

MEDICAL LAB TECHNICIAN

DATA-BASED DECISIONS:

Two years ago it was decided that all of the Health Professions programs should strive for achieving national accreditation as a defining hallmark of our programs. As we began moving towards this goal, we began to analyze the enrollment of MLT students as well as the retention numbers of those students. We also began to set goals for the number of students completing our program, sitting for the national certifying exam, passing the certification exam and for gainful employment of our graduates.

It quickly became apparent that although we started with good enrollment numbers, we were losing many students by the end of the program. Analysis of the program revealed some possible causes for lack of retention.

First, it was noted that the first semester was 24 credit hours. Most of the students enrolling in the MLT program the first semester were Freshmen students and 24 credit hours was exceedingly hard for them to complete successfully. This was true of all four semesters. We realized that we could pull out several of the classes from each semester and make these pre-requisite classes, thereby decreasing the amount of credit hours per semester. This would help to ensure a more successful outcome for the student.

Secondly, in analyzing the data, we found that students were enrolling in the MLT 1010 Medical Laboratory Techniques class and then dropping out. The MLT 1010 class according to the instructor, Ed York is a preliminary class so that students can see if they are well-suited for this occupation. We are now considering making this class a preliminary class prior to admittance into the MLT program .

We recognize that our program completion rates as well as the rates for our students sitting for and completing the national certifying exams are falling well below our desired goals. Preliminary data is revealing that students have not felt adequately prepared to sit for these examinations.

As a result, a complete curriculum evaluation has begun along with an evaluation of the laboratory facilities and equipment. We have begun consulting with area lab directors and national experts in the field for their input and recommendations. These recommendations will be taken into consideration and planning as we begin to revamp this program.

