

**Southeast Community
College**

**Surgical Technology
Program**

CLINICAL HANDBOOK



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Program Overview & Mission



The Southeast Community College Surgical Technology Program prepares students for entry-level employment as competent, confident, and ethical surgical technologists. The mission of the program is to provide high-quality education that integrates academic knowledge and clinical practice in compliance with ARC/STSA and CAAHEP standards. Graduates will demonstrate professionalism, critical thinking, and technical skills essential to patient-centered surgical care.

ACCREDITATION AND COMPLIANCE

The Surgical Technology Program at Southeast Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA). All clinical activities are structured to meet or exceed current ARC/STSA standards, ensuring students are not substituted for staff and that all experiences are educational in nature.



Clinical Education Philosophy

Clinical education is an essential component of the Surgical Technology Program. It provides students with opportunities to apply didactic and laboratory learning in real-world healthcare settings. Through supervised participation in surgical procedures, students develop competence, confidence, and professional behavior while maintaining patient safety and adhering to ethical standards.

Student Learning Outcomes & Competencies

Upon completion of the program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of surgical procedures and aseptic techniques.
- Apply principles of patient care and safety in the operating room.
- Communicate effectively with patients, peers, and healthcare team members.
- Perform surgical technology duties with professionalism and ethical responsibility.
- Integrate theoretical knowledge with clinical skills to ensure optimal patient outcomes.

Clinical Placement Process and Requirements

Students are assigned to multiple clinical affiliates throughout the program to ensure a broad range of surgical experiences.

Assignments are determined by program faculty based on availability, learning needs, and site capacity. Students are required to comply with all clinical site policies, including background checks, drug screening, immunizations, and orientation requirements.

If a clinical slot is assigned outside a customary commuting distance, the student must be informed of the assignment and agree to the assignment in writing prior to enrollment.



Professional Conduct & Responsibilities

Students represent Southeast Community College and the surgical technology profession at all times during clinical rotations. They are expected to demonstrate integrity, respect, accountability, and teamwork.

Unprofessional conduct, including breach of confidentiality, insubordination, or unsafe practice, may result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance at all scheduled clinical rotations is mandatory. Students must arrive on time and be prepared for assigned duties. Absences must be reported according to both program and clinical site policy. Excessive absences or tardiness may result in failure of the clinical course. In general students should arrive 1 hour prior to the scheduled start time for their assigned courses. The student will be counted absent if a period of time greater than thirty minutes is missed at any time during the clinical day.

For clinical education course absences, the clinical site should be contacted by at least 45 minutes prior to assigned arrival time. (Specific site contact information will be provided to the student)

- The clinical instructor should be contacted via Canvas message after contacting the clinical site at least 45 min prior to assigned arrival time.
- If the student fails to contact the instructor and/or the clinical site regarding an absence by at least 45 minutes prior to assigned arrival time, the student will receive 0 points in the Abides by Established Rules and Regulations category in the Affective Unit on the Final Clinical Education evaluation.

The two clinical education courses require the following number of hours and each student should attempt to complete a set number of hours each week. It will be the responsibility of the student to inform their SCC clinical instructor of their planned clinical days for each clinical course within the first week of the course.

- Clinical Education 1 – 225 total hours
- Clinical Education 2 – 270 total hours

Surgical Technology Online Clinical Students Attendance Policy- It is the responsibility of the online clinical student to establish a set schedule of dates and times that the student plans to be in their clinical site logging clinical hours towards the requirement for each clinical course.



Clinical Dress Code & Personal Appearance

- Students should be neat in appearance and display clean personal hygiene.
- Clinical facilities will provide the surgical scrubs to be worn in the clinical area. Students will wear their own scrubs to and from the clinical site.
- Additional expectations related to dress and appearance during clinical activities:
 - Hair is required to be completely covered at all time when in the surgical suite.
 - Beards and/or mustaches must be short and covered with appropriate OR attire in the surgical suite.
 - Fake eyelashes are not allowed as they may become an airborne contaminate.
 - Chewing gum is strongly discouraged during clinical rotation.
 - No jewelry is allowed as it harbors microorganisms.
 - No fingernail polish or artificial nails are allowed. Fingernails must be trimmed below the pad of the finger.
 - Safety glasses/goggles are required. These will be provided by the clinical site. Safety glasses will have good top and side protection and fit the face snugly.
 - No perfume should be worn during clinical rotation as it can be offensive to others.
 - Shoes with good support are required. No open-toed shoes are allowed. It is required that shoe covers are worn over shoes.
 - Surgical scrubs purchased by the student to wear to and from clinical should be black or gray in color. If students already own scrubs that are not black or gray they may wear those scrubs however, juvenile prints are unacceptable.
 - Students are expected to wear their SCC ID when attending all clinical courses.
 - Undergarments are required to be worn when completing clinical experience and should not be visible outside of hospital scrubs.

Confidentiality & HIPAA Compliance

Students are bound by HIPAA regulations and must protect patient privacy at all times. Discussing patient information outside the clinical setting or using identifying details in case studies, classroom discussions or on social media is strictly prohibited. Violation of confidentiality may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Patient Rights & Safety Standards

Students must uphold patient rights and safety as their highest priorities. All actions should reflect respect for the patient's dignity, privacy, and autonomy. Students must follow facility policies for infection control, time-out procedures, and incident reporting.



Clinical Supervision & Student Role

Students function as learners and must always be under the direct supervision of qualified surgical technologists or registered nurses. Students may not substitute for staff or perform duties beyond their level of competence. Clinical instructors and preceptors provide guidance, evaluation, and support throughout each rotation.

Any student employed by a facility where they are completing clinical experience will be required to complete a Safeguards Work Policy Agreement to establish clear roles and requirements in compliance with CAAHEP standards.

Clinical Evaluations

Student performance in the clinical setting is evaluated through a competency-based system. Evaluations are conducted by clinical instructors using standardized tools that assess knowledge, skills, professionalism, and communication. Students must demonstrate progressive mastery of surgical technology competencies to advance in the program.

Clinical evaluations will be conducted on a consistent, recurrent basis and with sufficient frequency to provide both the students and program faculty with valid and timely indications of the students' progress toward and achievement of the curriculum competencies in the required learning domains. Formal clinical evaluations will be synchronous, with program faculty and student meeting in real time to assess the student's clinical progress. Input from clinical preceptors will be incorporated into the formal clinical evaluations. Formal clinical evaluations will be signed by the student & the instructor. Summative clinical evaluations will be signed by the student, instructor and program director.

Clinical Case Requirements

Students are required to complete a minimum of 120 cases during the clinical experience portion of the program. These 120 cases must further be broken down into 30 General Surgery cases (20 of which must be in the first scrub role, 10 of which can be in the second scrub role) and 90 cases in various surgical specialties (60 of which must be in the first scrub role, 30 of which can be in the second scrub role). The 60 first scrub specialty cases must include a minimum of 10 cases completed in a minimum of 4 surgical specialties (40 total cases). The additional 20 required first scrub specialty cases may be distributed amongst any one surgical specialty or multiple surgical specialties.

Incident & Injury Reporting

All accidents and/or incidents during clinical experiences must be reported immediately to the clinical instructor/preceptor & Program Director. The appropriate form(s) will be filled out per facility procedure. The Instructor/Program Director and student, will submit a CCR report with SCC. This form can be found on the HUB. Determination will be made as to what diagnostic tests or procedures need to be done. Students are financially responsible for all medical expenses.



Insurance

Liability insurance for students is provided by the college for incidences occurring at the clinical site. The cost of the liability insurance is included in the student fees. Liability insurance does not cover personal health claims, and it is recommended that students obtain health insurance coverage for that purpose. Employee health may be used if you are injured at the clinical site, however, you will be responsible for any associated charges.

Infection Control & Standard Precautions

Students must adhere to standard precautions at all times to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. Hand hygiene, use of personal protective equipment, and safe handling of sharps are mandatory practices in all clinical areas.

Disciplinary Procedures

- The student will be given a verbal warning upon the first occurrence of breaching the rules or regulations, and be placed on a performance contract to foster compliance. If the problem continues, the student may be dismissed from the Program.
- Students may be terminated from the Program at discretion of the program director for the following reasons:
 - Falsification of records and reports
 - Unsatisfactory classroom performance
 - Not meeting Surgical Technology behavioral outcomes
 - Attendance abuse
 - Unacceptable and/or unethical behavior (against College rules)
 - Unsatisfactory and unsafe clinical performance (Student may be subject to immediate termination without a verbal warning if their clinical performance is deemed unsafe to the patient - This will be determined by the Program Director and Faculty or initiated by the hospital). Termination rules are listed in each clinical course syllabus and College Student Handbook.
 - Negligence during care of patient(s)
 - Leaving the operating room without permission from the instructor or the surgical team.
 - Refusing to abide by hospital and college policies and program rules and regulations.
- If a student has unsafe and unsatisfactory skill performance during the clinical experience, they will be placed on a probationary contract. At the completion date of the contract, an evaluation will be done to assess compliance & performance. If the student does not meet stated expectations, the student will fail the clinical course and be subject to recycle. Upon failure of the clinical course at any time during the term, the student will not be allowed to attend clinical at the hospital. The student can continue to complete all other Surgical Technology courses for that term.

Temporary Removal From Clinical Policy

A student enrolled in the Surgical Technology program may be temporarily removed from clinical participation at the discretion of the clinical preceptor, site supervisor, or program faculty when the student's behavior, performance, or actions present a risk to patient safety, violate professional or institutional standards, or otherwise disrupt the clinical environment.

Temporary removal is not a disciplinary action in itself, but an interim measure pending review and determination of appropriate follow-up, which may include remediation, counseling, or further disciplinary steps in accordance with program and institutional policies.

Grounds for Temporary Removal May Include (but are not limited to):

- Breach of patient safety or aseptic technique
- Unprofessional behavior or conduct inconsistent with program standards
- Violation of clinical site or institutional policy
- Failure to comply with supervision or scope of practice limitations
- Impairment or suspected impairment affecting safe performance
- Repeated tardiness, absenteeism, or failure to communicate appropriately
- Academic or clinical performance below expected competency



Temporary Removal From Clinical Procedure

1. Immediate Action:

- The clinical preceptor or faculty member will remove the student from clinical duties and document the incident using the Temporary Removal from Clinical Assignment form.
- The student may be dismissed from the site for the remainder of the day pending review.

2. Notification:

- The preceptor or site supervisor will notify program faculty as soon as possible.
- The student must contact the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator within 24 hours to schedule a review meeting.

3. Review Meeting:

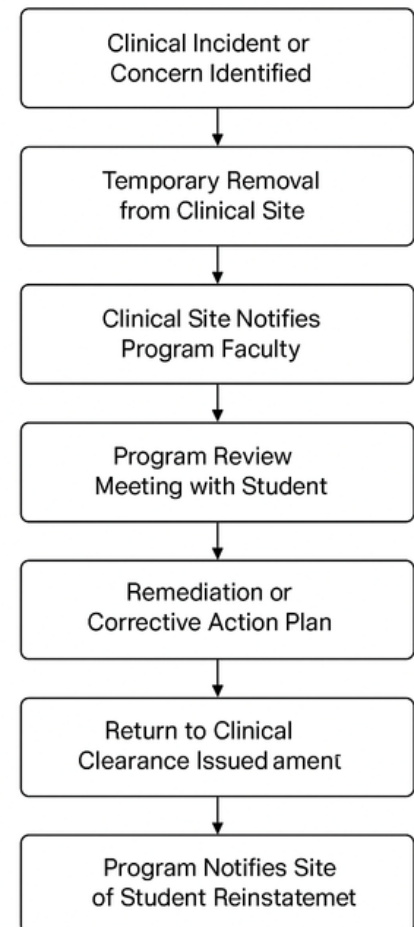
- The student will meet with program faculty to discuss the incident, provide a written statement, and develop an appropriate remediation or corrective action plan.

4. Reinstatement:

- The student may not return to the clinical site until officially cleared through the Return to Clinical Clearance form, signed by the Program Director or designee.
- Conditions for reinstatement may include demonstration of competency, counseling, or completion of remediation activities.

Clinical Incident Communication Flowchart

Surgical First Assistant Program



Student Grievance & Appeals

Students have the right to appeal academic or disciplinary decisions in accordance with Southeast Community College's grievance procedures. Concerns should first be discussed with the instructor or program director before filing a formal appeal. See the Southeast Community College Catalog for the college grievance policy.

Smoking, Electronic Cigarettes & Smokeless Tobacco

For the health and safety of all, smoking and the use of electronic cigarette devices or smokeless tobacco is not permitted in the clinical sites.



Emergency Preparedness Plan

In the event of unexpected disruption, the activities of the program will follow Southeast Community College's C-1a Continuity of Education Plan found on the [SCC Policy and Procedures webpage](#).

- Specifically clinical activities would follow the "offsite" section.
- In the event of in climate weather, follow the College policy. The college has provided a telephone number that will announce the cancellation message by 5:00 a.m. of the day in question: (402)437-2405. This information will also be available on the Hub. Students can sign up to receive notifications related to emergency/ School cancellations through Regroup on the Hub.

Acknowledgment of Receipt and Agreement

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Southeast Community College Surgical Technology Program Clinical Handbook. I agree to comply with all policies, procedures, and professional standards described within.

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Student Signature: _____