Laboratory Attendant (LA) Positions: Frequently Asked Questions
ANTR 551 - East Lansing Campus

Thank you for your interest in serving as a Lab Attendant (LA) or "blue coat" for the gross anatomy lab component of ANTR 551. Please take a few minutes to read the following guidelines:

What is my role as a LA?

- First and foremost, you are a peer mentor. Demonstrate professionalism.
- Correlate anatomy with what you have learned in your other first year courses; provide a larger frame of reference, and relevance for the material being learned in anatomy.
- Facilitate your learning of the material by providing confirmation for the proper identification of anatomical structures.
- Provide study tips, mnemonics, etc. that you found useful.
- Emphasize to the students the importance of "pre-labbing" for each day's session.
- Do not allow yourself, to be monopolized by one group of students for an entire lab period. You are scheduled in the lab to help every student for that assigned section. If during the semester you are also a tutor for your respective medical college, you must attempt to separate your role as LA and tutor. As a LA, you should not solely assist students whom you tutor outside of your scheduled lab hours.
- Please be careful about commenting on whether or not a specific lab objective will appear on a lab practical. Please do not assume that your experiences will hold true for the current academic year.
- If you are not sure of a lab objective or identification, ask a faculty member or another LA for assistance. You could also play an active role in telling the student where and how they can find an answer. For example, consult an atlas with the student or reinforce the idea and usefulness of "pre-labbing". Remember your own experiences with LA's, the most important attribute you can demonstrate is honesty. Not knowing the identification of a structure is not problematic; it is better to seek help by looking at a resource, asking another LA or faculty member than it is to make a false statement. You will earn more respect if you admit that you are unfamiliar with the structure in question than you will if you provide misleading information.
- If you work in the lab as a LA on the weekend or weeknight hours, it is not your personal responsibility to cover cadavers and return anatomical specimens to their appropriate bucket. However, you are in charge of the lab specimens in the evening and are therefore highly encouraged to make sure the medical students cover cadavers and put specimens back in their CORRECT buckets if they are the last students to leave the lab. (Please note that covering cadavers is NOT the responsibility of the undergraduate lab monitors). If specimens are left out the blame will go to both you and the medical students attending that session.
- If for any reason a student enrolled in ANTR 551 treats you in a disrespectful and/or unprofessional manner, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Pratt or any other anatomy faculty member.

Do I have specific obligations to fulfill during my assigned unit?

- Yes!
- LAs assigned to a particular unit are required to work together to prepare a practice practical for each block. The practice practicals will be 12 questions in length and can incorporate bucket specimens and 1-2 cadavers. Numbered pins will be provided to you (kept next to where you will
turn in your time sheets and grab your bluecoat to wear during labs). The practical can be set up by one LA and broken down by another, or you can all work as a team. The practice practical, when possible, will be set up on a Friday afternoon and left during the weekend hours and broken down before the next assigned lab on Monday. Some exams to do not fall on a Monday so those practice exams will need to be set up the afternoon before the exam date, left through the evening open hours and then broken down before exam set up the next day (8am) or that same evening after open hours.

- The chalkboards in the classroom as used to present a list of cadaveric material that represents a particular structure very well. At the beginning of each unit the boards are divided into neurovascular, muscles, nerves, ligaments, etc. and the cadaver code numbers along with the structure of interest is recorded. It is the responsibility of the LAs to make sure these lists are updated on a daily basis and added to throughout the unit. Dr. Pratt will make a final record of this list before pinning the exam and erasing the board.

- Filling out and signing your time sheet in a timely manner is your responsibility. Dr. Pratt will have a calendar posted of when time sheets will be collected for processing.

- Please wear your name tag and bluecoat each time you are teaching in the laboratory or classroom.

- You are in charge of the lab specimens in the evening and are therefore highly encouraged to make sure the medical students cover cadavers and put specimens back in their CORRECT buckets if they are the last students to leave the lab. (Please note that covering cadavers is NOT the responsibility of the undergraduate lab monitors). If specimens are left out the blame will go to both you and the medical students attending that evening session.

**What are the medical students told about my role as a LA?**

The information below is included in the ANTR 551 syllabus:

- LAs are students. While they all performed well in their own gross anatomy course, and were selected for these positions, they are not experts and should not serve as your only source of information.

- LAs are not tutors – please do not monopolize one LA for the entire lab period; there may be only 2 LAs available during each lab section.

**What materials do I need for my assigned unit?**

A lab manual for your assigned unit will be available for you to pick up in the Anatomy Office (A-519 East Fee Hall) should you need one. Blue coats can be obtained from the coat-rack in the gross lab classroom. On top of the coat-rack you will also find a box that has name cards and plastic holders. Please make a nametag for yourself and wear it at all times when you work in the lab as a LA. Your nametag should include both your first and last names. You can keep the nametag in the box when you are not working. **You must provide your own gloves and probes.**

**What are the anatomy lab rules?**

The anatomy faculty would appreciate your cooperation in enforcing the rules of the gross anatomy lab. Since you are a peer mentor, it is also expected that you follow the same guidelines:

- wash probes which fall on the floor IMMEDIATELY (so you don’t forget)
- use only stainless steel instruments as probes
• wear gloves when handling specimens
• wear a lab coat!!!
• wear a nametag!!!
• handle anatomical specimens carefully and respectfully
• properly cover cadavers and returning anatomical specimens to their appropriate bucket
• do not take any photographs while in the gross lab
• do not remove any anatomical models or specimens from the gross lab

How do I find my schedule?

The schedule can be accessed at the following web site:

http://www.rad.msu.edu//anatomy/info/schedule.htm

The weekly LA schedules will also be posted on the wall in the lab by the entrance to the gross lab classroom, near the anatomy faculty lab schedule. This schedule is firm. You are being counted on by the anatomy faculty, your fellow LAs, and the enrolled students to be present at your assigned lab times. All questions regarding SCHEDULE are to go to Chris Griggs.

What if I need to change my schedule?

If something unexpected arises during the week that will prevent you from being present at your assigned lab time, please email Ms. Chris Griggs (chris.griggs@radiology.msu.edu). You must also place a line through your name on the posted schedule in the gross lab (when you are back). **Please do your best to contact a fellow LA to cover your hours.**

If a situation arises and you have to switch lab hours with another LA, please email Ms. Chris Griggs (chris.griggs@radiology.msu.edu). You must also indicate this switch on the posted schedule in the gross lab (i.e. with arrows or something to that affect).

If you decide that working as a LA is not beneficial to your academic work or adversely impacting your personal life, please contact Ms. Griggs to be removed from the schedule. Resigning during the semester is not a problem, but Ms. Griggs and Dr. Pratt need to be aware of your decision ASAP.

How do I get paid if I am a LA in East Lansing?

Time sheets will be available in the gross lab classroom ("bone room") from a box on top of the coat-rack containing blue lab coats. It is important that the time sheets be filled out CORRECTLY and left in the box on top of the coat-rack. Time sheets are due (completed, signed and in the box) every two weeks. A schedule of due dates will be posted where the time sheets are located. A sample time sheet will also be posted. If you do not fill out your time sheet correctly, it will be returned by Dr. Pratt for appropriate corrections (you will then be paid at a later date for that time period).

You must sign-up for direct deposit through the MSU payroll system (www.epayroll.msu.edu). If you have previously been paid as a student employee at MSU and established direct deposit,
there is no need to do this again. All questions regarding PAYMENT are to go directly to Judy James in the Anatomy Office.

If you are working another job as a student employee at MSU, you will receive one check which includes pay from both departments. For example, your MSU pay will not indicate that you received $21 from anatomy and $33 from family medicine. In this case, your single deposit from MSU would be for $54.

**Can I continue to work as a LA if I am not enrolled at MSU?**

- **No!**
- **Being an ANTR 551 LA is a MSU student employee position. You must be enrolled in Summer 2011 and/or Fall 2011 courses to fill this position and receive payment. If for some reason, you are no longer a student you cannot continue to work and you will not be able to receive payment.**

**For additional information, contact:**

**East Lansing:**
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