

**Fall 2012**  
**Surgical Technology**  
**Information Packet**  
**Certificate Program**



**Accredited by:**  
Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs  
(CAAHEP)  
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[www.pvcc.edu/SURpgm](http://www.pvcc.edu/SURpgm)

# *Introduction*

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The PVCC Surgical Technology Certificate Program is designed to provide students with an entry-level career in a health-care field that is rewarding, in demand and provides an opportunity for career advancement.

Surgical technologists currently are in high demand in hospitals in Central Virginia. Surgical Technology is a rapidly growing field. PVCC's program is one of only a few offered in Virginia and the only one available in the Virginia Community College System.

The certificate curriculum is designed to provide graduates the opportunity to become nationally certified as surgical technologists. During the last semester of the program, students take the Certified Surgical Technologist Exam given by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA).

# *Nondiscrimination Statement*

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PVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, disability, veteran status, gender, age or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Vice President for Instruction and Student Services, 501 College Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22902; 434.961.5206.

# *Surgical Technology Program Philosophy*

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The Surgical Technology Certificate Program at PVCC is organized around the belief that as members of the surgical team, surgical technologists participate in the promotion of optimal health for persons of all ages with acute or chronic surgical needs.

Surgical Technology education is a balance of the humanities, sciences, ethical principles and technical skill ability. The curriculum is designed to support the personal and career development of students. As students perform in the operating room, they learn and develop their highest potential in a challenging environment. PVCC's Surgical Technology Certificate Program values the diversity of our students' age, life experiences and cultures as this diversity reflects the society they will serve.

With today's rapidly changing, information-expanding health-care system, students must develop skills and appreciation for life-long learning. For the Surgical Technology Certificate graduate this may include further acquisition of technical skills and knowledge within the work setting and/or pursuit of additional formal education.

# *Surgical Technology Certificate Program Objectives*

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The PVCC Surgical Technology Program prepares graduates to function as an integral member of the surgical team in a structured operating room setting. Through didactic and clinical training, the graduate will:

1. Apply knowledge of normal and pathological anatomy and physiology and the actions of pharmacological agents in order to individualize patient care.
2. Apply principles of asepsis in the establishment and maintenance of the sterile field.
3. Anticipate and respond to the needs of the surgeon in a calm and timely manner to minimize the patient's exposure to surgical and anesthetic stress.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of specific surgical procedures and display dexterity in the use of required instrumentation and supplies.
5. Recognize the importance of teamwork, collaboration and cooperation among members of the surgical team.
6. Perform patient care in an efficient and professional manner.
7. Apply safety practices for patients, self and others.
8. Respect the patient's inherent right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality.
9. Exercise sound judgment and discretion in the technical performance of surgical techniques.
10. Demonstrate awareness of the responsibility for actions with respect to legal and policy limits.

# *Essential Functions and Standards for Successful Performance*

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To successfully complete the classroom and clinical components of the program, the student in the Surgical Technology Program must, either independently or with reasonable accommodation, be able to perform all of the following essential standards and functions of a surgical technologist. Students who are unable to meet these standards are not eligible for admission to the program.

1. **Speech:** Establish interpersonal rapport and communicate verbally and in writing with clients, physicians, peers, family members and the health-care team from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds.
2. **Hearing and Comprehension:** Auditory acuity sufficient to respond to verbal instruction, perceive and interpret various equipment signals, use the telephone, understand and respond appropriately to verbal directions and hear faint body sounds.
3. **Vision:** Visual acuity sufficient to identify and distinguish colors, read handwritten orders and any other handwritten or printed data such as medication records or scales, chart data and provide for the safety of clients' condition by clearly viewing monitors and other equipment in order to correctly interpret data.
4. **Mobility:** Stand and/or walk eight hours daily in the clinical setting. Bend, squat or kneel. Assist in lifting or moving clients of all age groups and weights. Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (move around client to manually compress chest and ventilate). Work with arms fully extended overhead. Lift 50 pounds independently and 125 pounds with assistance.
5. **Manual Dexterity:** Demonstrate eye/hand coordination sufficient to manipulate equipment (syringes, infusion pumps, life support systems) and hand surgeon instruments without contaminating the instrument or sterile field.
6. **Fine Motor Ability:** Ability to use hands for grasping, pushing, pulling and fine manipulation. Have tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and manipulation of equipment.
7. **Mentation:** Ability to remain focused on multiple details and tasks for at least an eight-hour period of time. Assimilate and apply knowledge acquired through lectures, discussions and readings.
8. **Smell:** Olfactory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.
9. **Writing:** Ability to organize thoughts and present them clearly and logically in writing.
10. **Reading:** Ability to read and understand written directions, instructions and comments in both classroom and clinical settings.

## *Health Status*

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All individuals admitted to the Surgical Technology Certificate Program will be required to submit documentation of a complete health assessment by his/her health-care provider. This will include documentation that specific immunizations and tests have been completed. A list of these immunizations may be obtained from the Health and Life Sciences Division Office in the Kluge-Moses Science Building, Room K224A.

## *Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening*

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All PVCC Surgical Technology students must complete the Authorization Form for Background Check and Drug Screening. No other processes may be substituted for this requirement. Forms and information will be mailed to students upon acceptance into the Surgical Technology Certificate Program.

This testing is completed through an outside vendor and all fees will be paid directly to this vendor. The testing will compare findings against the following criteria:

- Adult or child sexual offenses
- Adult, child or elder abuse or neglect
- Assault or battery
- Fraud
- Narcotics or other drugs, including prescription drugs
- Felonies of any type

The vendor will report only whether a student clears or does not clear the criteria listed above. All reports will be returned to the Dean of Health and Life Sciences. In the event that a student is not cleared, the student must make any clarifications directly with the vendor. The student may elect to involve the Dean in any clarification procedures. If no suitable arrangement can be made, the student shall be administratively withdrawn from the Surgical Technology Certificate Program.

## *Program Behavior Expectations*

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The PVCC Surgical Technology Certificate Program reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants if such refusal is considered to be in the best interest of the program. The program will not accept any student who has been dismissed from another college or program due to misconduct, threatening behavior, or who has been determined to be a potential threat. Students may be denied admission to the program if there is sufficient reason to believe that they present a danger to themselves, other members of the college community or clients in the clinical setting.

## *Part-Time Study*

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Students who wish to pursue a part-time course of study should complete the general education course requirements (see next page) prior to applying for admission to the Surgical Technology Program. Depending on the number of courses taken each semester, completion of general education coursework on a part-time basis sometimes takes several years.

# Curriculum for Surgical Technology Certificate Program

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Course Number	Course Title	Credits
<b>General Education Courses</b>		
ENG 111	College Composition I	3
BIO 141	Human Anatomy & Physiology I <sup>1</sup>	4
BIO 142	Human Anatomy & Physiology II <sup>1</sup>	4
SDV 100/101/108	Orientation	1
HLT 141	Introduction to Medical Terminology	2
NAS 185	Microbiology <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>Surgical Technology Courses</b>		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester (Fall)</b>		
SUR 140	Introduction to Surgical Care	4
SUR 145	Fundamentals of Surgical Care	4
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (Spring)</b>		
SUR 250	Surgical Pharmacology	2
SUR 210	Surgical Procedures	8
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Semester (Summer)</b>		
SUR 260	Surgical Technology Clinical Practicum	5
SUR 254	Professional Issues in Surgical Technology	1
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>42</b>
<sup>1</sup> BIO 141, BIO 142 and NAS 185 must be repeated if they were taken more than eight years prior to application for admission to program.		

# *Surgical Technology Program Prerequisites*

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Only applicants who have completed all program prerequisites prior to May 1, 2012 will be eligible for admission.

The following items must be satisfactorily completed in order to be considered for admission to the PVCC Surgical Technology Certificate Program. This is a competitive admissions process with limited enrollment and not all applicants will be granted admission. Completion of these prerequisites and any of the general education courses in the curriculum **does not** guarantee admission.

## **1. Demonstrated competency in reading and writing (eligible to enroll in ENG 111)**

- a. Completion of developmental English courses (ENG 1, 3, 4, 5) OR
- b. COMPASS placement score demonstrating competency in this content OR
- c. Completion of an acceptable college-level composition course with a grade of “C” or better OR
- d. SAT verbal and writing score of 520 or an ACT score of 21

## **2. Demonstrated competency in Algebra**

- a. Completion of developmental math courses (MTH 2, BSK 6, 8 and 9) **within last eight years** OR
- b. COMPASS placement test score **within last eight years** demonstrating competency in this content OR
- c. Completion of an acceptable college-level math course **within the last eight years** (Technical math, statistics, and certain liberal arts math courses will not satisfy this prerequisite.) OR
- d. SAT quantitative score of 480 or ACT score of 20 **within last eight years**

## **3. Demonstrated competency in high school level science**

- a. Completion of high school biology and chemistry courses with a grade of “C” or better OR
- b. Completion of acceptable college-level biology and chemistry courses. Courses such as “consumer chemistry” will not satisfy the chemistry prerequisite OR
- c. Completion of NAS 2 – Foundations of Life Science OR

- d. Completion of NAS 2 challenge exam with a grade of 75% or better
- e. Completion of above courses must be verified by an official transcript

***Please note that students will need to meet the prerequisites for BIO 141/142 before taking those courses.***

#### **4. Curricular GPA of 2.5 or above**

The curricular GPA is the grade point average of all the general education courses (non-SUR courses) listed on the Surgical Technology Certificate curriculum sheet that the student has completed by the application deadline. This would include ENG 111, BIO 141/142, NAS 185, SDV 100/101/108 and HLT 141.

#### **5. Science GPA of 2.0 or above**

The science GPA is the grade point average in the following courses that the student has completed by the application deadline: BIO 141 and NAS 185.

#### **6. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)**

- a. Completion of the TOEFL iBT with a standard score of 84 or above and a minimum speaking score of 26 is required for ALL nonnative English speakers.
- b. These scores are based on recommendations from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing for the level of English proficiency required to perform entry-level nursing safely and effectively.
- c. Any nonnative English speakers who do not take the TOEFL and are determined to be unable to understand and speak English at the required proficiency will be dismissed from the Surgical Technology Certificate Program.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to meet with an academic advisor at his/her home college (PVCC, LFCC or VWCC). An intake interview with this advisor must take place no later than April 1 in order to be considered for fall admission. During the interview, the advisor will review your academic records to ensure that you have met the program prerequisites. In addition, the advisor will recommend appropriate courses to be taken prior to entry into the Surgical Technology Program.

# *Factors Considered for Admission Decisions*

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Admission to the Surgical Technology Program is competitive and will be based on a ranking system that includes student performance on all of the Surgical Technology Program prerequisites. Each student's past and potential educational achievement is measured against all other students applying. Applicants must submit all official documentation and demonstrate minimum requirements for consideration by the posted deadline to be considered for acceptance. Coursework in progress at time of deadline will not be considered during the application process. Students meeting all of the minimum requirements for admission are not guaranteed acceptance. Priority for admission is given to students who are residents of the PVCC service region (Albemarle, Buckingham, Charlottesville, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson). Applicants living in the service areas for Lord Fairfax Community College and Virginia Western Community College and planning to complete the Surgical Technology Program at either of those colleges will receive priority for admission at those sites.

Due to the large number of applicants, Surgical Technology Program personnel are not able to schedule individual appointments to review application documents. In an effort to provide students with the most current and comprehensive data, information sessions are held throughout the fall and early spring semesters. During these sessions, the Program Director will review the application process, prerequisites, and the competitive ranking criteria. All applicants are highly encouraged to attend one of these sessions. This information will also be available as an online presentation. In addition, there are advisors available in PVCC's Admissions and Advising Center.

# *Evaluation Process*

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1. Surgical technology applicants complete online Surgical Technology Program application and complete all required prerequisites prior to May 1 deadline. Applications or documentation received after the deadline will not be considered. THIS PROGRAM APPLICATION IS IN ADDITION TO THE PVCC COLLEGE APPLICATION.
2. All application documents are compiled by division and admissions office personnel.
3. The Program Director conducts a preliminary screening of all applicants to determine those who have met the minimum prerequisites and thus are eligible for admission.
4. The Program Director reviews the applications and academic records of eligible candidates.
5. Applicants are ranked according to the following criteria in order of importance:
  - a. The number of general education courses completed by the application deadline
  - b. The GPA earned in those completed courses
  - c. The number of science courses completed by the application deadline (BIO 141, BIO 142, NAS 185). These courses must be completed within the last eight years.
  - d. The GPA earned in those completed science courses
6. Letters to all applicants will be mailed the week of June 18, 2012.
  - a. Applicants will be accepted, placed on the waiting list or not accepted. Notification of status will be **posted on the Surgical Technology application Web site** ([www.pvcc.edu/surgtech](http://www.pvcc.edu/surgtech)) on June 18, 2012.
  - b. A waiting list of qualified applicants will be maintained in the event that selected students are not able to accept their place in the program. The waiting list will only be maintained until the first week of August 2012, and is not continued from year to year. Any student not admitted for their desired year will have to reapply for admission in subsequent years.
  - c. Students seeking readmission into the program or advanced placement transfers will be considered on a space-available basis. Applicants for readmission must have submitted a letter requesting readmission by **November 15** for spring readmission and **April 15** for summer readmission. Students desiring readmission into SUR 140 must apply as new applicants.

7. Applicants selected for admission will be required to attend an operating room visit prior to final admission decision. These visits are designed to provide the applicant with a firsthand view of the surgical technologist's role and for the clinical personnel to provide input about the applicant's promptness and demonstrated interest in the operating room activities. The visits will be scheduled by the Program Director and/or clinical site coordinators.



## *Frequently Asked Questions*

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### **1. WHAT DOES A SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST DO?**

Surgical technologists are educated specifically to assist in surgical procedures. Surgical technologists handle the instruments, supplies, and equipment necessary during the surgical procedure. They have an understanding of the procedure being performed in order to anticipate the needs of the surgeon. They must have the necessary knowledge and ability to ensure quality patient care during the operative procedure and are responsible for maintenance of the sterile field. PVCC's Surgical Technology Certificate Program is designed to prepare students to perform as a member of the surgical team during all phases of surgery.

### **2. IS THIS A PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME PROGRAM?**

Students can arrange their schedule to accommodate a part-time or full-time course load. Students accepted into the program will work with the Surgical Technology Program director to plan their curriculum. Note that most courses are offered sequentially and not every semester.

### **3. HOW LONG WILL THE PROGRAM TAKE?**

Students' current time commitments and courses/requirements already completed will determine how many semesters it will take to finish the program. A full-time student may complete the program in three semesters (12 months).

### **4. WHERE WILL I GET MY CLINICAL EXPERIENCES?**

A variety of clinical sites are used to ensure all students can participate in required procedures. During all scheduled clinical experiences, students are under the direct supervision of an assigned clinical preceptor. Clinical experiences may be scheduled at the following sites: Martha Jefferson Hospital, The University of Virginia Health System, Augusta Medical Center, Culpeper Regional Hospital, and the University of Virginia Outpatient Surgery Center. Students enrolled through Virginia Western Community College will get their clinical experiences at Lewis-Gale Hospital in Salem and Montgomery Regional Hospital in Blacksburg, as well as other hospitals in the region depending on availability. Clinical sites for Lord Fairfax Community College students are Winchester Medical Center and Fauquier Hospital, as well as other regional facilities depending on availability.

**5. HOW DO I GET TO CLASS/CLINICAL SITES?**

Students are responsible for their own transportation to both classroom and clinical sites.

**6. WILL I AUTOMATICALLY BE HIRED BY ONE OF THE REGIONAL HEALTH-CARE PARTNERS WHEN I FINISH THE PROGRAM?**

Program students will have a priority for any vacancies at the sponsoring training facilities, but the employers will make hiring decisions based on their criteria.

**7. WILL I BE NATIONALLY CERTIFIED AS A SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST WHEN I COMPLETE THE PROGRAM?**

The Certified Surgical Technologist Exam given by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) must be passed to become a certified surgical technologist. However, during the last semester of the program, students will have the opportunity to take this exam.

**8. HOW MUCH DOES A SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST MAKE?**

The salary range for an entry-level surgical technologist is roughly \$28,000-\$42,000, depending on experience and geographic area. According to the Association of Surgical Technologists, the average surgical technologist hourly rate in Virginia is \$19.37.

**9. IS THERE ROOM FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT?**

With continued education, surgical technology is a stepping stone to numerous opportunities, such as a medical sales representative, central sterile supply manager, anesthesia technician, surgical first assistant and nurse.

**10. ARE THERE PREREQUISITES FOR ADMISSION?**

Yes, certain required general education courses have prerequisites that must be completed before admission into the Surgical Technology Program is possible. See pages 8 and 9 of this booklet for a detailed description of these prerequisites.

**11. IS THERE FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE TO SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS?**

Yes. There are a number of financial aid opportunities. Some of these require enrollment in 12 semester hours each term. This should be considered as you plan your schedule. For further information, please contact the **Financial Aid Office** (434.961.6545) at your earliest convenience. It is best to complete your financial aid application by March 31 for the following fall semester.

## **12. WHAT DOES IT COST TO ATTEND THE SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM?**

In addition to tuition and fees and the cost of transportation to clinical sites and parking, students are responsible for the following items (estimated):

Books \$400

Lab coat/Supplies \$100

Background Check/Drug Screening \$103

Certification exam \$290 [\$190 for Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) members]

(Payable during third semester)

# *A Message from the PVCC Math Department Regarding Placement Tests*

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Dear Student,

Please keep in mind the following suggestions as you prepare to take your placement exam. Most students place appropriately. On occasion, however, students are not prepared and do not place into the proper level. This letter is written especially to help prevent placing below your true level.

- Take the exam **very** seriously. The exam determines your starting level in mathematics and, therefore, how many mathematics courses you will need to finish your program. **Retakes of the placement test are allowed only every four months or after significant learning has occurred.**
- Give yourself the time you need. The test is not timed! If you are pressed for time, come back early on a different day and take the test when time will not be a factor. Use the time to carefully and seriously answer the questions. *A little time wisely spent on the placement exam can save a semester or more of work!*
- Remember that the correct answer is in front of you, and process of elimination/careful consideration of the choices will help. You want your placement score to reflect what you truly know.
- You are allowed the use of a graphing calculator on this test. If you find yourself without the proper calculator, please ask for assistance at the desk.
- Brush up on your mathematics before the test, but don't try to cram and learn things beyond your knowledge. You can obtain practice problems for the Compass test in mathematics from PVCC's Learning Center and on the Internet at [www.act.org/compass](http://www.act.org/compass). The Jessup Library at PVCC has math texts on reserve for your review. You may also visit the PVCC Math Center for personal assistance prior to taking the math placement test. The Learning and Math Centers are located in PVCC's Main Building, room M617.
- Many students will have to take both mathematics and English placement tests. Consider taking these placement tests on separate days to minimize the effect of test fatigue.
- In summary, do yourself justice and place where you truly are in math by being serious and smart about your time.

# *Surgical Technology Program Admission Checklist*

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Use this as a tool to complete the Surgical Technology Application Requirements by May 1, 2012.

<b>Application Requirement</b>	<b>How Met?</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Complete PVCC Application <a href="http://www.pvcc.edu">www.pvcc.edu</a>	Online Application	
Complete Surgical Technology Program Application <a href="http://www.pvcc.edu/surgtech">www.pvcc.edu/surgtech</a>	Online Application	
Submit college transcripts to PVCC Office of Admissions and Advising.	Have colleges send official transcripts to PVCC Office of Admissions and Advising (Transcripts for other VCCS colleges are not required.)	
Submit high school transcript or GED to PVCC Office of Admissions and Advising.	Have high school send official transcript to PVCC Office of Admissions and Advising.	
Complete English prerequisite requirement.	COMPASS test, college transcript	
Complete math prerequisite requirement.	COMPASS test, college transcript	
Complete science prerequisite requirement.	HS transcript, college transcript, completion of NAS 2 or test-out of NAS 2	
Attend an observational experience.	Scheduled by Surgical Technology faculty after May 1 application deadline.	