AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Student Handbook

Reviewed/Revised: July 2025

Contents

Welcome Letter from the Program Director

Dear Scholars,

Welcome to the Surgical Technology Program at Augusta Technical College! We are excited to have you join our community of learners dedicated to excellence in surgical care.

Our mission is to provide you with a solid foundation in both theoretical knowledge and hands-on skills essential for success in the surgical technology field. We aim to make your education meaningful by aligning your training with real-world job opportunities—whether you are seeking new employment or advancing in your current role.

As your instructor, I am committed to supporting you in achieving your goals. Together, we will work as a team to help you grow knowledge, sharpen your skills, and become an asset to the surgical technology profession. The journey ahead will be challenging, but you will not walk it alone, we will navigate it step by step, learning and growing together.

This **Student Handbook** is designed to familiarize you with the policies and procedures specific to our program. Please note that it complements the broader policies of Augusta Technical College. It is essential that you become well-acquainted with both, as they will guide your experience from your first day through to graduation.

You are now part of a vibrant learning community with over 3,000 students. My door is always open—whether you have questions, need guidance, or simply want to talk about your aspirations in this rewarding field.

To learn more about the surgical technology profession, I encourage you to visit www.ast.org and www.nbstsa.org.

Sincerely,

Coretta Gothie

Coretta Gothie, BA, CST, CRCST
Department Head, Surgical Technology and Central Sterile Supply Processing

Telephone Directory

General Information	(706) 771-4000
Admissions	(706) 771-4028/4029
Bookstore	(706) 771-4119
Business Office/Administrative Services	(706) 771-4011
Career Services	(706) 771-4146
Continuing Education	(706) 771-4090
Counseling Center	(706) 771-4854
The Center for Online Learning and Innovation	(706) 771-5700
Financial Aid	(706) 771-4149
HOPE Info Line	1-800-546-HOPE
Library	(706) 771-4164/4165
School of Health Sciences – Allied Health Programs Office	(706) 771-4175/4191
School of Health Sciences – Nursing Programs Office	(706) 771-4166
School of Health Sciences – Academic Advisor	(706) 771-4185
School of Health Sciences – Campus Security	(706) 771-4020
School of Health Sciences – Fax	(706) 771-4181
Surgical Technology Program Director	(706) 771-4757
Surgical Technology Clinical Coordinator	(706) 771-4053
Registrar	(706) 771-5708/4038
Student Accounts	(706) 771-4030

Program Overview: Surgical Technology

Program Description

The Surgical Technology Program at Augusta Technical College is designed to prepare students for a wide range of career opportunities within the surgical field. Through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on clinical experience, the program introduces, develops, and reinforces the academic knowledge, technical skills, and professional attitudes essential for employment, career advancement, and long-term success in surgical technology.

In addition to preparing new professionals, the program also offers opportunities for current practitioners to enhance their skills or retrain in the field. Upon successful completion, graduates are awarded an **Associate of Applied Science Degree in Surgical Technology** and are eligible for employment as surgical technologists.

As a requirement for graduation, all students must sit for the **Certified Surgical Technologist (CST)** examination administered by the **National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA)**.

College Accreditation

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the Accrediting Body for Augusta Technical College. Augusta Technical College has been approved to award Associate of Science Degrees, Associate of Applied Science Degrees, Diplomas, and Technical Certificates of Credits. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, telephone 404-679-4500, http://www.sacscoc.org for questions about the accreditation of Augusta Technical College.

Program Accreditation

The Surgical Technology Program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (25400 US Highway 19 N., Suite 158, Clearwater, FL 33763, Phone 727-210-2350, www.caahep.org), upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA) located at 6 W. Dry Creek Circle, Suite #110, Littleton, CO 80120, Phone 303-694-9262, www.arcsta.org.

National Technical Standards

The following technical standards were adopted from the Association of Surgical Technology website. To obtain the entire document go to http://www.ast.org/educators/documents/Physical_Disabilities.pdf.

Surgical Technology involves the provision of direct care for individuals and is characterized by the application of verified knowledge in the skillful performance of surgical technology technical functions. Therefore, all applicants should possess:

1. Sufficient visual acuity, such as is needed in the surgical environment and for the observation necessary for patient assessment and care.

2. Sufficient auditory perception to receive verbal communication from patients and members of the health team and to assess the health needs of people using monitoring devices (e.g., cardiac monitors, biomedical equipment, fire alarms, etc.).

3. Sufficient gross and fine motor coordination to respond promptly and to implement the skills, including the manipulation of equipment, positioning, and lifting patients required in meeting health needs related to surgical technology.

4. Sufficient verbal and non-verbal communication skills (speech, reading, and writing), such as are needed in classroom and clinical settings to interact with patients and professional personnel; and

5. Sufficient intellectual and emotional functions to plan and implement care for individuals.

Discrimination Policy

The Technical College System of Georgia and its constituent technical colleges do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, disabled veteran, veteran of the Vietnam era, spouse of military member or citizenship status (except in those special circumstances permitted or mandated by law). This nondiscrimination policy encompasses the operation of all technical college-administered programs, programs financed by the federal government including any workforce innovation and opportunity act (WIOA) Title I financed programs, educational programs, and activities, including admissions, scholarships and loans, student life, and athletics. It also encompasses the recruitment and employment of personnel and contracting for goods and services.

The Technical College System and Technical Colleges shall promote the realization of equal opportunity through a positive continuing program of specific practices designed to ensure the full realization of equal opportunity. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

- For information on Title IX, contacts:
  - Shannon Patterson, Title IX Equity Coordinator (Employees), Augusta Campus-Building 100, (706) 771-4013, sbently@augustatech.edu
  - Migdaliz Berrios, Title IX Equity Coordinator (Students), Augusta Campus-Building 1300, Records/Career Services Office, (706) 771-5730, migdaliz.berrios@augustatech.edu

- For information on ADA/Section 504 Compliance, contact Karissa D. Wright, Special Needs/Academic Counselor, (706) 771-4067, Augusta Campus Counseling Center-Building 1300, kdavis@augustatech.edu.

Advisement Information

Once accepted into the SURG courses, students will be assigned an academic advisor—typically the Program Director. Advising is available by appointment or during designated advisement hours only.

Your advisor is here to support you in meeting program prerequisites, following the correct course sequence, and planning your academic schedule effectively. Regular communication with your advisor is essential to ensure you stay on track throughout your time in the program.

Change of Information & Graduate Contact Policy

Students are required to report any changes—such as address, phone number, or name—in writing to both the **Admissions Office** and the **Program Director** as soon as possible. The program cannot be held responsible for any missed communication resulting from unreported changes.

Additionally, the **State of Georgia** and **Augusta Technical College** request that all graduates provide a valid forwarding address upon graduation. This contact information will be used for up to three years to collect important statistical data that supports program funding and development.

Retention Support

To support student success and retention, academic advising, student services, and tutoring resources are readily available. However, it is the student's responsibility to take the initiative in requesting tutoring or additional support.

Do not wait until challenges become overwhelming—reach out early and take advantage of the help available to you. We are here to support your journey every step of the way.

Student Financial Aid

The Office of Student Financial Aid offers information and assistance regarding grants, loans, and work-study opportunities for students who may otherwise not be able to afford college. The type and amount of awarded aid depends on the availability of funds and the student's demonstrated financial need.

Career Services and Job Placement Support

Augusta Technical College's **Career Services Department**, along with the **Surgical Technology Program**, regularly shares job postings and employment resources to assist students in their job search. While these services are valuable tools, **employment after graduation is not guaranteed**.

If you would like help developing job-seeking skills—such as résumé writing, interview preparation, or job search strategies—please contact the Career Services Department for personalized support.

Student Records

Student records are maintained in both the **Surgical Technology Office** and the **Admissions and Records Office**.

All student information is strictly confidential. Students are not permitted to access or review the files of other students. Likewise, family members are not allowed access to a student's records without proper written authorization.

Please note: **Grades will not be released over the phone or via email** by Surgical Technology Program instructors to ensure the privacy and security of student information.

College Mission Statement

Augusta Technical College, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, is a public postsecondary academic institution that builds a skilled workforce and economically stronger communities through high-quality, innovative, and affordable career-advancing credentials.

Strategic Priorities

1. **Student Success with an Equity Focus.** Enhance academic programming to be recognized at the regional, state, and national levels for excellence.
2. **Organizational Culture.** Build organizational excellence through the growth and development of faculty, staff, and students.
3. **Engaging Learning Environments.** Build and modernize campuses, facilities, gathering spaces, grounds, technology, and infrastructure.
4. **Institutional Storytelling.** Enhance institutional branding, messaging, and reputation via storytelling.
5. **Community Engagement.** Expand academic, community, and industry partnerships to support recruitment, development, and student placements.

Program Mission Statement

The mission of this program is to prepare competent entry-level surgical technologists in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains. This will provide students with the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to gain employment as entry-level surgical technologists and become contributing members of the health care team. This is accomplished by (1) preparing competent graduates in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains, as stated above and (2) meeting or exceeding the criteria set forth in the current CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Surgical Technology*.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Surgical Technology Program, graduates will be able to:

1. **Integrate foundational sciences**—including anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and microbiology—into the role and responsibilities of a Surgical Technologist.
2. **Demonstrate safe, competent, and professional practice** in all aspects of surgical technology.
3. **Understand and apply ethical, legal, moral, and medical principles** in relation to patient care and collaboration with the surgical team throughout the perioperative experience.
4. **Identify and correlate the actions, uses, and effects of medications and anesthetic agents** commonly used in surgical procedures.
5. **Apply safe practices** in perioperative routines, including patient transport, positioning, and emergency response protocols.
6. **Maintain strict adherence to surgical asepsis principles** throughout the perioperative process.
7. **Address the biopsychosocial needs of surgical patients** using the knowledge and skills expected of a professional Surgical Technologist.
8. **Perform effectively as an entry-level surgical technologist**, demonstrating competence across cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains.
9. **Exhibit professional behavior and values** that reflect the standards and expectations of the surgical technology profession.

Graduate Outcomes

1. **Pass the National Certification Exam** in Surgical Technology administered by the NBSTSA.
2. **Apply the knowledge and skills** necessary for employment as competent, entry-level surgical technologists.
3. **Secure employment** in the field and demonstrate technical proficiency and general employability skills that meet or exceed employer expectations.
4. **Express satisfaction** with the quality of their education and training, rating it as satisfactory or very satisfactory.

Policy Updates and Revisions

Please note that program policies may be revised or new policies introduced periodically to meet the evolving needs of Augusta Technical College, our clinical affiliates, or to remain in compliance with accreditation standards set by AST, NBSTSA, and/or ARC/STSA.

Students will be informed of any changes—both verbally and in writing—prior to implementation. All updates will be reviewed in detail, and students will have the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. Each student is responsible for incorporating these updates into their current Student Handbook.

AST Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics serves as a guide by which Certified Surgical Technologists and student technologists may evaluate their professional conduct as it relates to patients, health care consumers, employers, colleagues, and other members of the health care team. This Code is intended to assist Certified Surgical Technologists and student technologists in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct and in providing for the protection, safety, and comfort of patients.

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

The Surgical Technologist continually strives to improve knowledge and skills by participating in continuing educational and professional activities, sharing knowledge with colleagues, and investigating new aspects of professional practice.

Pre-Admission Courses and Competitive Progression Policy
Effective Fall Semester 2011

The Surgical Technology Program at Augusta Technical College follows a **competitive progression process** for admission into major courses (SURG prefix). While applicants are admitted to the college and their preferred program, progression into the core Surgical Technology courses is selective and based on specific criteria. The number of students selected is determined by the available faculty and clinical site capacity.

Progression Evaluation and Notification

- Student progression is evaluated during the **summer term**, with notifications sent **on or before July 15**.
- Students not selected for progression may:
    - Consider changing programs, or
    - Resubmit an **Allied Health Sciences and Nursing "Request for Ranking"** form by the published deadline for the next progression cycle.

Note: There is **no provisional admission** into programs using the competitive progression process.

Placement Testing and Learning Support
Students who do not meet minimum scores on placement exams (COMPASS, ASSET, or ACCUPLACER) will be admitted to the **Technical Specialist program** to complete required learning support courses.

Prerequisite Course Requirements

To be eligible for progression into SURG courses, students must:
- Complete the following prerequisite courses with a **grade of "C" or higher**:
    - **BIOL 2113/L**
    - **BIOL 2114/L**
    - **MATH 1101**
- Maintain a **minimum GPA of 2.75** (on a 4.0 scale) in these courses.

Ranking Criteria

- Ranking is based on the **GPA of BIOL 2113/L, BIOL 2114/L, and MATH 1101**.
- In the event of a tie, the following will be used as tiebreakers:
    1. Overall GPA
    2. Date of application

Course Repeats and Grade Averaging

- If a student retakes a course to improve a grade, the **original and retake grades will be averaged** for ranking purposes.
- This policy also applies to **transfer grades**. For example, a transfer grade of "C" and a retake grade will be averaged to determine the ranking grade.

Academic Standards

- A **grade of "C" or higher** is required for all courses listed in the program curriculum.
- A student who earns **less than a "C" in two or more prerequisite courses** (same or different) is **ineligible for program progression**. This includes:
    - Courses taken at Augusta Technical College under any program of study.
    - Transfer courses from other institutions.
- **Unsuccessful course attempts** that lead to ineligibility will no longer be considered **after five years.**

SURG Course Policy

- A student who earns **less than a "C" in one SURG course** will be **suspended for one semester** and may be considered for reentry on a **space-available basis**.
    - The student must submit a **Program Readmission Form** to the Program Director by **midterm of the semester prior to the desired return**.
- A student who earns **less than a "C" in two SURG courses** (same or different) will **not be eligible for reentry** into the program.

Recommended Sequence for Prerequisite Courses – Year 1-Semester 1-Fall

Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
ENGL1101	Composition & Rhetoric	3
MATH1111 **or** 1101	College Algebra **or** Math Modeling	3
PSYC1101	Introductory Psychology	3
ALHS1090	Medical Terminology	2
BIOL2113	Anatomy & Physiology I	3
BIOL2113L	Anatomy & Physiology I Lab	1
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Recommended Sequence for SURG Courses – Year 1-Semester 2-Spring

Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
BIOL2114	Anatomy & Physiology II	3
BIOL2114L	Anatomy & Physiology II Lab	1
BIOL2117	Introductory Microbiology	3
BIOL2117L	Introductory Microbiology Lab	1
PSYC2103	Human Development (Guided Elective)	3
**One of the following:		
ARTS1101	Art Appreciation	3
ENGL2110	World Literature	3
ENGL2130	American Literature	3
ENGL2310	English Literature from the Beginnings to 1700's	3
HUMN1101	Introduction to Humanities	3
MUSC1101	Music Appreciation	3
THEA1101	Theater Appreciation	3
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Year 2-Semester 3-Fall

Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SURG1010	Introduction to Surgical Technology	8
SURG1020	Principles of Surgical Technology	9
		17

Year 2-Semester 4-Spring

Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SURG1100	Surgical Pharmacology	2
SURG2030	Surgical Procedures I	5
SURG2110	Surgical Technology Clinical I	3
SURG2120	Surgical Technology Clinical II	3
		13

Year 2-Semester 5-Summer

Course Prefix and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SURG2040	Surgical Procedures II	5
SURG2130	Surgical Technology Clinical III	3
SURG2140	Surgical Technology Clinical IV	3
SURG2240	Seminar in Surgical Technology	2
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TOTAL CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION: **72**

Approved Clinical Sites

Facility	Address	Telephone
Piedmont Augusta Hospital • Main OR • Day Surgery OR • L&D OR)	1350 Walton Way Augusta, GA 30901	(706) 774-5895
Piedmont Augusta Hospital- McDuffie County Campus	2460 Washington Road Thomson, GA 30824	(706) 597-5309
Doctor's Hospital	3657 Wheeler Road Augusta, GA 30909	(706) 651-4520
Wellstar MCG Medical Center	1120 15th Street Augusta, GA 30904	(706) 721-3341
Children's Hospital of Georgia	1446 Harper Street Augusta, GA 30904	(706) 721-5336
Surgery Center of Columbia County	4300 University Pkwy Evans, GA 30809	(706) 854-3000
Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center	950 15th Street Augusta, GA 30901	(706) 733-0188 ext. 2715
Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center	300 E Hospital Rd Fort Eisenhower, GA 30905	(706) 787-5811

Institutional and Academic Policies

Policy: Readmission Criteria

Purpose:

This policy outlines the requirements and procedures for re-admission into the Surgical Technology Program for students who withdraw or are dismissed prior to program completion.

Readmission Requirements

- **One-Time Re-admission Limit:**
  Students may be re-admitted to the Surgical Technology Program **only once**, regardless of the reason for leaving.

- **Application Process:**

  - Submit a new **college application** to the Admissions Office.

  - Complete and submit a **Surgical Technology Re-admission Application** to the Program Director **prior to the published deadline** for the desired re-entry year.

  - Readmission is **not guaranteed** and is based on **space availability**.

  - Students will be considered alongside the pool of new applicants.

- **Timeframe for Re-entry:**
  Students must re-enter the program **within one year** of withdrawal to be eligible for re-admission. All previously completed **SURG courses must be repeated**.

- **Ineligibility for Re-admission:**
  Students who have failed **more than one SURG course** are **not eligible** to reapply to the program.

Readmission Priority Criteria

If the number of admission applicants exceeds available space, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Students who withdrew due to **medical reasons** (personal or family-related).

2. Students who withdrew due to **financial hardship**.

3. Students who withdrew due to **academic failure**.

Additional Readmission Requirements

All re-admitted students must meet the following criteria:

- **Health Form Checklist:**

  - Must be **resubmitted**.

- **PPD skin test** must be repeated annually (chest X-rays are valid for two years).

- **CPR Certification:**

    - Must be **current** and valid for the duration of the program.

    - If certification expires before graduation, the student must complete **CPR re-certification** at their own expense.

    - Failure to maintain current certification will result in **immediate withdrawal from clinical courses** and **dismissal from the program**.

- **Background Check & Drug Screening:**

    - A new **background check** and **10-panel drug screen** are required prior to re-entry.

Policy: Professional Conduct

Purpose:
To ensure that all students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program maintain the highest standards of professionalism in both academic and clinical settings.

Policy Statement
Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, ethical, and professional manner always. Any behavior deemed unprofessional or inappropriate may result in disciplinary action,
including **suspension** or **dismissal** from the program. Disciplinary decisions are made at the discretion of the Program Director and will reflect the nature and severity of the behavior in question.
Refer also to the Program's Insubordination Policy for additional guidance.

Clinical Conduct Expectations
While at clinical sites, students must adhere to all **hospital policies, procedures, and rules**. Any questions or uncertainties regarding these expectations should be directed to:
- The designated **Clinical Site Coordinator**
- The **Program Clinical Coordinator**
- The **Program Director**
-
Failure to comply with clinical site policies may result in removal from the clinical setting and further disciplinary action.

See also: Disruptive Clinical Behavior Policy

Student Honor Pledge

It is a privilege to be a student at Augusta Technical College. I pledge to uphold the values of integrity, respect, and responsibility by doing my best and adhering to the College Honor Code.
I will not engage in dishonorable conduct such as lying, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, theft, or causing harm to others or property. I understand that maintaining academic and personal integrity reflects my work ethic and is essential to my success both in the classroom and in my future career.

I acknowledge that any violation of the College Honor Code may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the class or expulsion from the College.

Policy: Grievance Procedure

Purpose:

The Surgical Technology Program and Augusta Technical College are committed to upholding the rights of all students. We recognize that concerns or disagreements may arise, and we provide a fair and respectful process for resolving them. This **open-door, due process procedure** allows students to seek resolution without fear of retaliation.

Grievance Procedure

If a student has concerns or grievance, the following steps must be followed in order:

1. **Initial Discussion:**
   The student should first attempt to resolve the issue by discussing it directly with the appropriate faculty member.
2. **Program Director Review:**
   If the issue is not resolved, the student must submit a **typewritten request** to the Program Director within **five (5) days** of completing Step 1.
   - A meeting will be scheduled with the student and relevant faculty within **one week** of receiving the request.
3. **Dean Review:**
   If the matter remains unresolved, the student may submit a **typewritten request** for a formal hearing before the Dean within **five (5) days** of the Program Director's decision.
   - This request must include a **written statement** outlining the basis of the grievance.
   - The Program Director will schedule the hearing within **one week** of receiving the request.
4. **Formal Hearing:**
   During the hearing, the student will have the opportunity to present relevant information and may call witnesses if necessary.
5. **Decision Notification:**
   The Program Director will notify the student **in writing** of Dean's decision within **three (3) school days** of the hearing.
6. **Appeal to Vice President of Academic Affairs:**
   If the student is not satisfied with the Dean's decision, they may submit a **written appeal** to the **Vice President of Academic Affairs** within **three (3) school days** of receiving the decision.
   - A meeting will be scheduled within **two weeks** of receiving the appeal.
7. **Final Institutional Appeal:**
   If the issue is still unresolved, the student may pursue the **institutional appeals process** as outlined in the **Augusta Technical College Catalog**:
   - For **academic issues**, refer to the academic appeals section.

- For **non-academic issues**, refer to the appropriate grievance procedures in the catalog.

Policy: Academic Dishonesty

Purpose:

To uphold the integrity of the Surgical Technology Program and Augusta Technical College by ensuring that all students produce their own work and adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty.

Policy Statement

Each student is responsible for completing and submitting their own original work. Acts of academic dishonesty—including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsification, and theft of academic materials—are serious violations and may result in **immediate dismissal** from the program and/or the College.

Procedure for Addressing Academic Dishonesty

1. **Initial Referral:**
   Any student suspected of academic dishonesty will be referred to the **Student Disciplinary Officer** for investigation.
   - Any member of the College community may file a complaint by completing a **Student Code of Conduct Complaint Form** and submitting it to the Student Disciplinary Officer or their designee.

2. **Preliminary Investigation:**
   Within **five (5) business days** of receiving the complaint, the Student Disciplinary Officer will conduct a preliminary investigation and schedule a meeting with the student involved.

3. **Student Meeting and Determination:**
   During the meeting, the student will have the opportunity to respond to the allegations.
   - If the student fails to attend the scheduled meeting, they will be considered **in violation** of the Student Code of Conduct, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
   - The Student Disciplinary Officer will determine whether a violation occurred and, if so, impose appropriate sanctions.

4. **Outcome:**
   - If the student is not found **in violation**, the case will be closed with no sanctions.
   - If the student is found **in violation**, disciplinary action will be imposed, which may include **expulsion** from the class, program, or College.

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

1. **Cheating** on tests, quizzes, exams, or assignments.
2. **Falsifying attendance records** or clocking in/out for another student at a clinical site.
3. **Sharing or receiving information** about an exam with students who were absent.
4. **Plagiarism and/or collusion**, including submitting someone else's work without proper citation.
5. **Removing test materials** from the classroom or lab without permission.
6. **Forging or falsifying clinical documentation**, including preceptor signatures or initials.

Policy: Program Grading Scale

Purpose:

To define the grading standards and academic progression requirements for students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program at Augusta Technical College.

Grading Scale

The Surgical Technology Program follows the official Augusta Technical College grading scale for all didactic and clinical courses (SURG prefix):

Final Course Average	Letter Grade
90% – 100%	A
80% – 89%	B
70% – 79%	C
60% – 69%	D
Below 60%	F

Withdrawal Codes:

- **W** – Student withdrew before midterm.
- **WP** – Student withdrew after midterm with a passing grade.
- **WF** – Student withdrew after midterm with a failing grade (*WF carries a GPA of 0.0*).

Program-Specific Academic Requirements

1. **Grade Reporting:**
   Final grades are issued at the end of each semester.
2. **Minimum Grade Requirement:**
   Students must maintain a **minimum final grade of 70% (C)** in all courses with the following prefixes: **SURG, ENGL, MATH, ALHS, and PSYC** to remain in good standing and progress in the program.
3. **Course Failure and Re-enrollment:**
   - A student who fails to achieve a 70% in any course and is removed from the program may reapply the following year when the course is next offered.
   - Re-enrollment is **not guaranteed** and is based on **space availability**. Students must reapply according to the program's admission guidelines.
4. **Second Course Failure:**
   If a student is re-admitted and fails to meet the 70% requirement in a second **SURG** course, they will be **ineligible for future re-admission** to the Surgical Technology Program.

5. **Course Expiration Policy:**
    If a failed course is not repeated within **24 months**, the student must **repeat all SURG courses** previously taken, pending re-selection by the Office of Admissions.

Policy: Special Learning Needs

Purpose:

To ensure that all students have equitable access to learning by providing appropriate support and accommodation when needed.

Policy Statement

It is the responsibility of the student to privately inform the course instructor if they are having trouble understanding course material or require accommodation such as alternative note-taking methods, modified testing conditions, or other instructional adjustments.

The instructor will work individually with the students to help address any barriers to learning. However, **formal accommodations must be approved** through the College's **Disability Services Office**. Students seeking accommodation should contact the **Disability Coordinator** to initiate the approval process.

Policy: Work Ethics Program

Purpose:

Augusta Technical College is committed to preparing students not only with strong technical skills but also with professional work habits essential for success in the workplace. The Work Ethics Program is designed to reinforce these habits across all educational experiences.

Policy Statement

To support the development of well-rounded professionals, the Surgical Technology Program incorporates the **Work Ethics Program** into all didactic and clinical courses. In addition to academic grades, students will receive a **Work Ethics grade** that reflects their demonstration of key professional behaviors.
The ten core work ethics traits evaluated are:

1. **Attendance**
2. **Character**
3. **Teamwork**
4. **Appearance**
5. **Attitude**
6. **Productivity**
7. **Organizational Skills**
8. **Communication**
9. **Cooperation**
10. **Respect**

These traits will be discussed in class and are expected to be consistently demonstrated by all students throughout the program.

Policy: Graduate Warranty

Purpose:

To ensure employer satisfaction and uphold the quality of instruction provided by Augusta Technical College through a guarantee of graduate competency.

Policy Statement

The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), in collaboration with business and industry partners, has developed curriculum standards that define the competencies required for each program of study. Based on these standards, Augusta Technical College offers the following guarantee:

> *If a graduate educated under a standard program is found by their employer to be deficient in one or more competencies as defined by TCSG standards, Augusta Technical College will provide retraining at no instructional cost to the graduate or employer.*

Eligibility
- Applies to graduates employed in their field of training.
- Valid for **two years** from the date of graduation.
- Also applies to graduates who fail to pass a **State of Georgia-required licensing examination** within two years of program completion.

Filing a Warranty Claim

To initiate a claim under this warranty:
1. The **employer**, in collaboration with the graduate, should contact the **Vice President for Academic Affairs** at **(706) 771-4020**.
2. A formal letter on **company letterhead** must be submitted, stating that the graduate is deficient in one or more competencies as defined by TCSG standards.

Policy: Job Placement

Career Placement Assistance

Augusta Technical College is committed to supporting students in their transition from education to employment. Career placement assistance is provided through a collaborative effort between faculty and the **Office of Career Placement**.

Students are strongly encouraged to contact the Career Placement Office at the **beginning of their final semester**. The **Director of Career Placement** will work with each student to develop a personalized job search strategy tailored to their training and career goals.

Policy: Program Attendance

Purpose:

To emphasize the importance of consistent attendance and punctuality as essential components of academic success and professional preparation in the Surgical Technology Program.

General Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to attend all classes and clinical assignments regularly and punctually, demonstrating a commitment to their education and future profession. Attendance is a shared responsibility and reflects a student's professionalism and readiness for the workforce.

- Instructors will maintain accurate attendance records throughout the semester.
- Students should notify the instructor in advance of any anticipated absences or tardiness, or as soon as possible afterward.
- Students are responsible for reviewing and adhering to the attendance and make-up policies outlined in each course syllabus.

Note: Excessive absences or tardiness may negatively impact final grades and program progression.

Surgical Technology Program Attendance Policy

- **No Excused Absences:** There are no excused absences in the Surgical Technology Program. All missed work is subject to the program's make-up policy, and final grades will determine a student's eligibility to continue in the program.
- **Student Responsibility:** Students must obtain any missed notes or assignments from classmates. They are accountable for all material covered during their absence.

Clinical Attendance and Make-Up Policy

- **Mandatory Make-Up:** All missed clinical hours must be made up to ensure equitable learning experiences.
- **Scheduling Make-Up Time:** Clinical make-up hours must be completed by the end of the current SURG clinical course. Scheduling will be coordinated with the clinical site, Program Director, and Clinical Coordinator, based on staffing and supervision availability.
- **Approval Required:** A completed and approved **"Request for Make-Up"** form must be submitted to the Clinical Coordinator before any make-up hours are scheduled.
- **Time Tracking:** Each clinical site will use a time clock system to record daily student attendance.

Tardiness Policy

- **Didactic Tardiness:** Arriving **eight (8) minutes or more** after the scheduled class start time is considered tardy.
- **Clinical Tardiness:** Students are considered tardy if they arrive **after the morning staff meeting has begun**.
    - "Arriving" means being fully prepared to begin the day—dressed in scrubs, with appropriate PPE (hair cover, shoe covers, etc.).

- Students arriving late will not be allowed to stay for the clinical day. The absences will count against their weekly attendance and clinical hours.

Online Course Attendance

Students enrolled in online courses must attend all **proctored events**. Failure to do so will result in a final grade of **F** for the course.

Refer to the 2024–2025 Augusta Technical College Academic Catalog for the full Attendance and Withdrawal Policy.

Policy: Emergency Closing

Purpose:

To outline the procedures students must follow in the event of an emergency closing or class cancellation at Augusta Technical College.

Policy Statement

If Augusta Technical College cancels class or closes due to an emergency, the following guidelines will apply:

- **Before Class or Clinical Begins:**
  If the student has not yet arrived at class or clinical when the closure is announced, they are **not required to report**. This time will **not count for or against** the student in terms of attendance or clinical points.
- **During Class or Clinical:**
  If the student is already present when the closure is announced, they must **leave immediately**. The missed time will **not be penalized** or counted toward clinical hours.
- **After Classes Resume:**
  If a student is unable to return to class or clinical due to road conditions or other personal circumstances once the college has reopened, the absence will be treated as a **regular absence**. All standard attendance policies and grade deductions will apply.

Note: Students are encouraged to monitor official Augusta Technical College communication channels for closure announcements and updates.

Policy: Leave of Absence (LOA)

Purpose:

To clarify the college's position regarding extended absences from the Surgical Technology Program.

Policy Statement

Augusta Technical College does **not offer formal leaves of absence (LOA)** from the Surgical Technology Program. If a student must be away for an extended period, it is recommended that they **withdraw from the program** and reapply when they are able to return and complete the required coursework.

Re-entry into the program is subject to **space availability** and adherence to the program's **re-admission policies and procedures**.

Policy: Graduation Requirements

Purpose:

To outline the specific requirements for graduation from the Surgical Technology Program, in addition to those published in the Augusta Technical College Catalog. The full catalog is available at www.augustatech.edu.

Program-Specific Graduation Requirements

To be certified for program completion and eligibility for graduation, each Surgical Technology student must successfully meet the following criteria:

- **Complete all required courses** with a final average of **70% or higher** (refer to the Program Grading Scale Policy).
- **Accumulate a minimum of 540 clinical rotation hours** in accordance with Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) curriculum standards.
- **Complete a minimum of 120 surgical cases** as outlined in the Surgical Rotation Case Requirements. For details, consult the Program Director or refer to the case requirement guidelines.
- **Sit for the NBSTSA Certification Exam** prior to graduation.

These requirements will be reviewed in detail during **Clinical Orientation**.

Policy: Course/Program Withdrawal

Purpose:

To outline the proper procedure for withdrawing from a course or the Surgical Technology Program.

Policy Statement

It is the student's responsibility to initiate an official withdrawal from any course or the program through the **SmartWeb Banner Registration portal**. Students should refer to the **2024–2025 Augusta Technical College Academic Catalog** for detailed information on the college's Attendance and Withdrawal Policy.

Institution Policy: Sexual Harassment

Purpose:

Augusta Technical College is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning

environment for all students, faculty, and staff. In accordance with **Title IX** and college policy, discrimination based on sex—including all forms of **sexual misconduct**—is prohibited.

Policy Statement

Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to:
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault
- Domestic or dating violence
- Stalking

The college encourages any individual who experiences or witnesses sexual misconduct to seek support and report the incident. Prompt reporting allows the college to respond appropriately and provide necessary resources.

Confidentiality and Reporting

- If you wish to speak **confidentially** about an incident, obtain more information about filing a report, or have questions about your rights and options, please contact the **Title IX Coordinator(s)** listed on the college website.
- While the college will make every effort to respect requests for confidentiality, it is **legally obligated to investigate** all reports of sexual misconduct to ensure campus safety.
- **Faculty and staff**, including instructors, are **mandatory reporters** and must share relevant details of any incident with the Title IX Coordinator. This includes the names of individuals involved and any known facts.

For more information, please refer to the **2024–2025 Student Handbook and Wellness Guide** or the **Student Code of Conduct**.

Policy: Classroom and Lab Accessibility

Purpose:

To ensure students have appropriate access to learning environments and support for academic success.

Access to Facilities

Students may access classrooms and labs **during scheduled class hours** as listed on the semester schedule, unless otherwise directed by the instructor.
If a student wishes to access a classroom or lab **outside of scheduled hours**, they must make prior arrangements with the course instructor.

Academic Support

Students having trouble with course material are encouraged to **privately notify the instructor** as early as possible. Instructors are committed to working individually with students to address learning challenges and support academic progress.

Policy: Classroom and Lab Management Plan

Purpose:

To ensure a safe, organized, and productive learning environment during classroom and lab sessions in the Surgical Technology Program.

Lab Participation Expectations

Many courses include designated **lab hours**, during which students are expected to complete assigned lab activities under the supervision of the instructor. Instructors will be present to provide guidance, monitor progress, and ensure safety protocols are followed.

Lab Policies and Procedures

While in the Surgical Technology lab, students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- **No children** are permitted in the lab at any time.
- **Do not move or adjust electrical equipment or connections.** If assistance is needed, notify the instructor immediately.
- **Clean up** your work area after each lab session. Each student is responsible for maintaining a clean and organized space.
- **Attend lab only during your assigned time.** Lab groups are limited to a maximum of **four students** per session to ensure adequate supervision and access to equipment.

Policy: Use of Cellular Phones and Pagers

Clinical Assignments

- **Cell phone use is prohibited in public areas at clinical sites.**
    - *Refer to the Clinical Point Deduction Sheet*
    - **First Infraction:** Immediate dismissal from clinical for the day.
    - **Second Infraction:** A critical incident will be documented, and the student will be referred to the Program Director for disciplinary action.

Classroom and Laboratory Settings

- **Cell phone use (calls and texts) is not permitted during class (unless authorized by the instructor).**
    1. Phones must be silenced—no ringing or audible vibrations.
    2. Students may not make or receive calls or send/receive text messages during class.
    3. To take a call, students must leave the classroom.
    4. If expecting an urgent call, students must remain outside the classroom until the call is completed. Any missed lecture content is the student's responsibility. If this results in tardiness, it will be recorded accordingly.
    5. In case of emergencies, family and friends should contact the program office at **(706) 771-4175**. The administrative assistant will relay the message to the instructor, who will then notify the student—this helps avoid policy violations.

6. **During exams (including finals, pop quizzes, and unit tests), all phones must be turned off.** Any sound or vibration will result in:
   - Immediate collection of the test.
   - A grade of zero with no opportunity for makeup or credit.

Policy: Jury Duty and Court Summons

Students who receive a summons for jury duty or are required to appear in court must notify the Program Director in advance and provide appropriate documentation. A copy of the summons is required for the student to be officially excused. All missed coursework must be completed promptly upon the student's return.

Procedure

1. **Immediate Notification:** Upon receiving jury duty or court summons, the student must notify the Program Director without delay. A copy of the summons will be placed in the student's administrative file.
2. **Assignment Planning:** The Program Director and the student will review the lesson plans for the expected absence dates. Assignments will be provided as applicable.
3. **Make-Up Work:** Upon returning, the student is responsible for completing all missed assignments in a timely manner.

Policy: Student Employment and Work Guidelines

The program acknowledges that students may need to maintain employment while enrolled. However, to support academic success and clinical readiness, the following guidelines apply:

- **Recommended Work Hours:** It is strongly recommended that students limit employment to no more than **20 hours per week** to ensure adequate time for study, class preparation, and rest.
- **Third Shift Restriction:** Students are **not permitted to work third shift (overnight)** prior to a scheduled clinical day. Adequate rest is essential for safe and effective clinical performance.

Students who choose to work while enrolled must take full responsibility for maintaining:

- Satisfactory **attendance**
- Acceptable **academic performance**
- Consistent **clinical performance**

Employment obligations will **not** be accepted as a valid excuse for failure to meet program expectations or standards.

Student Work Policy
Approved by the Program Advisory Committee (PAC), October 2013
All student activities related to the curriculum, particularly during clinical rotations, must be **educational in nature**. Students:

- Will **not receive monetary compensation** for clinical experiences.

- Will **not be used as substitutes** for paid staff in any capacity, including that of a surgical technologist.

Policy: Insubordination and Inappropriate Behavior

The Surgical Technology Program is committed to maintaining a respectful, professional, and productive learning environment. In accordance with the authority granted by the State of Georgia, the program will take necessary action to ensure that all students can learn in an atmosphere free from disruption. **Insubordinate, disrespectful, or otherwise inappropriate behavior** disrupts the educational process and will not be tolerated. Such behavior negatively impacts the program's daily operations and the learning experience of others.

- Any student exhibiting inappropriate or disruptive conduct will be **immediately referred to the Student Disciplinary Officer** for appropriate action.
- Students are also expected to adhere to the **Student Code of Conduct** as outlined in the *Augusta Technical College Catalog*, available online at www.augustatech.edu.

The program reserves the right to take disciplinary action as needed to preserve a safe and effective learning environment.

Note: Refer to the *Clinical Disruptive Behavior Policy* for additional guidelines specific to clinical settings.

Policy: Safety and Emergency Procedures

Augusta Technical College is committed to maintaining a proactive and comprehensive safety program across all departments to prevent personal injury and property damage. A key component of this program is the communication and enforcement of safety practices that support a secure and effective learning environment.

- A copy of the **Augusta Technical College Safety Manual** is available in the **Surgical Technology Program lab**.
- **Students and faculty are expected to follow all safety guidelines** outlined in the manual.
- Suggestions for improving safety procedures are encouraged and should be directed to the **College Health and Safety Committee**.

Maintaining a safe environment is a shared responsibility. Everyone is expected to contribute to the prevention of accidents and the promotion of a culture of safety.

Policy: Drug and Alcohol Use

The Surgical Technology Program maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding the use or possession of illicit drugs and alcohol. This policy applies to all enrolled students and is designed to ensure a safe, professional, and effective learning and clinical environment.

Prohibited Conduct

Students are prohibited from:

- Possessing or using alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances without a valid prescription.

- Reporting to class, lab, or clinical assignments under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance not prescribed by a licensed healthcare provider.

If a student is taking prescribed medication that may affect performance, they must provide a written statement from their physician confirming their ability to safely perform all clinical and lab responsibilities.

Reasonable Suspicion of Impairment

Indicators that may lead to suspicion of substance use include, but are not limited to:

- Bizarre, erratic, or irrational behavior
- Slurred speech or the smell of alcohol
- Repeated errors or accidents not otherwise explained
- Violations of safety protocols that endanger others
- Noticeable decline in clinical performance or attendance
- Apparent intoxication or impaired motor skills

Procedure for Suspected Impairment

If a student is suspected of being under the influence:

1. The **Program Director** will privately address the student, expressing concern about their ability to perform duties.
2. **Security personnel** may be contacted if the situation warrants.
3. The student will be **sent home**, with transportation arranged through a family member, emergency contact, or responsible adult.
4. The Program Director will **document the observed behavior**, and this record will be placed in the student's file.
5. The student must undergo a **drug or alcohol screening within 24 hours**, at their own expense.
- **Failure to comply** with the screening or a **positive result** (without a valid prescription dated prior to the test) will result in **immediate dismissal** from the program.
- Students have the right to **appeal** disciplinary actions in accordance with the program's due process policy.

Legal Compliance

In accordance with **Title 20-1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated**, any student convicted of a felony involving the manufacture, distribution, sale, possession, or use of marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs will be **suspended from Augusta Technical College** as of the date of conviction.

Definitions

- **Illicit Drugs:** Any drug, medication, or controlled substance not prescribed to the individual by a licensed healthcare provider. This includes, but is not limited to, marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and other illegal substances.

Policy: Communicable Diseases

To protect the health and safety of both student surgical technologists and patients, the Surgical Technology Program enforces a strict communicable disease policy. This policy applies to all students participating in classroom, lab, and clinical activities.

Reporting Requirements

- Students must **immediately report** any communicable disease—whether contracted inside or outside the clinical setting—to the **Clinical Coordinator**.
- A **communicable disease** is defined as any illness that can be transmitted directly or indirectly from one person to another. Examples include, but are not limited to, **influenza** and **conjunctivitis**.

Attendance Restrictions

- Students with suspected or confirmed communicable diseases are **not permitted** to attend class, lab, or clinical rotations.
- Return to class or clinical activities is only permitted upon submission of **official medical clearance documentation**. **No exceptions** will be made.

Pre-Enrollment Health Requirements

- Prior to participating in campus or clinical labs, students must submit a **completed medical examination form**, distributed by academic advisors.
- Documentation of all **required immunizations**, including the **Hepatitis B vaccination series**, must be submitted.
- Students who decline the Hepatitis B vaccine must sign a **declination form** and understand that **clinical sites may deny placement**, potentially impacting program completion.

Exposure to Communicable Disease at Clinical Sites

In the event of exposure to a communicable disease during clinical rotations:

1. The student must complete the **clinical site's incident report** and follow its reporting procedures.
2. The **Clinical Coordinator** must also be notified and will complete an **Augusta Technical College Incident Report**, which must be submitted to the **Program Director within 24 hours**.
3. The student must seek medical evaluation the **same day** of exposure by:
    - Visiting their **private physician** (at their own expense),
    - Requesting a referral from the **Program Director** to a contracted medical facility, or
    - Going to the **clinical site's emergency room** if the situation is urgent (e.g., life or limb-threatening).
4. **Documentation of the medical visit** must be submitted to the Program Director within 24 hours.

If these procedures are followed, medical expenses may be covered by the **student services accident insurance policy**, which is included in the **student services fee** paid each semester.

The student must comply with all **follow-ups medical evaluations or treatments** as directed by the healthcare provider. Failure to do so will release Augusta Technical College from any liability.

Communicable Diseases Acquired Outside of School

If a student contracts a communicable disease unrelated to school activities:

- They must provide **medical clearance** from a personal physician or local health department before returning to class or clinical assignments.
- The student is responsible for all **medical costs** associated with evaluation and treatment.

Policy: Late Assignments

The Surgical Technology Program requires all students to complete and submit assignments by the deadlines outlined in the course syllabus or calendar.

- **Late submissions will not be accepted.**
- Assignments not submitted by the due date will receive a grade of **zero (0)**.

Exceptions may be considered only in cases of **extenuating circumstances**, and such cases will be evaluated **at the discretion of the course instructor** on an individual basis.

Policy: Use of Calculators

Calculators may be used during classwork, quizzes, tests, and examinations.

The use of **cell phone calculators is prohibited**. **Only with prior approval from the instructor**.

- Students are responsible for bringing an **approved, standalone calculator** when required.

Policy: Required Purchase List

A list of required student purchases will be provided during program orientation and must be followed as issued.

- If any updates or changes occur, they will be communicated **verbally in class**.
- It is the **student's responsibility** to update their personal copy of the purchase list accordingly.

Clinical Policies

Policy: Student Work During Clinical Instruction

Purpose:

To clarify restrictions regarding compensation and role expectations for students and faculty while participating in clinical education at affiliated sites.

Guidelines:

1. **Clinical times are strictly educational.** Students are placed in clinical settings to gain hands-on learning experiences that enhance their surgical technology knowledge and skills.
2. **Students and faculty may not be used as staff substitutes.** Regardless of staffing needs, students and college faculty are not to replace clinical personnel during instructional hours.
3. **Employment status does not alter student role.** Students who are employed by a clinical site must not function as staff during scheduled clinical rotations.
4. **No compensation is permitted.** Students will not receive payment for any services performed during clinical instruction.
5. **Faculty compensation restrictions.** Faculty serving as clinical coordinators may not receive payment from clinical sites for services rendered during instructional hours.
6. **Violations will result in disciplinary action.** Breaches of this policy may lead to **immediate suspension** for students and **termination** for faculty.

Policy: Requirements to Attend Clinical

Before participating in clinical rotations, students must meet all prerequisites and submit the following documentation. These requirements are mandatory and must be completed **prior to the start of any hospital-based clinical experience**:

1. **Student Liability Insurance**
   - Required each semester.
   - Fee: **$5 per semester**.
2. **Physical Examination**
   - Documentation must be submitted and **dated within the last 3 months**.
3. **Immunization Records**
   - Must include documentation of the **Hepatitis B vaccination series**.
4. **Background Check and Drug Screening**
   - Students must complete a **background check and 10-panel drug screen** through **Advantage Students**.
   - If a clinical site deems the results unsatisfactory, the student will be **prohibited from participating in clinical activities** and **unable to complete the program**.
   - Instructions for completing this requirement will be provided by the instructor.
5. **Proof of Current Health Insurance**
   - Submit a **copy of your insurance card** to the Program Director for your student file.

6. **CPR Certification**
   - Must hold a current **BCLS Healthcare Provider CPR card** issued by the **American Heart Association**.
7. **Program Uniforms**
   - Students must have the required uniforms as specified by the program.

Health Screening, Drug Screening, and Background Check

All students assigned to clinical rotations must complete **Health Screening**, **Background Check**, and **Drug Screen** prior to beginning clinical assignments.

Health Screening
- Students will receive the required health screening packet during **program orientation**.
- The **Clinical Coordinator** will review all submitted health screening documents for accuracy.
- If discrepancies are found, the documents will be returned to the student for correction.
  - **Students may not attend clinical** until all issues are resolved.
  - Any missed clinical days due to incomplete documentation will be subject to the program's **missed clinical day policy**.

Background Check and Drug Screen
- Clinical affiliates require background checks and drug screens to ensure patient safety.
- Students must complete both through **Advantage Students**, a company specializing in healthcare compliance screenings.
- Instructions for ordering will be provided by the Clinical Coordinator.
- These must be ordered and results submitted to the Clinical Coordinator by the first day of the semester:
  - **Background checks** typically take **7–10 business days**.
  - **Drug screens** typically take **10–14 business days**.

Cost and Documentation
- The cost of the background check and drug screen varies based on individual factors.
- Payment is made securely online via credit or debit card.
- Students will receive a **receipt and confirmation page** upon ordering.
  - A **copy of this confirmation** must be submitted to the instructor as proof of compliance.

Policy: Hepatitis B Vaccination Policy

In accordance with the **Technical College System of Georgia Bloodborne Pathogens Plan (1993)**, all students enrolled in the clinical portion of the Surgical Technology Program are required to either:
- **Complete the full Hepatitis B (HBV) vaccination series**, or
- **Sign an official waiver** provided by the Technical College System of Georgia.

Students who do not comply with this requirement will be **prohibited from participating in clinical rotations**.

Waiver and Counseling
- Students who choose to decline the HBV vaccination will receive **appropriate counseling** before signing the waiver.
- By signing the waiver, the student **releases Augusta Technical College and its clinical affiliates from liability** in the event of Hepatitis B exposure.

Vaccination After Waiver
- If a student later chooses to begin the HBV vaccination series after signing the waiver, they must:
    - Notify the Program Director, and
    - Submit **documentation after each dose** is administered.

Policy: Criminal Convictions

A conviction for a **felony or gross misdemeanor** may impact a student's eligibility for employment in the surgical technology field and may also affect their ability to sit for required **certification or licensing examinations**.

As part of clinical placement requirements, all students must undergo a **background check**, which will disclose any criminal history to affiliated clinical sites. Clinical sites reserve the right to deny placement based on the results of this background check.

Policy: Liability Insurance

All students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program are **strongly encouraged** to obtain **professional liability insurance** to ensure coverage during clinical education experiences.
- The **cost of the insurance** is the **responsibility of the student**.
- Proof of coverage may be required by clinical sites prior to participation in clinical rotations.

Policy: Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification

All students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program are required to maintain **current CPR certification** through the **American Heart Association (AHA)**.
- Students must provide the **Clinical Coordinator** with a copy of their valid **AHA BLS for Healthcare Providers CPR card**.
- This certification must be **kept current throughout the duration of the program**.

If a student's CPR certification **expires at any time**, they will be **immediately removed from the clinical site** and will not be permitted to return until valid certification is reinstated.
- All policies related to **attendance and missed clinical time** will apply.

Policy: Clinical Rotation Assignments

To ensure that all clinical experiences are educationally meaningful and equitably distributed, the Surgical Technology Program assigns students to clinical sites and departments on a **rotating basis**.

- A clinical rotation schedule will be provided to each student prior to the start of clinical activities.
- The schedule will include start and end dates, assigned facilities, and specific clinical areas.
- Students are not permitted to function as substitutes for paid staff, regardless of staffing needs.
- Students are responsible for any **personal expenses** incurred during clinical rotations.
- In the event of a **decreased workload** in a student's assigned area, the site's clinical coordinator may reassign the student to a comparable area to ensure continued learning.
- Students are **not allowed to visit or rotate through areas** outside of their assigned location without prior approval.

Procedure:
The **Clinical Coordinator** will develop the clinical rotation schedule. Schedules will be **distributed to students** at the beginning of the clinical rotation period. Program officials and faculty will ensure that schedules are also provided to **clinical site supervisors and coordinators**. Changes to the rotation schedule may only be made at the discretion of the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator.

Policy: Clinical Make-Up Time

Program Expectation

Students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program are expected to maintain consistent and reliable attendance during all scheduled clinical rotations. **Attendance at all clinical assignments is mandatory.**

- **Missed clinical time will not be made up.**
- A grade of zero will be recorded for any missed clinical day unless an exception is granted.

Exceptions to the Attendance Policy

Exceptions may be considered **on a case-by-case basis** and are at the **sole discretion of the Clinical Coordinator.** Students must provide **official documentation** to support any request for an exception. Acceptable circumstances may include:

- **Extreme personal hardship**, such as the death of an immediate family member
- **Hospitalization or incapacitating illness**

All documentation must be submitted promptly, and students must follow any additional procedures outlined by the program.

Policy: Clocking in and Out for Clinical Assignments

Each clinical affiliate site will have a designated method for tracking student attendance during scheduled clinical rotation days. Most facilities utilize **time clocks**, and students will be issued **individual timecards** for this purpose.

In addition, the program uses **Trajecsys**, a secure, web-based time tracking and documentation system. Students are required to accurately log their clinical hours in Trajecsys **in addition to** any site-specific timekeeping procedures.

Clocking Procedures
- Students must:
  - **Clock in at the start of the clinical day**
  - **Clock out and back in for lunch**
  - **Clock out at the end of the day**
- Each student must **clock in and out for themselves only**.
  - **Clocking in or out for another student is prohibited** and will result in immediate referral to the Program Director with a recommendation for **program dismissal**.
  - **Clocking in and out simultaneously** or falsifying time records in any way will result in **immediate dismissal** from the program.

Student Responsibility
- It is the **student's responsibility** to ensure accurate and timely clock-in/clock-out entries both at the clinical site and in **Trajecsys**.
- **Failure to clock in or out** as required will result in the student being marked **absent**, with **no exceptions**.

Policy: Lunch Breaks During Clinical Rotations

Purpose:
To establish a designated meal period for students during scheduled clinical rotation days.

Definition:
A **lunch break** is defined as a period during which the student is **completely relieved of all clinical and clerical responsibilities** and is **not present in a patient care area**.

Policy Guidelines:
1. **Lunch Duration:**
   Each student is allotted a **30-minute lunch break** during each clinical day, regardless of the clinical site's standard lunch period.
2. **Scheduling:**
   The **designated clinical preceptor** at each site will assign lunch times based on patient care needs and workload in the assigned area. Lunch times may vary accordingly.
3. **Punctuality:**
   Students are expected to **strictly observe their assigned lunch period**. Returning late from lunch may result in **disciplinary action**.
4. **Missed Lunch Breaks:**
   LUNCH BREAKS ARE MANDATORY!!!

Policy: Uniform Requirements, Grooming Standards, and Uniform Restrictions

To maintain a professional appearance and ensure compliance with clinical site expectations, all students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program are required to always adhere to the following uniform and grooming standards during clinical rotations.

Uniform Requirements

1. **Uniform Attire:**
   - Navy blue scrub top and pants or skirt.
   - Black uniform shoes or black athletic shoes (no canvas, open-toe, or backless shoes).
   - Socks or hose must be worn daily.
2. **Fit and Appearance:**
   - Uniforms must fit properly, clothing that is too tight, transparent, or ill-fitting is not permitted.
   - Students wearing inappropriate attire will be dismissed from clinical for the day.
3. **Undershirts:**
   - If worn, undershirts must be **plain white** with **no writing or images**.
4. **Tucking and Cleanliness:**
   - Uniform tops must always be **tucked in**.
   - Uniforms must be **clean and pressed**.
5. **Lab Coat:**
   - A lab coat with the **program patch sewn on the left shoulder** is required.

Grooming Standards

- **Hair:** Must be clean, neat, and secured **above the collar**.
- **Facial Hair (Male Students):** Must be clean-shaven or have a **well-groomed beard or mustache**.
- **Hands and Nails:**
  - Hands must be clean.
  - Nails must be trimmed to the fingertip.
  - **No nail polish or artificial nails** are permitted.
- **Undergarments:** Must be worn and **not visible** through the uniform.
- **Personal Hygiene:**
  - Conservative makeup only.
  - **No perfume or cologne**.
  - Students must maintain good hygiene, including **daily bathing, deodorant use, and oral care** (brushing, flossing, mouthwash).

Jewelry and Accessories

- **Earrings:** Not permitted.

- **Facial and Body Piercings:** No visible studs or posts, including tongue piercings, are allowed in the clinical area.
- **Jewelry:** No jewelry of any kind is permitted during clinical rotations, in accordance with infection control policies.

Enforcement and Disciplinary Action
- Students who fail to comply with uniform or grooming standards will be **sent home** and marked **absent** for the clinical day.
- **Repeated violations** may result in:
  - **Program expulsion**, and/or
  - A **letter grade deduction** in the clinical course (see Clinical Point Deduction Policy).

Policy: HIPAA Compliance

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) – Summary of Final Regulation

Purpose
HIPAA is a federal law that mandates the protection and confidential handling of an individual's health information. All Surgical Technology students must receive training on HIPAA policies and procedures to ensure compliance, particularly as it relates to their roles and responsibilities in clinical settings.

Key Privacy Requirements
Clinical sites are required to implement fair and consistent practices that:
- Inform individuals about how their health information is used and disclosed.
- Ensure individuals do not have access to their own health records.
- Maintain administrative, physical, and technical safeguards to protect **Protected Health Information (PHI)**.

Even if students do not routinely handle PHI, they are expected to be aware of and always comply with these regulations.

Definition of PHI
Protected Health Information (PHI) includes any information related to an individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health condition that can be used to identify the individual.
HIPAA is the first federal law to establish national privacy standards, limiting how PHI may be used or disclosed and granting patients greater control over their personal health information.

Use and Access
Students are only permitted to access PHI necessary to perform their clinical duties. Use of PHI must be limited to what is relevant and appropriate for the task at hand.

Breaches and Sanctions

HIPAA violations are taken seriously and may result in significant penalties. Individuals are personally accountable for compliance.

Penalties include:
- **Civil penalties:**
    - $100 per violation, up to $25,000 per year.
- **Criminal penalties:**
    - Fines and imprisonment of up to **10 years** for certain offenses.

Even unintentional violations—such as careless handling of confidential information—can result in civil penalties.

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR)** is responsible for investigating HIPAA compliance. For more information, visit: www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa

Policy: Disruptive Clinical Behavior

The Surgical Technology Program is committed to maintaining a professional, respectful, and safe clinical learning environment. In accordance with the authority granted by the State of Georgia, the program will take immediate action to address any behavior that disrupts clinical operations, compromises patient safety, or undermines the integrity of the program.

Grounds for Immediate Referral and Recommendation for Expulsion

A student will be referred to the Program Director with a recommendation for immediate expulsion from the program if any of the following occur:

1. A clinical department **requests the removal** of a student due to disruptive behavior.
2. The clinical department **refuses to allow a student to return** due to prior disruptive conduct.
3. A **patient files a formal complaint** against the student.
4. The student engages in **grossly negligent behavior** that jeopardizes patient safety or life.
5. A clinical site **terminates its affiliation** with the college as a direct result of a student's behavior.
6. The student engages in **harassment, intimidation, or any behavior** that negatively impacts patient care, departmental operations, or the well-being of staff, technologists, or fellow students.
7. A student is **removed from a second clinical site** due to lack of proficiency in required competencies, following prior remediation after removal from a previous site.

Due Process

Students recommended for expulsion have the right to **due process**, as outlined in the program's **Due Process Policy**. This includes full **investigation and hearing**.

- If the expulsion is overturned, the student will be required to **make up all missed clinical hours** and complete any **missed academic assignments**.

Additional Guidelines

Students are also expected to comply with the **Student Code of Conduct** as outlined in the *Augusta Technical College Catalog*, available at www.augustatech.edu.

Disruptive or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. The program will take all necessary steps to protect patient safety, uphold professional standards, and preserve clinical affiliation agreements.

Policy: Leaving Assigned Clinical Rotation Areas

To maintain the integrity of clinical education and ensure patient safety, students are **not permitted to leave their assigned clinical area** during scheduled clinical hours without prior approval.
Guidelines:

1. **Authorization Required:**
   Students must obtain permission from the **Clinical Coordinator**, and the **designated Clinical Preceptor** before leaving their assigned clinical area for any reason.

2. **Lunch Breaks:**
   Lunch periods will be assigned by the **clinical preceptor** based on the workload of the assigned area. (Refer to the **Lunch Break Policy** for additional details.)

3. **End-of-Day Expectations:**
   Students must remain in their assigned area until:
   - All **patient care responsibilities** are completed.
   - All **required clerical duties** are finished.
   - They are officially dismissed by the clinical preceptor.

4. **Disciplinary Action:**
   Leaving the clinical area without proper authorization will result in **disciplinary action**, up to and including **program expulsion**.

Policy: Travel Requirements for Clinical Rotations

To ensure a diverse and comprehensive clinical education, students in the Surgical Technology Program are required to attend off-campus clinical rotations at various affiliated healthcare facilities.

- Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from these clinical sites.
- Students must comply with all parking regulations at clinical sites, including payment for any required parking privileges or permits.
- Augusta Technical College and the Surgical Technology Program are not liable for any accidents, injuries, or incidents that may occur during travel to or from clinical assignments.

Participation in off-campus rotations is a mandatory component of the program and is essential for meeting clinical education objectives.

Policy: Clinical Case Logs

The Surgical Technology Program adheres to all accreditation standards and requirements as outlined by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST), the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA), and the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA).

Students are required to maintain accurate and up-to-date clinical case logs to document the volume and variety of surgical procedures they participate in. These logs serve as verification of clinical experience and educational activities.

Procedure:

1. **Daily Documentation**
   Students must carry their clinical case logs with them during all clinical rotation activities. It is the student's responsibility to update these logs daily, accurately recording all procedures observed, assisted with, or performed.

2. **Weekly Submission**
   Clinical case logs must be submitted on a weekly basis. Students are responsible for retaining a personal copy of all submitted records. These logs become part of the student's permanent academic file.

Note: Any falsification of clinical documentation will result in immediate dismissal from the program, with no opportunity for re-enrollment.

3. **Faculty Review**
   The Clinical Coordinator and designated clinical faculty will regularly review student case logs to ensure compliance with program policies and accreditation standards.

Refer to the **Clinical Point Deductions Policy** for details on penalties related to incomplete or inaccurate documentation.

Policy: Clinical Reprimands

The Surgical Technology Program enforces all clinical policies as outlined in the Student Handbook. Violations of these policies will result in documented disciplinary action, which may include verbal warnings, written reprimands, or more severe consequences depending on the nature of the infraction.

Each clinical policy includes a defined penalty for noncompliance. All disciplinary actions are subject to the program's **Due Process Policy**, and students have the right to appeal. Clinical reprimands will negatively impact the student's clinical grade.

Procedure:

1. **Issuance of Reprimands**
   When a clinical policy is violated, the student may receive a written reprimand or face other disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal from the program, based on the severity of the violation.

2. **Progressive Discipline**
   - Upon receiving **two reprimands** within the same semester, the student's final clinical grade will be reduced by **one letter grade**.
   - A **third reprimand** will result in **dismissal from the program**.

3. **Administrative Review**
   After any reprimand is issued, the Program Director will be notified. A formal meeting will be

scheduled with the student, the Clinical Coordinator, and the Program Director to review the student's performance, discuss educational goals, and assess the feasibility of continued enrollment.

4. **Clinical Oversight**
   The **Site Clinical Coordinator** is responsible for direct supervision of students and monitoring adherence to clinical policies. Site Coordinators are authorized to issue reprimands in accordance with program guidelines. The **Clinical Coordinator** will oversee all site-level supervision and ensure consistency in policy enforcement.

Policy: Student Supervision

The clinical education component of the Surgical Technology Program is a structured, competency-based experience that complements the didactic curriculum. It is designed to provide students with hands-on opportunities to meet both mandatory and elective competencies as required by the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA).

Clinical education is conducted under the direct supervision of qualified professionals, including certified surgical technologists, clinical coordinators, clinical supervisors, and adjunct clinical faculty. These individuals are responsible for guiding students through clinical experiences while ensuring patient safety and adherence to professional standards.

The presence of students in clinical settings is strictly educational and is not intended to replace or supplement the work of paid technical staff.

Policy: Incomplete Clinical Courses

In accordance with Augusta Technical College policy, a grade of **"I" (Incomplete)** may be assigned when a student is unable to complete all required coursework by the end of the semester, provided that prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. As stated in the College Catalog:

> **"I" Incomplete** – *Assigned by special arrangement with the instructor to a student who has not completed all required coursework by the end of the semester. This grade converts to an "F" if another grade is not submitted by midterm of the following semester.*

Incomplete clinical courses have become an ongoing concern. To address this, the Surgical Technology Program has established the following procedures and expectations:

Procedure:

1. **Course Requirements**
   On the first day of each semester, students receive a course syllabus outlining the minimum

requirements for successful completion of the clinical course, including the number of clinical hours mandated by the Technical College System of Georgia.

2. **Requesting an Incomplete Grade**
   - A grade of "I" will only be considered if the student submits a **written request** for a formal meeting with both the **Clinical Coordinator** and the **Program Director**.
   - This request must be submitted **at least three weeks prior** to the end of the clinical course.
   - The Program Director has sole discretion in determining whether a grade of "I" will be granted, based on a thorough review of the student's clinical records and progress.

3. **Attendance and Progress**
   - Students are responsible for maintaining regular attendance and completing clinical case logs at an appropriate rate.
   - Failure to demonstrate consistent clinical progress or to communicate performance concerns may result in denial of an incomplete grade.
   - Students experiencing difficulties must notify the Clinical Coordinator and Program Director promptly to arrange for remedial support.

4. **Impact of an Incomplete Grade**
   - If an "I" is granted, the final clinical course grade will be **reduced by one letter grade** upon completion of the required hours or competencies.
   - Students will **not be permitted to begin the next semester** until all incomplete requirements are fulfilled.
   - If the outstanding requirements are not completed within **seven days of the new semester**, the student will be **dismissed from the program** and must reapply for admission in the following academic year.

Policy: Personal Medical Emergencies and Incomplete Course Work

In the event a student experiences a significant personal medical emergency that results in a temporary interruption of attendance, a grade of **"I" (Incomplete)** may be assigned for the affected course(s) if the required work is not completed by the end of the current semester. If an extended absence is necessary, the student will be encouraged to withdraw from the program and return when they are able to resume and complete the course requirements.

This policy is not intended as a blanket provision; each case will be evaluated individually and managed at the discretion of the **Program Director**.

Procedure:
1. **Notification**
   The student must notify the **Program Director** as soon as possible regarding the nature of the medical emergency and provide an estimated recovery timeline as specified by their physician.
2. **Medical Documentation**
   The student must submit documentation from their physician indicating the date they are cleared to

return to class and clinical activities, along with any necessary accommodations or duty restrictions.

3. **Assignment of Incomplete Grade**
   If all missed clinical time is not completed by the end of the semester, a grade of **"I"** will be submitted. In accordance with Augusta Technical College policy, the student must complete all outstanding requirements by **midterm of the following semester**.

4. **Make-Up Schedule**
   Upon return, the student will meet with the **Clinical Coordinator** to develop a written schedule for making up missed clinical hours and competencies.

5. **Failure to Complete Requirements**
   If the student does not complete the required clinical hours by midterm of the next semester, the **"I"** will convert to a final grade of **"F"** for the course.

Policy: Pregnancy and Voluntary Disclosure

Purpose:

To ensure the safety and well-being of pregnant students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program while maintaining compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations. This policy aims to support students in continuing their education and clinical training safely throughout pregnancy.

Policy Statement:

The Surgical Technology Program complies with all federal and state regulations regarding voluntary disclosure of pregnancy. The program is committed to protecting both the health of the student and the developing fetus, including minimizing exposure to potential hazards such as radiation.

Disclosure of pregnancy is **strictly voluntary**. However, students are encouraged to notify the **Program Director in writing** if they become pregnant or suspect pregnancy, so that appropriate accommodation and protection can be implemented.

Procedure:

1. **Voluntary Disclosure**
   - If a student chooses to disclose her pregnancy, she must submit written notification including the estimated date of conception and expected due date. A disclosure form is available for convenience.

2. **Initial Response and Safety Coordination**
   - Upon disclosure, the **Clinical Coordinator** will notify the **OR Supervisor** to ensure a safe clinical environment.
   - The student must provide documentation from her **physician** indicating her ability to continue in both didactic and clinical activities, including any restrictions or accommodations.

3. **Educational Planning**

- Once medical clearance is received, the student will meet with the **Program Director** and **Clinical Coordinator** to discuss educational options. Each case will be managed individually. Options may include:
    - Continuing in both didactic and clinical components without schedule changes.
    - Adjusting clinical assignments to minimize risk (e.g., radiation exposure).
    - Monitoring fetal exposure and re-evaluating clinical participation if necessary.
4. **Radiation Safety and Clinical Restrictions**
    - During any x-ray exposure, the pregnant student must remain behind fixed protective barriers or outside the operating room.
    - No declared pregnant student will be forced to take a leave of absence unless medically required by her physician.
    - The student, in consultation with her physician, Program Director, and Clinical Coordinator, will determine the most appropriate educational path.
5. **Postpartum Return and Make-Up Requirements**
    - After delivery, the student will be assigned to any missed clinical areas to complete the required competencies.
    - All missed clinical hours must be made up before graduation certification (see Clinical Make-Up Policy).
    - Upon return, the student will resume her studies without prejudice. All academic and clinical standards, including attendance, must still be met.
6. **Undeclaring Pregnancy**
    - A student may choose to "undeclare" her pregnancy at any time by submitting a written statement to the Program Director. A form is available for this purpose.

Program Responsibilities:
- Ensure a safe clinical environment for pregnant students.
- Notify the OR Supervisor of any declared pregnancy.
- Review with the student:
    - Potential risks of in-utero exposure.
    - Required safety measures throughout the pregnancy.

Student Responsibilities:
- Follow all safety precautions and protective measures.
- Continue in the program (pending physician approval) and perform duties within established safety guidelines.
- Immediately report any unsafe conditions to the Program Director or Clinical Coordinator.

Policy: Telephone Calls

To maintain professionalism and minimize disruptions in the clinical environment, students are prohibited from making or receiving personal telephone calls while in clinical areas.
- Personal calls may only be made during designated **lunch or break periods**.

- In the event of an emergency, the **school office** will relay urgent messages to the appropriate instructor, who will then notify the student.

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include **program suspension** for initial offenses and **program dismissal** for repeated violations.

Allied Health Sciences & Nursing Clinical Guidelines

Student Uniform and Professional Appearance

Students in the Surgical Technology Program are expected to maintain a professional appearance that reflects the standards of Augusta Technical College and the healthcare profession. Uniforms must be worn with pride and in accordance with infection control and patient safety guidelines.

Uniform Standards:

1. **Identification**
   - The Augusta Tech badge must always be visible, including when wearing hospital-issued scrubs.
2. **Uniform Condition**
   - Students must arrive early at clinical sites in a **clean, well-pressed uniform**.
   - **Uniform inspections** will be conducted. Failure to meet standards may require the purchase of new uniforms.
3. **Undergarments**
   - No printed undergarments or inappropriate styles (e.g., string bikinis) are permitted.
4. **Hosiery and Socks**
   - **Females**: Only plain white or black hosiery/socks without designs, runs, or holes. Support stockings are recommended.
   - **Males**: Plain white or black socks only.
5. **Footwear**
   - Shoes must be **black**, clean, and polished. Shoelaces should be clean or replaced as needed.
6. **Hair and Grooming**
   - Hair must be **clean, neat, and off the collar**. Use minimal accessories. Buns, braids, or secure ponytails are recommended for long hair.
7. **Fragrance and Hygiene**
   - No perfume, cologne, or scented lotions.
   - Use effective deodorant and maintain excellent oral hygiene.
   - **Gum chewing is prohibited**; discreet breath mints are allowed.
   - **Visible "passion marks" (hickeys)** are not permitted. Students will be dismissed from clinic until such marks are no longer visible (see Attendance Policy).
8. **Makeup and Accessories**
   - Makeup should be **minimal and professional**.
   - **Jewelry of any kind** (including rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and facial piercings) is **not permitted** in the Operating Room.
   - **Artificial nails, nail polish, nail enhancements, false eyelashes, and eyelash extensions** are prohibited.

9. **Electronic Devices**
    - No personal electronics (e.g., iPods, beepers, cell phones) are allowed in clinical areas.
    - For emergencies, the family should contact the **Allied Health Administrative Assistant at 706-771-4175**.
10. **Required Clinical Tools**
- Students must bring:
    - Black ink pen
    - Surgical Pocket Guide
    - Notepad
    - Clinical log
    - Preceptor evaluation form
    - Timecard
    - A small coin purse (recommended for incidentals)
11. **Workshops and Orientations**
- Students must wear the official school uniform when attending clinical workshops or orientations.
-
  "Less is best" – Avoid accessories. Wear your uniform with pride, as a representative of Augusta Technical College, the surgical technology profession, and your peers.

Conduct While in Clinical

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and adhere to all policies and procedures of their assigned clinical facility. The following guidelines are designed to ensure safety, accountability, and a positive learning environment:

General Expectations
- Students must comply with all **hospital rules, safety protocols, emergency codes, and infection control practices**. These will be reviewed during clinical orientation.
- Students must arrive at the clinical site **at least 30 minutes early**. Tardiness or absence must be reported to both the clinical site and the program instructor.
- Students should eat prior to arrival to prevent nausea or dizziness during clinical activities.
- Students are **not permitted in clinical areas unless officially assigned**. Social visits to classmates during clinical hours are prohibited. Visitors must wait in the **lobby** and are not allowed in clinical areas.

Health and Safety Compliance
- Students must have all **required health documentation** completed and on file before participating in clinical rotations.
- **Pregnant students** must submit a signed statement from their physician confirming their ability to participate in both classroom and clinical activities.

- In the event of **exposure to bloodborne or airborne pathogens**, students must follow the procedures outlined in the **Bloodborne Pathogen Policy**.

Professional Conduct and Discipline
- Students must follow all **parking regulations** at clinical sites.
- If a student violates clinical conduct expectations, they may be **removed from the clinical site**. A formal meeting with the **Clinical Coordinator and Program Director** will be scheduled for the following day.

Removal from a clinical site will result in dismissal from the program.
- **Punctuality is mandatory**. Students arriving more than **15 minutes late** will be sent home. Leaving more than **15 minutes early** will result in a **grade deduction** (see Clinical Point Deduction Policy).
- Students are **strongly discouraged from leaving the clinical site for lunch** due to time constraints. Meals may be brought from home or purchased in the hospital cafeteria.
- **Smoking and vaping are prohibited** at all clinical facilities. Violations will be addressed according to the facility's disciplinary policy.

Professionalism and Evaluation
- Student behavior, attendance, and workplace interactions will be reflected in both the **work ethics grade** and **clinical evaluation**.
- Students must always maintain a professional demeanor, demonstrating respect for patients, staff, and peers.

Health and Safety

Policy: Clinical Environment Cleanliness and Food Safety

Cleanliness and Stocking Responsibilities

Students are expected to maintain a clean, organized, and well-stocked environment in their assigned clinical areas. This includes:

- **Stocking rooms with necessary supplies**
- **Replenishing linen**
- **Maintaining general cleanliness and readiness of the operating room**

Specific duties will be assigned by the **supervising surgical technologist** and/or the **designated clinical coordinator** at the facility. These responsibilities are essential to supporting patient safety, infection control, and the overall efficiency of the surgical team.

Food and Beverage Policy

To comply with **OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standards** and hospital infection control protocols:

- **Eating or drinking in patient care areas is prohibited.**
- Food and beverages may only be consumed in **designated break areas** within the hospital.
- Each clinical coordinator will inform students of the appropriate locations for meals and breaks.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action and jeopardize the student's clinical standing.

Policy: Student Injury During Clinical Assignments

In the event a student is injured while performing clinical duties, immediate and appropriate action must be taken to ensure the student's safety and compliance with Augusta Technical College and clinical site protocols.

1. Life- or Limb-Threatening Injuries

If a student experiences severe injury (e.g., significant bleeding, unconsciousness, or other critical conditions):

- The **clinical site will immediately transport the student to the Emergency Department** for evaluation and initial treatment.
- The **Clinical Coordinator must be notified immediately**.
- The student must be **medically evaluated on the same day** as the incident.
- The student is responsible for following all recommended **follow-up care and treatment**.

Failure to comply with follow-up care releases Augusta Technical College, the Surgical Technology Program, and the clinical facility from liability.

2. Non-Life-Threatening Injuries or Bloodborne/Airborne Exposure

In the event of a **needle stick, bloodborne pathogen exposure, or other non-critical injury**:

- The student must **immediately notify the clinical site supervisor and the Clinical Coordinator**.
- The student will be directed to the **Program Director's office** to complete the required incident documentation.
- The student will then be referred to an **approved medical facility** for evaluation and/or blood testing, in accordance with the **Augusta Technical College Exposure Control Plan**.
- The Program Director will contact the medical facility to ensure a **prompt appointment**.
- Upon arrival, the student must **identify themselves as an Augusta Technical College student**.
- **Fees for services** at the designated facility are typically covered by the **student accident insurance policy**. If the student chooses another facility, they are responsible for filing their own insurance claims and covering any uncovered costs.

3. Documentation and Return to Clinical
- **Accident/incident forms** must be completed and submitted to the **Augusta Technical College Business Office within 24 hours** of the incident.
- The student may not return to clinical or classroom activities until they are **medically cleared in writing by a licensed physician**.
- All missed clinical hours, and coursework must be made up in accordance with current **program policies**.

Policy: Hospital Equipment & Supplies

Hospital equipment and supplies are to be used **solely for their intended clinical purposes**. Under no circumstances may students remove any equipment or supplies from the hospital premises.
All equipment and supplies must be:
- **Used appropriately and responsibly**
- **Cleaned and returned** to their designated location immediately following the completion of each surgical procedure

Any misuse, mishandling, or unauthorized removal of hospital property is considered a serious violation of professional conduct and will result in **immediate dismissal from the program**.

Helpful Internet Websites

www.augustatech.edu	Augusta Technical College
www.google.com	Google
www.yahoo.com	Yahoo
www.orlive.com	Live Surgeries
www.osap.org/resources/cdcwb	Office Safety and Asepsis
http://cdc.gov/wonder	Center for Disease Control
www.ast.org	Association of Surgical Technology
www.arcstsa.org	Accreditation Review Council on ST & SA
www.caahep.org	CAAHEP
www.nbstsa.org	NBSTSA
www.myhspa.org	Central Sterile Processing
www.SynthesSimulation.com	Synthes Instrumentation
www.Jnjgate.com	Ethicon
www.webMD.com	Pharmacy Search Engine
www.edheads.org	Practice Surgeries

AST Core Curriculum 7ᵗʰ ed. Clinical Guidelines

SURGICAL ROTATION CASE REQUIREMENTS

Objectives: The learner will:

1. Describe the purpose of the observation role.
2. Develop professional competency by performing in the scrub role during an arranged clinical experience.
3. Evaluate the development of professionalism throughout clinical experiences using various methods.
4. Utilize sufficient documentation for verifying cases and roles performed.
5. Demonstrate procedural proficiency by completing a minimum of 120 surgical cases.

Content:

I. Role definitions
    A. First Scrub Role (FS)
        1. To document a case in the FS role, the student shall perform the following duties during any given surgical procedure with proficiency:
            a) Verify supplies and equipment
            b) Set up the sterile field
                1) Instruments
                2) Medication
                3) Supplies
            c) Perform required operative counts
                1) AST guidelines1
                2) Facility policy
            d) Pass instruments and supplies
                1) Anticipate needs
            e) Maintain sterile technique
                1) Recognize sterility breaks
                2) Correct sterility breaks
                3) Document as needed
    B. Second Scrub Role (SS)
        1. The SS role is defined as a student who has not met all criteria for the FS role but actively participates in the surgical procedure in its entirety by completing any of the following:
            a) Assistance with diagnostic endoscopy

b) Assistance with vaginal delivery

c) Cutting suture

d) Providing camera assistance

e) Retracting

f) Sponging

g) Suctioning

C. Observation Role (O)

1. The O role is defined as a student who has not met the FS or SS criteria. The student is observing a case in either the sterile or nonsterile role. Observation cases cannot be applied to the required 120 case count but must be documented.

II. Case requirements – A student must complete a minimum of 120 cases as delineated below: (refer to diagram A)

A. General surgery

1. A student must complete a minimum of 30 cases in General Surgery.

a) 20 of these cases must be performed in the FS role.

b) The remaining 10 cases may be performed in either the FS or SS role.

B. Specialty surgery

1. A student must complete a minimum of 90 cases in various surgical specialties, excluding General Surgery.

a) A minimum of 60 cases must be performed in the FS role and distributed amongst a minimum of four surgical specialties.

1) A minimum of ten cases in four different specialties must be completed in the FS role (40 cases total).

2) The additional 20 cases in the FS role may be distributed amongst any one surgical specialty or multiple surgical specialties.

b) The remaining 30 cases may be performed in any surgical specialty in either the FS or SS role.

2. Surgical specialties (excluding General Surgery)

a) Cardiothoracic

b) Genitourinary

c) Neurologic

d) Obstetric and gynecologic

e) Orthopedic

f) Otorhinolaryngologic

g) Ophthalmologic

h) Oral Maxillofacial

i) Peripheral vascular

j) Plastics and reconstructive

k) Procurement and transplant

III. Counting cases

A. Cases may be counted according to surgical specialty
as defined in the core curriculum.

1. One pathology is counted as one procedure.

Example:

A 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 and one case.

2. Counting more than one case on the same patient.

Example:

A trauma patient requires a splenectomy and repair of a LeFort I
fracture. Two cases can be counted and documented since the
splenectomy is general surgery, and the LeFort I repair is an oral
maxillofacial surgical specialty.

Example:

A procedure that requires different set-ups and includes
different specialties may be counted as separate cases. A
mastectomy procedure (general surgery) followed with immediate
reconstruction or augmentation (plastics and reconstruction) are
counted as separate cases.

3. Diagnostic vs. operative endoscopy cases

a) An endoscopy classified as a semi-critical procedure is
considered a diagnostic case.

b) An endoscopy classified as a critical procedure is
considered an operative case.

c) Diagnostic and operative cases will be counted according to specialty.

d) Diagnostic cases are counted in the SS role up to a total of ten of the required 120 cases.

Example:

A cystoscopy is a diagnostic procedure. If an adjunct procedure is performed, it is considered operative; therefore, a cystoscopy with ureteral stent placement is an operative procedure.

B. Vaginal delivery cases are counted in the SS role of the OB/GYN specialty, up to a total of five of the required 120.

IV. Documentation

    A. Case performed

    B. Role performed

    C. Performance evaluations

    D. Verification by program director

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*The surgical technology program is required to verify through the surgical rotation documentation the students' progression in the scrub role in surgical procedures of increased complexity as he/she moves towards entry-level graduate competency.

Diagram A: Surgical Case Requirements

*The numbers shown below reflect the **minimum** case requirements and surgical specialties.*

```
                              ┌─────────┐
                              │  20 FS  │
               ┌────────────┐ └─────────┘
        ──────▶│ 30 General │─────▶
               └────────────┘ ┌─────────┐
┌────────┐                    │ 10 FS/SS│
│  120   │                    └─────────┘
│ Total  │
│ Cases  │                                      ┌─────────┐
│        │                                      │  10 FS* │
│        │                                      └─────────┘
│        │    ┌─────────────┐   ┌────────┐      ┌─────────┐
└────────┘───▶│ 90 Specialty│──▶│ 60 FS  │─────▶│  10 FS* │
               └─────────────┘   └────────┘      └─────────┘
                     │                            ┌─────────┐
                     ▼                            │  10 FS* │
               ┌────────────┐                     └─────────┘
               │  30 FS/SS  │                     ┌─────────┐
               └────────────┘                     │  10 FS* │
                                                  └─────────┘
                                                  ┌───────────────┐
                                                  │ 20 FS your choice │
                                                  └───────────────┘
```
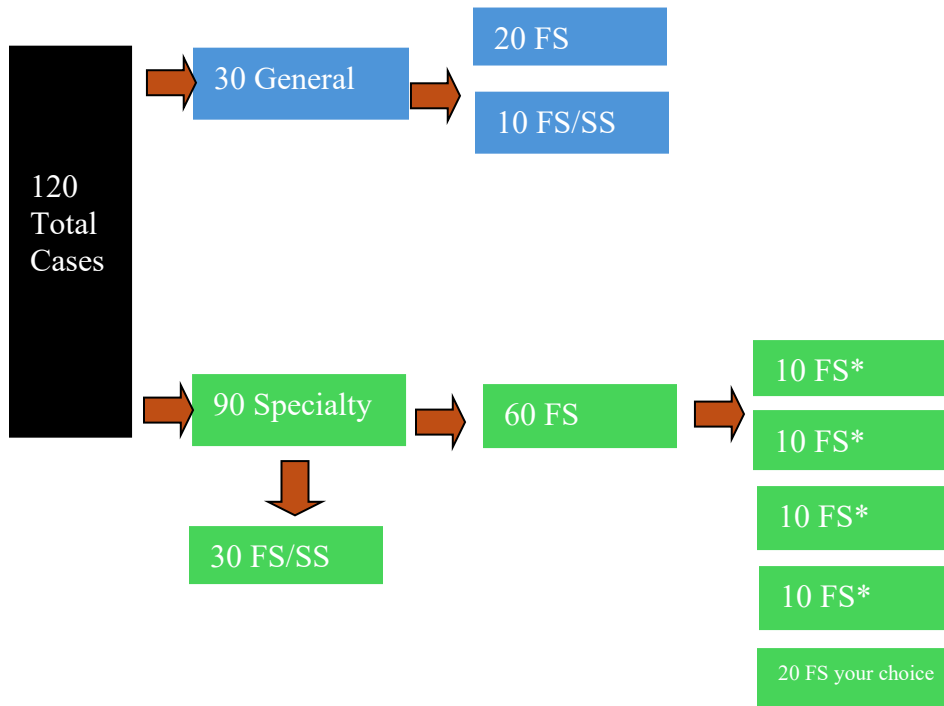
Program Forms

Student Voluntary Pregnancy Declaration Form

Withdrawal of Declaration of Pregnancy Form

Application for Readmission

Student Handbook - Acknowledgement Form

Student Emergency Information Form

Clinical Point-Based Disciplinary Guidelines

Clinical Point-Based Disciplinary Guidelines - Acknowledgement Form

AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Student Voluntary Pregnancy Declaration

Student Name: _____

Date of Declaration: _____

In accordance with current State regulations, I, _____, voluntarily declare that I am pregnant.

☐ Estimated Date of Conception: _____

☐ Estimated Due Date: _____

By making this declaration, I request the protections provided under applicable regulations. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Surgical Technology Program's policy on pregnancy and agree to comply with all related rules and procedures.

Student Signature: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Declaration

Program Director Signature: _____

Date of Receipt: _____

Clinical Coordinator Signature: _____

Date of Receipt: _____

Note: A copy of this completed form will be provided to the student after all signatures are obtained. The original will be retained in the student's administrative file.

AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Withdrawal of Declaration of Pregnancy Form

I, _____, wish to withdraw my declaration of pregnancy. If pregnant, but formally withdrawing declaration of pregnancy, I hereby release Augusta Technical College, the Surgical Technology program, and any clinical facility of any responsibility for embryo/fetal demise.

_____   _____

Student signature: date:

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Withdrawal of Pregnancy Declaration:

_____   _____

Program Director signature: date of receipt:

_____   _____

Clinical Coordinator signature: date of receipt:

I, _____, witnessed the above signatures being affixed to this document.

_____

Witness Signature   Date

Note: the student will receive a copy of this declaration once all signatures are obtained. The original will be maintained in the student's administrative file.

AUGUSTA TECH
School of
Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Application for Readmission

Name _____
            (Last)   (First)   (Middle)

Address _____

_____

_____

Student ID# 900-_____   Telephone _____

Email _____

Date of Withdrawal: Semester _____ Year _____

Desired Reentry: Semester _____ Year _____

Reason for Withdrawing:

□ Academic Failure   □ Medical

□ Financial   □ Other (explain)

_____

_____

_____

_____

I certify that all information on this application is correct.

_____
            (Signature)   (Date)

Complete and return to the Program Director of the Surgical Technology Program (Summerville Site: POB - ofc. 233).

Augusta Technical College is an Equal Access/Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.
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For Administrative Use Only:
      □ Accepted for Re-admission for _____ Semester
      □ Not Accepted

Program Director _____ Date _____

AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I, _____ acknowledge by signing this document that:

Print Name

1. I have thoroughly reviewed and understood the contents of the Surgical Technology Student Handbook.
2. I was given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the handbook, and all my questions were answered to my satisfaction.
3. I agree to comply with all policies outlined in the handbook and understand that these policies and procedures will be enforced if not followed.
4. I acknowledge and will adhere to the Student Work Policy, including the understanding that I will not receive compensation for clinical experiences.
5. I understand that a background check and a 10-panel drug screening are required prior to beginning clinical rotations.
6. I have read the National Technical Standards included in the handbook and confirm that I can meet these standards, with or without reasonable accommodations.

_____

Student Signature

Signed this _____ day of _____ , 20 _____

AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Student Emergency Information

Please Print Clearly.

Name: _____
        (Last)   (First)   (MI)   (Prefer to be called)

Student ID: 900-_____

Mailing Address: _____

_____
        (City)   (State)   (Zip code)

 Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

In case of emergency:

Hospital Preference: _____

Primary Care Physician: _____

The following emergency contacts must be able to make decisions if you are incapacitated.

Emergency Contact #1: _____
                            (Full Name)   (Contact Number)   (Relationship)

Emergency Contact #2: _____
                            (Full Name)   (Contact Number)   (Relationship)

AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Clinical Point-Based Disciplinary System

-------- 30 Points – Critical Incident--------

- Any serious offense that would result in termination from a professional position.

--------10 Points – Major Infractions--------

- Lost, destroyed, or incorrectly completed timecard.

- Failure to properly report an absence (You must notify both the clinical site and your clinical instructor)

- Unexcused absence

--------5 Points – Minor Infractions--------

- Clocking in more than 5 minutes before your scheduled start time
  (Example: If your shift begins at 7:00 AM, you may clock in starting at 6:55 AM—no earlier.)

- Arriving more than 5 minutes late

- Staying beyond your assigned shift without prior approval

- Taking a lunch break longer than 30 minutes

- Using a cell phone outside of designated break times or areas (only permitted during breaks and in the break room—not in the OR)

- Unauthorized use of hospital phones

- Unauthorized use of hospital computers

- Late submission of required work (due Fridays by 9:00 AM)

- Uniform violations (e.g., missing Augusta Tech ID, wearing jewelry, fake nails, false eyelashes, etc.)

- Eating, drinking, or chewing gum in the Operating Room

- Leaving your assigned work area without permission

- Demonstrating a lack of initiative or motivation

- Inconsistent clinical performance

AUGUSTA TECH
School of Health Sciences

Surgical Technology Program
Clinical Point-Based Disciplinary System Acknowledgement Form

I, _____ acknowledge by signing this form that:

Print Name

1. I have reviewed and understood the contents of the Surgical Technology **Clinical Point-Based Disciplinary System**.

2. I was given the opportunity to ask questions about the document, and all my concerns were addressed to my satisfaction.

3. I agree to follow the policies outlined in the **Clinical Point-Based Disciplinary System** and understand that all procedures will be enforced if not adhered to.

_____

Student Signature

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20 _____.