



Surgical First Assist Program

STUDENT
HANDBOOK



2026

 **Southeast**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content Items:	Page Number:
SCC Mission, Vision Statement & Core Values.....	3
SCC Code of Ethics.....	4
Health Sciences Mission Statement.....	4
Surgical First Assist Program Mission Statement.....	4
Surgical First Assist Program Philosophy.....	4
Surgical First Assist Code of Ethics.....	5
Surgical First Assist Program Goals.....	6
Surgical First Assist Program Student Learning Objectives.....	6
Accreditation Statement.....	6
Reasonable Accommodations.....	7
Surgical First Assist Program Faculty Information.....	7
Faculty Expectations of the Student.....	7
Success in the Program.....	7
Safeguards Work Policy.....	7
Student Communication Expectations.....	8
Essential Functions.....	8
Program Curriculum.....	8
Books.....	8
Program Special Fees.....	8
Health and Safety.....	9
Occupational Hazards.....	9
Criminal Background Checks.....	9
Drug Testing.....	9
Accident Reporting/CCR.....	10
Insurance.....	10
HIPAA/Patient Confidentiality.....	10
Attendance.....	10
Dress Code.....	11
Grading & Evaluations.....	11
Grading.....	11
SUFA1020 Lab component.....	11
Clinical Evaluations.....	11
Clinical Experience Case Requirements.....	11
Mid-Term Progress Reports.....	11
Probationary Contracts.....	11

Exam Policy.....	12
Lockdown Browser & Webcam Requirements.....	12
Transportation/Parking.....	12
Student Retention.....	12
Academic Integrity.....	12
Temporary Removal from Clinical Policy.....	13
Temporary Removal from Clinical Procedure.....	13
Clinical Incident Communication Flowchart.....	14
Dismissal from the Program.....	14
Recycling.....	15
Readmission.....	15
Incomplete Grade Policy.....	15
Grievance.....	15
Emergency Preparedness Plan.....	15
Student Activities.....	16
Graduation Requirements.....	16
National CSFA Certification Exam.....	17
Electronic Signature.....	17
Electronic Records Program.....	17
Program Advisory Committee Members.....	17
Smoking Policy.....	18
Social Media Statement.....	18
Appendix A – Essential Functions.....	19
Appendix B – Program Curriculum Schedule.....	20
Appendix C – Program Special Fees.....	21
Appendix D – PAC Members & Attendees.....	22

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION, VISION STATEMENT & CORE VALUES

MISSION:

- The mission of Southeast Community College is to empower and transform the diverse learners and communities of southeast Nebraska through accessible lifelong educational opportunities. The College provides dynamic and responsive pathways to career and technical, academic transfer and continuing education programs that contribute to personal, community and workforce development.

VISION STATEMENT:

- Southeast Community College seeks to transform and empower its diverse learners for fulfilling careers, life-long learning and community and societal advancement. The College is committed to ongoing intellectual, financial and strategic investment in its infrastructure and all phases of its operations.
- The College is dedicated to creating destinations and the highest quality learning climates through permanent, innovative, modern, virtually linked, sustainable, and collaborative facilities and green spaces. SCC will ensure its open-access mission is celebrated and realized through inclusivity, respect and compassion toward the diverse views and ideas of its various student populations and constituents. The College will work collaboratively and courageously with its higher education partners, employers and local and state officials to address Nebraska's skilled worker shortage and the need for everyone to have affordable access to the life-changing benefits of higher education. SCC will utilize valid and dynamic data to respond to local and statewide needs to strengthen the College's diverse communities and economies.
- SCC strives to be a national leader in developing high-contact technical and academic experiences through personal and sincere relationships with engaged and invested faculty, staff and administrators. These personal connections will be coupled with intensive learning opportunities through co-curricular involvement, research, volunteerism, and public service. SCC's commitment to student transformation intentionally encompasses the development of essential life skills, including reflective thinking, resiliency and emotional intelligence proficiency.

CORE VALUES:

- **Excellence** – Commitment to the highest level of performance in all facets of the College's programs, services, and operations through effective investment and support of all assets.
- **Integrity** – Continuous pursuit of fulfillment of mission and goals through transparency and ethical practices in all College operations.
- **Innovation** – Commitment to proactive discovery and application of emerging concepts and technologies, and promotion of the respectful challenging of ideologies and practices to cultivate creativity, alternative viewpoints and opportunities for ongoing discovery and intellectual growth.
- **Inclusion** – Promotion of opportunities and advancement for a diverse and dynamic student, employee and community population through the creation of a positive, compassionate and reflective culture.
- **Stewardship and Accountability** – Commitment to our students, employers and communities through investment in resources to fulfill the College's mission, vision and goals and responsible management of human, physical and financial resources.

CODE OF ETHICS AT SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

At Southeast Community College we aspire to:

- **Be Accountable and Show Respect for Others** - Be accountable. Accept responsibility for decisions, for the foreseeable consequences of action and inaction, and for setting an example for others. Remember the special obligation to lead by example, to safeguard and advance the integrity and reputation of the College as a whole. Demonstrate respect for human dignity, privacy, and the right to self-determination for all people by being courteous, prompt and decent.
- **Be Honest and Demonstrate Integrity** - Be truthful, sincere, and straightforward as well as honorable, upright, and courageous. Act with conviction.
- **Pursue Excellence in Fulfilling Responsibilities and Job Duties** - Pursue excellence in all matters. In meeting personal and professional responsibilities, be diligent, reliable, industrious, and committed. Perform all tasks to the best of our ability, and develop and maintain a high degree of competence. Be well-informed and well-prepared.
- **Be Kind and Compassionate** - Be dedicated to the ideas and principles that demonstrate the spirit of kindness and compassion. Give and share services with others while being trustworthy and fair in fulfilling commitments.
- **Adhere to the Principles of Diversity** - Adhere to the principles of nondiscrimination and equality without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, religion, ancestry, veteran status, national origin or other factors prohibited by law or College policy. Be true to the equal treatment of individuals, including the tolerance for others and acceptance of diversity. Fulfillment of these conduct practices reflects on the promises we have made to ourselves, to our community and to Southeast Community College. Respectful of these promises, we are guided by this motto: "Make each decision as if it were the one decision for which you would be remembered." -Walter Burke, Texas Instruments.

HEALTH SCIENCES MISSION STATEMENT

- The mission of SCC Health Sciences is to empower and prepare students to meet the health and wellness needs of our community. The Health Sciences division is committed to providing innovative, collaborative, student-centered learning to individuals pursuing healthcare and wellness careers.

SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

- The Surgical First Assist Program is an integral program of the Health Science Division of Southeast Community College. The mission of the Surgical First Assist Program is to use cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains of learning in order to prepare graduates to function as proficient, entry-level Surgical First Assistants.

SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

- The Surgical First Assistant is a highly skilled professional, trained and educated to function as a valuable and integral part of the surgical team. They are responsible for rendering quality patient care to each individual entrusted to their care or the care of the surgical team.
- The Program has identified the knowledge and skills essential to developing uniform standards of excellence in performance among Surgical First Assistant in relation to their role.

- For the Surgical First Assistant to fulfill this role and to become a safe, competent practitioner it is essential for him/her to understand the theory and principles from which techniques and procedures are developed and have an opportunity to apply and practice these techniques and procedures over an extended period of time.
- The students should have an opportunity to learn this knowledge and acquire these skills in situations conducive to learning. Since the primary focus of the Program is learning, students must accept the responsibility for their learning. We believe this can best be accomplished in a community college with a combination of theory and directed clinical practice in the hospital setting.
- The Surgical First Assist Program values communication between instructors and students to foster success for each student. The program reserves the right to share any and all information between instructors needed to achieve this success.
- The instructor and the students will act with integrity and strive to engage in equitable verbal and nonverbal behavior with respect to differences arising from age, gender, race, disabling conditions and religion.

SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST CODE OF ETHICS

Approved by the ASA Board of Directors: March 29, 2018

- **Ethics as they relate to the surgical first assistant role and the healthcare team**
 - Work within their scope of practice at all times.
 - Maintain and practice surgical assisting with pride and dignity.
 - Maintain the highest standards of professional conduct.
 - Respect all team members and facilitate a cooperative team atmosphere.
 - Support the professional role of surgical assistant and the organizations that represent our interests.
 - Be actively involved in continuing education to ensure a high degree of competence.
 - Be an active surgical assistant mentor for students and other health care providers.
 - Respect the surgical first assistant code of ethics.
- **Ethics as they relate to patient care**
 - Respect the principles of nonmaleficence and beneficence; act in the best interest of the patient.
 - Respect the patient's right to autonomy and self-determination.
 - Respect the principle of justice while providing care:
 - Ensure patient care and treatment provides for the patient's physical and emotional well-being.
 - Maintain privacy and confidentiality of information except in those circumstances where the patient provides permission or the law requires disclosure.
- **Ethics as they relate to business practices**
 - Only receive compensation for services rendered ensuring the patient has been properly informed.
 - Be responsible for helping colleagues maintain a high level of performance and integrity in the practice of surgery.
 - Abide by regulations, but support changes in those regulations which are contrary to the best interests of the patient and the profession.
 - Cooperate and deal honestly with governmental agencies.
 - Provide accurate, complete and timely documentation in all financial matters with the

patient, insurance and health care financing agencies.

SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST PROGRAM GOALS

The goal of the SCC Surgical First Assist program is to prepare entry-level Surgical First Assistants who are competent in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the profession.

- To provide the information necessary for the student to demonstrate the ability to comprehend, apply, and evaluate the information relative to their role as a successful Surgical First Assistant, both in online class and clinical. (Cognitive Domain)
- To provide the environment necessary for the student to practice and demonstrate technical proficiency in all skills required to fulfill their role as a successful Surgical First Assistant. (Psychomotor Domain)
- To develop surgical first assistants who practice standards in a professional manner in order to meet the expectations of the patient, employer, and surgical team. (Affective Domain)
- To prepare students for successful completion of the national certification exam, administered by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA). (Cognitive Domain)

SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to demonstrate clinical competence through satisfactory surgeon evaluations in the clinical setting.
- Students will be able to exhibit the ability to make independent clinical judgements within the limits of the surgical assistants' responsibilities.
- Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate critical thinking skills to formulate logical conclusions from the analysis of data.
- Students will be able to demonstrate the skills necessary to achieve effective communication, confidentiality, ethical standards and interpersonal relations with classmates, instructors, surgeons, operating room personnel and patients.
- The student will be able to demonstrate the skills associated with the unsterile role in the preoperative and postoperative phase.
- The student will pass the NBSTSA Certification Exam.

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

- The Surgical First Assist program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.caahep.org) upon the recommendation of the Accrediting Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (<http://arcstsa.org>).



Commission on Accreditation
of Allied Health Education Programs

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

- To comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), nondiscriminatory practices, the Program will make reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities when requested.
- It is the responsibility of the student to make such requests at the beginning of each course, specifying the disability and requested accommodation(s). Official documentation is required before any accommodations will be made.

SURGICAL FIRST ASSIST PROGRAM FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION

Dean of Health Sciences:

Jill Sand MEd, RRT jsand@southeast.edu 402-437-2729

Dean of Student Enrollment:

Mike Pegram mpeggram@southeast.edu 402-761-8270

Program Director:

Amy Goracke, BS, CST/CSFA agoracke@southeast.edu 402-437-2285

Campus Store

402-437-2560

Placement Services Office

402-437-2632

Learning Resource Center

402-437-2585

Retention Specialist

402-437-2678

Writing Center

402-437-2634

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT

- The student is responsible for knowing the contents of the Program rules and regulations contained within this Handbook. The student is responsible for periodically reviewing the rules and regulations throughout the duration of the program.
- It is expected online students set aside the proper amount of time to gain success, three hours per week for each credit hour is the expectation, but you may find more is required to achieve the grades you desire. Example – a 4.5 credit course would need 13.5 hours a week for study.

SUCCESS IN THE PROGRAM IS FOSTERED BY:

- Maintaining professional communication related to all aspects of the program.
- Maintaining a positive attitude in both didactic and clinical courses.
- Using appropriate time management skills to complete assignments on time and arriving to the clinical sites before required start time.
- Assuming responsibility for maximizing learning opportunities while in the program.
- Complying with the policies and procedures of the college, program and hospital clinical sites.

SAFEGUARDS WORK POLICY

- It is recognized that students may be sponsored by their employer to attend the surgical first assist program at Southeast Community College. It is also acknowledged that most SFA students will be working full time during their enrollment of the program. As students complete their clinical rotation it must be noted that:
 - All activities required in the program must be educational and students must not be substituted for staff
 - Accreditation Standards do not prohibit paid clinical experience for students enrolled in CAAHEP-accredited surgical first assist programs.

- This policy safeguards the integrity of the educational experience and protects patient safety.
- The student cannot be the first scrub role and then switch to an assistant at closing. This is considered a dual CST/SFA function and is not allowed as a student.
- After demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake certain defined activities with appropriate supervision and direction.

STUDENT COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS:

- Communication from students to program instructors should occur through Canvas message, email, or office phone.
- Notification of absences shall be sent via Canvas message and should be communicated for every class and clinical absence to every instructor for that day. Notification should include the need to attend class remotely.
- Emergencies should be communicated through phone call to faculty office phone numbers.
- Students should expect response to all communication within 24 hours of the next business day. Communication received after 3:30pm will be responded to the next business day.
- Students should expect items to be graded within 48 business hours. If instructors need additional time to grade items this will be communicated to the student
- Students are expected to respond to instructor communications within 72 hours, including completing any requested assignment corrections unless otherwise directed.
 - If you are unable to meet this time frame, please notify your instructor as soon as possible and provide an anticipated completion date

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- 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.
- See Appendix A for a list of required essential functions

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

- The program will follow the outlined curriculum taught during the Spring, Summer, and Fall terms annually in accordance with the most current edition of the Core Curriculum for Surgical Assisting-4th edition-CCST-4e.
- See Appendix B for Current Program Curriculum Schedule
- The program will follow the SCC Academic Calendar found online at southeast.edu/calendar/
- Advancement in the Program is dependent upon obtaining a C+ (75%) in all term courses and meeting individual course requirements.

BOOKS

- It is the student's responsibility to purchase all required textbooks, which are available in the SCC Campus Store. Books can be ordered online through the bookstore at <https://www.sccbookstore.com/lincoln/portal/>
- SCC Library (LRC) is available for use. Library resources can be accessed online at <https://thehub.southeast.edu/library/Pages/default.aspx>

PROGRAM SPECIAL FEES

- A variety of special fees will be attached to program courses throughout the duration of the Program. These fees will cover the National Certification Exam and practice exam, Criminal Background Check, Drug Screen, Electronic Clinical Records system access, and Liability Insurance related to clinical experience.
- Please see Appendix C for a breakdown of special fees associated with each SUFA course

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- All students are required to have a current BLS for Healthcare Providers CPR certification from the American Heart Association at the beginning of the program and are required to remain current throughout the duration of the program. Any other BLS will need to be approved by program director.
- A current 2 step TB test is required prior to the beginning of the program. TB tests are current for one year requiring the students to get an updated TB during the program to remain current throughout the duration of the program.
- All immunizations need to be completed or proof of positive titer as required on the Student Health Statement by the beginning of the program. Students will be required to get a flu shot when available each year as well as the COVID-19 vaccine or provide required documentation for a religious or medical exemption for the vaccine.
- When a medical or surgical condition exists that may harm the patient or other personnel, students are required to bring a signed release from their doctor stating when they are able to attend classes and/or clinical education. The release must provide detailed level of function to return to class and clinical.
- There are many infectious diseases a student may come in contact with during their clinical experience. This risk factor requires hospitals and school policies regarding infection control must be followed. Hepatitis B vaccination is required before going into clinical area, since the student will come in contact with patients' blood and body fluids. The hospitals require that the Program keep current records of all immunizations throughout the duration of the program.

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

- OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) has identified several hazards related to the profession of Surgical Technology including sharps injuries from needles and blades, bloodborne pathogens, surgical smoke, radiation exposure, chemical exposures to sterilants, and ergonomic issues like awkward postures that can lead to musculoskeletal injuries. OSHA provides guidelines and requirements for hospitals and healthcare facilities to implement control measures like safety-engineered devices for sharps, smoke evacuation systems, personal protective equipment (PPE), and radiation shielding to protect surgical technologists and other staff.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

- All students enrolled in any Health Sciences Program at SCC are required to undergo a Criminal Background Check (CBC) prior to entering the program. This is a requirement of the clinical facilities utilized for clinical rotations. The CBC will be conducted by an outside agency and the fee for this service will be paid through a student fee assessed in the first semester of the program. Any student recycling back into the program will be subjected to a second CBC at their expense prior to readmission.

DRUG TESTING

- All students entering the program are required to undergo a 10 panel Drug Screen. This is a requirement of the clinical facilities utilized for clinical rotations. The Drug Screen will be conducted by an outside agency and the fee for this service will be paid through a special fee assessed in the first term of the program for all students.
- The results will be sent directly to the Dean of Health Sciences. Any student recycling back into the program will be subjected to a second Drug Screen at their expense prior to readmission.

ACCIDENTS/CCR (COMPLAINTS & CONCERNS REPORTING)

- All accidents and/or incidents during classroom or off campus experiences must be reported immediately to the Program Director. The appropriate form(s) will be filled out per facility procedure. The Program Director, 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 charge.

HIPAA/ PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

- Student will adhere to strict patient confidentiality and HIPAA protocol throughout the duration of the program. Any violation from this protocol may result in dismissal from the Surgical First Assist program.

ATTENDANCE

- Attendance is encouraged in all classes, laboratories, and clinical externships. The program uses an online, asynchronous delivery using a learning management system. Attendance in the learning management system is crucial to the success of this course. Each course syllabus, CID and course outline will reflect the specific course policies regarding the importance of course participation and the success of the course.
- Communication with the course instructor should occur related to absences and to receive makeup work.
- For clinical externship course attendance, it is the responsibility of the 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.
 - The two clinical courses require the following number of hours per term. It will be the responsibility of the student to inform their SCC clinical instructor of their planned clinical days for each clinical course.
 - Clinical Externship 1 – 135 hours
 - Clinical Externship 2 – 135 hours
 - If the student is going to be absent on any clinical days that are included in their routine schedule, it will be the responsibility of the student to contact the clinical site,

preceptor and the instructor for the course to inform them of this absence.

Communication regarding absences is required.

- Leave of absence requests will be granted for the students who want to recycle into the program at a later time. To return, the student will be required to:
 - contact the Program Director to check on status for returning during leave.
 - be admitted to the next cohort if space permits
 - demonstrate skill competencies necessary to continue in the Program (See Recycle guidelines).

DRESS CODE

- The student must be neat in appearance and display clean personal hygiene.
- It is suggested the students wear scrub clothes to lab activities, and are expected to dress in a professional manner.
- Surgical Attire - Hospitals and surgery centers will provide the surgical scrubs to be worn in the clinical area. Hospital policy dress code will be adhered to by students including but not limited to:
 - 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.
 - No jewelry is allowed in the surgical suite as it harbors microorganisms.
 - Fingernails must be trimmed below the pad of the finger.
 - Safety glasses or goggles are required at the clinical site and in the lab setting and will be provided by the clinical site and the Surgical First Assist program. 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.

GRADING & EVALUATIONS

- Grading: All Surgical First Assist Courses utilize the current college grading scale found in the SCC Student Handbook. The student is responsible for reviewing all specific expectations related to each program course that can be found in the course Syllabi, Course Information Document (CID) and course outline.
- SUFA 1020 Lab component: Skills will be checked off as pass or fail. Lab participation will be 15% of the final grade.
- Clinical Evaluations: Formal clinical evaluations are given at mid-term, and at the end of the clinical rotation for Clinical Externship 1 and 2. The evaluations will consist of both the preceptor input and the instructor input. Evaluations will be completed and presented to the student by their clinical instructor. The instructor will utilize this evaluation from the preceptor when completing the student's final evaluation and final grade.
- Clinical Experience Case Requirements: Students are required to complete a minimum of 140 cases during the clinical experience portion of the program. These 140 cases must further be broken down into a minimum of 20 General Surgery cases, with the remaining 120 cases divided between various specialties
- Mid-term Progress Reports: At mid-term all instructors are required to review students' academic progress and enter mid-term grades for all students. Mid-term grades may be checked by the student on Self-Service.
- Probationary Performance Contracts: Students will be placed on a probationary performance contract as deemed necessary by the Program Director. This contract will state

the problem skill(s) and/or behavior(s) and list the appropriate solution(s). A time period for improvement will be written on the contract and all possible consequences if the behavior(s) and/or skill(s) is/are not improved. The objective of the contract is to foster satisfactory performance and understanding of the problem.

- A student is permitted to be placed on a contract twice for separate violations while in the program. Situations that require a third contract may result in dismissal from the program

EXAM POLICY

- Exams will open on a scheduled time frame in the Learning Management System. Students are required to complete the exam by 11:59pm on the date the exam due date is scheduled.
- Students will be given one attempt on each exam and each exam will have a time limit.
- Academic integrity is expected by all students when taking exams. No notes/books/handouts/electronic devices/other students etc. should be used to assist in answering exam questions. All activity of the student when in the exam can be tracked by the course instructors.
- Students are expected to not share information related to the exam with one another/discuss exam questions.
- Any perceived/suspected cheating/academic dishonesty will result in the student receiving a 0 for the exam grade with no discussion or justification allowed. Following this type of situation, a student will then be required to have every additional exam for the remainder of the program proctored at their own expense.
- When the student is not able to take the exam within the assigned time frame, the student should contact the instructor to take the test on the following day or five percentage points will be deducted from the exam for each day thereafter.
 - If the student knows they will be absent within the assigned time frame, they should inform the instructor before scheduled exam and should take the exam prior to the assigned timeframe. The exam may be a different form of the exam given at the scheduled exam time.

LOCKDOWN BROWSER & WEBCAM REQUIREMENTS

- This program requires the use of LockDown Browser and a webcam for online exams. The webcam can be the type that's built into your computer or one that plugs in with a USB cable.

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

- Transportation- Students are responsible for transportation to and from SCC labs and clinicals. If accommodations are needed to fulfill the lab portion of the program, this will be at the student's expense. SCC is not responsible for transportation liability or cost of injury sustained when traveling to and from the college, clinical education sites, and field trips.
- Parking- Students should be aware of parking regulations at all clinical institutions. Students parking in unauthorized areas may be subject to penalty from the clinical institution.

STUDENT RETENTION

- If at any time during the semester a student is having difficulty academically, they are encouraged to speak to the Program Director to seek guidance and assistance. Students can also seek help from SCC Student Services: Disability Services, Retention Specialist, TRIO Student Support, CAPS, and Tutoring. Information regarding these services can be found in

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

- All graded course work, unless otherwise specified, must be completed independently.
- Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing during the program, will receive a zero on the graded course work and be placed on a probationary contract. They will meet with the Program Director and the Dean before signing the contract.

TEMPORARY REMOVAL FROM CLINICAL POLICY

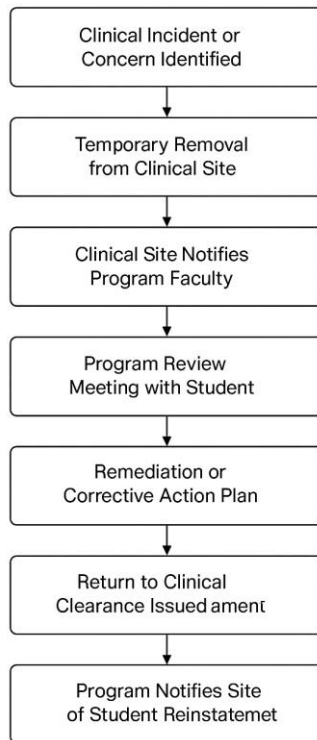
- A student enrolled in the Surgical First Assist program may be temporarily removed from clinical participation at the discretion of the clinical preceptor, site supervisor, or program faculty when the student's behavior, performance, or actions present a risk to patient safety, violate professional 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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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



DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

- 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 First Assist 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 First Assist courses for that term.

RECYCLING

- Students can repeat any course once under the direction of the Program Director if they are unsuccessful in passing the course with the required 75% (C+).
- When recycling, the student will be required to demonstrate skill competency for the previous term with passing scores.
- The testing of the competency will be scheduled by program faculty prior to the end of the term before when the student is seeking to recycle.
- If the student does not pass the skill competency, they will not be permitted to recycle back into the program. Practice to prepare for this skill competency will be allowed without instructor supervision during open lab times.
- It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the program director for a status report related to recycling and to schedule the skill competency demonstration.

READMISSION

- Readmission students are required to re-enter into the next cohort of surgical first assist students admitted to the program. Readmittance into the program is dependent on the maximum number of current students allowed for that term. First term readmission students will need to reapply to the program when the application opens on September 1st.
- Readmission applications will be considered along with all other applications for the next cohort.
- Students can only attempt the program twice.

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

- A grade of incomplete is only considered for students due to extenuating circumstances and in accordance with the college and program incomplete policy. Incompletes are at instructor and program discretion and must be negotiated prior to the end of the term and completed within the timeframe agreed upon in the contract of incomplete. Please refer to the college and program policy and procedures for more information.
- An incomplete is only allowed once per program course.

GRIEVANCE

- The Surgical First Assist Program follows the Southeast Community College grievance policy.
- See the Southeast Community College Catalog for the college grievance policy.

EMERGENCY PREPARDNESS 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 inclement weather, follow the College policy. The college has provided a telephone number for cancellations message by 5:00 a.m. of the day in question. The number is 402-437-2405. This information will also be available on the Hub. Students are encouraged to sign up to receive notifications related to emergency/School cancellations through Regroup on the Hub.
- If inclement weather is on lab days, consult the program director for lab cancellations.
- In the event of inclement weather, outside of the Lincoln area, follow the hospital’s policy for snow-days

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- Continued membership in the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) is highly encouraged after graduation. Each student should be a member of AST before program begins as it is on the admission criteria.
- Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) - The mission of HOSA is to enhance the delivery of compassionate, quality health care by providing opportunities for knowledge, skill and leadership development of all health science education students, therefore, helping the student meet the needs of the health care community. The purpose of the HOSA organization is to develop leadership and technical HOSA skill competencies through a program of motivation, awareness and recognition, which is an integral part of the Health Science Education instructional program. If you have any questions regarding Student Association Groups, please contact Jill Sand at **402-437-2729** or jsand@southeast.edu
- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society - “The purpose of Phi Theta Kappa will be to recognize and encourage scholarship among two-year college students. To achieve this purpose, Phi Theta Kappa will provide opportunity for the development of leadership and service, for an intellectual climate for exchange of ideas and ideals, for lively fellowship for scholars, and for stimulation of interest in continuing academic excellence.”
 - Alpha Pi Lambda is the PTK chapter on the SCC Lincoln campus. Students with a GPA of 3.5 or above and who have completed 12 credit hours at SCC are eligible for membership. For more information: please call Rachel Mason at 402-437-2630.

GRADUATION

- To graduate from the Surgical First Assist program, the student must fulfill the following requirements:
 - Satisfactory completion of all courses, laboratory, clinical, and program requirements.
 - Completed the general education requirements according to the College Catalog.
 - Submitted a graduation application to Admissions by the second week of the final term of the program. The application must be completed by the student and signed by the Program Director before submission. Failure to submit the application by the second week will result in delayed graduation.
 - Pay the graduation fee following processing of the graduation application to purchase cap & gown if student intends to walk at the graduation ceremony.
 - Postgraduate surveys are administered after graduation. These surveys extremely valuable to our Program and the College as a whole. Prompt attention to this task is greatly appreciated. These surveys will be emailed to

you after graduation. These survey results are an important part of the Program's assessment plan and are required by our National Accreditation agency-ARC/STSA.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAM

- The National CSFA Certification Examination will be offered prior to graduation for all students who can travel to Lincoln to test on campus. For students who live a distance away, the student will the schedule the exam after graduation.
- Upon verification of graduation from the Program Director, each student passing the National Certification Examination will receive the official certification certificate from the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) awarding them with the CSFA credential.
- The exam is administered through PSI. The Exam is given at Southeast Community College for all students who are able to attend. The cost of the exam is included in special fees attached to the Clinical Externship 2 course. More details about the National CSFA Certification Examination will be explained at the beginning of the final term.

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE

- The program may at times accept the student's electronic signature as the legal equivalent of the student's manual signature. This is to accommodate electronic filing of student records.

ELECTRONIC RECORDS PROGRAM

- The Surgical First Assist Program will be using an electronic records program to track clinical experience.
- The electronic records program will allow the student to log both their surgical cases and clinical time.
- Expectations are that the student will enter their cases and clinical time daily, throughout the entirety of the program. This allows the instructor to monitor the clinical experiences on a regular basis.
- Academic integrity is expected with the use of the electronic records program. Falsification of records could mean immediate dismissal from the program.

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- The SCC Surgical First Assist Program must appoint a Program Advisory Committee (PAC), comprised of representatives of the communities of interest as delineated in the CAAHEP Standards Guidelines. The PAC must meet at least annually to monitor the needs and expectations of the program as well as review and assess the established goals and learning domains.
- Members of the PAC must include at least one individual from each of the following delineated areas of interest.
 - Student
 - Program Graduate
 - Program Faculty
 - School Administrator
 - Employer
 - Physician

- Public Member
- Practicing CSFA (Surgical First Assistant)
- Students may be asked to serve as representatives on the Program Advisory Committee. Selected student(s) will participate in discussions regarding program content and are encouraged to provide input at committee meetings.
- See Appendix D for Current PAC Member List

SMOKING, ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES OR SMOKELESS TOBACCO USE POLICY

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

SOCIAL MEDIA STATEMENT

- SCC Health Sciences recognizes that many students choose to participate in social media and networking sites. This includes Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and other websites, blogs and networking sites. Social media is a powerful communication tool that can have significant impacts. It can be positive, fun, and can lead to job opportunities; it can also negatively impact one's reputation and the organizations one represents. You must be mindful anything you post on a social media site may be seen by anyone, including patients, classmates, instructors, and prospective employers. Inappropriate social media postings could form the basis for disciplinary action against you by the College.
- It is the position of the Health Sciences Division all students involved in healthcare have a moral, ethical and legal responsibility to maintain individuals' rights to privacy. HIPAA protects patient privacy and includes individually identifiable information in any form where the information could identify an individual by name, medical condition, demographics or other means. Students are expected to act with integrity and to respect the privacy rights of others. Social media postings regarding patient information constitute a violation of patient confidentiality and HIPAA. Such postings are prohibited and subject a student to discipline, up to and including dismissal from a program. Along these lines, students are reminded to use caution even when sharing locations or commenting on images. Students are directed to not post or share photographs from clinical and laboratory settings. Students must also avoid referencing clinical sites, clinical experiences, patients, and patients' family members on social media sites in any manner that violates the confidentiality of patients or their families. (Reviewed and Approved by Legal 1/10/2017)

APPENDIX A

Surgical First Assist Program Essential Functions

Performance essentials or essential functions are defined as those physical, mental, and psycho-social characteristics that are necessary to meet the demands of the Health Science Division Programs and eventual therapeutic care of patients and all tasks associated with that function.

Becoming a healthcare professional requires the completion of a technical education program that is both intellectually and physically challenging. The purpose of this statement is to articulate the demands of the Health Science Division Programs in a way that allows students to compare their own capabilities against these demands.

There are times when reasonable accommodations can be made in order to assist a student with a disability. Reasonable accommodation does not mean that students with disabilities will be exempt from certain tasks; it does mean that we will work with students with disabilities to determine whether there are ways that we can assist the student toward completion of the tasks.

A student with a disability who wishes reasonable accommodation must request it through the Disability Services provider on campus.

Motor Skills

Physical strength to lift, carry, pull, and guide weights up to 50 pounds

Ability to move about freely and maneuver in small spaces

Tolerate bending, stooping, twisting, sitting, kneeling, standing, squatting or walking for extended (8-12 hour shift) periods of time

Possess fine motor skills

Maintain balance

Agility to respond in an emergency situation

Communication Skills

Process, comprehend and communicate information (verbal and written) effectively, legibly, in a timely manner, in the English language, and with individuals from various social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.

Cognitive/Critical Thinking Skills

Collect, measure, calculate, analyze, interpret, and apply information

Exercise good judgment in a variety of settings

Ability to set priorities and manage time effectively

Interpersonal and Behavioral Skills

Establish and maintain professional working relationships

Apply conflict management and problem-solving strategies

Demonstrate professional, ethical, and legal behavior

Demonstrate appropriate maturity, emotional stability, and empathy to establish effective and harmonious relationships in diverse settings

Demonstrate flexibility and ability to adapt to change

Maintain self-control in potentially stressful environments

Comply with professional standards regardless of circumstance

Sensory Skills

Uses auditory, tactile, olfactory, and visual senses to collect data regarding patient status and provide patient care

APPENDIX B

Current Surgical First Assist Program Curriculum

Surgical First Assist Certificate Fall 2025 Cohort

Surgical First Assist Course Outline

- Fall Semester
 - SUFA 1020 – Fundamentals of Surgical Assisting – Credits: 3
 - SUFA 1050 – Clinical Externship 1 – Credits: 3
- Spring Semester
 - SUFA 1010 – Advanced Surgical Anatomy – Credits: 4
 - SUFA 1060 – Clinical Externship 2 – Credits: 3
- Summer Semester
 - SUFA 1030 – Principles of Surgical Assisting – Credits: 2
 - SUFA 1040 – Bioscience – Credits: 2

Total Certificate Credit Hour Requirement: 17 Hours

Surgical First Assist Certificate Spring 2026 Cohort

Surgical First Assist Course Outline

- Spring Semester
 - SUFA 1010 – Advanced Surgical Anatomy – Credits: 4
 - SUFA 1020 – Fundamentals of Surgical Assisting – Credits: 3
 - SUFA 1050 – Clinical Externship 1 – Credits: 3
- Summer Semester
 - SUFA 1030 – Principles of Surgical Assisting – Credits: 2
 - SUFA 1040 – Bioscience – Credits: 2
 - SUFA 1050 – Clinical Externship 2 – Credits: 3

Total Certificate Credit Hour Requirement: 17 Hours

APPENDIX C

Surgical First Assist Program Special Fees

Special fees will be assessed throughout each term of the Surgical First Assist Program in addition to SCC tuition and fees assessed for the credit hours related to each course. Below is a detailed description of each fee and the courses the fees are attached to. These fees are subject to change and are updated on an annual basis.

COURSE #	COURSE NAME	Dues	Insurance	Supplies	Exams	Drug Test	CBC	Totals
SUFA 1020	Fundamentals of Surgical Assisting			\$57 Suture Pad	\$40 practice exam			\$97
SUFA 1050	CLIN EX 1	\$100 Trajecsys	\$8			\$50	\$45	\$203
SUFA 1060	CLIN EX 2		\$8					\$8
TOTAL		\$100	\$16	\$57	\$40	\$50	\$45	\$308

APPENDIX D

Current PAC Members

ACCREDITATION REVIEW COUNCIL ON EDUCATION IN SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY AND SURGICAL ASSISTING [ARC/STSA] *sponsored by the*
American College of Surgeons [ACS] *and* Association of Surgical Technologists [AST]
in collaboration with the
COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF ALLIED HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS [CAAHEP]

ARC/STSA Program Advisory Committee (PAC) Form

Date: 9/4/2025 via Zoom

Communities of Interest	Name	Place of Employment/Education	Professional Title	Email Address	Phone
Student	Heleena Pettee	CHI Nebraska Heart	CST	heleenapettee@gmail.com	704-999-7146
Graduate	Jody Buchholz	Pender Community Hospital	RN, CST/CSFA	jody.buchholz@pchne.org	712-898-1065
Faculty	Amy Goracke	Southeast Community College	CST/CSFA	agoracke@southeast.edu	402-988-8099
College Administration	Jill Sand	Southeast Community College	Dean, Health Sciences	jsand@southeast.edu	402-437-2729
**Employer	Tammy Strait	CHI St. Elizabeth	BSN, RN, CNOR	tammy.strait@commonspirit.org	402-219-7079
**Physician	Kara Krejci-Reed	Prairie Orthopaedic & Plastic Surgery	DPM	KKrejci@prairie-ortho.com	402-489-4700
Public	Sarah Mota	New Empire Industries/ Lawyer	Director of Operations and General Counsel	sarahaplegate1@gmail.com	308-216-0723
**Credentialed Practicing Surgical Technologist/Assistant*	Kari Nelson	Nebraska Orthopedic Center	CST/CSFA	karikreikemeier@yahoo.com	402-719-5505

*ST programs must appoint a Credentialed Practicing Surgical Technologist; SA programs must appoint a Credentialed Practicing Surgical Assistant.

**Either the employer, physician or practicing surgical technologist (for surgical technology programs)/practicing surgical assistant (for surgical assisting programs) must be employed by one of the program's clinical sites.

Complete 2025 PAC Attendee List

NAME	POSITION	BUSINESS
<u>Sponsoring Institution Administration:</u>		
Jill Sand	Dean, Health Sciences Division	Southeast Community College
<u>Program Faculty ST:</u>		
Casey Glassburner, CST, FAST	Program Director	Southeast Community College
Amy Goracke, CST/CSFA	Faculty	Southeast Community College
Rick Horne, CST	Faculty	Southeast Community College
Castin Martin, CST	Faculty	Southeast Community College
Elliot Wagner, CST	Faculty	Southeast Community College
<u>Instructional Design/Distance Education Representative:</u>		
Amy Rockel	Instructional Designer/Trainer	Southeast Community College
<u>Program Adjunct Faculty ST:</u>		
Jennifer McLaughlin, CST/CSFA	Surgical Technologist/Surgical First Assist/Adjunct Instructor	CHI Health Nebraska Heart
<u>SIS Faculty ST:</u>		
Ashley Bartlett, CST	Surgical Technologist/Adjunct Instructor	Lexington Regional Medical Center
<u>Program Faculty SFA:</u>		
Amy Goracke, CST/CSFA	Program Director	Southeast Community College
<u>Student Representative ST:</u>		
Tamara Penzing	Student	Southeast Community College
Mackenzie Southard	Student	Southeast Community College
<u>Student Representative ST SIS:</u>		
Donnette Van Pelt	Student	Southeast Community College
<u>Public Member:</u>		
John Harris	Public Member	Wahoo High School
Sarah Mota	Public Member	
<u>Physician:</u>		
Kara Krejci, DPM	Podiatrist	Prairie Orthopedic & Plastic Surgery
<u>SIS Site Representative ST:</u>		
Hannah Hild, RN	OR Director	Lexington Regional Medical Center

<u>Employer:</u>		
Laura Dilley, MSN, RN	OR Manager	CHI Health St. Elizabeth
Casie Grubbs, RN	OR Director	MARY LANNING MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE
Hannah Hild, RN	OR Director	Lexington Regional Medical Center
Barb Hines, RN, CNOR, ST	Director of Perioperative Services	Fremont Health Medical Center
Dani Beninghaus, RN	Nurse Manager-West Campus	Bryan Health
Amy Phillips, MSN, RN	OR & Sterile Processing Manager	Columbus Community Hospital
Jamie Prange, RN BSN	Director of Surgical Services, Infection Control & Environmental Services	CHI Health Nebraska Heart
Kathy Spalti-Fucik, BSN, MA, RNFA, CNOR	OR Manager	Nebraska Methodist Hospital
Tammy Strait, RN	Educator for Surgical Services	CHI Health St. Elizabeth Avera St. Anthony's
Linda Rahder, RN	OR Director	Hospital
Paige Beins	OR Director	York General Hospital
Kylie Kasperbauer	Director of Surgical Services	Boone County Health Center
Lena Walton	Outreach Coordinator	Boys Town National Research Hospital
<u>SIS Graduates and Practicing CST:</u>		
Madison Hopkins, CST	Surgical Technologist	Franciscan Healthcare Memorial Hospital
<u>Graduates and Practicing CST:</u>		
Heleena Pettee, CST	Surgical Technologist	CHI-Nebraska Heart
Shannon Wells, CST	Surgical Technologist	York General Hospital