



**Surgical Technology Program
Student Handbook**

Spring 2023

The basic beliefs, attitudes, and concepts that are the foundation of the Surgical Technology program are expressed in the following statements.

Surgical Technology is a program of study which is compatible with the policies of the Technical College System of Georgia and encourages each Surgical Technology student to benefit and contribute as a partner in the economic development and stability of Georgia. The philosophy of the Surgical Technology program is founded on the value attributed to individual students, the occupational field and technical education.

The Surgical Technology program of study is consistent with the philosophy and purpose of the college. The program provides academic foundations in communications, mathematics, and human relations, as well as occupational fundamentals. Program graduates are well trained in the underlying fundamentals of surgical technology and related areas and are well prepared for employment and subsequent upward mobility.

The Surgical Technology program is a training program that provides the student with the knowledge and skills to become a qualified surgical technologist. Important attributes for success of program graduates are critical thinking, problem solving, and the application of the training to the work requirement. Our goal is to prepare entry-level Surgical Technologists who are competent in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the profession.

The program structure acknowledges individual differences and provides opportunities for students to seek fulfillment of their educational goals. GTC and the program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, veteran status, or citizenship status (except in those special circumstances permitted or mandated by law).

To assist each student to attain his or her respective potential within the program, both the instructor and the student incur an obligation in the learning process. The instructor is a manager of instructional resources and organizes instruction in a manner, which promotes learning. The student assumes responsibility for learning by actively participating in the learning process.

This is a dynamic field, which requires attention to current curriculum and up to date instructional equipment. The Surgical Technology program must promote the concept of change as the profession evolves. The need for nurturing the spirit of involvement and life-long learning is paramount in the surgical technology field and related areas.

The Surgical Technology program is in continuing accreditation status and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.caahep.org) upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Review Committee on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARCSTSA.org).

GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES

SEMESTER SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Surgical Technology classes are taught in a sequential order requiring the student to develop basic skills and knowledge to then incorporate forming advanced skills and knowledge. Therefore, it is imperative to teach all the scheduled courses in sequence. The necessity of the sequence forces us to complete SURG 1010 before the students begin SURG 1020 even though they are both taught and completed during the student's initial semester in the program. Although SURG 1020 is not started until later in the semester, students are counted present for all registered classes at the beginning of the semester. Consequently, if a student initiates a withdrawal from classes after the drop add period *but* before the midpoint of the semester several consequences may occur:

- 1) He or she will **not** receive a refund for the other sequenced classes.
- 2) In order to withdraw from any course with a "W", the withdrawal must be initiated by the posted "Last day to withdraw with a W" date. This date is usually just after the midpoint of the semester.

COMPLETION OF COURSE COREQUISITES

The Surgical Technology program is a lock-step program. All courses required in each semester must be successfully completed simultaneously. In the event that a student fails any individual class, they will not be permitted to continue in any program course, including the corequisites for that semester.

Semester corequisite courses include:

1st Semester – SURG 1010, SURG 1020, SURG 1080

2nd Semester – SURG 1100, SURG 2030, SURG 2110, SURG 2120

3rd Semester – SURG 2040, SURG 2130, SURG 2140, SURG 2240

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

1. ***A grade of 70% or above in each course component as well as the final grade.***
2. Successful completion of the Clinical Practicum.
3. Acceptable employability skills which include attendance, reliability, punctuality, appearance, socialization skills, cooperation and professional communication.
4. Completion of a comprehensive final exam at the end of the final semester in the curriculum with a grade of 70% or better.
5. The National Certification exam is a MANDATORY test given as an exit exam from the program. It is the student's responsibility to join the Association of Surgical Technologists (\$45 fee) and to apply for the exam (\$190 fee) during the program.

PROGRAM RE-ENTRY

There may be situations where a student must leave the program due to administrative withdrawal, personal reasons, or academic deficiencies and re-entry may be desired. Re-admission in any semester is based on space availability.

- All students desiring re-entry into the first semester of the program must reapply with Admissions and go through the competitive admissions process again. A minimum of an overall GPA of 3.0 is required.

- Program re-entry into the second or third semesters of the program will be based on an academic test over the previous semesters, an appropriate skills check-off, and clinical site and course space availability. Failure of either the academic test or skills check-off will disqualify the student for re-entry into the second or third semesters.

Due to the critical nature of professionalism and work ethics in the profession, if a student does not successfully complete any SURG course due to failure of the Professionalism category, the student will not be eligible to return to the program in any subsequent semester.

CRITICAL COMPETENCY LAB SKILLS CHECK OFFS

Practical exams, or “check offs,” will be administered throughout the course as listed below. The skills included are comprehensive and build upon the previous skill, so failure of any skill will exclude a student from progressing on to the next. Each of these skill sets is considered a critical competency, and it is required that the student pass each one by the due date set for the competency which will be published on the student calendar. Adequate instructional and practice time is scheduled during class and lab time for students to learn each skill.

Check off #1	Open Gloving, Towel Folding, Instrument and Sharps Handling
Check off #2	Surgical Scrubbing
Check off #3	Opening Sterile Supplies, Scrubbing, Gowning & Closed Gloving
Check off #4	Entire Surgical Setup – 20-minute timed competency
Check off #5	Medication Handling and Labeling

For check offs #1, #2, #3, and #5 students are given maximum three attempts to pass the competency. If a student passes on the first attempt, their grade will be a 95. With a second attempt pass the student will earn an 85, and on a third attempt pass the grade will be a 75. **Failure of the third attempt for check offs #1, #2, #3, or #5 will result in failure of the course and the student’s dismissal from the program on the date of the failed attempt.**

For check off #4, students earn a percentage score based on a prescribed points system for each included skill. If the student earns a 70% or greater on their first attempt, that competency is considered met. If the student does not earn a 70% or greater they are given a second attempt at which time they must earn a 70% or better in order to pass and proceed in the course. On the occasion of a required second attempt, the highest grade that a student can receive is a 70%. **Failure of the second attempt for check off #4 will result in failure of the course and the student’s dismissal from the program on the date of the failed attempt.**

All of the assigned check offs listed above will be observed by a minimum of two (2) Surgical Technology instructors. Final attempts of any check off may be observed by the entire Surgical Technology faculty.

REMEDIATION POLICY

After each unsuccessful attempt of a skill checkoff, the instructor will provide a scheduled remediation time with students. Remediation may be facilitated by any faculty member, including adjunct faculty. Prior to remediation, students are required to watch their checkoff video and read their entire checkoff document. Time will be spent during remediation reviewing the student’s needed points of improvement as evidenced in their checkoff. Emphasis will be placed on student accountability to spend appropriate time in lab practice, with or without an instructor present, in order to improve to the required level.

Adjunct faculty make themselves available during open lab times to provide one-on-one skills training prior to skills check offs. Students are encouraged to work with adjunct instructors to obtain new perspectives on how to best improve their technique. Students are also encouraged to schedule appointments with instructors for additional help.

If a student is unsuccessful after the third attempt for check offs #1, #2, #3, or #5, or after the second attempt of check off #4, there is no remediation and the student will receive a failing grade for the course and the student will be dismissed from the program on the date of the attempt.

CLASS HOURS

Regardless of the times or days listed in Banner for the course, you will be expected to attend class or lab according to the following schedule:

- First semester - Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. During special times, such as SURG 1010 lab schedule, you may be expected to arrive earlier or stay later than normal hours.
- Second & third semesters – Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at hospital clinical site. Wednesday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on campus.

STUDENT PROFESSIONALISM

Students will begin with a Student Professionalism score of 100 points and will be evaluated in the classroom, lab and clinical site setting according to the guidelines outlined in the *Work Ethics and Employability Skills* and the *Professionalism Demerits* sections.

A score of 70% or better in this category must be maintained in order to successfully complete any SURG course. Failure to maintain a 70% in the Professionalism category will result in a grade of "F" as well as dismissal from the program on the date of the infraction that causes the student to drop below the minimum of 70%.

Due to the critical nature of professionalism and work ethics in the profession, if a student does not successfully complete any SURG course due to failure of the Professionalism category, the student will not be eligible to return to the program in any subsequent semester.

PROFESSIONALISM DEMERITS

Issue	Point Deductions
Absence from class, lab, clinical, field trip, or class activity. Absence may be classified as any non-presence from class of 90 minutes or more (regardless of reason)	10 per day
Early departure or tardiness to class, lab, clinical, field trip, or class activity of 1-89 minutes = ½ day absence (regardless of reason)	5 per occurrence
Failure to notify instructor of impending tardiness or absence prior to class/clinical/lab	10 per occurrence
Failure to notify instructor of changes in assigned lab schedule	5 per occurrence
Unprofessional/negative behavior in the class or clinical setting to instructor/preceptor supervision, including failure to follow directions given by any instructor/preceptor	15 per occurrence
Unprofessional/negative behavior towards other students	15 per occurrence
Uncooperative behavior/failure to demonstrate teamwork in the class/clinical setting	5 per occurrence
Failure to demonstrate safety measures and Standard Precautions in the lab or clinical setting, including failure to wear PPE properly	15 per occurrence

Non adherence to ST Program Handbook and/or GTC Policies & Procedures	15 per occurrence
Unprofessional appearance / out of uniform / poor hygiene	5 per occurrence
Disruption of class or clinical of any kind	15 per occurrence
Failure to use class/lab/clinical time in an effective manner, including sleeping in class	5 per occurrence
Excessive use of phone/tablet/computer for personal use during class/lab/ clinical time	15 per occurrence

ATTENDANCE

Students anticipating an absence or tardy should contact the course instructor at the cell number or office number provided, IN ADVANCE or provide notification as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the student to account for instructional time missed and to seek permission for make-up work at the discretion of the instructor. Each tardy, absence or early departure, REGARDLESS OF REASON, will be documented and will result in a reduction of the student’s professionalism grade for the course.

Any tardy to class/clinical or early departure from class/clinical of 1 to 89 minutes, REGARDLESS OF REASON, is considered a half day absence. Any tardy, early departure or absence from class/clinical greater than 90 minutes is considered an absence for the day. There are no “excused” absences or tardies.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE (DRESS CODE)

The personal appearance and demeanor of Surgical Technology students reflect both the school and program standards are indicative of the students’ interest and pride in their profession. Students in improper, incomplete, wrinkled or soiled uniform or with poor hygiene will be asked to leave the classroom/lab and not return until they have proper hygiene or uniform.

Any missed class time to achieve this proper hygiene or uniform will be recorded as an absence or early departure in accordance with the amount of time missed and will generate Professionalism Demerits at the discretion of the instructor.

Our uniform requirements are established on evidence-based research and guidelines for practice recommended by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) and the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN). These uniform requirements are hospital industry standards that have been established for the sterile environment to promote optimal patient outcomes and infection prevention. We follow these guidelines on campus due to the fully immersive simulation environment of our labs.

The following uniform is required to be worn every class and clinical day beginning on the first day of class:

Approved Attire (Males/Females)

- Scrubs in solid color chosen by the class; no additional color trim is allowed.
- Scrub tops must be the standard V-neck style with no ties in the front or back.
- Scrub pants must be the standard style – no joggers, no elastic at the ankles. Cargo pockets are acceptable.
- A long sleeve, round neck, waist length, scrub jacket in solid white color. Front of jacket must either snap, button, or zip up to the neck. Sleeves must have elastic at the wrist.
- The Gwinnett Technical College patch must be sewn 2” below shoulder seam on left arm of the scrub jacket only, NOT on the scrub shirt.

- Undershirts may be worn under scrubs, but must be white, short sleeved, collarless, and minimally visible. Undershirt sleeves may not extend past scrub sleeves at any time, either in class, lab or clinical. Undershirts are not required.
- Clean, plain white socks or hose must be worn. Supportive compression hose/socks for both males and females are suggested.
- Clean white uniform or SOLID white leather athletic shoes (no high tops; no clogs). Shoes may not have mesh or holes of any kind, and must provide the student protection from fluids and sharp objects. A separate pair of “inside OR” shoes are suggested for clinicals.
- Students must display a Gwinnett Technical College ID badge at all times according to GTC policy. These can be purchased in the bookstore. Badge must list current school year and “Surgical Technology” under the student’s name.
- Program faculty reserve the right to disallow any uniform deemed inappropriate or unprofessional.

Personal Appearance / Hygiene

- Clean, neat and appropriate hairstyle and color.
- Fingernails will be short, neat and clean. Fingernails must not be visible over ends of fingers. No polish can be used, including clear polish. No artificial or acrylic nails are allowed.
- All jewelry is prohibited. No visible body piercing is allowed.
- Proper underclothing must be worn.
- Makeup should be kept to a minimum.
- No false eyelashes are allowed.
- Mustaches and/or beards must be kept neatly trimmed. Proper cover is to be worn in the OR to contain all hair.
- No hats are allowed.
- Proper dental and body hygiene are required. Perfumes and colognes should not be worn. Due to the close contact between students and staff and the use of much of the same equipment, the best of hygiene should be considered. The program will not tolerate complaints generated because of hygiene issues such as offensive body odor (including the smell of cigarette smoke and poor dental hygiene), general uncleanliness, dirty clothes, or other complaints.

PERSONAL CONTACT DURING LABS

Due to the nature of the surgical technology skills students are learning and the proximity necessary for:

- Surgeon to technologist interaction,
- Circulator to technologist interaction,
- Technologist and circulator to patient interaction,
- And instructor to student interaction,

It is often necessary to have physical contact and close proximity during labs. This includes many activities of scrubbing and donning sterile attire, preparing a sterile setup, and steps of surgical procedures, as well as during the instruction of such skills. At no time will physical contact by instructors or other students be allowed to vary outside of the normal parameters and functions of the operating room.

PROGRAM PHYSICAL DEMANDS & TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Technical standards are an accreditation requirement meant to assist both students and program faculty in determining appropriate qualification for the program. Technical standards must meet state and federal requirements that preserve the rights of individuals with disabilities. The standards below reflect those referenced by the U.S. Department of Labor and requirements of local job postings.

The following are physical demands that must be met in both the on-campus lab experience and the in-hospital clinical experience.

Standing:	7-8 hours per day; Stand and maintain balance; Stand on raised surgical step stools
Walking:	1-2 hours per day; Walk 100 meters in 1 minutes; Climbing stairs
Bending:	1-2 hours per day; Pick up objects from floor; Squat then rise from standing
Reaching:	1-2 hours per day; Reach above shoulder; Reach below waist
Lifting:	3-4 hours per day; Up to 75 pounds alone; Transfer and position surgical patient with a team; Repetitive lifting of 30+ pound instrument trays; Pushing and pulling large equipment
Fine Motor:	Pick up small objects with hands; Twisting while disconnecting and assembling equipment; Perform repetitive motions with hands
Hearing:	Hear and repeat normal speech without seeing lips; Hear faint body sounds like blood pressure; Hear equipment auditory alarms
Visual:	See small objects at 20 inches away; See larger objects at 20 feet away; Distinguish color
Tactile:	Feel vibrations to palpate pulse; Detect temperature to identify hot/cold solutions

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

There are many occupational hazards that are inherent to working in surgery. Students in their clinical rotations, and even students in the simulation lab setting, will be subject to any or all of the following:

- Exposure to blood and bodily fluids, infectious waste, and bloodborne pathogens.
- Exposure to infectious diseases including, but not limited to HIV, Hepatitis B and C, influenza, COVID-19, tuberculosis, MRSA, measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, varicella.
- Injury from contaminated sharps.
- Injury from shocks, burns, or eye damage related to electrosurgical devices and lasers.
- Musculoskeletal injuries from required standing, lifting, and pulling.
- Exposure to anesthetic gases and compressed gases.
- Exposure to surgical smoke plume including toxic chemicals and by-products such as hydrogen cyanide, toluene, perchloroethylene, benzene, formaldehyde, and ethylbenzene.
- Exposure to teratogens including cytotoxic compounds, chemical agents, sterilizing agents, cleaning agents, preserving agents, and fixing agents.
- Exposure to hormones (e.g., prostaglandins and progesterones).
- Exposure to ionizing radiation and other sources of radioactive materials.

CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS

Speaking on the cell phone or texting during a lecture is considered extremely rude and will not be tolerated. Personal computer usage is acceptable in the classroom under certain guidelines.

Taking notes, viewing PowerPoints, etc. is acceptable. Checking email, chatting, playing games, browsing the internet, or logging into social media is not allowed.

Use of earbuds or headphones is not allowed in any part of the department at school or in the clinical setting, as it is not conducive to teamwork and effective communication. Any infraction of this type will result in a reduction in the student's Professionalism grade as outlined in the course syllabus.

While attending clinical sites or off-campus events, cell phones may be kept with you for cases of emergency but MUST be turned on silent mode. There will be absolutely no use of cell phones in the OR/SPD setting. Any use of a phone should be done during break or lunch times and should be conducted outside the department areas.

In accordance with HIPAA laws, no patient information may be recorded or disseminated through any media outlets including photos, video, email, text, or social media. This also applies to students' receipt of patient information or photos through any means mentioned above. No comments about clinical sites are permitted to be posted on social media.

STUDENT WORK POLICY

Students are allowed to work in their free time but will not be permitted to leave class or clinical to go to work. It is recommended that students try to limit their outside work hours to accommodate the didactic and clinical rigors of the program. Additionally, students are not allowed to work at their clinical site. A student may not complete their clinical assignment at a hospital where they are employed in any capacity.

All student activities associated with the curriculum, especially while students are completing clinical rotations, will be educational in nature. Students will not be substituted for hired staff within the clinical institution in the capacity of a surgical technologist.

CANCELLED CLASSES DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event weather conditions are such that travel to and from school for students and faculty would be hazardous or extreme temperature presents a safety comfort problem, school may be closed for the day or delayed in opening. GTC will announce any closing or delay on radio station AM 750, other radio stations, and our automated phone attendant. Gwinnett Tech will be announced separately from Gwinnett County Public Schools. If you have not signed up for text/phone notifications, please log on to your GTC Dashboard and complete that. Additionally, your instructor will make an announcement via Edmodo regarding any weather delays or closures.

FIRE DRILL – BUILDING EVACUATIONS

Know where emergency exits are located, should the need arise to evacuate.

1. Follow the directions of the instructor
2. Leave immediately, quickly, quietly, without panic
3. Close all doors.
4. Be sure all pathways are clear.
5. Move as far as possible from the building.
6. Re-enter only when instructed to do so.

CLINICAL POLICIES & REQUIREMENTS

CLINICAL ASSIGNMENTS

Clinical assignments are a required aspect of the Surgical Technology program to provide opportunities to achieve professional competencies. All students are expected to exhibit an attitude of maturity, professionalism and responsibility toward their clinical assignments and experiences. Each clinical location expects the student to provide high quality patient services in addition to achievement of competencies. Students are expected to practice in a safe, legal and ethical manner.

Students will be assigned clinical rotations to receive the necessary clinical experience as defined by our accrediting body, the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA). Our clinical sites are within the metro Atlanta, Gainesville, and Athens areas. Students will be assigned to one or more clinical sites throughout the program based on clinical site availability, student case requirements, and potential for graduate job placement. Although consideration may be given to clinical site location and student drive time, it is not a deciding factor in clinical assignments. To successfully complete the SURG 2110/2120/2130/2140 clinical courses, students must complete each assigned clinical rotation.

Students should be aware that paid parking is required at some clinical sites. Students will be responsible for any incurred costs in transportation and/or parking associated with clinical rotation assignments.

CLINICAL ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend all clinical assignments as scheduled by the program faculty. The total number of hours each student spends in his or her clinical site will be entered on the student's permanent record at the end of the semester. Students must complete the minimum total amount of cases to fulfill curriculum requirements.

If a student will be tardy or absent due to unavoidable circumstances, he or she must contact Susan Feltmann, Clinical Coordinator (404) 308-7013 within one hour of the start of that clinical day AND also contact the clinical site supervisor.

Scheduled absenteeism (i.e. appointments, vacations, marriages, etc.) must be reserved for periods when classes are not in session. If a student must leave clinical site early (due to illness, emergency, etc.) Susan Feltmann, Clinical Coordinator (404) 308-7013 must be notified immediately.

Clinical absences and tardies will be documented using the Professionalism demerit system described previously in this document.

BLS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS CARD (CPR)

All students are required to have a BLS for Healthcare Providers card from the American Heart Association. This certification must be valid for the entire year of the program. This course may be taken through GTC's Continuing Education department or you may find information about BLS courses through the American Heart Association.

IMMUNIZATIONS

As healthcare professional students, it is highly recommended that you are vaccinated against infectious diseases encountered at clinical sites. We recommend you discuss these vaccinations with your personal physician.

Students are required to follow the medical clearance policies designated by their assigned clinical sites. Please be aware that some clinical sites mandate vaccinations against specific diseases such as COVID-19 and influenza, and testing for specific diseases such as tuberculosis. If you elect not to be vaccinated or tested, you will not be allowed to attend those clinical sites. If you do not have all required immunizations and tests, you will have limited access to clinical sites. This will delay or prevent program completion.

Although vaccines are not required for program admission, each clinical site reserves the right to deny a student entry based on their own policies and procedures. If a student is denied entry to a clinical site based on lack of vaccinations or testing, the student will not be able to complete the clinical courses. As a result, successful completion of the program will not be possible. Please see individual program materials for information regarding specific vaccine and testing requirements.

This information is intended to give recommendations and not set specific policies on vaccinations and/or testing. Gwinnett Technical College, the Health Science division and the Technical College System of Georgia are not responsible for any adverse reactions that may occur as a result of vaccines and/or testing.

PREGNANCY

Students who become pregnant while enrolled in the Gwinnett Technical College Surgical Technology Program have the option to voluntarily inform the Program Director of their pregnancy. This information must be in writing. A student will not be considered pregnant without written disclosure.

Upon written disclosure, the student and the Program Director will meet to discuss the potential harmful effects of exposure to diseases, chemicals, radiation, and anesthetic gases inherent in the practice of surgery on the unborn baby, as well as the options available to the student to fulfill the educational requirements of the program.

The pregnant student is required to seek advice and counsel from their attending physician concerning continuing in the Surgical Technology Program at Gwinnett Technical College. A checklist form will be provided for the student to review with their physician. After consultation with the program director and seeking counsel from their attending physician, the student will choose from the following options:

1. The student may voluntarily withdraw from the Surgical Technology program. If they leave in good academic standing, they will be reinstated to the program at the beginning of the semester that was not completed, on a space available basis.
 - If the student does not re-enter the program at the earliest possible date after delivery, they will have to reapply for the program under the standard of application procedure, should they wish to enter the program at a later date. In this case, the student will begin the program from the first semester, and they will be responsible for any incurred costs involved in repeating a course.
2. The student may choose to continue in the Surgical Technology program. Student clinical assignments will not be changed; however, the student will be reminded of possible hazards and exposure risks, and guidance will be given as to proper protection mechanisms.

In addition, the student must supply a signed Pregnancy Form and Physician Visit Checklist to be allowed to continue in the program. The student will be expected to fulfill all assignments as required of all other students. The pregnant student must follow the established program policies and meet the same clinical and educational criteria as all other students before graduation.

If the student chooses to continue in the program they are assuming responsibility for certain medical risks. Some of these risks and areas of concern include, but are not limited to:

1. Exposure to anesthetic gases and compressed gases.
2. Exposure to surgical smoke plume including toxic chemicals and by-products such as hydrogen cyanide, toluene, perchloroethylene, benzene, formaldehyde, and ethylbenzene.
3. Exposure to teratogens including cytotoxic compounds, chemical agents, sterilizing agents, cleaning agents, preserving agents, and fixing agents.
4. Exposure to infectious waste and bloodborne pathogens.
5. Exposure to hormones (e.g., prostaglandins and progesterones).
6. Exposure to ionizing radiation and other sources of radioactive materials.
7. Exposure to diseases including, but not limited to HIV, Hepatitis B and C, influenza, COVID-19, tuberculosis, MRSA, measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, varicella.
8. Injury including, but not limited to sharps injuries, electrical hazard, exposure from equipment, and musculoskeletal injuries.
9. Necessity to frequently lift and carry up to 75 pounds, as well as to twist, bend, squat and kneel.
10. Necessity to stand and walk for long periods of time of up to 8 hours.

If the student remains in the Surgical Technology Program during pregnancy, they accept full responsibility for their actions and relieve Gwinnett Technical College, its faculty, and surgical clinical sites of any responsibilities in case of adverse effects.

STUDENT INJURIES

The program faculty should be notified immediately should any student suffer an injury that requires medical attention while in a clinical site. Students are guests in each of these clinical assignment sites and are therefore responsible for securing and financing any medical treatment required as a result. The clinical site and Gwinnett Technical College are not responsible for injuries incurred by students.

BACKGROUND CHECKS & DRUG SCREENING

All students will be required to undergo a criminal background and drug test from Advantage Students. This process is mandatory and must be completed in order for the student to attend clinical. Students with a positive drug screen will be prohibited from attending hospital clinical sites. The student cannot complete the program without attending clinical rotations.

Because of hospital regulations, a student CANNOT be placed in clinicals if they have any of the following on their criminal background check:

- Two or more misdemeanors in the same category (i.e. two DUIs, two thefts, etc.)
- One or more felonies of any kind
- Any misdemeanor or felony involving moral turpitude (i.e. assault, battery, armed robbery, child molestation, drug manufacture/distribution, family violence, manslaughter, kidnapping, murder, rape, prostitution, etc.)

If a student has one misdemeanor, or two misdemeanors in different categories, they MAY be placed in clinicals. However, the student should be aware of the difficulty in obtaining employment in the healthcare field after graduation with a criminal background of any kind.

It is not acceptable for a student to discuss background checks or drug screening directly with the clinical site. Any questions or comments regarding this process or regulations must be directed only to GTC program faculty.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The conduct of the Surgical Technology student reflects upon the individual, the clinical site, Gwinnett Technical College and the surgical profession. Therefore, the surgical technology student must conduct himself/herself in a professional, mature manner at all times. Surgical technology students will adhere to all policies in the program handbook and any additional Gwinnett Tech policies. Failure to comply with policies will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the program. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all clinical requirements, college requirements, and the requirements for completion as stated in the syllabus.

The Surgical Technology program reserves the right to refuse admission and/or program continuation to any student who is involved in any activity considered unprofessional or not conducive to proper patient care.

Misconduct is defined as: deliberate violation of a standard or improper behavior (Webster's); and is characterized by the following behaviors during clinical time:

- Non-alert condition.
- Possession of drugs or alcohol.
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Sleeping at the clinical site.
- Theft from the clinical site.
- Immoral or unethical conduct as deemed by program faculty or clinical site.
- Smoking in prohibited areas.
- Unapproved extended breaks or lunch times.
- Eating or drinking in prohibited areas.
- Refusing to do assigned tasks within the realm of capabilities.
- Forgery/falsifying any record of attendance or evaluation tool.
- Leaving the assigned clinical site without permission from the supervisor and GTC faculty. This includes leaving the specifically assigned OR or Central Processing department, even if the student remains on the hospital premises but is not in their assigned area participating in assigned tasks.
- Contacting any clinical site personnel regarding preceptor or supervisor evaluations, or criminal background or drug screen results.
- Taking photographs or video recordings in the operating room or restricted hospital areas as prohibited by hospital policy.
- Making comments regarding the school or clinical site on social media.
- Violation of any HIPAA regulation including: recording or disclosing any patient information including personal information, pictures, videos, health information. This is to include taking pictures in the operating room by which any patient may be identified including taking pictures of the surgery schedule.
- Functioning independently in the circulator role as prohibited by law or hospital policy.

CLINICAL DISMISSAL

Any student suspected of being impaired due to alcohol or drugs will be subject to an alcohol or drug test (at the student's expense) and face immediate program dismissal. Please refer to the college's drug and alcohol policy in the GTC handbook.

If a student is believed to have committed an instance of misconduct listed above, the instructor will investigate with the clinical site and hold a conference with the student. If a student is found to have committed any of the above stated instances of misconduct, they may be removed from the clinical site either by GTC faculty or by request of hospital management.

A student may also be removed from a clinical site by GTC faculty or by request of hospital management due to safety issues, patient endangerment, employability skills, or unprofessional misconduct (as referenced in the Professionalism and Student Conduct sections). In addition, a student may be dismissed from clinicals for failure to progress in skill acquisition after having been advised and remediated.

If a student is removed from the clinical site by request of hospital management and/or GTC faculty, due to safety issues, patient endangerment, employability skills, unprofessional misconduct, or failure to progress in skill acquisition as referenced above, the student will earn the grade of "F" for all clinical practicum courses, SURG 1010/2110/2120/2130/2140. This results in a conference and dismissal from the program, including any other SURG courses which are co-requisites. A student dismissed by a clinical site for these reasons will not be eligible to return to the SURG program in any subsequent semester.

If a student is dismissed by request of hospital management due to any other reason not stated above, the instructor will review the dismissal on a case by case basis in collaboration with program faculty.

SURGICAL CASE REQUIREMENTS

The Surgical Technology program is required to verify through the surgical rotation documentation the students' progression in First and Second Scrub surgical procedures of increased complexity as he/she moves toward entry-level graduate competency. These are requirements of our programmatic accrediting body, the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA). Students must complete a minimum of 120 cases as delineated below.

ROLES DEFINED:

First Scrub Role: To document a case in the first scrub role, the student shall perform the following duties during any given surgical procedure with proficiency:

- Verify supplies and equipment needed for the surgical procedure.
- Set up the sterile field with instruments, supplies, equipment, medication(s) and solutions needed for the procedure.
- Perform required operative counts with the circulator prior to the procedure and before the incision is closed, according to AST guidelines and facility policy.
- Pass instruments and supplies to the sterile surgical team members during the procedure, including anticipation of surgical team needs.
- Maintain sterile technique as measured by recognized breaks in sterility, correction of sterility breaks, and documentation as needed.

Second Scrub Role: The second scrub role is defined as the student who has not met all criteria for the first scrub role, but actively participates in the surgical procedure in its entirety by completing any of the following:

- Assistance with diagnostic endoscopy
- Assistance with vaginal delivery
- Cutting suture
- Providing camera assistance
- Retracting
- Sponging
- Suctioning

Observation Role: The observation role is defined as a student who has not met the first scrub or second scrub criteria. The student is observing a case in either the sterile or nonsterile role. Observation cases cannot be applied to the required 120 case count but must be documented.

CASE REQUIREMENTS:

- I. A student must complete a minimum of 120 cases as delineated below:
 - A. General Surgery
 1. A student must complete a minimum of 30 cases in General Surgery
 - a. 20 of these cases must be performed in the First Scrub Role.
 - b. The remaining 10 cases may be performed in either the First or Second Scrub Role.
 - B. Specialty Surgery
 1. A student must complete a minimum of 90 cases in various surgical specialties, excluding General Surgery.
 - a. A minimum of 60 cases must be performed in the First Scrub Role and distributed amongst a minimum of four surgical specialties.
 - i. A minimum of 10 cases in four different specialties must be completed in the First Scrub Role (40 cases total).
 - ii. The additional 20 cases in the First Scrub Role may be distributed amongst any one surgical specialty or multiple surgical specialties.
 - b. The remaining 30 cases may be performed in any surgical specialty in either the First Scrub or Second Scrub Role.
 2. Surgical Specialties (excluding General Surgery)
 - a. Cardiothoracic
 - b. Genitourinary
 - c. Neurologic
 - d. Obstetric and gynecologic
 - e. Orthopedic
 - f. Otorhinolaryngologic
 - g. Ophthalmologic
 - h. Oral Maxillofacial
 - i. Peripheral vascular
 - j. Plastics and reconstructive
 - k. Procurement and transplant

COUNTING CASES:

- I. Cases may be counted according to surgical specialty as defined in the core curriculum.
 - a. One pathology is counted as one procedure.

- i. Example – A patient requires a breast biopsy followed by mastectomy. It is one pathology, breast cancer, and the specialty is general surgery; therefore, it is counted and documented as one procedure and one case.
 - b. Counting more than one case on the same patient:
 - i. Example – A trauma patient requires a splenectomy and repair of a LeFort fracture. Two cases can be counted and documented since the procedures are in different surgical specialties.
 - ii. Example – A procedure that requires different setups and includes different specialties may be counted as separate cases. A mastectomy procedure (general surgery) following with immediate reconstruction or augmentation (plastics and reconstruction) are counted as separate cases.
 - c. Diagnostic vs. operative endoscopy cases
 - i. An endoscopy classified as a semi-critical procedure is considered a diagnostic case.
 - ii. An endoscopy classified as a critical procedure is considered an operative case.
 - iii. Diagnostic and operative cases will be counted according to specialty
 - iv. Diagnostic cases are counted in the Second Scrub Role up to a total of 10 of the required 120 cases.
 - 1. Example – A cystoscopy is a diagnostic procedure. If an adjunct procedure is performed, it is considered operative; therefore, a cystoscopy with ureteral stent placement is an operative procedure.
- II. Vaginal delivery cases are counted in the Second Scrub Role of the OB/GYN specialty, up to a total of 5 of the required 120.

CASE DOCUMENTATION

Students' clinical participation is required to be documented and stored in a secure location. Students are required to log all cases into a database that is accessed through an individualized weblink provided to them at the start of the semester. A link to a spreadsheet showing all of the student's entries will also be provided. Each case scrubbed or observed must be documented DAILY on the form provided by the department. The information must be complete and accurate, and a preceptor electronic signature is required for each case logged by a student.

Any falsification of information on the clinical case log will be subject to Gwinnett Technical College's Academic Integrity policy (GT 5.1.20). The online clinical case log is a legal document, and by electronic signature, the student and preceptor attest to the accuracy of the information.

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

The Surgical Technology program recognizes an electronic signature as a valid signature from students and clinical site staff for purposes of clinical case documentation and clinical evaluation, subject to the conditions listed below. An electronic signature is defined as any electronic process signifying the integrity of the document, presented in electronic format.

Procedure

Each student's case log and forms are stored in a secure cloud-based location, which are only accessible by program faculty and the individual student. Authorized users must sign in with individual log-in credentials to access the secure location and forms. It is the responsibility and obligation of all parties to keep log-in credentials secure and confidential. Once logged in, any information uploaded, updated, or removed is subject to the College's Academic Integrity policy (GT 5.1.20). Users are responsible for logging out of all systems and exercising the necessary precautions when using publicly accessible computers.

Surgical Specialty	Total # of cases required	Minimum # of First Scrub cases required	Maximum # of Second Scrub cases allowed
General Surgery	30	20	10
Surgical Specialties -Cardiothoracic, ENT, Eye, GU, NEuro, OB/GYN, Oral, Maxillofacial, Orthopedics, Peripheral Vascular, Plastics	90	60	30
Optional: Diagnostic Endoscopy - Bronchoscopy, Colonoscopy, Cystoscopy, EGD, ERCP, Esophagoscopy, Laryngoscopy, Panendoscopy, Ureteroscopy			10 diagnostic endoscopy cases may be applied toward the Second Scrub cases
Optional: Labor & Delivery			5 vaginal delivery cases may be applied toward the Second Scrub cases
Totals	120	80	40

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This signature sheet is due on the first day of class

PLACE YOUR INITIALS next to each statement indicating your agreement. PRINT NAME, SIGN AND DATE at the bottom of the sheet.

_____ I have read the following in their entirety. I understand the included policies and hereby agree to abide by them.

- Surgical Technology Program student handbook
- SURG 1010 syllabus
- SURG 1020 syllabus
- SURG 1080 syllabus

_____ I understand that I must personally complete all required critical competencies and that accommodations cannot be made which would waive the accomplishment of each required competency.

_____ I understand that failure to reach any critical competency by the assigned due date will result in my dismissal from the Surgical Technology program on the date of failure. I further understand that such dismissal may negatively impact my GPA and financial aid.

_____ I understand that I will be working at clinical assignments at my own risk, and that the clinical sites are not responsible for my medical care should I be injured.

_____ I understand that my student records may be shared with the clinical training sites and any guest instructors if necessary.

_____ I permit the Surgical Technology program at Gwinnett Technical College to use my likeness in photographs or videos for promotional materials for the program.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____