membership



Difference between ASCLS and ASCP

- ASCP (American Society for Clinical Pathology) is also a professional society that includes pathologists and laboratorians
- Although you sign up for the BOC exam through ASCP, you do NOT have to join ASCP in order to maintain your certification

#8 ASCLS Membership



Benefits

Networking

- Meet other laboratory professionals from around the state or country
- Attend vendor expos and ask questions about instrumentation
- Ask colleagues from other facilities about validations, borrowing supplies, etc.
- Social events
- Friendship

#8 ASCLS Membership



Benefits cont.

Scholarships

- Undergraduate, graduate, and research grants

Continuing Education

- Discounted rates for State, Regional, and National meetings
- Live continuing education provides an opportunity to ask questions and network with other laboratory professionals.

Staying Informed

- ASCLS Member Community Forums
- Clinical Laboratory Science Journal
- National and State Newsletters



#8 ASCLS Membership



Benefits cont.

Legislation

- ASCLS can keep you informed on issues that affect our profession
- Members talk with legislators yearly on Capitol Hill to fight for issues affecting the lab

Leadership Academy

- Regional and National levels
- Learn and develop skills to become a leader in the lab and ASCLS

#8 ASCLS Membership



Ways to get involved

- Attend conventions
- Planning committees
- Leadership positions: board and committee positions at the state, regional, and national levels
- Delegate at the House of Delegates at the Annual Meeting
- Leadership Academy: Regional and National

#8 ASCLS Membership



Ways to get involved cont.

Facebook groups and pages

- ASCLS (national page)
- State page
- Regional page
- ASCLS Ascending Professional group
- Medical Laboratory Science: Hidden Heroes
- Various interest groups (ie. Blood Bank Interest Group)

#8 ASCLS Membership



How to join/renew

- Join or renew online at <http://www.ascls.org/membership/join>
- <https://members.ascls.org/content.asp?admin=Y&contentid=151>
- Ascending Professional (formerly New Professional): \$60 (\$48 to renew) plus state dues (\$10 per year)
- Ascending Professional Membership is open to any individual eligible for Professional Membership, if the individual has not held previous membership other than Developing Professional or Ascending Professional. Membership in this Society and is within five years of graduation from a program of clinical laboratory studies.

#8 ASCLS Membership



What do you get with an Ascending Professional membership?

- All of the benefits as a professional member, but at a cheaper price for 5 years.
- Access to the Ascending Professional forum
- Access to the CLS journal
- Hold an office
- Voting privileges



Questions

?

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Answers

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Good luck on your adventure!

