



Essential Functions for the Surgical Technology Program

In order to complete the surgical technology program curriculum and be prepared for work as surgical technologist, students must be able to meet the program's academic and technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations. The program wishes to ensure that access to its facilities, programs, and services is available to all students, including students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability and Access Resources office (dar@pct.edu or 570-320-5225) immediately to begin confidential conversation about possible accommodations necessary to meet these standards.

Surgical technologists and, by extension, candidates for the Surgical Technology program must possess abilities and skills in six categories: observation, communication, motor, intellectual, behavioral/social, and environmental.

Observation:

- Surgical technologists must adequately acquire, interpret, and assimilate information in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting.
- Surgical technologists must possess adequate skills to perform examinations and detect subtle differences in surface textures.
- Surgical technologists must be able to adequately observe a patient's condition and to discern subtle color changes in tissues, blood, and vital signs.

Communication:

- Surgical technologists must possess strong communication skills to effectively interact in academic and healthcare environments and with patients, their families, and other healthcare professionals. This includes the ability to clearly address patient needs in a prompt and efficient manner.
- Surgical technologists must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in the operating room.
- Surgical technologists must demonstrate effective collaboration through clear communication among surgeons, surgical technologists, and all operating room staff.

Motor:

- Surgical technologists must execute fine motor functions in an appropriate and safe manner in all facets of patient care. Examples include suturing, knot tying, grasping and manipulating delicate tissue, assembling intricate medical devices, threading needles, loading surgical staplers, labeling specimens, and calibrating and operating specialized equipment.
- Surgical technologists must be able to assist with patient positioning and equipment setup using safe and inclusive techniques that accommodate a variety of body types and abilities.
- Surgical technologists must negotiate patient care environments and must be able to move between sterile and non-sterile areas within the operative setting.
- Surgical technologists must be able to meet applicable safety standards for the environment (e.g., perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), transfer patients from litters to beds and vice versa, use fire extinguishers, apply personal protective equipment (PPE), anesthesia monitoring, etc.), and follow universal precaution procedures.



- Surgical technologists must possess the physical stamina to participate in classroom, laboratory, and clinical experiences.
- Surgical technologists must be proficient in safe patient handling techniques, including transfers from wheelchairs, beds, and other equipment to operating tables, while considering the needs of patients with varying levels of consciousness and mobility.
- Surgical technologists must appropriately maneuver heavy equipment such as monitors, laparoscopic equipment, robots, and microscopes; and they must be able to maneuver overhead operating room lights and other various mounted equipment.

Intellectual:

- Surgical technologists should possess strong analytical and problem-solving skills, using a data-driven approach. They must also thrive in a fast-paced surgical environment.
- Surgical technologists must adequately acquire, interpret, and assimilate information presented via a patient's anatomy, organ function, and physiological responses to surgical processes.
- Surgical technologists must demonstrate proficiency in applying a comprehensive skillset to solve problems and deliver patient care in a timely and collaborative manner.

Behavioral and Social:

- Surgical technologists must possess skills to effectively handle and manage prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities and exercise good judgement.
- Surgical technologists must be able to build strong, collaborative, and trusting relationships with patients and healthcare team members. They must be adaptable, empathetic, and ethical team players with strong communication skills, and they should demonstrate a commitment to patient-centered care and thrive in dynamic healthcare environments.

Environmental:

- Surgical technologists must be able to function in an environment that requires the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for infection control. This includes gloves (latex-free options available), masks, protective eyewear, and surgical gowns.
- Surgical technologists must work in laboratory and clinical environments that are not 100% latex free. Additionally, they may be exposed to various chemical solutions and aerosols for pathogen control within the surgical environment.