



2026-2027 PROGRAM HANDBOOK

**Surgical Technology
TCAT Murfreesboro
1303 Old Fort Parkway, Murfreesboro, TN 37129**

**Program Director – Shera Wilson
Associate Instructor – Mary Frattalone
Adjunct – Cindy Czerwinski**

2026-2027 PROGRAM HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	
MISSION.....	
ACCREDITATION.....	
WELCOME.....	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE.....	
PROGRAM INFORMATION.....	
DEFINITION OF SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY.....	
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.....	
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.....	
PROGRAM EVALUATION.....	
SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.....	
REQUIRED PHYSICAL SKILLS OF A SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY STUDENT.....	
PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS.....	
PROGRAM OUTLINE.....	
PROGRAM AWARDS.....	
COURSE OVERVIEW.....	
GRADING AND PROGRESS STANDARDS.....	
GRADING STANDARDS.....	
RETENTION STANDARDS.....	
MAKEUP POLICY.....	
STUDENT COUNSELING RECORD.....	
WORKER CHARACTERISTICS.....	
TCAT – MURFREESBORO POLICIES.....	
ATTENDANCE.....	
TARDIES.....	
TBR GENERAL POLICY ON STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS.....	
ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT.....	
ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER USE.....	
DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT.....	
SMOKING.....	
CLASSROOM POLICIES.....	
DRESS CODE.....	
ID BADGE.....	
INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURE.....	
FOOD/DRINK.....	
CELL PHONES.....	
CLASS BREAK TIMES.....	
SLEEPING IN CLASS.....	
CLASSROOM/LAB SPACE MAINTENANCE.....	
ATTITUDE AND CONDUCT.....	
ABSENCE NOTIFICATION.....	
COMPUTER/INTERNET PRIVILEGES.....	
ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM RULES.....	
LAB & CLASSROOM SAFETY POLICY.....	
CLINICAL PERFORMANCE POLICIES.....	
CLINICAL DRESS CODE.....	
CONDUCT CODE AND BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS.....	
CONFIDENTIALITY FOR THE STUDENT.....	
CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION.....	
EMPLOYMENT DURING TRAINING.....	
CLINICAL ATTENDANCE POLICY.....	
CLINICAL PERFORMANCE POLICY.....	
DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING.....	

BACKGROUND CHECK	
HEALTH POLICIES	
STUDENT PROTECTION.....	
INFECTION CONTROL POLICY	
STANDARD PRECAUTIONS.....	
PROTOCOL FOR EMERGENCIES.....	
BLOOD/BODY FLUID EXPOSURE	
CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP	
STUDENT CASE LOGS.....	
SAFETY POLICIES.....	
FIRST AID KIT	
SAFETY	
FIRE PROCEDURES	
TORNADO PROCEDURES.....	

INTRODUCTION

Institution Mission

The mission of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro is to be the leading training provider for workforce development by delivering the best in technical education to our region.

Institution Accreditation

Tennessee College of Applied Technology is accredited by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE). The COE, originally founded in 1971 as a regional accrediting agency of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is the successor to the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (COEI). In 1995, the Council became a national accrediting agency. In 2006, the Council celebrated its 35th year of assuring quality and integrity in career and technical education. The Council's accreditation process is conducted on behalf of more than 181,000 students across the nation who pursue careers in a variety of technical fields.

Program Mission

The mission of the Surgical Technology Program is to provide an educational experience through cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains designed to produce surgical technologists competent at the entry-level position and successfully prepared to take the national certification exam.

Students will sit for the nationally accredited board exam through the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) and gain their credentials as a Tech in Surgery -Certified (TS-C) before graduation.

The program provides the qualified and motivated applicant with a learning opportunity in an environment that is supportive and responsive to their individual needs. Learning experiences are designed to help the student correlate theory with practice under the guidance of qualified faculty and/or preceptors.

We, the faculty, believe that Surgical Technologists are integral members of the surgical team who work closely with surgeons, anesthesiologists, registered nurses, and other surgical personnel delivering patient care and assuming appropriate responsibilities before, during, and after surgery.

Education is an ongoing process of learning. Everyone is afforded the realization of his potential in a changing society enabling him to become progressively self-directed and self-disciplined.

Surgical Technology is a formal, planned program of instruction, which prepares the motivated person to assume his/her own role as a Tech in Surgery-Certified (TS-C), conscious of the need for continued vocational growth. This is achieved through the selected learning experiences progressing from simple to complex, correlating theory with practice, under the guidance of a qualified faculty.

Welcome

Welcome to the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro. Entering the Surgical Technology Program indicates a commitment on your part to enhancing your future. It is the aim of the Surgical Technology Program to assist you in developing into a healthcare professional capable of giving thorough, competent, supportive, and safe care. This is possible

through guidance and instruction of our faculty, combined with your interest and enthusiasm. Our curriculum is designed to meet the requirements established by accreditation agencies per program.

This student handbook provides specific information regarding program requirements, policies, and guidelines for students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program. It is the responsibility of each of you to become thoroughly familiar with all information contained in the handbook.

This handbook plus the official school handbook and other documents your instructor might give you, will guide you through your career at the TCAT Murfreesboro. You are expected to understand and comply with the requirements, policies, and guidelines in this handbook; your signature will attest to your willingness to do so. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor. We are here to assist you!

Best,
Surgical Technology Instructors

Acknowledgement Page

(Please return the completed form to your instructor.)



I have received and read my copy of the Program Handbook in preparation for my course of study at TCAT – Murfreesboro.

The Program Handbook describes important information about TCAT – Murfreesboro. I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the Handbook, I will consult my instructor for clarification.

I will act in accordance with the standards of conduct outlined in this Program Handbook and in the TCAT – Murfreesboro Student Handbook as a condition of my enrollment.

Student's Signature

Student's Name (Print)

Date

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Definition of Surgical Technology

Surgical Technologists are Allied Health Professionals in a paramedical field. The surgical technologist is an integral part of the surgical team who works with qualified professional nurses and physicians in providing care to patients having invasive therapeutic and diagnostic procedures. A surgical technologist possesses expertise in the theory and application of sterile and aseptic technique. The surgical technologist combines the knowledge of human anatomy, surgical procedures, instrumentation, and new technologies to maximize patient safety when assisting the surgeon. As part of the team of medical practitioners, the surgical technologist renders surgical care to the patient in a variety of settings. Duties of the surgical technologist may be performed in operating rooms, ambulatory surgery centers, central supply, labor and delivery areas, cardiac catheterization laboratories, private physicians' offices, and other areas where invasive therapeutic and diagnostic procedures are performed.

Program Description

The Surgical Technology Program trains individuals to prepare the operating room, select and care for instruments, provide technical assistance to the surgeon and nursing team during surgery, and turnover the room after surgery. The program consists of four months of concentrated theory and lab practice, two months of integrated theory and clinical preparation, and six months of clinical practice. Upon successfully completing the program, students will sit for the nationally accredited board exam through the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) and gain their credentials as a Tech in Surgery -Certified (TS-C) before graduation.

Program Objectives

The purpose of the Surgical Technology program is to prepare students with the basic knowledge and technical skills necessary to perform independently as a Surgical Technologist upon completion of the program and to sit for the National Certification Exam. This is achieved by providing a foundation in Surgical Technology of selected learning experiences that are progressive in complexity. Students must demonstrate cognitive, psychomotor, and interpersonal competencies to gain proficiency in entry-level surgical technology skills. Based on this philosophy, upon completion of the course, the graduate will be able to:

- Recognize, respect, and provide for a patient's right to privacy, dignity, and confidentiality.
- Provide a safe, efficient, and supportive environment for the surgical patient, including, but not limited to, following established guidelines and procedures regarding patient care.
- Function efficiently and in a professional manner in all aspects of surgical care, during both routine and special duties and procedures, including the use of appropriate medical terminology.
- Demonstrate knowledge of basic microbiology as it relates to aseptic technique and the prevention of wound healing complications.
- Understand the principles and rationale of aseptic techniques and be able to practice these techniques in the surgical suite.
- Explain the methods and principles of sterilization and disinfection and be able to apply these to aseptic technique.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the proper cleaning, care, and sterilization or disinfection techniques required for surgical instruments, supplies, and equipment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of anatomy and physiology and see the relationship between theory and practice in the diagnosis and treatment of surgical patients.

- Demonstrate knowledge of basic surgical procedures and techniques and be able to identify and manage instruments, drapes, sutures, sponges, and other supplies or equipment as required in these procedures.
- Understand the meaning of pharmacological weights, measures, symbols, and abbreviations and apply knowledge of the actions of pharmacological agents in order to individualize patient care for the patient receiving anesthetic agents.
- Be able to identify emergency situations and use sound judgment in instituting established procedures to respond to emergencies in a calm and efficient manner.
- Demonstrate initiative in expanding knowledge of new surgical procedures and technologies relating to the operating room and the surgical patient.

Program Evaluation

The Surgical Technology Program is evaluated by the following methods:

- Advisory Committee input
- Student Evaluation of Instructor/Program
- Program Evaluation Data Review by School Administration, Tennessee Board of Regents, and the Council on Occupational Education each year
- Alumni and Employer Surveys
- Standardized Testing and Certification test results
- Clinical Evaluations of student performance

Surgical Technology Advisory Committee

The Surgical Technology Program at TCAT Murfreesboro utilizes an advisory committee composed of local area residents who assist in the development and guidance of each individual program. These committee members are chosen because of their expertise in each of the individual fields and their commitment to the role of education.

The functions and responsibilities of the advisory committee to the Surgical Technology staff and faculty are as follows:

- Assist and advise the instructor(s) in development and updating of short and long-range educational goals.
- Provide advice on curriculum development, materials, and training policies to ensure that content is related to employment needs.
- Assist in the evaluation of the Surgical Technology Program.
- Introduce individual programs to the community, employers, and prospective students through public information activities. These may include articles, news releases, speeches, advertisements, and participation in dedicated events and meetings.
- To aid in the process of finding appropriate instructors as the need arises.
- To address the Surgical Technology students, as needed, to inspire and to reach their goals.
- Help provide teaching materials and provide placement opportunities for graduates.

Required Physical Skills of a Surgical Technology Student

- a. Able to walk, stand, bend, stoop, and sit without assistance for long periods of time in one location with minimal food, drink, or restroom breaks.
 - b. Able to lift a minimum of 30 pounds without assistance.
 - c. Able to push/pull equipment weighing up to 300 pounds.
 - d. Able to palpate/handle organs or tissues with gentle accuracy as instructed.
- Visual ability and manual dexterity to load fine suture (11-0) onto a needle holder with or without corrective lenses.

- e. Have sufficient peripheral vision to anticipate and function while in the sterile surgical environment.
- f. Ability to hear and understand muffled communication between team members without visualization of the communicator's mouth/lips and within 20 feet.
- g. Able to communicate and understand fluent English language, both verbally and in writing.
- h. Ability to hear activation/warning signal from surgical equipment.
- i. Able to detect odors sufficiently, to maintain environmental safety and patient needs.
- j. Manipulate instruments and supplies with speed, dexterity, and effective hand-eye coordination.
- k. Able to assist with lifting, moving, positioning, and manipulating the unconscious patient's body and limbs without assistive devices.
- l. To be free of reportable communicable diseases and chemical abuse.
- m. Possess short- and long-term memory sufficient to perform tasks such as, but not limited to, tracking surgical needles, sponges, sharps, and specimens.
- n. Able to make appropriate judgement decisions, quickly.
- o. Demonstrate the use of positive coping skills under stress and calm/effective responses during emergency situations.
- p. Able to maintain personal health and hygiene in accordance with the established guidelines of the healthcare facility assigned to for clinical rotations.
- q. Exhibit positive interpersonal skills during patient, staff, peer, and faculty interactions.

Professional Expectations

Professionalism includes meeting deadlines, not debating assignments, cooperating, and contributing to the class or clinical team environment.

Students are expected to act in a professional manner by striving to improve the following traits:

- r. Attitude: display a positive attitude.
- s. Organization: must maintain organization.
- t. Feedback: receive feedback in a positive manner.
- u. Communication: must have effective communication skills.
- v. Punctuality
- w. Dress professionally.
- x. Teamwork: productive, contributing team member.
- y. Accountability: accountable for one's actions/responsibilities.
- z. Competence & Skills: appropriate for current learning progress.

**Surgical Technology Outline -
Summer Cohort**

Summer Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 0001	Worker Characteristic	6
SGT 1010	Vocational Relations	30
SGT 1020	Medical Terminology	24
SGT 1030	Anatomy & Physiology	84
SGT 1040	Microbiology	36
SGT 1050	Asepsis	36
Total Hours For Trimester		216

Fall Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 0002	Worker Characteristic	6
SGT 1020	Medical Terminology	12
SGT 1030	Anatomy & Physiology	60
SGT 1060	Supplies, Equip, Instrumentation	36
SGT 1070	Technological Sciences	36
SGT 1080	Patient Care	36
SGT 1090	Pharmacology	36
SGT 2010	Basic Procedures	210
Total Hours For Trimester		432

Spring Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 0003	Worker Characteristic	6
SGT 2010	Basic Procedures	54
SGT 2020	Clinical Practicum I	162
SGT 3020	Clinical Practicum II	196
SGT 3010	Advanced Procedures	14
Total Hours For Trimester		432

Summer Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 3010	Advanced Procedures	130
SGT 3020	Clinical Practicum II	86
Total Hours For Trimester		216

**Surgical Technology Outline -
Spring Cohort**

Spring Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 0001	Worker Characteristic	6
SGT 1010	Vocational Relations	30
SGT 1020	Medical Terminology	36
SGT 1030	Anatomy & Physiology	144
SGT 1040	Microbiology	36
SGT 1050	Asepsis	36
SGT 1060	Supplies, Equip, Instrumentation	36
SGT 1070	Technological Sciences	36
SGT 1080	Patient Care	36
SGT 1090	Pharmacology	36
Total Hours For Trimester		432

Summer Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 0002	Worker Characteristic	6
SGT 2010	Basic Procedures	264
SGT 2020	Clinical Practicum I	162
Total Hours For Trimester		432

Fall Trimester		
Course Code	Title	Clock Hours
SGT 0003	Worker Characteristic	6
SGT 3010	Advanced Procedures	144
SGT 3020	Clinical Practicum II	282
Total Hours For Trimester		432

[Summer Surgical Tech Pacing Guide .xlsx](#)

[Spring Surgical Tech Pacing Guide.xlsx](#)

Program Awards

Surgical Technologist Diploma

1296 hours

Course Overview

- **SGT-1010 Vocational/Professional Relations**—explores the relationship of the surgical technologist within the healthcare team and the surgical patients and special populations they will encounter. This Course also looks at the different environments in which Surgical Technologists may work, introduces the concepts of professionalism, ethics, and legal doctrines under which they may be held accountable.
- **SGT-1020 Medical/Surgical Terminology**—Medical Terminology is the language of healthcare. The ST must have a good foundation in the basic components of terminology and be able to build and interpret words based upon his/her growing vocabulary.
- **SGT-1030 Anatomy & Physiology**—This Course investigates the normal structure and function of the human body. This Course, along with Medical Terminology, may extend through two trimesters, as we link normal anatomy and physiology with pathology, or disease processes, which require surgical intervention.
- **SGT-1040 Microbiology**—Explores the relationship between microscopic organisms that live in and around us and their relationship to our health and states of wellness. This Course also discusses the concepts of transmission of disease and precautions taken to prevent that in the healthcare environment.
- **SGT-1050 Principles of Asepsis**—The student will learn the principles of asepsis and sterility and how we apply those to the operating room environment by using sterile techniques. This is the fundamental basis of the Surgical Technologist's practice in the operating room. We will also look at methods of decontamination, cleaning, reprocessing, disinfection, sterilization, and environmental cleaning.
- **SGT-1060 Supplies & Equipment**—Within this Course, the student is introduced to various supplies and equipment that is commonly found and used in the OR including, but not limited to, surgical sponges, syringes, needles, drapes, electrosurgical equipment, pneumatic tourniquets, endoscopic equipment, sutures, stapling devices, and dressings.
- **SGT-1070 Technological Sciences**—The modern OR is equipped and dependent upon computers, lasers, and robots. It is important that the ST understands the scientific principles upon which these machines operate and the basics of each.
- **SGT-1080 Patient Care**—We will discuss those things that we do that provide for the safety and well-being of our patient, such as preparing the patients for the operating room, transporting and proper transfer techniques, correctly identifying the patient, and the verification of the procedure and the correct site, and proper positioning techniques. Also included will be items such as, but not limited to, preparation of the skin, measurement of vital signs, and insertion of urinary catheters.

- **SGT-1090 Pharmacology**—The Surgical Technologist handles a variety of medications and is legally responsible for knowing what those medications are, what they are designed to do, how they are supposed to be given, what the correct dosage would be, and what side effects to watch for in patients receiving the medications. The student is also introduced to anesthesia concepts in this Course: medications, types of anesthesia, equipment needed, etc.
- Lab Basic Skills and Fundamentals
- AHA's BLS for the HCP
- **SGT-2010 Basic Surgical Procedures**—A look at the diagnostic procedures, anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology, supplies and equipment, and the operative techniques involved with the most common procedures in the fundamental specialties of surgery.
 - Introduction and Diagnostic Procedures
 - Abdominal Incisions
 - General Surgery
 - Obstetric and Gynecologic Surgery
 - Genitourinary Surgery
 - Otorhinolaryngology Surgery
 - Ophthalmic Surgery
 - Peripheral Vascular Surgery
 - Orthopedic Surgery
 - Pathophysiology Associated with Specialties Listed Above
- **SGT-2020—Clinical Practicum I**—The student surgical technologist will begin to build upon what they have learned in the classroom and lab by taking those skills and knowledge into the clinical setting. Under the guidance of clinical preceptors, they will begin to take an active “hands-on” role in procedures, receiving instruction and feedback, building their skills and abilities.
- **SGT-3010—Advanced Surgical Procedures**—A look at the diagnostic procedures, anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology, supplies and equipment, and the operative techniques involved with the most common procedures in the more advanced specialties of surgery.
 - Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
 - Plastics / Reconstruction Surgery
 - Thoracic Surgery
 - Cardiac Surgery
 - Neurosurgery
 - Pathophysiology Associated with Specialties Listed Above
 - All Hazards Preparation
 - Employability Skills, Resume Creation, and Entry into the Workplace Preparation

- **SGT-3020—Clinical Practicum II**—the student surgical technologist will continue to build their skills and take on more responsibilities as they prepare to become “entry-level” surgical technologists.

Students must maintain a satisfactory average of 80 for each course to continue.

In addition to the “classroom” component, a large portion of what the Surgical Technology Program focuses on are the skills that it will take for you to become successful—as a team member, as a reliable and valuable employee, and as a Surgical Technologist.

The first and second trimesters, students will spend time in the lab, learning skills and instruments. This is a hands-on, closely monitored time when students are taught the basic skills they will need to know to start out and to build upon. Students will be given a pass/fail grade in lab. At the end of each month, the student must pass each lab skill covered in order to continue.

The second and third trimesters, the students will spend time in the clinical setting. Here they will take what they have learned in the lab and build and expand. They will receive direct verbal feedback from their preceptors and their instructor(s). The instructor(s) will also receive a daily written evaluation from the preceptor and the instructor will average the evaluations for the student’s clinical grade. At the end of each month, the minimum daily average must be 80 to progress.

GRADING AND PROGRESS STANDARDS

Grading Standards for Nursing and Allied Health Programs

Evaluations of student achievement toward a program's identified occupational competencies are recorded for each student at the end of 432 hours of instruction that comprise a term.

Those evaluations shall be based on the following scale of progress:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79 (failing)
D	60-69 (failing)
F	0-59 (failing)

Students will be graded in the following categories:

- Theory/Related Information
 - A theory grade comes from online modules, chapter tests, and course final tests. This information will be expressed in the course outline for each subject. The percentile will be as follows:
 - MindTap Online Modules/Quizzes 10%
 - Chapter Tests 60%
 - Course Final Exam 30%
- Skill Proficiency (Clinical)
 - Skill grades come from lab reviews and instructor evaluation of hands-on activities in the lab and clinical evaluations during clinical externship. Students must continue to satisfactorily complete all required competencies in the lab. Students will be given a pass/fail grade in lab and will be given 3 attempts to pass all skill assessments. If unable to complete the skill in the three attempts, the student is subject to suspension from the program.

A course grade will be determined by averaging the theory and skill grade. If there is only a theory grade, that is the course grade. If there is only a skill grade, that is the course grade.

Students must maintain a satisfactory average of 80 for each course and may be suspended if a final course grade is below 80.

Students will be given a progress report at the end of the trimester. Students are encouraged to keep track of their grades throughout the trimester. Your grades will be documented on D2L. This gives you 24-hour access to your grades. Your instructor will be glad to talk with you about your grades and give you an update on your progress at any point during the trimester.

It is your responsibility to submit all work and/or take all tests. If you are absent, please check your weekly schedule and communicate with your instructor on the day you return regarding missed work and/or tests.

Academically, grades of A, and B are considered satisfactory progress; grades of C, D or F are considered unsatisfactory progress. A student who receives an unsatisfactory academic grade at the end of the term or unit will be suspended from the program due to failure to progress.

Retention Standards

A student who fails during any term to attain a cumulative GPA at or above the level indicated below for the customary clock hours attempted or the average grade per course will be placed on suspension at the end of the term.

Standard:

- Students must maintain a satisfactory average (80) for each unit of the curriculum.

Additional retention standards for specific programs may be established by the college based on accreditation or licensing requirements applicable to a program.

Makeup Policy

Assignments, tests, and comprehensive exams will be given. Assignments, tests, pop tests, and comprehensive exams are to be submitted or taken on the day they are scheduled. If you are absent and not able to turn in an assignment on the day it is due, you must turn it in on the day you return to receive credit. There will be a 5-point deduction per day that an assignment is late up to three days. On the fourth day, a zero is recorded on D2L. If you are absent and miss a test, you must take it on the day you return to receive full credit. The make-up test may be a different exam. After that, there will be a 5-point deduction per day that it is late. The make-up test will be given after school hours, so please make proper arrangements to be here after 2:30 p.m. It is imperative you communicate with your instructor the morning you return to check for possible schedule conflicts. Pop tests may not be made-up. The instructor has the right to negotiate the points' deduction in certain circumstances.

Note: You are required to contact your instructor of any tardy or absence. If you do not, you will receive an automatic zero on any missed assignment(s) and/or test(s). If the test has already opened in D2L, you will not be allowed to begin taking the test.

If a student is not present at the time a comprehensive final exam is given, the student will not be eligible to take the exam later, unless there is an extreme reason for the absence (a severe illness that is documented, death in the immediate family), and the student notifies the instructor of absence. The instructor will determine whether the student may or may not take the exam based on the reason for absence.

Student Counseling Record

His/her instructor will advise a student if there is a problem with his/her progress, attendance, or behavior.

The instructor will initiate any paperwork necessary to document counseling sessions.

If the student is having academic problems in a particular class, the student needs to initiate an appointment with the instructor.

Each time a student is counseled by the instructor, written documentation including recommendations for improvement will be placed in his/her file. The students have the option and are encouraged to write comments prior to signing the counseling record. If improvements are not made as recommended and the student shows no sign of improvement, the student is subject to dismissal.

Worker Characteristics

Worker characteristics measure a student's professionalism in the workplace. The instructor will observe your actions throughout your time in class and give you an evaluation based on the following categories. A number grade will be issued to you at the end of the trimester.

- **Attendance:** Attends class, arrives/leaves on time; notifies the instructor in advance for planned absences
- **Character:** Displays loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, dependability, reliability, initiative, self-discipline, and self-responsibility
- **Teamwork:** Respects the rights of others; respects confidentiality; is a collaborator; is cooperative; displays a customer service attitude; seeks opportunities for continuous learning
- **Appearance:** Displays appropriate dress for the profession (grooming, hygiene, etiquette, uniform)
- **Attitude:** Demonstrates a positive attitude; appears self-confident; has realistic expectations of self
- **Productivity:** Follows safety practices; conserves materials; keeps work area neat and clean; follows directions and procedures; makes up assignments punctually; participates in class
- **Organizational Skills:** Manifests skills in prioritizing and management of time and stress; demonstrates flexibility in handling change.
- **Communication:** Displays appropriate nonverbal (eye contact, body language) and oral (listening, telephone etiquette, grammar) skills
- **Cooperation:** Displays leadership skills; appropriately manages criticism, conflicts, and complaints; demonstrates problem-solving capability; maintains appropriate relationships with supervisors and peers; follows chain of command
- **Respect:** Deals appropriately with cultural/racial diversity; does not engage in harassment of any kind

TCAT – MURFREESBORO POLICIES

Attendance

As stated in the Student Handbook, “The nature of the programs at the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology is such that it is necessary for every student to attend regularly. Excessive interruptions due to absences will have an adverse effect on student progress.”

5.5% Absences – Instructor Counseling and Documentation

- Students who miss 5.5% of their enrolled hours for the term (24 hours for full-time students enrolled in 432 hours) must be formally counseled by their instructor. Absences affect the work ethic grade and could affect financial aid.
- The instructor documents the meeting with a signed attendance counseling form or memo. The student receives a copy, and the instructor retains a copy for his/her records.

9.7% Absences – One-Term Suspension with Appeal Opportunity

- Students who miss 9.7% of their enrolled hours for the term (42 hours for full-time students enrolled in 432 hours) are reported by the instructor to Student Services.
- The Student Services Office notifies the student of the option to (1) accept the one-term suspension or (2) appeal the suspension within three business days of notice. An appeal form is provided to the student.
- Student appeals are forwarded to an Attendance Appeal Committee (appointed by the Vice President of Student Services) for review of the documentation. Only one appeal will be granted within a 12-month period.
- If approved to continue, the student and the instructor are notified via email of the stipulations for approval (e.g., not missing additional classes for the term); if the student fails to meet the stipulations, the instructor notifies Student Services to proceed with suspension. If the initial appeal is not approved and suspension is recommended by the committee, the appeal is then reviewed by the Vice President of Student Services.
- In consultation with the President, the Vice President provides the final decision on suspension to Student Services, so the student and the instructor can be notified via email.

Three-Day No Call/No Show

Students are responsible for notifying their instructor each time they are absent. When a student misses three (3) consecutive days without contacting the college, that student may be presumed to have withdrawn from the college and will be exited from the program.

Tardies

As stated in the Student Handbook, “A student is considered tardy if not in the classroom at the designated time for class to start. Multiple tardies will result in the following discipline.”

5 Tardies – Instructor Counseling and Documentation

- Students who are tardy five times in the term (four times for part-time students) must be formally counseled by their instructor. Further tardies can lead to probation and other sanctions.
- The instructor documents the meeting with a signed tardy counseling form or memo. The student receives a copy, and the instructor retains a copy for his/her records.

6 Tardies – Probation and Student Success Plan

- Students who are tardy six times in the term (five times for part-time students) are reported by the instructor to Student Services.
- The Student Services Office places the student on probation, and the student is required to complete a Student Success Plan with the appropriate Student Services representative.

7 Tardies – Review by Vice President for Possible Suspension

- Students who are tardy seven times in the term (six times for part-time students) are reported by the instructor to Student Services.
- The Student Services Office notifies the Vice President of Student Services for review. In consultation with the President, the Vice President provides the final decision on suspension to Student Services, so the student and the instructor can be notified via email.

Note: Students arriving late to the classroom/clinical site will be charged as follows:

1 to 30 minutes will be counted as 30 minutes.

31 to 60 minutes will be counted as 1 hour.

For the classroom setting, students must contact the instructor by email or TEAMS message prior to 7:30 if you are tardy or absent. If you are leaving early, let your instructor know before you leave, so the instructor may document the correct time you have left for the day.

TBR General Policy on Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions

TCAT – Murfreesboro is governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). Students enrolled in a TBR postsecondary educational institution are citizens of their civic communities as well as the academic community. As such they are expected to conduct themselves as law-abiding members of each community at all times.

Admission to an institution of post-secondary education carries with it special privileges and imposes special responsibilities apart from those rights and duties enjoyed by non-students. In recognition of the special relationship that exists between the institution and the academic community which it seeks to serve, the Tennessee Board of Regents (“TBR” or “the Board”) has authorized the presidents of the institutions under its jurisdiction to take such action as may be necessary to maintain conditions on institution-owned and controlled property and to preserve the integrity of the institution and its educational environment.

Pursuant to this authorization and in fulfillment of its duties to provide a secure and stimulating atmosphere in which individual and academic pursuits may flourish, the Board has developed this policy, which is intended to govern student conduct at the institutions under its jurisdiction.

In addition, students are subject to all federal, state and local laws and ordinances. If a student's violation of such laws or ordinances also adversely affects the institution's pursuit of its educational objectives, an institution may enforce its own policies regardless of the status or outcome of any external proceedings instituted by other civil or criminal authorities.

Students are responsible for compliance with this policy and with institutional policies and regulations.

The policy in its entirety may be found at: <https://policies.tbr.edu/policies/general-policy-student-conduct-disciplinary-sanctions>.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is any action or attempted action designed to provide an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for oneself or others. Academic misconduct includes a wide variety of behaviors such as plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and other academic dishonesty. For purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

- Plagiarism. The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper attribution. Examples include but are not limited to copying passages from works of others into one's own work without acknowledgment; summarizing or paraphrasing ideas from another source without proper attribution, unless such information is recognized as common knowledge; and using facts, statistics graphs, representations, or phrases without proper attribution;
- Cheating. Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or test/examination. Examples include but are not limited to copying another's work; obtaining or giving unauthorized assistance; unauthorized collaboration or collusion with another person; having another person take a test for a student; and the use of unauthorized materials or devices. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours;
- Fabrication. Falsifying, fabricating, or misrepresenting data, research results, citations, or other information in connection with an academic assignment. Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Academic misconduct is prohibited. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly, through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed in accordance with this policy, the instructor has the authority to take academic discipline consistent with institutional policy, procedures, and processes.

An instructor who determines that a student has engaged in academic misconduct may choose to exercise academic discipline by lowering to any extent, including to a grade of “F” or “zero,” a student’s grade in the course, assignment, or examination affected by the alleged academic misconduct.

The policy in its entirety may be found at: <https://policies.tbr.edu/policies/general-policy-student-conduct-disciplinary-sanctions>.

Acceptable Computer Use

All computer use including Internet use must be in support of education and research and appropriate for the assignment. The College is not responsible for a student’s access to any inappropriate material. All students at the College will be taught ethics and acceptable use of the computer system and the Internet. If there is a complaint about inappropriate usage, the instructor will resolve it. If not resolved by the instructor, the President or Vice Presidents will review the complaint. Inappropriate usage may be grounds for suspension or dismissal from the College.

This policy is in conjunction with TBR Policy IT Acceptable Uses 1.08.05.00.

Inappropriate usage includes but is not limited to:

- Using the network or Internet for personal and private matters including electronic mail outside the College.
- Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors including spamming.
- Accessing pornographic or obscene material.
- Accessing confidential material including but not limited to test files and personal/personnel records.
- Destroying, inappropriate deleting or changing, or otherwise damaging hardware or software.
- Downloading and/or installing programs or data files on college computers without the permission of the Instructor.

Removal from Class for Disruptive Conduct

As stated in the TCAT – Murfreesboro Student Handbook, “Students are expected and encouraged to develop proper work habits and to maintain a sincere, cooperative attitude at all times.” This includes:

- actively and routinely participating in all class functions in a timely manner
- coming to class with the necessary tools and equipment required to participate in class activities.
- wearing appropriate attire for the program area and displaying their name tag
- maintaining a respectful and cooperative demeanor at all times with instructors, institutional officials, and classmates

- avoiding inappropriate language or conduct deemed disruptive to the institution's learning environment.
- following all institutional procedures related to absences and tardiness (e.g. arriving to class on time, notifying instructor of planned and unplanned absences, etc.)

Pursuant to Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) policy, students who engage in disruptive conduct or other conduct that violates the TBR's General Policy on Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions 3:02:00:01 may be temporarily removed or excluded from class by the instructor for each class session in which the conduct occurs. Repeated infractions may result in additional disciplinary sanctions.

Smoking

TCAT Murfreesboro's campuses are smoke free. This includes all tobacco and electronic cigarettes, vape products, and smokeless tobacco. Students may only use tobacco products in their personal vehicles.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Dress Code

Appropriate attire must be worn that is representative of what the industry requires in the workplace. Ceil blue solid color scrubs (scrub top and bottom) must be worn daily. A t-shirt, with no visible lettering or imagery, may be worn under the scrub top, but not in place of a scrub top.

See Clinical Performance Policies section for clinical dress code.

ID Badge

Students must always wear their Tennessee College of Applied Technology student photo identification badges while on campus. The badges must be displayed so that they are readily visible. If a student loses his or her student ID badge, the student may request a replacement from Student Services after paying a \$5 fee to the Business Office.

Inclement Weather and School Closure

It is the philosophy of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro that students are being prepared for the workplace. For this reason, the TCAT Murfreesboro normally does not close because of inclement weather, even though public-school classes may be cancelled.

We recognize that inclement weather such as winter ice and snow occasionally make it difficult for students to attend school and clinical.

In the event of snow, ice or other severe weather conditions, students should use their own judgment in deciding whether to travel to school or clinical. When weather conditions are severe, information regarding school closing will be provided to you through the RAVE alert system, which is the rapid notification system we utilize.

Food/Drink

A drink is allowed in the classroom at the instructor's discretion.

Cell Phones

Your cell phones and/or smart watch must be on silent, not vibrate, always and cell phones put away. Cell phones may be utilized at break times only. If you do receive an emergency call, please excuse yourself and go into the hallway to complete the call. If the presence of cell phones becomes a problem, cell phones will be left in cars and not permitted in the classroom.

Class Break Times

Class begins at 7:45am. Students are to be in their seats when the role is taken. Lunch is 11:30-12:15pm.

Sleeping in Class

Students are expected to develop proper work habits and to remain engaged and on task in class. Students are not permitted to sleep in class. Repeated violations may result in the student being sent home for the day.

Classroom/Lab Space Maintenance

Good housekeeping practices should always be followed. Trash must be picked up on site; tools, equipment, etc. should be kept in appropriate places-not on benches, machines, and floors when not in use. As an integral part of instruction, each student is expected to participate in housekeeping and cleanup activities at the conclusion of each day to maintain efficient, high-level training programs. Trash is taken to the dumpster every afternoon. The lab is swept and mopped, and the classroom vacuumed on Fridays.

Attitude and Conduct

You are expected to be cooperative and to demonstrate a professional and respectful attitude at all times. Everyone is encouraged to work as a team. Horseplay, hazing, inappropriate language, and any other behavior deemed inappropriate for this program will be reflected in a reduction of the worker characteristics grade and may be referred to the Vice President of Student Services for progressive disciplinary action.

Absence Notification

If you know in advance that you will be absent, you must notify your instructor. If you do not know in advance that you will be absent, call the instructor as soon as possible. If you leave class before the class is over, you must inform the instructor. Failure to notify the instructor will result in a deduction in your worker characteristic grade.

Computer/Internet Privileges

The classroom computers and internet are provided only as a resource for research and learning. They are not to be misused in the classroom.

Additional Classroom Rules

- Students are expected to:
 - Participate in all aspects of the course.
 - Communicate with the instructor and other students.
 - Keep abreast of course announcements.
 - Use the assigned institutional e-mail address rather than a personal e-mail address for school-related business.
- Unnecessary and unrelated conversations should not occur during lecture or study time.
- Students are responsible for housekeeping in the classroom and lab areas.
- Please observe the 15 MPH speed limit in the parking area. No parking in tow away zones.
- Students are requested to make dependable childcare arrangements, as children are not permitted in classrooms/labs even on inclement weather days.

- All examinations will be posted online through D2L and are proctored on campus. A laptop, notebook or iPad is required for class.
- Students are expected to be alert during class time and responsible for attending all lectures, including videos.
- Students are expected to show respect to peers, classmates, faculty, and staff. Disrespectful behavior, with malicious intent, will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action by the administration.
- Students are expected to notify the instructor when leaving early or coming late.
- Students will be required to obtain or provide documentation of CPR certification through the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross.

Lab & Classroom Safety Policy

Safety issues identified are listed either as 'Injuries' or 'Hazards.'

All students and the instructor are responsible for adhering to the policy as well as identifying other potential injuries or hazards that need to be added for updates to this document. As new and/or different supplies, medications, instruments, and equipment are introduced to each student its' individual safety issues will be addressed.

All open sutures and scalpel blades are to be locked in a designated cabinet in the lab and are to be replaced in said cabinet after use or disposed of in the proper receptacle.

Any accident or injury that occurs on Campus or at a Clinical Site will require the student/s involved completing an Accident/Incident Report within 24 hours of the occurrence at TCAT Murfreesboro and the Clinical Site involved.

Procedures for Avoiding Injuries

Needle-stick Injuries:

- Do not blindly retrieve any item from any area of the Lab.
- Do not recap (re-sheath) needles unless necessary.
- If needle must be recapped (re-sheathed) then use a recapping device/instrument or the one hand method to insert the needle into the cap. Also keep both cap and needle on a flat surface when recapping.
- Use a clamp to handle the needle hub for discarding instead of your fingers.
- If both hands are used to complete the recapping process, then stabilize both hands on a flat surface to restrict hand movement.
- Use a mechanical device whenever possible.
- Discard sharps in the proper bio-hazardous receptacles ONLY.

Puncture Injuries:

- No pointing instruments, sutures, scalpel blades or any other inanimate object at organic tissues, such as the instructor, students, or oneself.
- Instrumentation is to be utilized on simulator modulators only.
- Flip-Flop, Sandals and Open-Toed shoes are NOT allowed in the Lab at ANY time.

Trip or Fall Injuries:

- Keep bags, books, purses, etc... clear of the aisles.
- Keep desk top area free of debris.
- Keep electrical cords flat on floor.
- Unplug electrical cords when not in use from the plug at the wall receptacle not by the cord.

Contamination Hazard:

- Bouffants/head-coverings, masks, safety goggles, gloves, and instruments stay in the Lab or Classroom setting during class hours and are NOT to be worn or taken into the hallways of the facility without instructor permission to do so.

Chemical Hazard:

- Always wear appropriate PPE when performing any task in the Lab and Classroom.
- Wear PPE when using disinfectant during weekly cleaning duties of the Lab and Classroom.
- Wear PPE when using any chemical in the Lab and Classroom.
- Wear scrub suit to class daily (according to policy) to prevent loose clothing damage or contamination from chemicals and/or equipment in the classroom and/or lab setting.

Bodily Injuries:

- Use proper body mechanics for transport, transfer, and patient positioning.
- Ask for additional help for any task that can not be accomplished safely with one individual.
- Use proper body mechanics when lifting, pushing, or pulling any device.
- Hair must not become an obstacle in the Lab/Clinical setting, therefore ALL hair must be contained within the Bouffant/Skull Cap provided in the Lab/Clinical sites.

It is each student's responsibility to follow all safety measures at all times, being very aware that the Lab and the Classroom are environments with multiple sharps and potentially dangerous instrumentation and supplies if utilized inappropriately. Each student is responsible to report any misuse of items within the Lab or Classroom to the instructor immediately.

CLINICAL PERFORMANCE POLICIES

Clinical Dress Code

- Student/clinical ID badge must always be worn.
- Ceil blue solid color scrubs (scrub top and bottom) must be worn daily. A t-shirt, with no visible lettering or imagery, may be worn under the scrub top, but not in place of a scrub top.
- A clean, pressed sweater, jacket or lab coat may be worn over scrubs, if desired. No hoodies or sweatshirts may be worn over scrubs. Some clinical sites may require a white lab coat.
- Moderation and professionalism are the general rules.
- Dress conservatively. NO hair coverings, with the exception of religious or illness reasons. If hair is longer than the shoulders, it must be pulled back to adequately fit into a surgical hair covering.
- Hair must be neat, clean, and arranged away from the face always. Extreme hair fashions or ornaments are not acceptable.
- Facial hair must be neat. Sideburns, beards, and mustaches will only be allowed if kept clean and neatly trimmed close to the face and if allowed by facility. Sideburns must be kept above the earlobe level.
- Personal grooming is allowed at break time and lunch only in the restroom.
- Appropriate hygiene is a must. Smelling clean, having clean hair, brushing your hair, and brushing your teeth every day is a requirement.
- If you smoke, wash your hands after smoking. Make sure you do not smell like a cigarette when you come back in.
- Moderate make-up, perfume, and jewelry are allowed. Jewelry is limited to one pair of post earrings in ear lobes only. No facial and/or tongue piercings are allowed. No false eyelashes are allowed.
- Cell phone must be placed in your locker at the facility and NEVER used in the OR.
- Clean, neatly manicured fingernails that do not extend beyond the end of your finger. Nail polish, gel or dip will not be allowed during clinical rotation. No artificial nails are allowed.
- Clothes should fit properly, be in good condition, be neat (not wrinkled) and clean at all times. Only your arms, feet, neck, and head should be visible from the openings in the scrubs. Shorts, tank tops, short skirts, short dresses, sweatpants, spandex, revealing clothing, including low necklines and short tops (that expose your midsection) are not allowed. Yoga pants or leggings are permitted only when paired with a top that comes to or below your fingertips when arms are at your sides.
- Sandals, flip flops, and open-toed shoes are not allowed during lab time, this includes crocs with the holes in them.
- Shoes should be neat, clean, and always in good condition. Leather shoes that cover the top of the foot are required for clinical.

Students are required to adhere to all policies and procedures in the classroom and clinical settings.

Students may be disciplined by administration for any violation of the dress code in the classroom and/or clinical setting. Violations of the dress code may result in a lower Worker Characteristic grade.

Conduct Code and Behavioral Standards

Students accepted into the Surgical Technology Program are expected to always demonstrate professional behavior and demeanor which include, but not limited to, bathrooms, hallways, break room, parking lot, classroom, clinical sites, and field trips. There are no exceptions. Professional behavior encompasses a broad range of expectations, always including the expectation of trustworthiness and keeping the welfare of others as a priority.

All clinical sites with which this school is affiliated have granted students the privilege of learning in their facilities. Students are expected to always demonstrate professional behavior. This means that each student is individually responsible for his/her actions and, in addition, must abide by the affiliates standard procedures, policies, rules and regulations as outlined by the clinical affiliates. While off-campus during clinical assignments, students are representing the program, profession, and school to the public and community.

VIOLATING THESE STANDARDS COULD LEAD TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION/SUSPENSION

Confidentiality for the Student

Individuals who provide health services and know that they are infected with a communicable disease are ethically and legally obligated to conduct themselves responsibly in accordance with the following protective behaviors:

- Seek medical advice.
- Follow program and/or agency guidelines when clinical assignment makes it necessary to be involved in direct patient care.
- Be knowledgeable about the practice measures to prevent transmission of infectious diseases.
- Obtain the release of a physician to continue direct patient care activities relative to the program of study.
- No specific or detailed information concerning complaints or diagnosis will be provided to instructors, administrators, or even parents, without the expressed written permission of the individual in each case. This position, with respect to health records, is supported by an amendment to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
- Officials and other institutional officers must remember statutes protect all confidential medical/health care information and that any unauthorized disclosure may create legal liability.

Confidentiality of Records and Information

We abide by all HIPAA laws and a student who “breaches confidentiality” in the classroom or clinical setting may be subject to disciplinary action/suspension.

In the process of performing, one’s assigned duty in the health care facility, it is possible to overhear information regarding patients, physicians, and/or personnel, which must be considered confidential. Therefore, you are directed not to discuss, outside the health care facility or even with other health care facility students or personnel, these bits of information. Even casual conversation with other students may be overheard and thereby violates the privacy of others. Be particularly careful about your conversation in elevators, eating places, and other places of assembly within or outside the health care facility.

Any discussion of patient information must be done for the purpose of fulfilling clinical assignments. Anyone who delights in idle conversation about patient care does not show appropriate demeanor for a health-care professional.

Respect the fact that a patient owns the information contained in his/her medical record and that the facility owns the recorded document itself. Therefore, students must not remove original, microfilmed, or photocopied records from the facility’s premises. Any health data that identifies a patient, physician, or health-care provider by name is confidential information.

Confidential information is privileged information that may not be disclosed without proper, written authorization from the patient. Not only is medical information confidential, but also identifying information such as a patient’s age, address on discharge, and the service or medical unit on which the patient was hospitalized. Unauthorized disclosure of health information is a breach of confidentiality punishable by state or federal law. Students who release health information without proper authorization may be dismissed from the program.

During this year, you will have access to Personal Contact Information and/or Photographs of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro, its’ Staff/Instructors/Students, Clinical Affiliates and their respective Staff, and Classmates.

At NO TIME do you have the Right to Share with Anyone or Place said information onto social media (ie, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc...) without the individuals’ explicit verbal or written permission to do so.

Employment During Training

Employment outside of school hours is permissible in the Surgical Technology Program. However, this is the choice of the student. If outside employment interferes with the progress or behavior in the classroom, and/or clinical setting, the student will be sent home, and this absence will be considered as a leave early and can lead to disciplinary actions. If the student is/becomes employed with a clinical site, the student will not be allowed to receive paid compensation during clinical time.

Surgical Technology students WILL NOT be permitted to work 11:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m. (night shift) and then report to a clinical site. If this occurs, the student will be sent home for the day and the total hours deducted.

Clinical Attendance Policy

The nature of the Allied Health programs at TCAT Murfreesboro is such that it is necessary for every student to attend regularly. Excessive absences will have an adverse effect on student progress.

Due to difficulty making and completing assignments in the clinical area, students will be expected to be at the clinical site for the entire duration of the clinical shift. The shift that has been set by the preceptor will be followed by the student, and absenteeism will be documented per the policy for absenteeism.

The TCATM attendance policy states that students are to attend all classes regularly and punctually. During the clinical externship component, concerning both excused and unexcused absences, the student is expected to abide by additional attendance policies. The Allied Health programs have a more stringent attendance policy because of the condensed delivery format, demands of the Allied Health curriculum, and the problems encountered when clinical externship hours are missed. For these reasons, the Allied Health programs have the following policies regarding student attendance:

Definitions

- "Excused Absence" - An absence can be excused ONLY if the student has notified the program office/program faculty member and clinical instructor/preceptor before the scheduled clinical time on the missed day. Excused absences include, but are not limited to, personal illness, illness of an immediate family member, or death of an immediate family member. Excused absences require documentation and will be included in the total absence hours for that term. However, if a student is summoned for jury duty or military duty that Student will not be responsible for missed hours accumulated.
- "Unexcused Absence" - An absence which does not meet the definition of an excused absence or one in which the program office/program faculty member and clinical instructor/preceptor were not contacted before the scheduled clinical time is considered unexcused. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, car trouble, routine doctor appointments, dentist appointments, or childcare issues. Unexcused absences will be included in the total absence hours for that term.

Allied Health Program Policy Regarding Excused Absences

For clinical externship absences, two (2) excused absences will result in a documented with student signature verbal counseling. Three (3) excused absences will result in written counseling. Four (4) excused absences will result in clinical probation. Any additional absence will be referred to the director for possible termination.

Allied Health Program Policy Regarding Unexcused Absences

For all Allied Health clinical externship courses, one unexcused absence will result in written counseling. Two unexcused absences will result in clinical probation.

*Students should be aware that if employment interferes with attendance and participation in clinical externships these absences will be unexcused, and students will be subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

During clinicals, students MUST contact by phone, the clinical site first and Instructor second before the scheduled time if they are going to be tardy or absent. Exceptions to the time requirement may only include situations that occur while in transit to the clinical site, such as a vehicle accident, vehicle malfunction, and family or severe weather-related emergency. Documentation may be required for the exception to be granted. Students MUST also notify the clinical site and Instructor if they are going to leave earlier than the scheduled time. It is not good practice to miss clinical time. This time is crucial to you as it reflects your dependability as a future employee in this profession.

*The first time a student fails to contact by phone, the clinical site first and instructor second (as described in the previous section), the student is placed on clinical probation for the remainder of clinicals. *

It is the student's responsibility to attend all scheduled classes, clinical, laboratory sessions, and conferences.

Clinical Performance Policy

Successful clinical performance is essential to the completion of all Allied Health Programs. Students must successfully complete the preceding trimester and be skill-ready to be eligible for clinicals.

Clinical probation resulting from unsatisfactory performance - A student is placed on clinical probation when a student's performance is unsatisfactory according to the clinical preceptor. The student will be counseled regarding the cause for probation, suggestions for improvements, and the time element for probation length. The information will be documented and signed by all concerned parties and placed in the student's file. If the Student's clinical performance does not improve within the time allowed, the student may be suspended from the program. If the clinical site requests the student be removed from the site due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will be referred to the President of the school for suspension.

For a student on clinical probation, an additional violation of handbook policy, including unsatisfactory clinical performance, may result in suspension from the program

Clinical Area

- Allied Health students are required to purchase liability insurance. Liability insurance will be paid before clinicals.

- It is the student's responsibility to be in the clinical area promptly and in proper uniform.
- Clinical hours are assigned per each clinical site. Any tardy or absence should be reported to the clinical site FIRST and Instructor SECOND before your scheduled time.
- The student should be prepared for the clinical day. Failure to be prepared will result in dismissal for the day and counting this time as an absence.
- At no time will the student do any procedure outside of the scope of their practice.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

Screening prior to clinical experience: Students should be aware that the clinical facilities with which the campus contracts require successful completion of a drug and/or alcohol screen prior to commencement of participation in the clinical site. Testing positive may result in further disciplinary action, including suspension from the program.

Reasonable Suspicion Screening: Students engaged in classroom/clinical activity may be requested to undergo a blood or urine screening for drugs and alcohol if reasonable suspicion exists. Prior to testing, the student will be asked to sign a statement of understanding and consent to drug and/or alcohol screening. A student who refuses to undergo testing will be subject to suspension.

Background Check

All students will be required to have a background check done prior to observing at the clinical site. Clinical contracts require the program to comply with this request. Every student will have the same parameters evaluated for their background check. The parameters for the background check are determined by the clinical contracts. Students are required to provide the instructor with receipt of payment for the background check by the due date set by the instructor. The instructor is required to verify the background check is completed prior to the first day of observation. Students are required to have available the results of the background check at the request of the clinical site, as it is the clinical site that will review the results and determine the ability for the student to be at the site based on the results.

Health Policies

- All illnesses should be reported to the instructor. If a student appears ill or unable to perform duties as assigned, whether in classroom or clinical area, it will be the instructor's discretion to determine if the student should remain in the classroom or clinical area. Dismissal from the classroom or the clinical area may occur as a result of a possible contagious illness; and/or undue influence of prescription medication.

Per TBR and CDC guidance, all staff, students, and guests are strongly recommended to wear a mask inside buildings (classrooms, labs, and public areas) and when social distancing guidelines of 3-6 feet or more cannot be maintained.

Students, faculty, and staff will be encouraged to maintain social distancing (3-6 feet apart) when possible, in labs, classrooms, offices, and public areas.

- If a student is absent for serious illness/injury, the student must present a written statement from his/her physician before returning to the clinical setting stating that the student is physically able to perform the required clinical duties.
- It is recommended that all students maintain their own accident and sickness insurance. School policy recommends all students carry their own medical insurance; however clinical sites require more stringent documentation to verify every student maintains their own medical coverage.
- The clinical facilities will in no way assume workman's compensation liability for students.
- First Aid and supportive treatment will be provided in the event of an accidental injury or sudden illness while on campus or in the clinical facility. Each student is responsible for his/her medical expenses incurred.
- In the event of pregnancy, the student must have written verification from an authorized health care provider stating eligibility to continue in the program. This verification must state that the student can safely perform all duties necessary for the student's training program without limitations or danger to the student's personal health or that of the patient.

Student Protection

The Surgical Technology program will follow the guidelines established in the "Ionizing Radiation Rules" governing radioactive material and electronic product radiation by the Department of Public Health, Division of Radiological Health.

According to the General Provision R325.5205 Dose Limits, Rule 205, the maximum permissible dose equivalent for occupational exposure for fertile women (with respect to fetus) is 0.5 REM in gestation period.

During the gestation period, the student will remove herself from specific radiology areas or situations that could cause her to receive excessive or unnecessary stray radiation during X-ray exposure.

Infection Control Policy

All students must submit documentation to Student Services with:

- Proof of MMR immunity
- Proof of VZV (Chickenpox) immunity

In addition to the above items, clinical sites require:

- Hepatitis B series vaccination, proof of immunity or declination of vaccine
- Two (2) doses of varicella vaccine or proof of immunity

- Proof of negative 2-step TB test, IGRA negative, or normal chest x-ray if skin or IGRA positive
- Pertussis (Tdap) vaccination – one dose
- Influenza vaccination during flu season (Oct. 1 – March 31)

Clinical sites may require more stringent vaccination documentation based upon clinical affiliation agreements.

Covid vaccinations and boosters may be required per the clinical sites depending on their standards at the time of clinical rotations.

If you ever come into contact with one of the infectious diseases listed below, make a note of and report the following to your instructor/preceptor at the clinical site:

- The date, time, and duration of the contact
- The name of the contact (i.e., if patient or classmate)
- The nature of the contact

(Rubella, chickenpox or shingles, any illness with a rash, needlestick or other body fluid contact, potential MRSA contact, infectious material, Covid, and Tuberculosis)

Standard Precautions

Standard Precautions are work practices required for a basic level of infection control. They include good hygiene practices, particularly washing and drying hands before and after patient contact, which may include the use of protective barriers such as gloves, gowns, plastic aprons, masks, eye shields or goggles, appropriate handling, and disposal of sharps and other contaminated or infectious waste, and use of aseptic techniques. Standard precautions are recommended for the treatment and care of all patients, regardless of their perceived infectious status, and in the handling of:

- Blood
- All other body fluids, secretions, and excretions (excluding sweat), regardless of whether they contain visible blood.
- Non-intact skin; and
- Mucous membranes

Standard precautions also apply to dried blood and other body substances, including saliva.

The main goal of following Standard Precautions is to minimize the risk of acquiring blood borne viruses from contact with patients. To make such work practices effective; it must be assumed that all patients are potentially infected with such viruses. To only follow these precautions with those patients who are known to be infected gives a false sense of security and promotes risky work practices.

Confidentiality of these and all student records is a priority. Immunization information will be made available to the clinical site upon request.

Protocol for Emergencies

The supervising faculty, and if appropriate, the clinical personnel, must be notified immediately should a student suffer an injury or illness which requires medical attention. Students are considered guests in the clinical facilities and are therefore responsible for securing and financing any medical treatment required as a result of accidental injury. Students must realize that although medical facilities may offer/suggest treatment within the facility, charges for service will be assumed by the student. All students are individually responsible for obtaining adequate health insurance or for bearing any costs incurred for medical treatment while on campus or in assigned clinical facilities. Students wishing to purchase health insurance through a policy available to TCAT students may contact the Student Services Office for the appropriate forms. Students are strongly encouraged to have adequate health insurance while enrolled in this program of study. Clinical sites require more stringent documentation to verify every student maintains their own medical coverage.

For injuries or health problems which occur during a clinical assignment that require treatment, but are not life threatening, the student should consider the following options:

- Treatment from an independent physician and/or facility of the student's choice at cost to the student.
- Treatment by the emergency department of the clinical facility at cost to the student.

The supervising facility and program office, if appropriate, clinical personnel, must be contacted immediately should a student be responsible for, or involved in, an unusual incident in the clinical area. Examples of such include, but are not limited to:

- Self, patient, staff or visitor injury or potential injury.
- Sharps related injuries.
- Formal complaints lodged against a student.
- Major equipment damage attributed to student misuse.
- Incorrect administration of pharmaceuticals or procedures to a patient
- Contamination of patient or environment
- Any activity which may, or does, result in adverse consequences to patients or personnel.
- Misrepresentation of students' identification, clinical duties, qualifications, or abilities.

The student and clinical instructor must submit a completed report to the program instructor within 24 hours. Additionally, the clinical facility's procedures for dealing with the incident must be strictly followed and the necessary reports completed and properly signed. Disciplinary action may follow based on the individual incident.

Blood/Body Fluid Exposure

This procedure is to be followed if a student is involved in a blood/body fluid exposure incident.

- A clinical instructor or designated supervisor immediately assists the student in cleansing the wound or affected area with soap and water, or irrigating splash area (i.e., eyes, mucus membranes) with normal saline or water. If eyes have been splashed, flush for 15 minutes at eye wash station with wash bottle or saline.

Clinical Externship

The Surgical Technology program provides students with supervised clinical training. Students perform in the clinical area in various health care facilities under the direction of the program instructor(s), according to the terms of the affiliation agreement between the school and the clinical facility. Students may be assigned to work independently but will never be expected to function fully as staff members while in the clinical setting (i.e., the student shall not be substituted for paid staff personnel during the clinical component of the program). Likewise, students will not receive compensation (monetary) for their performance in the clinical setting. Students are not allowed to be in the clinical setting in the scrub role after normal clinical hours.

Student Case Logs

PURPOSE: To establish that the student has met certain minimum standards during their clinical practice:

1. Throughout the complete clinical experience (SGT 2020/SGT-3020), the total number of cases the student must complete is one hundred twenty-five (125).
2. The surgical technology program is to verify through the surgical rotation documentation the students' progression in the First and Second Scrubbing surgical procedures of increased complexity as the student moves towards entry-level graduate abilities.
3. Counting Cases
Cases will be counted according to surgical specialty. Examples:
 - Trauma patients require a splenectomy and repair of a LeFort I fracture. Two cases can be counted and documented since the splenectomy is general surgery and repair of LeFort I is oral-maxillofacial surgical specialty.
 - A mastectomy procedure (general surgery) followed with immediate reconstruction (plastics & reconstruction) are counted as separate cases – two cases.
 - Patient requires a breast biopsy followed by mastectomy. It is one pathology, breast cancer, and the specialty is general surgery; therefore, it is counted and documented as one procedure – one case.
 - Endoscopic cases that convert to an open case (e.g.: Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy converted to an Open Cholecystectomy) are counted and documented as one (1) procedure—one case.

TOTALS Minimum of 125 total cases, at least 90 of which are in *1st scrub.

Minimum 30 scrubs in general surgeries; and a (max:50 general scrubs allowed)

Minimum of 75 scrubs in at least three (3) of the following areas: (you are allowed to select the three (3) areas)

1. Gynecology
2. Genitourinary
3. Cardiovascular
4. Neurosurgery
5. Obstetrics
6. Thoracic
7. Peripheral Vascular
8. Ophthalmology
9. Otorhinolaryngology
10. Plastic/Reconstructive
11. Other (please specify)
12. Orthopedic
13. Diagnostic Scopes (Maximum of 15)

The majority of cases in each category must be completed as 1st scrub.

DEFINITIONS:

First Scrub Role- The student surgical technologist shall perform the following duties during any given surgical procedure WITH PROFICIENCY. The following list is provided to identify the items that must be completed in order to document a case in the “First Scrub” role. A student not meeting these five criteria cannot count the case as “First Scrub” and the case should be documented in the “Second Scrub” role or “Observation” role.

1. Verify supplies and equipment needed for the surgical procedure.
2. Set up the sterile field with instruments, supplies, equipment, medication(s), and solutions needed for the procedure.
3. Perform counts with the circulator prior to the procedure and before the incision is closed.
4. Pass instruments and supplies to the sterile surgical team members during the procedure.
5. 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 defined as the student who is at the sterile field who has not met all criteria for the first scrub role, but actively participates in the surgical procedure in its entirety by completing any of the following:

- Sponging
- Suctioning
- Cutting suture

- Holding retractors
- Manipulating endoscopic camera

Observation Role – The observation role is defined as the student who is in the operating room performing roles that do not meet the criteria for the first or second scrub role. These observation cases are not to be included in the required case count but must be documented by the program.

SAFETY POLICIES

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is available on the wall in the Surgical Technology lab. If you are injured, you should notify the instructor as soon as possible.

Safety

Each individual program instructor will discuss safety in the classroom and occupational setting. After completion of the safety instruction, you will be required to sign a Safety Form, identifying you have been instructed and understand the safety procedures that apply for your individual program.

Fire Procedures

In the event of a fire drill or an actual fire, students should immediately exit the building and report to the back parking lot facing W. Main Street outside.

Tornado Procedures

In the event of a tornado drill or an actual tornado, students should immediately seek shelter in the hallway outside the classroom alongside the Digital Graphic Design classroom wall.