

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

All students in the Surgical Technology program are expected to meet certain technical standards which are essential for the successful completion of all phases of the program, and which reflect industry requirements and standards. To verify the student's ability to perform these essential functions, students may be required to demonstrate the technical standards below.

Meeting these technical standards does not guarantee employment in this field upon graduation. The ability to meet the program's technical standards does not guarantee a student's eligibility for any certification exams or successful completion of the program. *These requirements apply for the purpose of admission and for continuation in the program.*

The student must demonstrate the following abilities:

Technical Standard	Definition of Standards	Examples
Critical Thinking/ Problem-Solving Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ability is sufficient for clinical judgment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify cause-effect relationships.Plan/control activities (organizational skills)Anticipation of a surgical sequence of events.Ability to make decisions quickly.Ability to respond to the appropriate surgical need in emergency situations.Collect data, prioritize needs, and anticipate reactions.
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Abilities are sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish rapport with clients, instructors, staff, colleagues, and groups.Employ appropriate ethical, professional, and respectful values while providing care to diverse populations within the healthcare system.Exhibit ethical behavior and exercise good judgment.

Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abilities are sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to enunciate clearly with all surgical personnel. Ability to comprehend surgical team directives. Ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand. Read, write, comprehend, and speak the English language to facilitate communication with instructors, patients, and their family members, and other health care professionals.
Coping Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to cope with stressful situations. Possess coping skills sufficient to maintain composure in stressful situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt rapidly to changing environments and/or stress. Ability to maintain emotional composure.

Mobility/Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical abilities are sufficient to move in one's environment with ease and without restriction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to perform despite the difficulty of the situation at hand. Ability to lift and carry up to 50 pounds. Ability to maintain a minimum of 18 inches from furniture and non-sterile personnel in confined spaces. Able to move around without assistive devices. Able to assist with and/or lift, move, position, and manipulate a patient who is unconscious with/without assistive devices. Digital dexterity, e.g.: able to handle surgical instruments with both left and right hands at an extremely rapid pace, able to supinate and pronate at the wrist. Ability to load and pass sharps (scalpel, suture, needles) and power tools to another individual without causing injury to oneself or others. Ability to stand or sit for prolonged periods of time, without breaks during surgical procedures (4-6 hours or longer). Be able to refrain from nourishment or restroom breaks for prolonged periods of time (4-6 hours or longer).
Auditory Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditory abilities are sufficient to monitor and assess the needs of the surgical team and the patient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to focus on a single source of sound in the presence of other distracting sounds. Ability to hear a muted or low-pitched conversation from several feet away. Normal hearing - a surgical technologist needs to be able to hear and clearly understand masked surgeons and surgical team members
Visual Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in perioperative care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal vision glasses or contact lenses are acceptable. Ability to prepare and implement perioperative care.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate sufficient visual acuity to differentiate between suture strands, and suture needle tips, track needles smaller than an eyelash, discern increments on hypodermic syringes for medication handling and management, and visualize hand signals. • Demonstrate sufficient peripheral vision to anticipate and function while in the sterile surgical environment.
Tactile Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactile ability is sufficient for physical assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between monofilament and multifilament suture strands, and tissue types, and sense potential nicks from sharps through surgical gloves. • Manipulate instruments, supplies, and equipment with speed, dexterity, and good eye-hand coordination.
Olfactory Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olfactory ability sufficient to detect significant environmental and client odors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to detect odors sufficient to maintain environmental safety and patient needs and to tolerate various odors.
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess the ability to tolerate environmental stressors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerate wearing protective equipment (e.g., mask, gown, gloves, glasses, laser, and radiation) • Safely work with potentially harmful chemicals used in health care settings. • Practice Standard Precautions in the clinical setting. • Anticipate exposure to communicable diseases, body fluids, unpleasant sights/odors, and toxic substances.
Emotional/Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess emotional stability sufficient to maintain composure in stressful situations and assume responsibility/accountability for actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to assess a situation rationally and respond accordingly. • Ability to accept constructive criticism and show behavioral change. • Demonstrate honesty and integrity beyond reproach.

In the case of an otherwise qualified individual with a documented disability, appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be made unless doing so would fundamentally alter the essential training elements, cause undue hardship, or produce a direct threat to the safety of the client or student. If there are any reasons why a student may not be able to perform these functions with or without reasonable accommodations, she/he must follow the chain of command.

Students who are identified as having possible latex allergy must be medically evaluated about potential risk and are strongly urged to consider another field since latex is prevalent in the healthcare environment. Students with confirmed latex allergy continue in the program at their own risk. The College assumes no responsibility for exposures and possible resulting student health problems.

A change in your ability to perform any of the Essential Functions must be reported to Ray Flores, Program Director of the Surgical Technology Program at (830) 591-7289 immediately.

OCCUPATIONAL RISKS

As a student in the Surgical Technology program, you may be exposed to various levels of workplace hazards. Hazards for potential exposure include but are not limited to:

- Needle sticks
- Sharp injuries
- Communicable disease
- Chemicals

- Blood and body fluids
- Unpleasant odors
- Electrical hazards
- Hazardous waste materials

- Biological hazards
- Radioactive material
- Infection
- Loud and unpleasant noises
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“Southwest Texas College will abide by the American Disability Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Because the duties of this program are vigorous, if you have a disability, Southwest Texas College encourages, you the applicant, to disclose disability that may necessitate academic accommodations, policy modifications, and/or adaptive equipment that may allow you to participate on an equal basis the functions set forth by this program. Access and Learning Accommodations Office is the indicated office in which applicants can disclose and obtain information regarding accommodations. The Access and Learning Accommodations Applicants are encouraged to self-disclose in a timely manner.”