Surgical Technology Program
Student Handbook

Fall 2020

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. The present forward trend in this field is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

The program structure acknowledges individual differences and provides opportunities for students to seek fulfillment of their educational goals. The program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicapped condition, academic disadvantage, or economic disadvantage.

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.

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

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.

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
Check off #5   Medication Handling and Labeling

For check offs #1, #2, and #3 students are given 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, or #3 will result in the student's dismissal from the program on the date of failure.**

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%.

For check off #5, students are given two 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.

Failure of the second attempt for check off #4 or #5 will result in the student's dismissal from the program on the date of the second 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.

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. All students desiring re-entry into the first semester of the program must reapply and go through the competitive admissions process again. Subsequent re-admission in any semester is based on space availability. A minimum of an overall GPA of 2.5 is required.

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.

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.

Class Hours:

Regardless of the times or days listed in Banner for the course, you will be expected to attend class 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.

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.***

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 GTC Policies / Procedures	10 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	10 per occurrence
Excessive use of phone/tablet/computer for personal use during class/lab/ clinical time. Any use of earbuds/headphones in the ST department or clinical	15 per occurrence

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.

These 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 uniform 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 should be of the standard V-neck style with no ties in the front or back. Program faculty and clinical supervisors reserve the right to disallow any scrubs deemed inappropriate or unprofessional.
- 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 <u>SOLID</u> 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.
- A long sleeve, knee length lab coat with a collar will be worn to class and for designated functions as defined by the instructor. Lab coats are not allowed to be worn in the lab setting.
- The Gwinnett Technical College patch must be sewn 2" below shoulder seam on left arm of the lab coat only, NOT on the scrub shirt.
- Students must at all times display a Gwinnett Technical College ID badge. These can be purchased in the bookstore. Badge must list current school year and "Surgical Technology" under the student's name.

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 <u>must be worn.</u>
- Females should keep makeup to a minimum.
- No false eyelashes are allowed.
- Males must keep any mustache and/or beards 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.

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 pictures, video, email, text, or social media. 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. Students at their assigned clinical site cannot be substituted for a paid employee as the experience is for educational purposes only.

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.

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 Jim Rafferty, Clinical Coordinator (404) 308-7013 within one hour of the start of that clinical day AND also contact the clinical site supervisor. A message can be left on voicemail, BUT TEXTING IS NOT ALLOWED.

Students are expected to be punctual for clinical assignments and instructors will keep an accurate record of attendance. 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 clinical or early departure from clinical of 1 to 89 minutes, REGARDLESS OF REASON, is considered a half day absence. Any tardy, early departure or absence from clinical greater than 90 minutes is considered an absence for the day.

Once a student has missed the equivalent of three (3) school days based on these guidelines, they are subject to administrative withdrawal and will receive an "F" for the course.

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.) Jim Rafferty, Clinical Coordinator (404) 308-7013 must be notified immediately.

Immunizations
Students in health care programs have an increased risk of contracting Hepatitis B. Although not required, students are strongly encouraged to receive the Hepatitis B vaccination. Students who choose not to receive the vaccine are required to sign a waiver stating that they have elected not to receive the vaccine. The waiver must be signed before beginning ANY clinical site rotation.
- **If a waiver is signed, acceptance into a clinical site cannot be guaranteed.**
- The attached Health Science Certificate of Immunization must be completed.

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 good for the entire year of the program. If necessary, a student may have to renew their certification during the program in order to fulfill the year requirement. This course may be taken through GTC's Continuing Education department or you may find information about BLS courses through the American Heart Association.

Pregnancy

Students who become pregnant must notify the program faculty immediately upon awareness of the pregnancy. Student rotations will not be changed, however the student will be reminded of possible hazards of radiation effects, anesthetic gas inhalation, and guidance will be given as to proper protection mechanisms. The student is expected to fulfill all assignments as required, unless she is physically unable.

If it is medically necessary to remove the student from the clinical setting, she may be able to continue in the didactic portion of the program. However, the student must make-up all clinical competencies missed before being eligible for graduation from the program. This could result in a delay in program completion beyond the expected graduation date.

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 is 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 the clinical site regarding criminal background or drug screening.
- 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, 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, 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 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.

Students must complete a minimum of 120 cases as delineated below.

 I. **General Surgery**: Students must complete a minimum of 30 cases in General Surgery, 20 of which must be performed in the First Scrub role. The remaining 10 cases may be performed in either the First or Second Scrub role.

 II. **Specialty Cases**: Students must complete a minimum of 90 cases in various surgical specialties, excluding General Surgery, 60 of which must be performed in the First Scrub role. The additional 30 cases may be performed in either the First or Second Scrub role.
 - A. A minimum of 60 surgical specialty cases must be performed in the First Scrub role and distributed amongst a **minimum of 4** surgical specialties.
   - 1. A minimum of 10 cases in the First Scrub role must be completed in each of the required minimum of 4 surgical specialties (40 cases total required.)
   - 2. 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 surgical specialty cases may be performed in any surgical specialty either in the First or Second Scrub role.

 III. **Optional Surgical Specialties**: Diagnostic endoscopy cases and vaginal delivery cases are not mandatory. However, up to 10 diagnostic endoscopic cases and 5 vaginal delivery cases can be counted towards the maximum number of Second Scrub role cases.

A. Diagnostic endoscopy cases must be documented in the category of "Diagnostic Endoscopy" rather than by specialty.
B. Vaginal delivery cases must be documented in the category of "Labor & Delivery" rather than in the OB/GYN specialty.

IV. Case experience in the Second Scrub role is not mandatory.

V. Observation cases must be documented, but do not count toward the 120 required cases.

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/or 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: _____