

December 2002

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of the Joint Generalist Examination Committee, it is my pleasure to provide you with a summary of what transpired during our annual meeting. Committee members met in Chicago the week of June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002, to review the MT and MLT examination pools.

### **Change of Percentages on Content Guideline**

Beginning in 2003 there will be a modification to the subtest percentages. Laboratory Operations will now be an individual subtest. The subtest percents will change as follows: Blood Bank, Chemistry, Hematology, and Microbiology will each be 19% of the total examination; Immunology and Urinalysis & Body Fluids will each be 9% of the total examination; Laboratory Operations will be 6% of the total examination.

### **Review of Examination Item Pool for 2002**

All questions in the MT and MLT examination pools were divided into subject areas (blood banking, microbiology, chemistry, hematology and coagulation, urinalysis and body fluids, and immunology) and reviewed individually by committee members prior to the June meeting. Over 2600 questions were then reviewed again in subcommittees and the digitized images examined before being presented to the entire committee.

During the course of the item review it was noted that some students were performing poorly on questions about the principles of immunological techniques (e.g. direct agglutination; passive agglutination; precipitation which includes immunodiffusion/gel diffusion; flocculation; competitive and non-competitive enzyme immunoassays, immunoblotting, and direct and indirect immunofluorescence). This topic is important and will only become more important with time.

In the past, the committee has referred to the ASCP Technical Curricula for MT and MLT programs from the 1995 Albuquerque, N.M. Educators' Consensus Conference, to help assess the relevance of questions. While this document has served as a resource in the past, it is dated, and is no longer being used by the committee for determining additions, deletions and knowledge levels. The Joint Generalist Examination Committee is composed of educators and practitioners at the MT and MLT level, each of who possesses a level of expertise in one or more disciplines. ASCP is now performing an in-depth "Practice Analysis" that will provide valuable information for the MT and MLT levels of practice. It is anticipated that the committee will utilize the results of this analysis at our next meeting for evaluation and development of exam items.

This year's changes, which will be implemented for the 2003 examinations, are listed below. They will be added to the changes listed from 1997 to 2001 on the ASCP web page

( [www.ascp.org/certification/ForProgramDirectors/](http://www.ascp.org/certification/ForProgramDirectors/) ) under additions/deletions.

## **Microbiology Changes: MT and MLT**

### New Terminology

*Bartonella*  
*Chryseobacterium*

### Old Terminology

*Rochalimaea*  
*Flavobacterium*

## **Chemistry Changes: MT and MLT**

MT additions:

- CA 15-3 and CA-125 markers for breast cancer
- Progesterone

MT and MLT additions:

- Trace elements
- Utilize values from the American Diabetes Association Guidelines
- Utilize the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) III Guidelines

## **Immunology Changes: MT**

- Increased emphasis on antibodies to extractable nuclear antigens (ENA)

The committee recognizes that even though concepts and information may no longer be included on the exam, program directors may still include these items in their curriculum.

## **New Examination Items**

Approximately 200 new examination items were written and reviewed in subcommittee before being presented to all committee members. All new questions are field-tested for one year and committee members and ASCP staff then carefully evaluate examinees' performance on each question before they are included in the examination pool.

## **Program Performance Reports**

Committee members reviewed the feedback you provided about program performance reports in the 2001 Satisfaction Survey. Thank you for taking the time to include your comments. The committee plans to consider your input as we review the program performance reports in light of the results of the practice analysis.

As a reminder, graduates of your program who take and pass the ASCP examination are not certified until they have submitted all of the necessary paperwork (e.g. transcript with degree posted).

## **Testing Centers**

Effective July 1, 2002, all Board of Registry Examinations are being delivered by the electronic testing business of **NCS Pearson™ Professional Testing**. As of October 1<sup>st</sup>

there are approximately 200 testing sites throughout the United States. A list of available centers is located on the BOR website ([www.ascp.org/bor](http://www.ascp.org/bor)). We hope that you find the information included in this letter helpful. Your feedback is important to us, so if you have any questions or comments, please contact the current committee chairperson, Deborah Firestone, by phone (631-444-3221) or e-mail ([dtfire@notes.cc.sunysb.edu](mailto:dtfire@notes.cc.sunysb.edu)). In addition if you or anyone you know would be interested in serving on the Joint Generalist Examination Committee, we encourage you to log onto [www.ascp.org/Certification/ForProgramDirectors/related/volunteers.aspx](http://www.ascp.org/Certification/ForProgramDirectors/related/volunteers.aspx) and submit an abbreviated CV.

We thank you for your continued support of ASCP and the certification process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Firestone". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Deborah Firestone, M.A., MT(ASCP)SBB  
Chair  
Joint Generalist Examination  
Committee

Elizabeth Zeibig, M.A., MT(ASCP)  
Vice-Chair  
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