

# Southeast Community College Surgical First Assist Program

## Technical Standards (Functional Abilities Essential for Surgical First Assist Practice)

The purpose of the Surgical First Assist Program is to educate students to meet the program outcomes and to ensure graduates possess the skills to provide optimal patient safety. Surgical First Assist students will receive both didactic and clinical instruction in multiple surgical specialty areas (General, Orthopedic, Cardiovascular, Neurosurgical, etc.) and will be required to demonstrate competency in each area.

In order to provide safe and effective patient care in the Surgical First Assist Program, the student must be able to demonstrate, with or without reasonable accommodation, physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the program curriculum and clinical experience requirements. Any applicant who has met the required academic prerequisites and can, with or without reasonable accommodation, meet and/or perform the Surgical Technology Program Technical Standards will be accepted for admission.

Students admitted to the Surgical Technology Program gain experience in a variety of surgical settings that can be physically demanding. During clinical experience, the Surgical First Assist student is assigned to participate in surgical procedures which may include medication handling, wound closure and direct patient care. Students will be expected to adhere to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) of 1996 which safeguards patient confidentiality.

Transportation to and from clinical experience facilities is the responsibility of the student. Some of the standards listed below are skills that the student will learn as they go through the program.

### Please carefully read the Surgical Technology Program Technical Standards

| Functional Ability | Standard  | Examples of Required Activities  |
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| Gross Motor Skills | Gross motor skills sufficient to provide the full range of safe and effective surgical patient care activities without assistive devices  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move within confined spaces such as the operating room while maintaining sterility without assistive devices</li> <li>• Assist and/or lift, move, position and manipulate with or without assistive devices, a patient who is unconscious</li> <li>• Manipulate surgical equipment with speed, dexterity and good eye-hand coordination</li> <li>• Continuously hold retractors in predetermined positions for extended periods of time</li> <li>• Closure of tissue layers utilizing appropriate suture techniques</li> <li>• Insert laparoscopic trocars</li> </ul> |
| Fine Motor Skills  | Fine motor skills sufficient to perform manual psychomotor skills   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate ability to load a fine (10-0) suture onto needles and needle holders with/without corrective lenses, while wearing safety glasses</li> <li>• Manipulate instruments and supplies with speed, dexterity and good eye-hand coordination implementing the ability to multitask efficiently</li> <li>• Accurately cut fine suture</li> <li>• Perform safe suctioning and sponging of the operative site</li> <li>• Insert a urethral catheter</li> <li>• Injection of local anesthetic in subcuticular tissue</li> </ul>                                      |
| Physical Endurance | Stamina sufficient to remain continuously on task for up to an 8 hour clinical shift while standing, sitting, moving, lifting and bending to perform surgical patient care activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand, bend stoop and/or sit for long periods of time in one location with minimal/no breaks</li> <li>• Refrain from nourishment or rest room breaks for periods of up to 4 hours</li> <li>• Manually resuscitate patients in emergency situations</li> </ul>   |

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| Physical Strength                               | Strength sufficient to perform full range of required surgical patient care activities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Push and pull 250 pounds</li> <li>• Lift/move heavy objects from 35-50 pounds</li> </ul>  |
| Mobility  | Ability sufficient to move throughout the operative department and maneuver in small spaces; full range of motion to twist/bend, stoop/squat, reach above shoulders and below waist and move quickly; manual and finger dexterity, and hand-eye coordination to perform surgical technologist tasks and functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambulate/move around without assistive devices in surgical area</li> <li>• Demonstrate efficiency in handling surgical instruments before, during and after the surgical procedure</li> </ul>   |
| Hearing   | Auditory ability sufficient for monitoring and assessment of surgical team and patient needs, with or without technical assistance device   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear and understand muffled communication without visualization of the communicator's mouth/lips within 20 feet</li> <li>• Hear activation/warning signals on equipment</li> </ul>  |
| Visual  | Normal or corrected visual ability sufficient for accurate observation and performance of surgical technology tasks and functions   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate sufficient peripheral vision to anticipate and function while in the sterile surgical environment</li> <li>• Visual acuity to load a fine (10-0) suture</li> <li>• Ability to tolerate unpleasant sights</li> </ul>   |
| Tactile   | Tactile ability sufficient for performance of surgical technology tasks and functions   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to manipulate a wide range of surgical instruments and equipment</li> <li>• Ability to aid in tissue manipulation/stabilization under the guidance of the surgeon</li> </ul>  |
| Smell   | To sufficiently be able to detect significant environmental and surgical patient odors  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detect odors sufficient to maintain environmental safety and patient needs</li> <li>• Detect smoke</li> <li>• Ability to tolerate unpleasant odors</li> </ul>   |
| Personal Health                                 | Demonstrate personal health to protect yourself and the surgical patient from exposure to communicable diseases   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be free of reportable communicable disease and chemical abuse</li> <li>• Demonstrate immunity to rubella, rubeola, tuberculosis and hepatitis B or be vaccinated against these diseases</li> </ul>  |
| Emotional/Behavioral                            | Emotional stability and appropriate behavior sufficient to assume responsibility/accountability for actions   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit positive interpersonal skills in patient, staff and faculty interactions</li> <li>• Respect and care for persons whose appearance, condition, beliefs and values may be in conflict with their own- ability to place the needs of the patient above oneself and put the patient first in all situations</li> <li>• Deliver quality patient care regardless of patient's race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation or diagnosis</li> <li>• Conduct themselves in a composed, respectful manner in all situations and with all persons</li> <li>• Possess a strong commitment to patient safety</li> <li>• Function as an effective member of a team/workgroup</li> <li>• Demonstrate emotional skills to remain calm and maintain professional decorum in emergency/stressful situations</li> <li>• Adapt rapidly to changing environment/stress</li> <li>• Exhibit ethical behaviors and exercise good judgement, always adhering to surgical conscious</li> </ul> |
| Professional Attitudes and interpersonal Skills | Present professional appearance and demeanor; demonstrate ability to communicate with patients, supervisors, co-workers to achieve a positive and safe work environment.  |  |
|   | Follow instructions and safety protocols<br><br>Honesty and integrity demonstrated in all situations  |  |
| Communication                                   | Oral communication skills sufficient to communicate in English with accuracy, clarity and efficiency with patients and the other members of the health care team, including non-verbal communication, such as interpretation of facial expressions, affect and body language                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate and understand fluent English both verbally and in writing</li> <li>• Give verbal directions to or follow verbal directions from other members of the healthcare team and participate in health care team discussions related to care of the surgical patient</li> <li>• Convey information to patients and other healthcare team members as necessary to teach, direct and counsel individuals in an accurate, effective and timely manner</li> <li>• Recognize and report critical patient information to other healthcare team members</li> </ul>  |
| Cognitive/ Quantitative Abilities               | Reading comprehension skills and mathematical ability sufficient to understand written documents in English and solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning analysis and synthesis   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process short and long-term memory sufficient to perform tasks such as but not limited to mentally tracking surgical supplies and performing anticipation skills during the surgical procedure</li> <li>• Transfer knowledge from one situation to another showing concern for details</li> <li>• Collect data, prioritize required tasks and anticipate future needs</li> </ul>  |

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|                              |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately process information on medication containers, surgeon's preference cards, and other medical records as well as policy and procedure manuals</li> </ul>   |
| Conceptual/Spatial Abilities | Conceptual/spatial ability sufficient to comprehend three dimensional and spatial relationships                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehend spatial relationships in order to properly maintain sterility while performing all surgical technology related tasks and functions</li> </ul>  |
| Clinical Reasoning           | Ability to reason across time about a patient's changing condition and/or changes in the surgical procedure sequence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to determine when a problem is occurring or likely to occur, anticipating response in advance whenever possible</li> <li>• Evaluate situation for changes in required instruments and equipment based on changes to the planned surgical procedure</li> <li>• Identify aseptic breaks and take appropriate action to correct them in order to maintain sterility</li> </ul> |
| Flexibility                  | Adapt to Surgical Technology program course scheduling policies  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available to attend didactic/clinical experience at assigned times weekdays ranging from 6:30-3:00pm</li> </ul>   |

Qualified applicants with disabilities are encouraged to apply to the program. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Office of Students with Disabilities if they feel they cannot meet one or more of the technical standards listed. Each ACC campus offers support services for students with documented physical or psychological disabilities. Students with disabilities must request reasonable accommodations through the Office for Students with Disabilities on the campus where they expect to take the majority of their classes. Students are encouraged to do this three weeks before the start of each semester.