

**Clinical Biochemistry**

Code: 101912  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2501230 Biomedical Sciences	OB	3	2

**Contact**

Name: Francesca Canalias Reverter  
Email: Francesca.Canalias@uab.cat

**Use of languages**

Principal working language: catalan (cat)  
Some groups entirely in English: No  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: Yes  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

**Teachers**

Francisco Rodríguez Frías  
Josefina Mora Bruges  
Francisco Blanco Vaca

**Prerequisites**

The prerequisites to follow the course are a working knowlegde of the material of the courses "Structure and function of biomolecules" and "Metabolism of biomolecules" of the 1st year of the degree. Furthermore, although not official, it is advisable to have passed the course "Physiology of systems".

**Objectives and Contextualisation**

Clinical Biochemistry is a mandatory course of the 3rd year of the degree as part of the main subject number 7 "Pharmacology, Diagnosis and Therapy."

Clinical Biochemistry aims to initiate the student in understanding the in vitro study of the biological properties that contribute to the prevention, diagnosis, prognosis and monitoring of diseases and disease states in humans.

The general objectives of the course are:

- 1) Familiarize students with the specific characteristics of a laboratory of clinical biochemistry.
- 2) Understanding the pathophysiology and molecular basis of the most prevalent diseases.
- 3) Know the analytical methods commonly used in the clinical laboratory.
- 4) Know how can contribute the clinical laboratory to assess the health status of individuals.

At the end of the course the student will know: the pathophysiological bases of the most relevant and prevalent diseases in our population; the main biological properties that are altered in these diseases and are examined in a clinical biochemistry laboratory; the procedures for the biological properties measurement and test; and

their semiologic characteristics. It will also be familiar with the use of tools for the operation in a clinical biochemistry laboratory: instructions or work protocols, implementation of internal control quality program, participation in an external quality evaluation programs and use of automated measurement systems.

## Skills

- Contribute to public discussions on cultural matters.
- Develop critical thinking and reasoning and communicate ideas effectively, both in the mother tongue and in other languages.
- Develop independent learning habits and motivation to continue training at postgraduate level.
- Develop independent learning strategies.
- Develop scientific knowledge, critical reasoning and creativity.
- Display knowledge of the bases and elements applicable to the development and validation of diagnostic and therapeutic techniques.
- Generate innovative and competitive proposals for research and professional activities.
- Identify and understand the advances and challenges of research.
- Plan and implement laboratory analysis experiments and procedures belonging to the biomedical field.
- Respect diversity in ideas, people and situations.
- Show respect for the ethical and legal aspects of research and professional activities.
- Use bioinformatic tools, databases and methods for analysing experimental data.
- Work as part of a group with members of other professions, understanding their viewpoint and establishing a constructive collaboration.

## Learning outcomes

1. Analyse information from experimental studies and clinical trials.
2. Contribute to public discussions on cultural matters.
3. Define the concepts and fundamental principles of a clinical laboratory (premetrological, metrological and postmetrological variability, measurement error, uncertainty, quality control, semiology).
4. Develop critical thinking and reasoning and communicate ideas effectively, both in the mother tongue and in other languages.
5. Develop independent learning habits and motivation to continue training at postgraduate level.
6. Develop independent learning strategies.
7. Develop scientific knowledge, critical reasoning and creativity.
8. Generate innovative and competitive proposals for research and professional activities.
9. Identify and understand the advances and challenges of research.
10. Identify the principal analytical procedures used to determine biochemical magnitudes.
11. Interpret the results of biochemical markers used for screening, diagnosis, prognosis and monitoring of the most common pathological disorders (diabetes, hypercholesterolemia, cardiopathies, hepatopathies).
12. Perform basic techniques in clinical biochemistry.
13. Respect diversity in ideas, people and situations.
14. Show respect for the ethical and legal aspects of research and professional activities.
15. Work as part of a group with members of other professions, understanding their viewpoint and establishing a constructive collaboration.

## Content

### Theme I. Metrological and semiological aspects of clinical laboratory

INTRODUCTION. Concepts. Pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical phases of the clinical laboratory. Collection, preparation and preservation of specimens. Pre-analytical variability.

METROLOGY. Values and quantities, observations and measurements. Measures and errors. Random error: precision. Systematic error: trueness. The true value. Calibration and traceability. Specificity. Error of

measurement: accuracy and uncertainty. Measuring analytical range. Analytical sensitivity. Detectability.

QUALITOLOGY. Control materials. Basis of internal control: control rules and charts. Algorithms. External quality assessment programs.

BIOLOGICAL VARIABILITY AND REFERENCE VALUES. Intra- and inter-individual biological variability. Theory of reference values. Transversal and longitudinal comparisons. Production of reference values.

SEMIOLOGY. Discriminant capacity. Cut-off value. Diagnostic sensitivity and specificity. Prevalence and predictive value. Likelihood ratio. Receiver operating curves (ROC).

## **Theme II. Biochemical assessment of metabolic pathways**

PROTEINS. Classification of plasma proteins. Methods of identification, detection and quantification. Identification of electrophoretic profiles. Hyperproteinemia and hypoproteinemia. Polyclonal and monoclonal hyperimmunoglobulinemia. Paraprotein.

ENZYMES. Diagnostic usefulness of measuring plasma enzymes. Measuring the catalytic concentration and the mass concentration. Transformation and factors that affect it. Calibration. Standardization measures. Major diagnostic enzymes of interest.

CARBOHYDRATES. Hormonal control of glucose homeostasis. Hyperglycemia and diabetes mellitus and alterations in glucose tolerance. Procedures for measuring glucose, hemoglobin A1c and albumin in urine.

LIPOPROTEINS. Structure and classification of plasma lipoproteins. Procedures for the study of dyslipidemia: total cholesterol and triglyceride. Separation of lipoproteins, VLDL cholesterol, HDL and LDL. Apolipoproteins. Classification of dyslipidemia. Genetic basis. Atherothrombosis: coronary heart disease and risk factors.

CALCIUM. Hormonal regulation of calcium homeostasis. Hypercalcemia and hypocalcemia. Bone metabolism. Biochemical markers of bone formation and resorption. Metabolic bone. Procedures for measuring biochemical markers of mineral metabolism.

ACID-BASE BALANCE. Homeostasis acid-base: blood pH buffers. Origin of pH variations. Compensatory mechanisms. Determination of pH, pCO<sub>2</sub> and pO<sub>2</sub>. Alterations of the acid-base balance. Respiratory and metabolic acidosis and alkalosis.

## **Theme III. Biochemical assessment of the function of organs and systems**

LIVER FUNCTION. Hepatobiliary system. Liver functions. Catabolism of hemoglobin. Hepatobiliary disease. Laboratory tests for evaluation. Investigation of jaundice: bilirubin determination.

CARDIAC AND MUSCULAR FUNCTIONS. Myocardial infarction and angina. Mechanisms. Meaning diagnostic procedures and measuring creatine kinase and its isoenzymes, myoglobin and troponin. Natriuretic peptides in the diagnosis of heart failure. Myopathies: progressive muscular dystrophy, rhabdomyolysis and polymyositis.

RENAL FUNCTION. Formation of urine and renal functions. Kidney disease: glomerulonephritis, tubular diseases, kidney failure, diabetic nephropathy, renouretal lithiasis. Laboratory tests for evaluation: urea, creatinine, urate, clearance testing, protein and kidney stones.

THYROID FUNCTION. Thyroid. Synthesis, transport, metabolism and regulation of thyroid hormones. Hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism.

GONADAL AND GESTATIONAL FUNCTIONS. Ovarian function. Hormonal studies: prolactin, estradiol, progesterone, androgen and gonadotropins. Evaluation of infertility. Testicular function. Alterations: hypogonadism, infertility, disorders of puberty. Diagnosis and monitoring of pregnancy. Evaluation of fetus-placental unit.

BIOCHEMISTRY OF CANCER AND TUMOR MARKERS. Concept and classification. Clinical utility. Dynamic interpretation of the results. Main markers: CEA, AFP, b-hCG, PSA, CA19.9, CA125 and CA15.3. Application in different types of tumors. Concept of hereditary cancer. Oncogenes and tumor suppressor genes.

## **LABORATORY PRACTICES**

### **Session 1**

Measures by molecular absorption spectrometry in an analyzer: (1) Measurement of the substance concentration of cholesterol in serum through an enzymatic-colorimetric reaction to an end-point. (2) Measurement of the substance concentration of urea in serum by a two points enzymatic reaction-spectrometric. (3) Measurement of the catalytic activity of L-lactate dehydrogenase in serum using a continuous spectrometric method recommended by the SEQC<sup>ML</sup> (Spanish Society of Medical Laboratory). Measuring the substance concentration of total bilirubin in serum through a chemical reaction by molecular absorption spectrometry: Measurements with blank sample. Implementation of an external quality assessment program using the obtained results.

### **Session 2**

Measurement of the catalytic activity of L-lactate dehydrogenase in serum using a continuous spectrometric method recommended by the IFCC (International Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine) in a molecular absorption spectrometer: Comparison of two procedures and influence of the measuring instrument.

### **Session 3**

Study of the effect of interfering substances (hemoglobin, bilirubin and lipids) in the measurement of the substance concentration of uric acid in serum using an end-point enzymatic procedure in a molecular absorption spectrometer.

### **Session 4**

Determination of the linearity and the latency periods of the enzymatic reaction catalyzed by aspartate aminotransferase using a continuous spectrometric method: Effect of pyruvate in the measurement of the enzyme.

## **Methodology**

The teaching methodology consists of lectures, seminars and laboratory practices. The teaching materials for these activities can be found on the Virtual Campus.

Lectures: taught in master classes where students acquire basic knowledge of the subject by attending classes and supplementing them with individual study of the topics explained. The lectures are for the whole group.

Seminars: discuss, develop and present case studies, clinical cases and problems. The knowledge acquired in the lectures and individual study will be applied to solve cases and problems. Students work in small groups supervised by the teacher, solving proposed cases and after exposing them to class. The aim of the seminars is to promote the capacity for analysis and synthesis, the critical reasoning and the ability to solve cases and problems.

Laboratory practices: practical sessions in the laboratory where they apply the knowledge acquired in the lectures and promote learning practical techniques of clinical biochemistry laboratory. It promotes teamwork and active self. Students work in small groups. This activity is mandatory. To attend the sessions the student must have passed the biosafety and safety tests found in the Virtual Campus and to be aware and accept the rules of operation of the laboratories of the Faculty of Biosciences.

Additionally students can have specific tutorials.

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
<b>Type: Directed</b>			
Laboratory practices	9	0.36	1, 12, 15
Lectures	36	1.44	3, 10, 11
Seminars	10	0.4	1, 2, 3, 7, 4, 10, 11, 15
<b>Type: Supervised</b>			
Group tutorials	2	0.08	3, 7, 5, 10, 9, 11
<b>Type: Autonomous</b>			
Evaluation (exams and oral presentations)	10	0.4	1, 2, 3, 7, 6, 5, 4, 10, 9, 11, 12, 15
Individual study	51	2.04	1, 3, 7, 6, 5, 10, 9, 11, 12
Solving problems and practical cases	20	0.8	1, 2, 7, 6, 5, 4, 11, 15

## Evaluation

### Evaluation activities

The assessment of the course is continuous and will be evaluated both individually and in group activities. All assessment activities are obligatory.

(1) Midterm exams, there will be two written tests on basic concepts of the course on the dates scheduled. The content will be multiple choice questions, short questions and case studies of the subjects developed in the lectures and seminars.

The score of the written tests represents 60 % (30 % + 30 %) of the final grade for the course. It is necessary that the mark of each test is  $\geq 4.7$  to overcome it and then to add marks of the other activities evaluated.

(2) Seminars, there will be two measurable activities: (1) test problems (10 %), and (2) clinical case (15 %). The clinical case consists of two parts: presentation of the case (10 %) in group of two students or individually, content and oral presentation in class is evaluated; the clinical case presented must be submitted through the Virtual Campus in the deadline. The cases presented but not submitted are not evaluated. To get the remaining 5 % the student must participate by asking questions about the cases presented in class and at the request of the teacher.

The score of the seminar activities represents 25 % of the final grade for the course. There is no possibility of re-assessment.

(3) Laboratory practices, evaluation of the practical results obtained in the laboratory sessions (5 %) and a final written test (10 %). The practices are mandatory.

The laboratory score represents 15 % of the final grade for the course. There is no possibility of re-assessment.

(4) Re-assessment exam, for those students who have not passed the midterm exams or who want to mark up. The examination will be the entire subject matter (no individual midterm re-assessment). The content will be multiple choice questions, short questions and case studies of the subjects developed in the lectures and seminars.

The score of the re-assessment exam represents 60 % of the final grade for the course. It is necessary that the mark is  $\geq 4.7$  to overcome it and then to add marks of the other activities evaluated.

#### **You must consider:**

To pass the course you must get at least  $\geq 5.0$  in the final mark. The **non**-execution of any of the assessment activities is a zero in that activity.

Total or partial plagiarism from any other source in any assessed activity will automatically to be considered as a fail.

Students who have completed activities assessed with a weight less than 50 % will be marked as "not evaluated".

Repeating students keep marks of the seminars activities evaluated during two academic courses. Do not keep marks of parts. If students do not pass the course in this period, they must return all seminars activities.

### **Evaluation activities**

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Assessment laboratory practice	15 %	2	0.08	1, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15
Midterm exams	60 %	5	0.2	3, 7, 6, 5, 10, 11
Reassessment exam	60 %	3	0.12	1, 3, 7, 6, 5, 10, 11
Seminars: clinical cases and problems	25 %	2	0.08	14, 1, 2, 7, 5, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15

### **Bibliography**

#### **Books**

BIOQUÍMICA CLÍNICA Y PATOLOGÍA MOLECULAR. X Fuentes Arderiu, MJ Castiñeiras Lacambra, JM Queraltó Compañó. Volumes I and II, 2nd ed. Editorial Reverté: Barcelona, 1998

BIOQUÍMICA CLÍNICA. A Gaw, MJ Murphy, R Srivastava, RA Cowan, DSJ O'Reilly. 5th ed. Harcourt: Madrid, 2014

CLINICAL CHEMISTRY. WJ Marshall, M Lapsley, SK Bangert. 7th ed. Mosby, Harcourt Publishers: Londres, 2012

EL LABORATORIO EN EL DIAGNÓSTICO CLÍNICO. JB Henry. Volumes 1 and 2. Marbán Libros: Madrid, 2005

TIETZ FUNDAMENTALS OF CLINICAL CHEMISTRY. CA Burtis, ER Ashwood, DE Bruns, eds. 7th ed. Elsevier Saunders: St. Louis, MO, 2014

TIETZ TEXTBOOK OF CLINICAL CHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR DIAGNOSTICS. CA Burtis, ER Ashwood, DE Bruns, eds. 5th ed. Elsevier Saunders: St. Louis, MO, 2012 (reference book)

#### **Monographs**

Control de la Calidad en el Laboratorio Clínico. FJ Gella. 2nd ed. BioSystems: Barcelona, 2005

Metrología en el Laboratorio Clínico. FJ Gella. 2nd ed. BioSystems: Barcelona, 2001

Enzimología Clínica. FJ Gella. BioSystems: Barcelona, 2003

**Web pages** related to the clinical laboratory (see the Virtual Campus)