



Plaza College

Surgical Technology

Student Handbook

2024-2025



Plaza College

Surgical Technology

A Message from the Program Director

Dear Surgical Technology Student,

CONGRATULATIONS!

Plaza College welcomes you to our Associate of Applied Science in Surgical Technology program.

The Surgical Technology Associate degree program at Plaza College offers students the opportunity to learn all aspects of aseptic technique. The program offers a blended format, including dynamic lectures, interactive lab training, and participation with real patients during practicum experience. After completing our program and practicum, students will have the opportunity to sit for the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certificate Exam in Surgical Technology - CST Exam.

We encourage you to read and refer to this handbook as it is a useful guide. It aims to foster academic and professional excellence among students and is a supplementary resource to the College Catalog and Student Handbook. It is a beneficial resource for you as you begin and progress through your program, as it outlines information on the curriculum, policies and procedures, and our specific expectations and responsibilities of you as a student in the Surgical Technology program. The information contained within is subject to change, and such changes will be published as they occur.

Plaza College's faculty and staff are dedicated to supporting and encouraging you and answering any questions that may arise during your new journey.

Again, welcome, and congratulations on being accepted into our program.

Best regards,

Nicholas Brown, MSHA, CST
Program Director

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Program Mission, Purpose, Philosophy and Goals

Program Mission

The Surgical Technology program at Plaza College is committed to providing students with a high-quality education that fosters technical excellence, professional integrity, and a dedication to improving healthcare outcomes. Our program prepares entry-level surgical technologists who are competent in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains, ensuring they develop the critical thinking, technical proficiency, and professional attributes necessary for success in the operating room. By equipping graduates with these essential competencies, we aim to strengthen the healthcare workforce, reduce disparities in surgical care, and promote health equity within our communities.

Program Purpose

The AAS Surgical Technology program at Plaza College is designed to prepare students for careers as competent, entry-level surgical technologists in the operating room. The program provides comprehensive training in surgical procedures, aseptic techniques, surgical instrumentation, and patient safety, ensuring graduates can function effectively as part of the surgical team.

Through a balanced approach that integrates cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains, the program equips students with the technical expertise, critical thinking abilities, and professional attributes needed to contribute to safe, efficient, and high-quality surgical care.

Additionally, the program aims to address healthcare workforce shortages and reduce disparities in surgical care by producing highly skilled, ethical, and culturally competent surgical technologists who are prepared to serve diverse patient populations.

Program Philosophy and Goals

Surgical technology integrates principles from the biological, behavioral, and social sciences to ensure compassionate patient-centered, and coordinated care that respects patients' preferences, values, and needs. The goal of the Surgical Technology program at Plaza College is to prepare entry-level Surgical Technologists who are competent in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the profession.

Bloom's Taxonomy recommends several categories in which students learn and demonstrate knowledge in these three domains (cognitive, psychomotor, and affective). Plaza College faculty are committed to expanding and further defining the objectives included, incorporating their own course's distinctive objectives, and evaluating each domain to ensure the student's learning experience is comprehensive.

Cognitive Domain:

- Recall or recognition of knowledge,

- Comprehension, intellectual development,
- Integration of learned concepts and application in new ways.
- Break down content into separate concepts to appraise, associate, and differentiate.
- Combine, solve, categorize, create, and propose new patterns.
- Assess information to appraise, judge, compare, and explain new methodology.

Psychomotor Domain:

- Manipulate materials and equipment.
- Ability to use sensory cues to guide motor activity.
- Readiness to demonstrate motor, mental, and emotional skills.
- Demonstrate skillful motor performance involving complex patterns.
- Display adaptability to various scenarios to fit special requirements.
- Create new patterns to fit a particular problem or need.

Affective Domain:

- Awareness, willingness to listen, select attention, respect for others
- Active participation, attends, willingness to respond, shows satisfaction in responding
- Displays commitment, worth, and value; takes pride in performing tasks
- Prioritizes, resolves, and deescalates conflicts
- Controls behavior, adjust to situations, values people, work ethics, and professional commitment.

The program philosophy emphasizes the role of the learner in society, in the delivery of safe, ethical, and patient-centered care, and in ongoing personal and professional growth through lifelong learning. Faculty believe that surgical technology is a dynamic discipline in which practitioners strive for excellence, integrity, and cultural competence while delivering high-quality care to diverse patient populations across various religions, cultures, and age groups.

Successful surgical outcomes depend not only on technical proficiency but also on the teamwork, communication, and collaboration of the entire surgical team. Providing evidence-based, culturally sensitive care enhances patient safety and ensures the best possible surgical outcomes.

Students in the Surgical Technology program at Plaza College engage in a curriculum that incorporates high-impact learning methodologies and emphasizes patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, and patient safety. This educational approach equips students with the knowledge, skills, and professional attributes needed to minimize patient risk, monitor care outcomes, and contribute to a more equitable healthcare system. The program serves as a foundation for graduates to become competent, adaptable, and ethical surgical technologists in modern healthcare.

The Surgical Technology program at Plaza College strives to:

1. Develop Competent Surgical Technologists

- Ensure graduates demonstrate proficiency in surgical procedures, surgical instrumentation, and aseptic technique to provide safe and effective patient care.

2. **Foster Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills**
 - Train students to anticipate the needs of the surgical team, respond effectively to intraoperative challenges, and apply sound judgment in high-pressure situations.
3. **Promote Ethical and Professional Behavior**
 - Instill a strong sense of integrity, accountability, and adherence to legal, ethical, and professional standards in surgical technology.
4. **Enhance Communication and Teamwork**
 - Develop graduates who can effectively communicate and collaborate with surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists, and other healthcare professionals to ensure optimal patient outcomes.
5. **Support Health Equity and Community Impact**
 - Prepare surgical technologists who contribute to reducing healthcare disparities by delivering high-quality surgical care to diverse patient populations.
6. **Encourage Lifelong Learning and Professional Growth**
 - Inspire graduates to pursue continuing education, professional development, and certification to advance their careers and maintain excellence in surgical technology.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, graduates will have the ability to:

1. **Apply** knowledge of medical terminology, surgical procedures, and anatomy and physiology to the role of the surgical technologist, demonstrating an understanding of their relationship to patient-centered care and surgical outcomes.
2. **Demonstrate** proper aseptic technique, surgical instrumentation, and perioperative skills to assist the surgical team effectively.
3. **Apply** ethical, legal, and professional standards to ensure patient safety, confidentiality, and professionalism in the operating room.
4. **Analyze** surgical procedures to anticipate the needs of the surgical team and respond appropriately to changing intraoperative situations.
5. **Communicate** effectively with the surgical team using clear verbal, nonverbal, and written skills to ensure teamwork and accuracy.
6. **Implement** infection control practices, patient positioning techniques, and intraoperative monitoring to promote optimal patient outcomes.

College Accreditation

Plaza College is an accredited institution and a member of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE or the Commission) www.msche.org. Plaza College's accreditation status is Accreditation Reaffirmed. The Commission's most recent action on the institution's accreditation status in 2023 was to approve the College's substantive change request to include the first Master's in Healthcare Administration leading to the Master of Science (M.S.) degree within the institution's scope of accreditation. MSCHE is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to conduct accreditation and pre-accreditation (candidate status) activities for institutions of higher

education including distance, correspondence education, and direct assessment programs offered at those institutions. The Commission's geographic area of accrediting activities is throughout the United States.

Surgical Technology Program Accreditation

Plaza College is currently pursuing initial accreditation by Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) for the Surgical Technology Program. Applying for accreditation does not guarantee that accreditation will be granted.

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

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About the Surgical Technology Profession

History of Surgical Technology

The profession of surgical technology has evolved significantly due to technological advancements and historical circumstances. In the late 19th century, nurses were the primary assistants in surgical settings, responsible for preparing instruments and even administering anesthesia. However, World War II marked a turning point; technological advances and a shortage of nurses led to the training of corpsmen to assist surgeons. These corpsmen, initially called Operating Room Technicians (ORTs), played roles previously filled only by nurses, such as administering anesthesia and assisting during surgery.

Post-WWII and during the Korean War, the need for specially trained personnel grew. Civilian hospitals began employing former corpsmen, and the role of nurses in the operating room started to shift. By 1965, civilian ORTs began receiving formal training. Organizational developments further professionalized the field. The Association of Operating Room Nurses (AORN) took early steps in standardizing training, which led to the establishment of the Association of Operating Room Technicians (AORT). The first certification exam was administered in 1970, and the profession later became independent with its own professional body, the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST), changing the title of the certified professional to Certified Surgical Technologist (CST).

The profession has undergone dramatic changes, driven by technological advancements, wartime exigencies, and the evolution of healthcare needs and practices. It has moved from an ad hoc role filled by nurses to a specialized and certified field with its own guidelines, responsibilities, and training programs.

Role of the Surgical Technologist

Surgical technologists are integral operating room team members, working with surgeons, anesthesiologists, and circulating nurses. Their primary role is as the "first scrub," responsible for preparing the operating room with sterile instruments, equipment, and supplies. They also assist surgeons in donning gowns and gloves and creating a sterile field around the patient.

During surgery, surgical technologists anticipate the surgeon's needs, pass instruments, and provide necessary supplies like sponges. They are also responsible for maintaining counts of sponges, sharps, and instruments to ensure patient safety. They handle tissue specimens and ensure the sterile field is uncompromised to prevent surgical site infections.

In some cases, surgical technologists may also serve as assistant circulators. In this role, they help transport and position the patient, prepare incision sites, and obtain additional supplies during the procedure. They also assist in post-procedure tasks like applying sterile dressings and transferring the patient to the recovery room. Their roles may vary based on state law and hospital policy.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics for Surgical Technologists is a seminal document that codifies the ethical norms, responsibilities, and professional standards expected of individuals in surgical technology. The original adoption of the Code of Ethics in August 1985 by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) Board of Directors was a significant milestone in the profession's maturation. It demonstrated a collective commitment to integrity, patient care, and professional conduct, thus elevating the profession's status and credibility within the healthcare industry. The updates to the Code of Ethics, first in November 1993 and then in January 2013, reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of the surgical technology field and shifts in societal expectations and advancements in medical technologies and practices.

These revisions ensure that the code remains current and responsive to the changes in the surgical technology landscape, which often involve emerging technologies and increasingly complex surgical procedures, and warrant that the profession continues to adapt and excel in rapidly changing standards of patient care and safety.

CODE OF ETHICS (last update January 2013)

- To maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and patient care.
- To hold in confidence, with respect to the patient's beliefs, all personal matters.
- To respect and protect the patient's legal and moral rights to quality patient care.
- To not knowingly cause injury or any injustice to those entrusted to our care.
- To work with fellow technologists and other professional health groups to promote harmony and unity for better patient care.
- To always follow the principles of asepsis.
- To maintain a high degree of efficiency through continuing education.
- To maintain and practice surgical technology willingly, with pride and dignity.
- To report any unethical conduct or practice to the proper authority.
- Adhere to this Code of Ethics at all times in relation to all members of the healthcare team.

Occupational Risks

Surgical technologists face various occupational risks, including exposure to infectious diseases, bloodborne pathogens, and hazardous chemicals. They may also experience physical strain from long hours of standing, repetitive motions, and lifting heavy equipment. The risk of injury from sharp instruments, such as scalpels and needles, is also present. Additionally, exposure to radiation, particularly in procedures involving X-rays or fluoroscopy, poses a potential health threat.

Professional Credentialing

Students who enroll in the Surgical Technology program are granted the exclusive opportunity to join the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST). This membership offers an array of benefits designed to enhance both academic and professional development in the field of surgical technology. Over the duration of the program, application forms for this membership will be made readily available to students, streamlining the process of becoming part of this esteemed organization.

Association of Surgical Technologists

6 West Dry Creek Circle, Ste. 200

Littleton, CO 80120

P: 800.637.7433

F: 303.694.9169

E: memserv@ast.org

www.ast.org

Certification from the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) is a tangible endorsement of a surgical technologist's competencies, ensuring employers, peers in healthcare, and the public that the individual has met the established national benchmarks for expertise in surgical technology practice. Those who have attained this certification have successfully navigated a comprehensive examination, proving their mastery in various knowledge domains, including surgical procedures, aseptic techniques, and patient care. NBSTSA certification enjoys national recognition, further accentuating its significance as a credible validation of professional competence. *The applications for certification will be distributed during the semester.*

The National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting

6 West Dry Creek Circle, Ste. 100

Littleton, CO 80120

Email: info@arcstsa.org

<https://arcstsa.org/>

www.nbstsa.org

Areas of Employment

Surgical Technologists are healthcare professionals who play an integral role in the surgical unit, assisting surgeons throughout all surgical procedures in the operating room. Their workplaces span hospital operating rooms, birthing rooms, cast rooms, outpatient care units, and central supply divisions. They are also employed in various settings, including clinics and the offices of

ophthalmologists, physicians, and dentists, product innovation, research, laser technology, medical sales, tissue banks, and biomedical engineering. Thanks to their comprehensive educational foundation and specialized clinical expertise, surgical technologists are highly adaptable and find roles in disparate fields. Benefits of this career include competitive salaries and the latitude to choose from various geographical locations for employment.

Program Requirements

Admissions Requirements

The selection of potential candidates for the Surgical Technology program is complex and may take several steps. Students cannot enroll directly into the program, and admission is based on specific criteria, procedures, and policies.

Applicants to the Surgical Technology program must have completed the following prerequisite courses. Courses marked with asterisks* must have been taken within the past 5 years and earned grades of B or better:

- Anatomy and Physiology I with Lab* (4 credits)
- Medical Terminology* (3 credits)
- Academic Writing & Professional Research (3 credits)
- Mathematical Applications (3 credits)

Surgical Tech Program Admissions Process:

1. Complete an Application for Admission
2. Provide documentation of a high school diploma or other official proof of graduation from an institution providing secondary education, or the equivalent of such graduation, as recognized by the State of New York
3. Provide college transcripts for any courses the student is requesting transfer credit
4. Complete financial aid forms
5. An applicant must achieve a minimum score of 18 on the Wonderlic SLE exam.
6. An applicant must achieve the following minimums on the Accuplacer exam involving:
 - Mathematics (230)
 - Writing (235)
 - Reading (250)
7. Applicants must provide two letters of recommendation and a professional resume detailing their work experience.
8. All applicants who meet minimum scores must submit a writing assignment and a personal statement detailing why they want to earn a degree in Surgical Technology. A standardized rubric will be utilized to score candidates on the writing assignment.
9. All applicants who meet minimum scores will be offered an interview with the ST Admissions Committee. The Committee comprises the Director of Admissions, the Director of Enrollment Management, the director of the Surgical Technology Program, and an ST faculty member. Other members may include a General Education/Liberal Arts and

Sciences faculty member or a member of the administration. A standardized rubric will be utilized to score candidates on the interview.

Note: Applying to the program does not warrant entering it since it is highly competitive. Transferred courses from other accredited colleges to be applied toward program requirements are subject to review and approval by the Admissions Department.

Please contact the Admissions Department for more information by stopping by the Admissions office, calling (718) 505-4188, or emailing info@plazacollege.edu.

Program Curriculum

The program's course curriculum leading to the A.A.S. degree is comprised of 68 credits of core liberal arts, sciences coursework, and surgical technology courses. Students who graduate from Plaza College's Surgical Technology Program will be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills in alignment with the established learning domains: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. This holistic approach will provide students with a comprehensive educational experience, focusing on key learning objectives essential for developing the competencies needed to be clinically competent and function as level-I Surgical Technologists.

Course Outline

To graduate from the Surgical Technology Program at Plaza College, students must complete and pass the following coursework sequence.

Course		Semester Credits
	Surgical Technology	
SUR100	Introduction to Surgical Technology	2
SUR101	Introduction to Perioperative Services	5
SUR105	Surgical Procedures I	6
SUR107	Advanced Perioperative Services	3
SUR110	Surgical Procedures II	6
SUR220	Pharmacology and Anesthesia	3
SUR230	Professional Development for the Surgical Technologist	3
	<i>Subtotal</i>	28
	Clinical	
SUR200	Surgical Technology Practicum I	2
SUR201	Surgical Technology Practicum II	3
SUR205	Surgical Technology Practicum III	3
	<i>Subtotal</i>	8
	Liberal Arts and Sciences	
LS6000	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	3
LS6000a	Human Anatomy and Physiology II Lab	1

Course		Semester Credits	
LS196	Microbiology	3	
LS260	Pathophysiology for Allied Health Sciences	3	
LL52	Interpersonal Communications	3	
LA1000	Medical Law and Ethics	3	
[]	Psychology Elective	3	
	<i>Subtotal</i>		19
	<i>Core Program Requirements</i>		55
	<i>Liberal Arts and General Education Requirements*</i>		13
	<i>Total Program Requirements (Credits)</i>		68

Course Descriptions

SUR100 Introduction to Surgical Technology 2 credits

This course offers a general overview and introduction to the profession of surgical technology, historical development, and the practitioner's role. Emphasis will be placed on the scope of practice, professional communication, and responsibilities of the surgical technologist in the context of the organizational structure of healthcare facilities. Legal and ethical obligations. Identification and assessment of different patients' needs revolving around physical, emotional, cultural, spiritual, death, and grief. Recognition of the various types of healthcare organizations, classification of hospital departments, management level, and their effect on health delivery, including understanding procedures for accrediting hospitals and different requirements to maintain the surgical environment free of microorganisms.

SUR101 Introduction to Perioperative Services 5 credits

Students will learn the fundamentals of essential surgical skills necessary for effective functioning within the surgical setting and foster comprehension of the underlying aseptic principles that regulate the surgical technology practice.

SUR105 Surgical Procedures I 6 credits

This course focuses on basic surgical specialties such as General Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecological, Genitourinary, Ophthalmology, Otorhinolaryngology (ENT), and Oral and Maxillofacial (OMFS) procedures, with emphasis on systematic review, pathology, the rationale behind surgical procedures, surgical techniques, specialized instruments, and surgical methodologies. The guiding principles will be consistent with the established best practices and clinical experiences in a hospital environment. The lab portion focuses on honing the student's surgical skills in basic procedures necessary for effective functioning within the surgical setting and fostering comprehension of the underlying aseptic principles that regulate the surgical technology practice.

SUR107 Advanced Perioperative Services 3 credits

It covers the essential knowledge needed to function in the practicum phase and the skills necessary to perform in the first scrub role. The main focus will be principles of hemostasis and emergencies and hazard preparation, wound healing, suturing techniques, diagnostic procedures, specimen handling, minimally invasive, and more. The lab portion focuses on honing the student's surgical

skills in advanced procedures necessary for effective functioning within the surgical setting and fostering comprehension of the underlying aseptic principles that regulate the surgical technology practice.

SUR110 Surgical Procedures II 6 credits

Within this course, students will have the chance to delve into and gain expertise in intricate surgical specialties such as plastic surgery, ophthalmic surgery, vascular surgery, orthopedic surgery, thoracic surgery, cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, and trauma surgery. The emphasis will be on systematic review, pathology, the rationale behind surgical procedures, surgical techniques, specialized instruments, and surgical methodologies. The guiding principles will be consistent with the established best practices and clinical experiences in a hospital environment.

SUR200 Surgical Technology Practicum I 2 credits

This course is designed to provide students with field experience under the care of a cooperating hospital operating room employee and the supervision of Plaza College's Clinical Coordinator and Program Director. The emphasis is placed on the student's demonstration of the proficient application of the basic surgical skills and knowledge acquired from lectures and laboratory practice in previous semesters necessary to participate in surgical procedures while complying with the AST Core Curriculum. The student will spend 8 hours weekly in the hospital, participating in surgeries in various locations; this will facilitate the development of personal and professional skills.

SUR201 Surgical Technology Practicum II 3 credits

This course is designed for the student to participate in all assigned cases working in the primary Surgical Technologist role under the care of a cooperating hospital operating room employee and the supervision of Plaza College's Clinical Coordinator and Program Director. The emphasis is placed on the student's demonstration of the proficient application of the basic surgical skills and knowledge acquired from lectures and laboratory practice in previous semesters necessary to participate in surgical procedures while complying with the AST Core Curriculum. The student will spend 16 hours weekly in the hospital, participating in surgeries in various locations; this will facilitate the development of personal and professional skills.

SUR205 Surgical Technology Practicum III 3 credits

This course is designed for the student to participate in all assigned cases working in the primary Surgical Technologist role under the care of a cooperating hospital operating room employee and the supervision of Plaza College's Clinical Coordinator and Program Director. The emphasis is placed on the student's demonstration of the proficient application of the basic surgical skills and knowledge acquired from lectures and laboratory practice in previous semesters necessary to participate in surgical procedures while complying with the AST Core Curriculum. The student will spend 16 hours weekly in the hospital, participating in surgeries in various locations; this will facilitate the development of personal and professional skills.

SUR220 Pharmacology & Anesthesia 3 credits

This course provides an understanding of the fundamental concepts, mechanisms of action, and clinical applications of drugs in the operating field. This course covers the medications required in surgical procedures, their terminology and abbreviations, classification of drugs, actions, side

effects that may affect the delivery of optimum care of patients, drug interaction, conversion of equivalent units of one system to another, simple math measurements, delivery, dose calculations. Specific attention will be paid to administration techniques, drug dosage, labeling, and aseptic handling. Preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative medications, types of anesthesia, phases, anesthesia adjuncts devices, and complications.

SUR230 Professional Development for the Surgical Technologist 3 credits

Is a capstone course appropriate for students approaching graduation. The course applies various concepts relating to written and oral communication, psychology, and human relations introduced in earlier studies to career planning activities. Students receive special attention in developing job search plans and learning strategies for advancing their careers.

Academic Evaluation Process

Throughout the program, students are assessed using various methods for assessing cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (practical skills), and affective (soft skills) domain learning outcomes. These include formative, diagnostic, and summative assessments.

Formative Assessments: the program uses weekly evaluation activities that aim to improve knowledge and practical skills. Formative assessment is employed to help students identify strengths and weaknesses and focus on areas needing improvement. Assessments include Canvas discussions, homework, one-minute papers, classroom polls, skills checklists, peer assessments, simulation-based self-assessments, video analysis, open lab sessions, scenario-based learning, instructor's observation and feedback, 360-degree feedback, mentoring, reflective practice, and a soft skills checklist.

Diagnostic Assessment: this assessment evaluates the student's existing knowledge. The program will use brief multiple-choice quizzes and one-minute paper assignments for self-assessment. Additionally, simulated practice scenarios and non-graded evaluations will be used for specific skills. Assessment for the affective domain will rely on observation, feedback, mentoring, and a soft skills checklist.

Summative Assessments: the program will conduct a cumulative final exam to evaluate the *cognitive* and *psychomotor domains*. Final exams for lectures and labs carry a high point value. For the cognitive domain, the summative assessment measures the extent of the student learning compared to content standards and learning objectives established at the beginning of this course. For the psychomotor domain, a pass/fail cumulative final lab exit exam is administered to measure the student's proficiency in all practical skills learned throughout the semester to assess student readiness for their practicum experience.

To measure skills in the *affective domain*, a final pass/fail comprehensive rubric evaluates the student's soft skills, comportment, and professional readiness before the clinical experience.

Grade Scale

- The passing grade for all lecture components is **78% (C+)**.
- Practical components such as lab and practicum are pass or fail

Surgical Technology Grade Scale				
Grade Letter	Description	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Points
A	Superior	95	100	4.0
A-	Excellent	90	94	3.7
B+	Very Good	86	89	3.3
B	Good	82	85	3.0
B-	Above Average	80	81	2.7
C+	Acceptable/Pass	78	79	2.5
C	Fail	72	77	2.0
C-		69	71	1.7
D		65	68	1.0
F		0	64	0.0

Program Retention Criteria

1. Receive no less than 78 (C+) in any SUR courses.
2. Students earning less than a 78 “C+” grade in a SUR course may repeat the course once.
3. The minimum grade for the repeated SUR course is “B.”
4. A second grade of less than 78 “C+” in any SUR course will result in dismissal from the Program.
4. Clinical performance must be at a satisfactory level to remain in the program. Students who have failed a course during a clinical semester cannot be readmitted unless they pass qualifying examinations in the previously completed courses and demonstrate knowledge and clinical competency.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from Plaza College Surgical Technology Program, students must *FIRST* complete all **68 credits**, including didactic and clinical competency evaluations, requirements, and capstone assignments, and successfully pass all courses. *SECOND*, upon completing all program requirements, students will be eligible to take the National Certification Exam (CST), administered by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA). The exam is arranged by the program director and hosted at Plaza College. *Students must sit for the exam to graduate.*

Program Policies

Statement of Nondiscrimination

In congruence with Plaza College policies, as stated in the Student Handbook, the Surgical Technology Program maintains a commitment to extending equal opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual preference, age, marital status, national origin, or physical or mental ability in the conduct and operation of its educational programs and activities, including admission and employment, in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,

federal, and other regulations. The College's Title IX officer is *Kalliopi Koutsoutis, Dean of Institutional Research, (718)779-1430 or kkoutsoutis@plazacollege.edu*.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is at the heart of any academic endeavor and is an essential part of the learning process. At Plaza College, students are expected to uphold academic honesty. Students are expected to work individually on assignments; completed work should be the result of the student's own effort. Students should not receive any assistance or communicate in any way with another student while taking an exam. Students are not permitted to submit the same work for more than one course. It is a commitment by all members of the College community not to engage in acts of falsification, misrepresentation, plagiarism (intentional or unintentional), or deception. An infraction of academic honesty is not ethical and is a serious infraction against the College Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of students to refrain from any conduct that may lead to any suspicion of infractions, or aiding others in infractions, of academic honesty.

Infractions of Academic Integrity are as follows:

Plagiarism

- Phrasing or reproducing another person's written or spoken words without complete and proper citation.
- Copying information from an Internet site, or other electronic sources, without complete and proper citation.
- Copying statistics, graphs, charts, and/or facts without acknowledging their source.
- Copying one's own or substantially similar work, produced in connection with one course to fulfill a requirement in another course without prior permission. A student may use the same or substantially the same work for assignments in two or more courses only with written permission from the instructors of all the classes involved.
- Buying, selling, and/or posting on a site accessible to others, or using, without appropriate authorization, any materials intended to be used for assignments.

Cheating

- Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance before, during, or after an academic exercise, assignment or examination (includes but not limited to: unauthorized use of notes, books, electronic devices or other aides).
- Unauthorized collaboration on assignments or examinations.
- Arranging for an examination to be taken by someone other than the intended student.
- Allowing someone else to view one's own exam responses.

Disruptive Campus Behavior

- Failure to comply with instructions or directives given by a professor or College official.

- Interfering with lectures or other academic exercises to the detriment of other students.
- Disruptive behavior for the purpose of protecting or stifling another person's free speech or the free exercise of ideas.

Misrepresentation

- Misrepresenting or falsifying information, data, citations, sources, or other information that is part of an assignment, presentation, or academic exercise.

Theft, damage, or misuse of library resources and/or technology resources

- Taking materials from the library that have not been properly checked out.
- Defacing or damaging library materials.
- Abuse of privileges for using library materials on reserve.
- Displacing or hoarding library materials within the library.
- Unauthorized use of another person's computer, email account or technology privilege.
- Damaging computer equipment.
- Interfering with the College computer network.

Plaza College's Policy on Plagiarism and AI Use

- Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated.
- Plagiarism can result in a failure on projects and tests as well as failing grade in the class overall.
- Plagiarism can also result in expulsion from the college as a whole.
- Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Using the words and/or ideas of another without proper documentation.
 - Using work completed in a previous course to meet the requirements of a current one (without the instructor's permission.)
 - Turning in an essay as your own that was written either wholly or partially by another.

AI Syllabus Statement

Plaza College acknowledges the growing presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in academic and professional settings. The college allows for the following uses of Generative AI tools:

- Brainstorming
- Checking grammar/spelling
- Generating research ideas
- Checking final assignment formatting.

Please note that infractions of academic honesty are cumulative during a student's stay at Plaza College.

Technology Requirements

All Plaza College students must own a laptop that meets LMS and video conferencing standards to ensure full participation in courses that include online learning. Minimum laptop specifications include: (1) Operating System: Windows 10+ or macOS 11+, (2) Processor: Intel i5 or equivalent, (3) RAM: 8GB minimum. Students are also expected to maintain a stable broadband internet connection with a minimum speed of 10 Mbps. A webcam and microphone are also required for Google Meet video conferencing and participation in virtual discussions.

The IT Department provides support and recommendations for students who need assistance ensuring their devices meet technical requirements. The College has partnered with technology providers to offer students discounted purchasing options for laptops and accessories. In emergencies where a student's device becomes unusable, Plaza College has limited loaner laptops available through the IT department. Computers are also available for student use in the Library and Academic Resources Center.

Single Sign-On (SSO) Security Measures: All online applications Plaza College uses are vetted for Single Sign-On (SSO) integration, allowing seamless authentication across multiple platforms using college credentials. SSO enhances security by reducing password fatigue, ensuring a unified authentication experience, and minimizing unauthorized access risks. IT regularly updates security protocols and conducts cybersecurity training for students and faculty to safeguard user data and prevent phishing attempts.

IT Support: The Information Technology Department prides itself on supporting the success of Plaza College and its students by providing timely communications, maintaining technical resources that enhance the learning process, and assisting with any barriers to access. Should you need assistance, there are three levels of support available to you. First, alert your instructor and ask for assistance – they may be able to help with various issues such as submitting assignments, accessing information on your Canvas course page, and other academic needs. Next, the IT Department maintains a Support page on the oncampus.plazacollege.edu portal that provides FAQs, web orientations for a number of student technology needs and tools, and information that may allow you to quickly self-solve issues. Finally, IT Department is always here for you! Should you need assistance, you can stop by the office in person, call the IT Help Desk at 718-505-3502, or submit a Help Desk ticket via the oncampus.plazacollege.edu or plazacollege.edu (IT Support page) websites. The office is open from 8am – 10pm Monday through Thursday, 8am to 5pm on Fridays, and 8am to 4pm on Saturdays.

Professional Behavior

In the Surgical Technology program, we encourage students to embody professional behavior and take responsibility for their actions. We emphasize the importance of demonstrating courtesy toward fellow students and staff members. Developing emotional intelligence and maintaining focus are essential skills that involve managing emotions, staying attentive to tasks, and practicing patience. Professional conduct is characterized by traits such as honesty, trustworthiness, a strong work ethic, effective communication, respect for others, reliability, concern for the well-being of the patient, and punctuality. It's crucial to recognize that your behavior, both on campus and in clinical settings, greatly influences your interactions with healthcare professionals, patients, staff, visitors, peers, and mentors. Consequently, it's important for students to be mindful of their

conduct and consistently exhibit professionalism. Any form of unprofessional behavior, such as the use of foul language, exercising poor judgment, making demeaning remarks, or showing disrespect, will be addressed appropriately, and students might face sanctions.

Communication

Communication between faculty and students is expected to be clear and accurate. Communication is critical in building educational systems and providing high-quality healthcare delivery. Given its fundamental role, it becomes compulsory for students to actively engage with faculty members when encountering challenges, issues, or concerns within the educational environment or the clinical setting.

The IT department maintains Plaza College servers and networks, enabling all users to connect to and use the most cutting-edge technology. While on or off campus, students and faculty can use Google Apps & Email, *MyPortal*, and *eCampus*. Google Apps & Email allows users to communicate using Plaza College email, view the online calendar, and manage and edit documents. *MyPortal* will let users view student accounts, midterm and final grades, financial aid awards, class schedules, and a help desk. *eCampus* allows users to view academic resources and calendars and access Gmail and *MyPortal* from any location. For mobile phone access to *eCampus*, faculty, staff, and students can download the *Plaza College App*. Go to the App Store for Apple iPhones and search "Plaza College." For Android users, go to Google Play and search "Plaza College."

Emergency alerts and announcements are transmitted via *Gmail* and *eCampus*, by text message, and on the college's social media accounts.

Students may contact faculty and the Surgical Technology Program Director via Plaza College email or by calling the college's main switchboard at 718-779-1430 in case of missing class due to an emergency.

Social Media Policy

Students are prohibited from utilizing social media to engage in harassment, threats, insults, defamation, or bullying against any individual or entity, to violate any policies set forth by Plaza College, or to partake in illegal activities including, but not limited to, gambling, identity theft, or various forms of fraud. Posting or storing any content that is obscene, pornographic, defamatory, racially insensitive, excessively violent, or otherwise harmful, harassing, threatening, or objectionable is forbidden. Furthermore, without obtaining written authorization, students must not disclose confidential information related to the College, unpublished strategies, student records, or personal details, including photographs of patients and personnel from the clinical site.

Students are responsible for ensuring that:

- Appropriate security levels are set for their profile
- Any posted pictures or content does not violate HIPAA or FERPA laws
- Appropriate credit is given when posting the work of another
- Defamatory content about the College, its faculty, staff, students, or partners/constituents is not posted or permitted

- Academic material (exams, quizzes, presentations, etc.) is not disseminated through any channel other than those sponsored by the College

Student Testing Policy

Didactics

Plaza College's Surgical Technology Program uses diverse methods to assess academic progress on didactic courses, including multiple-choice questions, diagnostic quizzes, assignments, and chapter exams. A cumulative grade of 78% (C+) is required to advance to the next semester.

Laboratory

Lab grading is a pass/fail. Weekly non-graded assessments are conducted to evaluate students' practical knowledge and progress in a controlled laboratory setting. These assessments involve assigning specific procedures or tasks and evaluating the students' skills, ability to follow safety protocols, and adherence to procedural guidelines through simulated lab exercises.

Practicum

Practicum is a pass/fail course designed to evaluate students during their clinical rotations. Students will be assessed on their practical skills, professionalism, and ability to work independently in a surgical environment, with a focus on cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills. Instructors and supervisors will offer feedback regarding the students' performance to determine if they meet the qualifying criteria and requirements established by the workplace.

Note: Students who exhibit deficiency in their clinical performance may be removed from the clinical site, receive an F grade for the semester, and, depending on the circumstances, face termination from the program.

Make-Up Exam Policy

Students are required to take all their exams at the scheduled times. However, in exceptional circumstances such as personal illness, a court order, or the death of an immediate family member, students may be allowed to take a makeup exam. To be considered for a makeup exam, students must provide verifiable documentation and obtain permission from the Professor and Program Director. The deadline for completing the makeup exam is within one week of the scheduled exam.

Furthermore, students who anticipate missing an exam due to an emergency must communicate in writing to the professor and Program Director in advanced.

Academic Support

At Plaza College, we take the academic success of our students seriously, especially those enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program. To ensure every student's success, the college has implemented proactive measures to identify and support those facing academic challenges. Our academic and career counseling services are available to all students, offering personalized guidance and resources to help them overcome obstacles and stay on track toward their goals.

The evaluation of academic progress in our Surgical Technology Program is comprehensive and dynamic, encompassing both theoretical and practical aspects of the discipline. We aim to assess not just students' knowledge and skills but also to prepare them for the multifaceted demands of a career in surgical technology. Our program is designed to help students acquire the skills and knowledge they need to succeed academically and professionally.

Should you need additional assistance in your courses, please contact the Academic Resources Center (non-Surg Tech core courses), your course faculty, and/or the Surgical Technology Program Director.

Health and Safety Policies

Pregnancy Policy

Plaza College adheres to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 by prohibiting discrimination against students due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. We guarantee that all students have equal educational opportunities and resources and work with them to establish appropriate accommodations individually. If a student believes she is pregnant, she should notify the Program Director and the course faculty immediately. A doctor's letter confirming pregnancy and approving their involvement is necessary to continue participating in lab or clinical tasks within the Surgical Technology Program. To attend lab or clinical courses, pregnant students must obtain documentation from their healthcare provider. While we strive to furnish plausible accommodations, if a student cannot meet all course requirements adequately, they may be advised to withdraw from the program until their pregnancy ends temporarily. To learn more about accommodations for pregnant students, refer to the College Catalog.

Smoking Policy

In compliance with building regulations, smoking or vaping is not permitted anywhere in the building including elevators, lavatories, public stairways, halls and lobbies. In addition, students should move away from the building's front entrance to smoke, as loitering impedes traffic flow. Hospitals, health care agencies and other public places are designated no smoking zones. Students must comply with no smoking policies as outlined by any off-site partner.

Drug Alcohol Policy

Plaza College's drug-free policy on campus requires all students and the administration to comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. Any student found to be non-compliant with the standards outlined in the Plaza College Student Handbook may face disciplinary action. Students are expected to perform all classroom activities safely and efficiently without the use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, marijuana, or prescription medications that impair or make the student unsafe. Suppose faculty observes a student behaving in a manner that is consistent with the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or drugs that impair judgment, affecting either the classroom, clinical, or laboratory setting. In that case, the student will be removed from the educational setting and required to submit to a drug screen. If the behavior is noted in the clinical setting, the student will be removed from patient care. If the behavior is observed in either the

classroom or laboratory setting on campus, the student will be terminated from the program. If students take prescribed medication and appear impaired or unsafe, they may be asked to leave the classroom or clinical site.

Basic Life Support (BLS) and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

It is mandatory before students can attend clinical rotations where patients are present. Surgical Technology students must complete the Healthcare Provider-level BLS and CPR course. Only BLS and CPR courses approved by the American Heart Association (AHA) will be considered. You will need to complete an outside-of-class training session in Basic Cardiac Life Support (BLS) and provide a signed copy of the card issued to you upon completion to the Program Director for placement in your student file. Failure to comply with these policies will result in the inability to enter or continue the program. If a student already has a BCLS card that is due to expire during the program, it is recommended that it will be renewed it so that it is current during the clinical phase of the surgical technology course. BLS and CPR training is certified for a two-year period.

Professional Liability Insurance

The College provides limited group professional liability insurance coverage for all currently enrolled surgical technology students. Information about coverage and current limits of liability may be obtained from the office of the Program Director. Students who desire their professional liability insurance are encouraged to obtain such coverage.

Health Clearances

Each student enrolled in the Surgical Technology program must comply with all medical clearances outlined below to participate in clinical experiences.

Students must understand that clinical affiliates are strict about health clearances, background checks, and drug screenings. Any potential "red flags" that may arise during the background check/health clearance process will prevent them from progressing in the program and participating at a clinical site. Therefore, students need to disclose any relevant information before beginning the program. Plaza College takes the privacy and confidentiality of our students seriously, and all information provided will be kept strictly confidential.

Students should visit www.castlebranch.com and create an account, which will be used to maintain all medical documents, background check results, and drug testing results for the duration of the program. Students are responsible for ensuring compliance with all outlined requirements and addressing any "flagged" issues in *Castlebranch* or as notified by a program administrator.

Drug Testing/Criminal Background Check

Students in the Surgical Technology Program must submit to and pass a urine toxicology screening and criminal background check every six (6) months. These processes are completed through Castlebranch, and all instructions provided must be followed for scheduling appointments, providing appropriate documentation, and completing screenings.

Students may be required submit additional background and drug screening tests throughout the program to meet the requirements of clinical rotation sites and are responsible for the cost of performing the background check.

Students should note that a history of criminal convictions may prevent the student from attending or completing the clinical and experiential requirements of the program or may prevent his or her credentialing in the profession.

Additionally, if a clinical site determines that a student's participation in the rotation would not be in the best interest of the organization based on the results of these screenings, the student may be unable to meet course requirements and remain in the program.

Physical Exam

Students must have a Physical Exam every nine (9) months, including color blindness testing if applicable, every year in the program. The student's private health care provider should complete and sign the provided physical form, which the student will then upload into Castlebranch.

Titers (Bloodwork, not Vaccines!)

Students must have recent titers done for the following:

- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Varicella
- Hep B (HbsAB and HbsAG)
- Hep C Antibody

These titer reports must be uploaded into Castlebranch, and outdated bloodwork will not be accepted.

Immunizations

Students must have immunization records for the following:

- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Varicella
- Hep B Vaccine Series or declination
- TDAP – valid for ten years
- PPD or QuantiFERON
- Flu – completed seasonally

The student must upload these vaccine records into Castlebranch.

COVID -19 Vaccinations

Students must have completed the COVID-19 vaccination series, including the most recent booster. COVID-19 vaccine cards must be uploaded into Castlebranch, and copies must be accessible for facilities upon request.

N95 Fit-Testing

Students are required to be annually fit tested for the N95 respirator.

Medical Expenses

Students who participate in clinical education assume the risk of contracting a disease or incurring bodily injury due to activities in the clinic. Therefore, they are entirely liable for any medical expenses incurred in the clinical setting from any emergency medical treatment. All students are required to provide proof of enrollment in a health insurance plan, either independently or through their parents' or family's plan. By engaging in activities in clinical education environments, students acknowledge and accept the potential risk of experiencing health issues and understand that the College does not take responsibility for any harm that may occur because of their involvement in clinical education activities.

Cohort Advisor

Surgical Technology students can benefit from personalized advising and mentoring from experienced and knowledgeable CST faculty members, including the Program Director, whether you need help with course selection, career planning, or any other aspect of your academic journey in Surgical Technology. We will provide you with the guidance and support you need to succeed in your studies and future career in the surgical field.

For students seeking general academic advisement other than Surgical Technology, please get in touch with the college Academic Advisement Department or the Career Service Department for assistance.

Student Complaint Policy

Academic integrity is an essential aspect of education and professional behavior. It is imperative that every student abide by the rules and regulations set forth by their educational institution. In case of any breach of academic integrity, the school will take punitive action against the student. Academic dishonesty can involve submitting assignments or work that is not the student's own or failing to fulfill academic responsibilities.

The consequences of academic dishonesty can be severe, and students may face various penalties depending on the severity of the offense. For instance, a student may receive a zero for the submitted assignment, fail the course, or be suspended or expelled. It is important to note that all incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Program Director of Surgical Technology, who will maintain records of such cases.

As a result, it is essential for students to uphold academic integrity and to ensure that they submit their work. The College's high standard of academic integrity must be maintained to ensure that

each student is held accountable for their actions. This will prevent academic dishonesty from becoming a pervasive problem in the future.

Students with Disabilities

The College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. If a prospective student who is otherwise qualified requires a reasonable accommodation, he/she should contact the following: Dean Kalli Koutsoutis at Plaza College via email at kkoutsoutis@plazacollege.edu

Technical Standards for Surgical Technology Students

Surgical Technology at Plaza College is a demanding discipline. To excel, students must possess diverse cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor skills, a deep understanding of anatomy and physiology, and the ability to think critically and make quick decisions under pressure. Additionally, surgical technologists must have excellent hand-eye coordination, dexterity, and fine motor skills to assist surgeons in performing delicate procedures with precision. They must also possess strong communication and interpersonal skills to work effectively with surgeons, nurses, and other healthcare professionals in the operating room. Overall, the mastery of these skills is essential for success in the field of surgical technology. Students may not rely on someone else to perform the following technical standards independently.

Gross Motor Skills

To assist surgeons with all necessary procedural needs, the student must possess sufficient motor function to perform essential movements. This includes the ability to precisely move hands and arms, handle and manipulate surgical instruments, maintain a sterile field and environment, and anticipate surgeons' needs during procedures. Additionally, the student must maintain focus and concentration throughout the entire practical training and surgical process during the clinical experience to ensure the safety and well-being of the patient as well as the ability to stand for extended periods.

Sensory Function

To gain comprehensive knowledge, the student must actively participate in various educational aspects such as basic and clinical science courses, laboratory work, and surgical patient care experiences. By doing so, they can better understand their field's theoretical and practical components and develop essential skills that will enable them to provide quality care to patients.

Hearing, Visual and Tactile Skills

Students in the surgical field must possess sufficient auditory, visual, and tactile abilities to assess, monitor, and respond to the needs of the surgical team. They should be able to react promptly to signals, alarms, and other displays indicating immediate needs. They must be able to hear and understand team members' communication through the surgical mask and observe pertinent data in the surgical environment that indicate activity for patient safety. Additionally, they should be able to distinguish signs and indicators to determine sterility and expiration dates. Finally, they must be able to perform the required

skills for participation in the surgical field, including manipulation of surgical needles and assembling complicated equipment.

Communication Skills

All students must possess exceptional communication skills to succeed as surgical team members, as effective communication is crucial in the operating room. Surgical Technology students must be able to communicate in a professional, effective, and sensitive manner with both the surgical team and patients. This includes listening actively, asking relevant questions, and providing clear and concise information. Effective communication is particularly important in the surgical setting, where even the slightest miscommunication can have serious consequences. The student must also empathize with patients experiencing various emotions and physical discomfort. By mastering these communication skills, the student can help ensure that all surgical team members work together effectively and that patients receive the highest quality of care possible.

Behavioral and Social Interactions

Surgical technology students must possess physiological, psychological, and emotional health competencies to succeed academically. It is essential to have a comprehensive set of competencies that contribute to their overall health and well-being. Mental and emotional health is crucial, as students must effectively apply coping mechanisms such as time management, self-management, self-regulating studies, and stress management skills to navigate the demands of academic life. Additionally, emotional health is vital as they must recognize and regulate their emotions and form positive communication with others. By mastering these competencies, students are better equipped to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, make sound decisions, and successfully navigate the school year to achieve their academic goals.

Program Failure and Readmissions Policy

Students achieving a grade of less than 78 “C+” in any lecture course or receiving a failed “F” grade in the lab or any practicum course must apply for readmission in writing no later than the end of the semester in order to be considered to repeat the course. Students must submit an “Intent to Return” letter to the Surgical Technology Program Director outlining what they thought caused them to be unsuccessful and include a plan for success that demonstrates significant changes in how they will approach the course.

Considerations for Readmission

- Readmission is subject to space availability and is not guaranteed.
- The student must have complied with all other program requirements and have no violations of the college or program’s code of conduct.
- It is essential to note that students can only fail **ONCE**, pass the repeated course with a minimum of B+, and pass the lab component with a grade of 100 to be readmitted into the program.

Automatic Withdrawal Policy

Future healthcare professionals are expected to adhere to strict ethical codes. Ethical conduct is crucial not only in a clinical environment but also in the professional mindset. Therefore, the Surgical Technology program at Plaza College has established a comprehensive automatic withdrawal policy to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, faculty, and staff in the educational environment. This policy outlines the criteria that will be used to determine whether a student's behavior or actions pose a threat to themselves or others and whether an automatic withdrawal is necessary.

The following student behaviors may result in dismissal from the program:

- Chronic and excessive absences without a valid documentation.
- Violating the Surgical Technology behavioral policies or Plaza College code of conduct.
- Students who have failed a clinical course and seek readmission must demonstrate their skills to the Program Director before resuming clinical coursework.
- The students must pass the failed course with a minimum grade of “B” or better on the cumulative exam covering didactic and pass the practical components in order to be readmitted into the program.
- Insubordinate, combative, or disrespectful behavior or attitude towards faculty, staff, other students, and personnel at the Health Care facilities, including all hospital representatives.
- Determination of becoming a "direct threat" to a student(s), professor(s), or patient(s) that cannot be mitigated by “reasonable accommodation.”
- Use of profane or vulgar language in classrooms, laboratories, and clinical sites.
- Failure to improve unsafe or incompetent clinical performance after receiving remediation and academic advisement.
- Displaying a lack of soft skills, work ethics, and trustworthiness.
- Any action or neglect that endangers the patient's physical or emotional well-being.
- Unprofessional verbal or non-verbal communication, such as notes, emails, or gestures.
- Unprofessional or conduct that is inconsistent with the surgical technology professional expectations (See Rules of the NYS Board of Regents, Part 29.2, General Provision for Health Professions <https://www.op.nysed.gov/title8/rules-board-regents/part-29>).
- Dishonesty, e.g., stealing from the college or a clinical agency, plagiarism, cheating on examinations (see Policy on Academic Integrity).
- Failure to immediately report any technical error that may compromise the sterile field and endanger the patient's safety to the preceptor, surgical team, or clinical coordinator.
- Use of alcohol, legal or illegal drugs that impair judgment during class or clinical hours.
- Creating or altering documentation, forging a signature, concealing the truth, or providing false information.

Consequences for Policy Violation

Academic integrity is of utmost importance in any educational institution. Any student found to have acted dishonestly in submitting academic assignments or carrying out

academic responsibilities will face serious consequences. These consequences may include receiving a failing grade for the course, a zero for the submitted assignment, or even suspension or expulsion from the College, depending on the severity of the offense(s).

It is important to note that all incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Surgical Technology Program Director and may be retained by the College in the student's records. Students must uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all their educational pursuits.

Lecture, Lab, and Practicum Expectations in Surgical Technology

Plaza College holds its Surgical Technology students at Plaza College to a high standard of engagement and participation in all aspects of their courses. This includes attending and actively participating in lectures, labs, and clinical practicum experiences. Students must follow the outlined policies, which cover various aspects of their academic and clinical experiences, such as attendance, punctuality, dress code, safety protocols, and ethical standards. By adhering to these policies, students can ensure that they receive the necessary training and knowledge to become competent and compassionate Surgical Technologists. Balancing the theoretical with the practical is vital to a comprehensive educational experience in this field.

Attendance and Punctuality

Class participation and student engagement with faculty and among peers will be assessed by the quality and frequency of student interactions in class, as it is a portion of the grading criteria. Chronic absenteeism, such as absences with or without justification, can significantly impact a student's academic performance, leading to lower grades, decreased motivation, and an increased risk of dropping out or failing the course. Therefore, attendance is a crucial aspect of academic success in the Surgical Technology Program, and a standard has been set to ensure students keep up with their studies.

Lecture Attendance Policy

It is essential to promote regular attendance in lecture classes to mitigate the risk of students developing chronic absenteeism. In the event that a student is absent from a single class session, they will receive a **verbal warning** from the professor or program director. Upon reaching two (2) absences, a formal **written warning** will be issued. Subsequently, the student is required to meet with both the Program Director and the Dean of Academics to evaluate their current status and determine their continued eligibility for program participation.

Lab Attendance Policy

Lab practice in Surgical Lab practice in Surgical Technology is crucial in preparing students for the clinical semester. Through simulations that replicate actual events in the operating room, students acquire the surgical skills essential for their practicum semester. Students must attend all lab classes to ensure they are fully qualified and capable of successfully passing and skillfully participating in the clinical.

In the event that a student is absent from a single class session, they will receive a **verbal warning** from the professor or program director. Upon reaching two (2) absences, a formal **written warning** will be issued. Subsequently, the student is required to meet with both the Program Director and the Dean of Academics to evaluate their current status and determine their continued eligibility for program participation.

Tardiness Policy

Punctuality is a vital principle in the field of surgical technology and a crucial requirement in the operating room. It is essential to recognize the importance of arriving early for academic sessions to achieve success in this program. Consequently, students who arrive more than five (5) minutes late will be marked as late and will not be permitted to enter the classroom until the instructor has addressed the situation. Two (2) lateness will constitute one (1) absence. Those arriving 15 minutes after class has begun may be sent home at the instructor's discretion – which may also constitute as one (1) absence.

Medical Emergencies Protocol

Students enrolled in the Surgical Technology program are expected to maintain consistent attendance due to the essential hands-on skills and knowledge required in their future professional roles. However, we recognize that unforeseen medical emergencies may impede attendance. This policy aims to support students facing such emergencies while ensuring the integrity and progression of their learning experience.

While medical emergencies are considered valid reasons for absence, extended or repeated absences that impact academic progression may require a review by the program director and dean of academics. This review assesses the student's ability to meet program standards and, if necessary, outlines alternative paths for successful completion.

Definition of Medical Emergency

A "medical emergency" is any sudden illness, injury, or condition that significantly impacts a student's physical or mental ability to participate in classroom activities. This may include hospitalization, acute pain, or severe illness, provided it is supported by appropriate documentation from a licensed medical provider.

Notification and Documentation Requirements

1. **Timely Notification:** In an emergency, students must promptly notify the Professor and Program Director via email. Immediate communication is essential to ensure timely support and assistance.
2. **Medical Documentation:** Students must submit documentation from a licensed healthcare provider on the day following their return. The documentation should:
 - Confirm the necessity of days off
 - Specify the dates of illness impact
 - Include any recommendations for a return-to-school or modified participation plan if applicable.
3. **Confidentiality:** All documentation will be kept confidential and only shared with faculty and staff on a need-to-know basis.

Academic and Student Support

In line with Plaza College's commitment to student welfare and success, students who miss classroom sessions due to a verified medical emergency will not be penalized academically. Faculty will provide support for make-up exams or assignments, recorded lectures (if available), and alternative methods for fulfilling missed requirements where possible.

Practicum Attendance

Students are allowed **one absence** during the course of Clinical Practicum I and **two absences** during Clinical Practicums II and III. All absences should be planned ahead of time and approved by the Clinical Coordinator; documentation may be required to approve the occurrence. Students who experience a serious illness should stay home, consult a medical provider on the day of the absence, and submit medical documentation indicating the absence and return date. Any absences that are in excess of course limits established above will follow the process as described below:

First Occurrence: The Clinical Coordinator will submit an "Incident Report – Final Warning," to the Program Director and the student must meet with the Clinical Coordinator before returning to the clinical site.

Second Occurrence: The Clinical Coordinator will submit a recommendation to the Program Director and Provost for the student's dismissal from the course, resulting in a grade of "F."

Tardiness

Students must arrive at the clinical site by 6:30 AM unless assigned to a later shift. For later shifts, students are still required to arrive 30 minutes prior to the shift start. The Clinical Coordinator will note late arrivals, and points will be deducted from the ST Professional Scoring Rubric. Students arriving late may be dismissed from the clinical day at the discretion of the clinical partner or Plaza College faculty. ****Please note that if a student is dismissed due to tardiness, this will be considered an unplanned absence and will follow the process as outlined above.**

- **Two late arrivals** will count as one unplanned absence, following the **First Occurrence** process outlined above.
- **Third late arrival:** The Clinical Coordinator will submit a recommendation to the Program Director and Provost for the student's dismissal from the course, resulting in a grade of "F."

Religious Observance Days

The Surgical Technology Program at Plaza College respects students' religious beliefs, and in following New York State law, students who are absent because of a documented religious observance will be given the opportunity to make up any academic requirements missed because of such absence. Students must inform faculty about planned religious days off *at the start of each semester*. Students will not be penalized for absences related to religious beliefs because alternative means will be sought to satisfy the academic

requirements. The Surgical Technology Program will make every effort to accommodate religious beliefs and observances of students. However, requested adjustments must be reasonable, made well in advance of the requested day(s) to allow the fulfillment of academic requirements. Absences from class and clinical placements will not be accommodated on those holidays when work is permitted. Absences on days when work is permitted are considered unexcused thus scheduled exams, presentations, clinical hours and other academic or clinical activities cannot be made up.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Mobile phones, electronic gaming devices, recording equipment, audio players, earbuds, headphones, or other devices that create distractions or produce noise must be turned off, in silence mode, or removed while in the classroom, laboratory, or clinical site. If a student is found using any of these devices during class time, they may be asked to leave the classroom. **No texting is allowed during class, lecture, or lab.** Should there be a need to make or receive emergency phone calls, students must step out of the classroom. Exiting the classroom for phone calls or restroom use can interrupt the continuity of the lecture, and as such, re-entry to the class will be at the instructor's discretion.

Uniform and Personal Hygiene

Plaza College requires all students to always wear scrubs and student ID on campus and at the clinical sites. ST students must adhere to the following policies and expectations:

Uniform

- It is mandatory to wear only the official uniform scrubs assigned to the Surgical Technology program for all academic activities, including lecture classes, labs, and clinical sessions.
- It is not allowed to wear any other clothing in place of your scrubs.
- During lab sessions, no long-sleeved shirts can be worn under your top scrub uniform - a thin, solid-color sleeveless shirt or tank top may be worn underneath your scrub top.
- No jewelry or visible piercings are allowed as these are not permitted at clinical sites.
- Uniforms should always be clean, free from wrinkles, and properly maintained.
- Only black leather sneakers or shoes are permitted, clean, and properly maintained, without any lines or emblems.
- No cloth, mesh, or rubber plastic footwear is permitted.
- Any attire that may negatively impact or misrepresent the surgical technology program and school is not permitted.

Note: Students who are non-compliant with the dress code policies will be sent home.

Personal Hygiene

- All students are expected to be well-groomed and non-offensive to others.
- Only non-perfume hygiene products are to be used
- No perfume or cologne in the clinical setting is allowed
- Vaping is not permitted.
- Facial hair should be clean and neatly trimmed or avoided as it may interfere with the fit of the facial mask or n-95 respirator mask if required for clinical rotations.
- Shoulder-length hair should be tied off the collar and pulled back from the face.
- Hair must be natural (no bright colors; pink, purple, blue, green, etc.).
- Fingernails must be short (not longer than fingertips), clean, injury-free, and well-groomed without nail polish, artificial nails, tips, gels, or extensions.
- The use of make-up should be kept to a minimum. No lipstick, gloss, or tinted lip balm are allowed.
- False eyelashes are not permitted.

Dress Code at the Clinical Site

While in the operating room, Surgical Technology students must comply with the Plaza College ST program dress code and policies of the clinical setting.

- No jewelry or visible piercings are allowed at clinical sites.
- A long sleeve, ¾ body-length white lab coat, and appropriate black leather shoes are required.
- Hats, headscarves, and bandanas are not permitted except for religious head coverings; however, they must be covered with approved operating room attire.
- Most clinical sites do not permit skirts within the operating room environment and might be pending clinical site approval. Please consult with academic services or the Program Director before enrolling in the Surgical Technology program.
- Any attire that may negatively impact a client's physical or emotional safety is not permitted.

Assessments and Skills – Lab Competencies

Lab is evaluated in a pass/fail basis, therefore participation in lab practice is essential to preparing for the practicum experience at the clinical site. Students must check off every specific surgical skill before progressing to the practicum semester.

During lab practice, students engage in hands-on surgical simulations that closely mimic the real-life procedures that take place in the operating room. As part of this training, students are evaluated on their ability to apply aseptic techniques and principles, as required by the ST Core Curriculum. These evaluations assess the students' skills associated with the established domains: cognitive, psychomotor and affective, thus ensuring they are fully prepared for their future careers in surgical technology.

Students must gain independence in performing the following competencies:

Cognitive skills

Demonstration of knowledge and application of aseptic techniques and principles, anatomy, basic and advanced surgical procedures, basic health sciences, surgical medication, and medical terminology to the practical setting.

Psychomotor skills

Patient safety relies heavily on the student's capacity to fulfill the following essential performance standards. Each case will be assessed individually to determine whether reasonable accommodations or modifications can be made without compromising patient safety.

SKILLS	STANDARD	EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES
Communication	Proficient communication skills in English, both spoken and written, that allow for clear and effective interaction with others.	Outline procedures, respond to healthcare provider orders, and ensure writing is clear and accurate. Proficiency in computer access skills is also required.
Interpersonal	Interpersonal skills adequate for engaging with individuals, families, and groups from diverse social, emotional, cultural, religious, and intellectual backgrounds.	Establish strong relationships with patients, their families, colleagues, and members of the healthcare team. Maintain effectiveness even in stressful situations.
Motor Skills	Adequate gross and fine motor skills to deliver safe, effective, and proficient care.	Adjust and operate equipment, handling surgical instruments, sutures, and needles. Assemble power tools and manage equipment and devices during emergencies.
Critical Thinking	The capacity for critical thinking is essential for making informed clinical judgments.	Recognize cause-and-effect connections in clinical scenarios, evaluate the situation, and create a plan of action to be completed within a specified time limit.
Mobility	Physical abilities adequate for moving between rooms, moving around tight spaces,	Lifting a minimum of 30 lbs, positioning, and transporting patients is required. Must be able

	navigating staircases, and bending down to pick up items.	to move efficiently to meet the needs of both patients and the surgical team. Participate in patient care during both emergency and non-emergency situations. Full manual dexterity of the upper extremities, including neck and shoulders, is essential, along with unrestricted movement in both lower extremities, back, and hips. The ability to reach the floor and engage in sitting, bending, reaching, walking, and standing throughout most of the workday.
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess the needs of the surgical team.	Respond to signals, alarms, and other indicators of urgent needs. Listen to team members' communication while wearing the surgical mask.
Tactile	Adequate tactile skills necessary for engaging in the precise tasks required in the surgical field.	Carry out essential skills for involvement in the surgical field, such as handling surgical needles and assembling complex equipment.
Visual	Clear vision adequate for observing and evaluating the requirements of the surgical team.	Monitor relevant data within the surgical environment that reflect activity related to patient safety. Identify signs and indicators that establish sterility and expiration dates.

Affective skills

In a surgical technology program, affective skills are often assessed through instructor observations and interaction with professors, peers, operating room personnel, patients, and family. Key components of affective skills assessment include:

1. **Professionalism:** adherence to dress code, punctuality, reliability, and respect for privacy

2. **Communication Skills:** the ability to communicate clearly, respectfully, and effectively with the surgical team, including surgeons, nurses, and other staff, patients, and families.
3. **Cultural Competence:** the ability to effectively interact and communicate with members of diverse communities, languages, and religions without personal biases.
4. **Teamwork and Collaboration:** ability to work cohesively within the surgical team, demonstrating a collaborative spirit, willingness to assist, and respect for others' roles.
5. **Adaptability and Stress Management:** ability to handle stressful or unexpected situations, maintain composure, and adapt to changes in the surgical environment.
6. **Ethical and Legal Responsibility:** student's understanding and practice of ethical and legal standards, including maintaining patient confidentiality, understanding informed consent, and demonstrating integrity in all actions.
7. **Empathy and Patient-Centered Care:** student's commitment to patient well-being and dignity is assessed through their conduct and decisions in the OR, showing a patient-centered approach even if direct patient interaction is minimal.
8. **Initiative and Motivation:** student's engagement in academic learning opportunities, preparedness for assigned tasks, and intrinsic motivation to enhance skills and knowledge.

Evaluation of Learning Objectives

Students' skills progress is assessed weekly to ensure psychomotor and cognitive competencies are adequately developed throughout the semester. The final practical evaluation is the only formal assessment determining whether students pass or fail.

Final lab evaluations are a comprehensive assessment of all skills taught throughout the semester, conducted by the laboratory instructor, clinical coordinator, and program director. Students are assessed based on their understanding of the subject matter and their ability to apply this knowledge in both theoretical and practical surgical settings. Critical infractions such as breaking sterile techniques, safety principles, mishandling sharps, inability to perform basic routines independently, lack of critical thinking, soft skills, and professionalism involving insubordination, lateness, apathy, or initiative will be grounds for automatic failure. Students who meet lab learning objectives with a minimum of a "B" grade will proceed to hospital clinical.

Lab Make-Up Policy

Students must take all lab competencies at their scheduled times. However, exceptional circumstances might be considered by providing a verifiable written excuse demonstrating personal illness, illness of an immediate family member, or a family member's death.

Students may be allowed to take a makeup exam or quiz later after obtaining permission from the instructor. The deadline for completing the makeup exam or quiz should be reasonable and agreed upon by both the student and the professor. Students who anticipate missing an exam due to an emergency must communicate in writing to the professor and Program Director.

Assessments and Skills – Clinical

Performance Evaluation

During the practicum semester, the assessment is based on pass/fail criteria. The onsite nurse educators, preceptors, and clinical coordinator conduct six skills evaluations, which include four skill performance evaluations, a midterm, and a final assessment. The evaluations are performed using observational methods at the clinical site, and grades are drawn from cumulative performance based on daily objectives. The evaluation criteria include direct observation of the student's proficiency in aseptic techniques, interactions with hospital personnel and surgical team members, attitude, motivation, initiative, disposition for learning, quality of patient care delivery, knowledge of procedures, instrumentation, and supplies, attendance and reliability, and level of participation during pre, intra, and post-operative routines. Levels of participation are recognized as 1st scrub and 2nd scrub roles.

Performance observations will be recorded in the Clinical Skills Performance Evaluation (CSPE) forms and carry a point grade. Assessments recorded in the CSPE forms will determine the student's final course grades. To pass a practicum course, the students must score a minimum grade of 78 (C+) or higher.

Clinical Documentation

Students are responsible for weekly managing and submitting clinical documentation, timesheets, and Surgical Case Logs (SCLs), which record all surgical procedures they participate in during their clinical rotation.

A minimum of **120 surgical procedures** from various specialties must be documented through the practicum semesters in order to graduate from the program. As part of the evaluation criteria, students are expected to complete 20 general surgeries in their 1st scrub role, 10 general surgeries in their 2nd scrub role, and 90 cases from other specialties as were performed in the 1st scrub role.

Scrub Role Definitions

First Scrub Role

The student shall perform the following duties with proficiency during any surgical procedure. A student not meeting the five criteria below cannot count the case in the first scrub role, and the case must be documented in the second scrub role or observation role.

- Verifies supplies and equipment needed for the surgical procedure.
- Independently set up the sterile field with instruments, supplies, equipment, medication(s), and solutions needed for the procedure.
- Perform counts with the circulator before the incision is closed.
- Pass instruments and supplies to the surgical team members during the procedure.
- Maintain sterile technique as measured by recognized breaks in technique and demonstrate knowledge of how to correct with appropriate technique.

Second Scrub Role

The second scrub role is assigned to a student who is present at the sterile field but has not yet met all the requirements to be given the first scrub role. However, they are still an active participant in the surgical procedure and can perform various tasks such as:

- Assistance with diagnostic endoscopy and vaginal delivery
- Sponging
- Suctioning
- Cutting suture
- Holding retractors
- Providing camera assistance

Observation Role

The observation role in the operating room is performed by the student who does not meet the criteria for either the first scrub or second scrub role. The student in this role observes a case either in the sterile or non-sterile role. ***These observation cases are not counted towards the required case count, but the student must document them.***

Clinical Policies and Procedures

The practicum or clinical externship is essential to the Surgical Technology Program. It is designed to offer students a comprehensive and hands-on learning experience, allowing them to gain exposure to a wide range of surgical procedures and techniques and to develop the skills and knowledge required for successful practice in Surgical Technology.

Furthermore, students shall not be compensated for the work performed during the completion of clinical rotations. Students will not be substituted for hired staff personnel within the clinical institution in the capacity of a surgical technologist.

Clinical Responsibilities

The clinical experience provides students with hands-on exposure to real-world surgical procedures, enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom to practical scenarios. It aims to equip students with the necessary competencies to function efficiently and safely in the perioperative environment. Students are required to complete no less than a minimum of 120 surgical cases or more in various surgical specialties, including but not limited to general surgery, orthopedics, plastics, gynecology, urology, and thoracic, cardiovascular surgery, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, under the supervision of experienced surgical technologists, surgeons, and perioperative nurses.

Placement Sites

Clinical placement is a crucial part of the Surgical Technology program.

Clinical site placements and assignments are not negotiable. Students are obligated to adhere to applicable policies and procedures of the clinical agencies they are assigned. Students are required to know and comply with all policies and procedures.

The clinical coordinator is responsible for arranging clinical placements for students. Students may be required to travel up to 50 miles each way for a clinical site. Students who decline to report to an assigned clinical rotation site will be deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn from the program.

Clinical Clearance

Students are permitted to begin a clinical placement after the Clinical Coordinator ensures that the student has successfully completed the health clearance process, required background checks, mandatory training, and passed the clinical calculation examination by the stated deadline. Students will not be considered for a clinical placement until they have satisfied all pre-requisites. If a student does not submit all requisite documents required for a clinical placement by the deadline, the clinical placement may not be granted.

Clinical Performance

Plaza College's Surgical Technology program requires students to adhere to high standards of professionalism during clinical experiences.

Attendance, Lateness, and Unexcused Absences

Attending practicum is absolutely *mandatory*. Participating in practicum experience is critical to the success of the Surgical Technology student. Mastering the appropriate surgical techniques takes time and requires full engagement in all surgical procedures throughout the semester. A single missed clinical day may result in the student falling short of the necessary surgical skills and the required surgical cases, which could hinder their ability to graduate. Therefore, it is highly recommended that students prioritize their attendance on all clinical days to ensure they receive the necessary training.

Frequent absences during the practicum can lead to an *Administrative Withdrawal (AW)*. This policy states that SUR 201 and SUR 205 students can have a maximum of TWO (2) absences, while SUR 200 students can have a maximum of ONE unexcused absence.

Practicum Tardiness Policy

It is important to arrive at the healthcare facility by 6:30 am, as room assignments start around 6:40 am. Students must arrive at the clinical site early and be ready to start the shift at 7 am and continue until 3 pm. A student arriving at the clinical at 7 am will be considered late, and a second lateness, the student will be sent home and counted as ONE unexcused absence (refer to the absence policy for details) and placed on probation automatically. Students are encouraged to make ample time to navigate through the morning traffic or commuting delays to anticipate any unforeseen situations.

COVID-19 Protocol

In compliance with the hospital's COVID-19 guidelines, the Surgical Technology Department takes strict measures to ensure the safety of its patients and personnel. If a student contracts COVID-19, it is mandatory to inform the clinical coordinators and the program director immediately in writing. The student must submit valid documentation with positive PCR/rapid test results to be officially excused. Any absence due to COVID will be counted as a single official day off, regardless of the number of days the student needs to quarantine.

Behavior

Unprofessional clinical practice by a student includes behaviors that endanger a patient's safety, such as improper use of equipment leading to falls or lacerations, errors in aseptic technique, performing tasks without proper supervision, and not seeking help when necessary. Such actions can make patients feel threatened or fearful. Unprofessional behavior also encompasses rudeness, misbehavior, insubordination, or poor interactions with instructors, staff, or patients that could harm working relationships or the reputation of the Surgical Technology program or the institution. This includes communication that damages rapport, possibly affecting contracts or violating legal or ethical norms. Violations may result in immediate removal from the clinical site and a review meeting involving the student, clinical coordinator, Program Director, and possibly the Dean of Academics and Provost.

The Surgical Technology Program has a zero-tolerance policy for negative behaviors such as poor attitudes, lack of work ethic, disruptive behavior, or confrontational tendencies. Any student exhibiting such behaviors will receive a failing F grade for practicum and will not be allowed to return to the clinical site.

Expectations

Throughout the clinical semester, students are under constant observation not only by the instructor but also by the OR staff. Students must consistently demonstrate professionalism and appropriate behavior, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Follow the Patient's Bill of Rights, the OSHA Standards of Care, and the Code of Ethics for Surgical Technologists.
- Maintain a professional attitude and behavior when receiving clinical assignments.
- Preparing and implementing the surgical room, reviewing and collecting instrumentation and sterile supplies as needed for each procedure.
- Demonstrate dexterity and safety when passing instrumentation and sharps to the surgical team.
- Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and anticipation skills to assist surgeons with all surgical needs.
- Do not wear hospital scrubs when entering or leaving the healthcare facility.

- Exhibit utmost professionalism and work ethic: arrive early, respect clinical site personnel, professors, and classmates, follow directions, avoid dishonesty, and be truthful, responsible, and accountable.
- Demonstrate consciousness: acknowledge limitations, recognize and report errors before they escalate, prioritize safety, and notify the supervisor if they hinder a clinical task.

Transportation

It is the student's responsibility to arrange for their transportation to and from the clinical site. This involves ensuring that they have a dependable mode of transportation that will enable them to arrive at the hospital facility on time and leave at the end of their shift. It is important to note that some clinical sites may require a commute of up to 3 hours, so students should plan accordingly. Furthermore, students are accountable for any parking fees applicable at the clinical sites.

Confidentiality in the Clinical Setting

While discussing patient situations during clinical conferences, labs, class, or the clinical setting is allowed, using patient names and other identifying information outside the clinical experience is strictly prohibited. Students must be mindful of their conversations and ensure they do not disclose confidential information that could harm the patient's privacy.

Any breach of patient confidentiality violates HIPAA policy and can have serious consequences. Students who fail to maintain the patient's right to confidentiality will receive a course grade of F and will not be permitted to return to the clinical site. Therefore, it is imperative that students understand the importance of patient confidentiality and take all necessary measures to protect it.

Confidentiality is crucial when it comes to snapshots and audio recordings. Unless the clinical site school program and the student make special arrangements, taking photographs and recording audio is strictly prohibited. It is important to note that no recorders or cellular phones are allowed in clinical agencies without authorization.

Universal Precautions

When working in a clinical setting, students must follow standard precautions to ensure their and their patients' safety. These precautions may include wearing personal protective equipment, properly disposing of hazardous materials, and practicing good hygiene. By following these guidelines, students can help prevent the spread of infections and maintain a safe and healthy environment.

Students must report immediately if:

- Exposure to blood, body fluids, or needle sticks occurs.

- Exposure to exudative lesions, weeping dermatitis, or other contagious conditions
- Break physical barriers to anticipate contact with blood and other body fluids to prevent skin or mucous membrane exposure.

Incident Reporting

If a student sustains an injury while participating in a clinical agency experience, it is imperative that they adhere to the hospital's protocol. This may entail being treated at the emergency room or their private physician for examination and treatment. The Clinical Coordinator and the student must complete relevant incident reports for the agency and the Plaza College Surgical Technology Program to ensure the incident is properly documented. Additionally, the student must obtain health clearance from the clinical agency before resuming their practice in the operating room.

If a student experiences any changes in their health status, such as injury, illness, or pregnancy/childbirth, during the semester, they must submit documentation to the Surgical Technology Program. Before returning to the clinical agency, students must receive clearance from a private physician.

Program Resources

Plaza College cultivates an academic environment that promotes collaborative learning, supported by a range of resources, including workshops, career services, and student organizations. These resources are strategically designed to prepare graduates for the challenges and opportunities encountered in the operating room.

The Surgical Technology program at Plaza College is dedicated to providing students with the critical skills and foundational knowledge required for a successful career in the evolving field of surgery. The program places significant emphasis on experiential learning and the practical application of theoretical concepts, facilitated through a comprehensive curriculum that incorporates both theoretical instruction and hands-on experience. The curriculum is supported by a state-of-the-art simulation laboratory that replicates real surgical settings, featuring a high-fidelity surgical simulator, specialized surgical instruments across various specialties, and a comprehensive array of surgical supplies. This setup enables students to practice procedures within a safe and controlled environment.

Students also benefit from extensive library resources, which include both physical and digital collections, as well as advanced virtual reality tools. Available resources encompass essential textbooks, specialized surgical journals, video libraries, interactive virtual reality environments, eBooks, and access to scholarly databases focused on surgical technology. These resources are invaluable for students conducting research and deepening their academic understanding of surgical practices.

Instruction in the program is conducted by seasoned professionals who are certified in surgical technology and actively engaged in the operating room environment. These instructors offer not only technical training but also valuable mentorship, guiding students as they explore complex

concepts. Their feedback and professional insights greatly enrich the educational experience, providing students with a deeper understanding of the surgical field.

During clinical rotations, students are exposed to various surgical environments, benefiting from the mentorship and guidance of experienced surgical personnel and preceptors. This phase of training enables students to collaborate with established surgical teams within hospital surgical units, where they gain hands-on experience across multiple specialties, including orthopedics, cardiovascular surgery, plastic surgery, and neurosurgery. Through these practical applications, students hone and enhance their skills, thoroughly preparing them for their future roles within surgical teams.

CST Testing and Certification

Upon completion of the Surgical Technology coursework, students are eligible to take the national board certification examination conducted by Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP) - PSI and supported by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA).

A semester before completing the program's coursework, students will submit their CST Gold Bundle Exam application and \$247. The Gold Bundle discount package costs include AST Student Membership, Exam Study Guide, Exam Application, and Shipping and Handling. This fee will be paid by the College. The National Board Exam will be held on-campus at a specific time and date, which all eligible students must attend, and will be supervised by an authorized individual from AMP. The exam will take place within 30 days of graduation.

The CST examination is designed to test students' knowledge and skills in a comprehensive manner. It comprises 175 questions, out of which 150 are scored, and the remaining 25 are pretest items used for analysis and statistical evaluation. To help you succeed, the passing score is set at a reasonable level, requiring you to answer a minimum number of questions correctly. Currently, the passing score on the CST examination is 102 out of the 150 scored questions. Students can confidently approach the exam and achieve the desired results with proper preparation and study. All candidates who take the examination typically receive score reports within 10 days. Upon successfully passing the CST exam, students may use the CST initials and renew their certification every two years by completing 30 continuing education credits (CE).

Obtaining the CST credential as a Surgical Technologist indicates that the individual has met the national standard for knowledge essential for surgical technologists' practice. Certification serves to advance in one's career, is a requirement for employment, offers a path to higher pay, and is a source of recognition across the country.

Honors and Recognition

To be considered for semester awards, students must have maintained a high standard of conduct. This includes refraining from actions that violate the Student Code of Conduct, such as academic dishonesty, harassment, or other misconduct. It is essential that students understand the significance of upholding these standards, as it reflects positively on both them and the institution they represent.

- *Trustee's List:* A student is placed on the Trustee's list during a semester in which the student earns a grade-point average between 3.80 and 4.0, while carrying at least 12 college credits and maintaining no less than a B grade in any subject.
- *President's List:* A student is placed on the President's list during a semester in which the student earns a grade-point average between 3.65 and 3.79, while carrying at least 12 college credits and maintaining no less than a B grade in any subject.
- *Dean's List:* A student is placed on the Dean's list during a semester in which the student earns a grade-point average between 3.30 to less than 3.64, while carrying at least 12 college credits and maintaining no less than a B grade in any subject.

Honor Societies

Plaza College has two chapters of national honor societies for the associate degree into which students can earn membership: Alpha Sigma Lambda and Sigma Kappa Delta. Plaza pays students' lifetime membership fees for honor societies. To qualify for honor societies, students must have no instances of violating the Student Code of Conduct. In addition, the requirements for membership in each society are as follows.

- *Alpha Sigma Lambda*, with chapters at over 250 colleges and universities throughout the United States, was established in 1946 to honor superior scholarship and leadership in adult students. The criteria for acceptance to the society requires the candidate to have: (1) a minimum 3.3 grade point average; (2) successful completion of 24 semester credits; (3) successful completion of 12 liberal arts credits; (3) no instances of violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
- *Sigma Kappa Delta* is a nationally recognized Honor Society for achievement in English at the Associate level with chapters on campuses all across the country. The aim of Sigma Kappa Delta is to recognize those students who have achieved a certain level in college English and to promote literacy in both the school and the community. To qualify for membership in Sigma Kappa Delta, a student must hold a minimum G.P.A. of 3.3, have completed 24 college credits, and have earned a B+ or higher in LL254 (Composition and Research) with no instances of violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Graduation/Pinning Ceremony

The Surgical Technology Pinning Ceremony is a prestigious event that honors the exceptional achievements of students who have completed their program coursework. This ceremony is the culmination of the students' hard work, perseverance, and dedication to the surgical technology profession. The Pinning Ceremony is held in the presence of the Surgical Technology Faculty and

Administration and the students' friends and family. During the ceremony, the students are presented with their Surgical Technology pins, which serve as a tangible reminder of their accomplishments and signify their transition into the Surgical Technology profession. The pins themselves are intricately designed and crafted. They feature the emblem of the Surgical Technology program, which represents the students' commitment to providing safe, effective, and compassionate patient care. The pins symbolize the students' newfound knowledge and skills and their passion for lifelong learning. It is a time for the students to celebrate their achievements, reflect on their journey, express gratitude to those who have supported them, and look forward to a bright future. The ceremony is a testament to the student's hard work and dedication and marks the beginning of a new phase in their professional lives.

Handbook Acknowledgment

Surgical Technology, A.A.S.

All students should familiarize themselves with this handbook because it contains important information and guidelines. All policies and procedures printed in the handbook must be read, understood, and followed by students. The application of these policies and procedures will not be waived due to negligence or contradictory information received from other sources. As a complement to the College's Catalog and Student Handbook, this handbook provides additional information and guidelines. Entry into the Surgical Technology Program establishes a contract governed by the policies and procedures outlined in this manual.

I accept terms and conditions of the policies of the Surgical Technology Program contained in this Handbook.

STUDENT'S NAME (PRINT): _____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____