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Welcome to the Surgical Processing Technician Certificate Program!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Berkeley College. We are glad that you have chosen us to assist you in attaining your educational goals. Everyone at the College wishes you an enjoyable and productive academic year.

This *Surgical Processing Technician Student Handbook Supplement* is intended to clarify policies and procedures specific to the Surgical Processing Technician program. These policies supersede any conflicting statements made by faculty, administrators, the general Berkeley College Student Handbook, and the College Catalog. This *Surgical Processing Technician Student Handbook Supplement* is updated regularly. You are urged to provide us with recommendations and suggestions for future revisions by communicating your ideas to Student Development and Campus Life.

Once again, let me extend my sincerest welcome from the entire Berkeley College community. We look forward to assisting you in reaching your goals!



Joseph Charleman, MS, CST, CSFA, CRCST, LPN
Department Chair, Surgical Processing Technician Program

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Overview

The policies and procedures outlined in this Student Handbook Supplement are specific to the Surgical Processing Technician program. These program-specific policies and procedures supersede any conflicting statements made by faculty, administrators, the general Berkeley College Student Handbook, and the College Catalog. Students should refer to the College Catalog and the general Berkeley College Student Handbook for all other College policies.



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Surgical Processing Technician Program Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Surgical Processing Technician program is to prepare competent entry-level surgical processing technicians with the knowledge and skills required to work in a Central Supply/Sterile Processing Department of a healthcare facility.

Knowledge:

- To provide students with a background in the basic sciences and a mastery of decontamination and sterilization processes.
- To educate students regarding the ethical, legal, and professional principles of surgical processing and the scope of their practice as a patient advocate.
- To prepare students for successful completion of the Certified Registered Central Service Technician Exam, administered by the International Association of Healthcare Central Services Materiel Management (IAHCSMM).

Skills:

- To ensure students enter the workforce as qualified and technically skilled surgical processing technicians.
- To educate students to prepare and assemble instruments for distribution, and to process supplies and equipment from operating rooms and nursing units throughout the healthcare facility.
- To instruct students to employ HIPAA, OSHA, Standard Precautions, and other infection control measures in the healthcare setting.
- To prepare students to interact effectively, in a therapeutic and professional manner, with members of the healthcare team.



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Academic Progression and Grading Criteria

Passing Grade

The minimum passing grade required for a surgical processing technician (SPT) course is a C (70%). Any grade below a C (70%) is a failing grade.

Repeating a Surgical Processing Technician Course

Surgical Processing Technician students who receive a grade of D or below in any surgical processing technician (SPT) course must repeat that course provided that they meet the minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress as stated in the general student handbook. The minimum passing grade required for a repeated course is a C.

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Add/Drop Policy

Students interested in adding a course or courses to their schedule must meet with the Advisement Department to obtain approval prior to the start of the second week of the quarter. Requests will be considered only if appropriate arrangements can be made to make up missed class time.

Clinical courses cannot be added to a student's schedule after the start of the term.



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Class Hours

Generally, Surgical Processing Technician classes are in session from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm. Clinical practicums are typically scheduled from 7:00 am until 12 midnight, Monday through Saturday.



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Clinical Requirements

To pass the Clinical Practicum course, students must remain in their practicum assignment for the entire quarter, accumulate a total of 400 clinical hours, and successfully complete course requirements. If, for some reason, a student is unable to remain in the practicum assignment for the entire quarter, the student must contact the Clinical Coordinator and the instructor immediately.



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Credit for Prior Learning

Surgical Processing Technician students wishing to receive credit for prior learning may do so by participating in challenge exams.

To participate in a challenge examination for a surgical processing technician (SPT) course, the student must have completed a similar course from an IAHCSSM approved sterile processing program. Students cannot challenge out of clinical practicum courses.

For courses other than SPT, challenge examinations can only be attempted once for each course and may not be taken for any courses in which the student received a failing grade in a previous quarter. Students may not attempt to test out of courses in which they are currently enrolled.

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Graduation Requirements

To qualify for graduation, Surgical Processing Technician students must fulfill the following requirements:

- Pass each surgical processing technician (SPT) course with a minimum grade of C
- Successfully complete the prescribed number of clinical hours
- Successfully complete the prescribed course of study with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00
- Meet the credit-hour requirements for the major
- Participate in the Certified Registered Central Service Technician (CRCST) certification examination
- Discharge all financial obligations to the College

Only students who have met all of the above requirements will be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony.

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Confidentiality

Berkeley College students are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of all patient information encountered at any clinical internship and/or practicum site. While the requirements of patient confidentiality are emphasized throughout the student's coursework, all students are encouraged to visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website (<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>) (<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>) to review the entire HIPAA policy before beginning the clinical component of the program. In addition to complying with all federal regulations, Berkeley College students must comply with any specific confidentiality requirements, policies, and/or procedures established by the assigned internship and/or clinical site.

A patient's right to confidentiality regarding his or her medical information, which includes confidentiality of personal and social information, is a fundamental healthcare tenet. Accordingly, students must remain mindful of the following basic requirements:

- Patients must not be described in any identifiable way for purposes other than the provision of direct patient care. When discussing experiences involving patients with third parties for legitimate educational purposes, using patient initials, exact descriptions, or locations of patients - either on paper or online - is strictly prohibited. Students are to use generalities only, so that no patient can be clearly recognized.
- While participating in clinical rotation(s) students shall not videotape, photograph or make audio recordings of themselves, their fellow students, their instructors, or their patients for any reason.
- The public discussion of any patient and his/her condition without consent violates patient confidentiality and ethical principles. This includes any discussion held in public areas such as elevators, hallways, and cafeterias. It also includes any discussion held in any media forum (such as print media) or any virtual forum (such as websites or social networking sites). Classrooms, pre- and post-conferences, and/or laboratory settings may be used for such discussions, but only for legitimate educational purposes.
- Students should only obtain information about those patients who are assigned to their care for that clinical day. At no time should students use their position in the clinical setting to seek information about a patient other than the patient(s) to whom they have been assigned.
- Copying, scanning, and/or removing any portion of a patient's medical record or printed patient information from the healthcare facility is strictly prohibited.

Social networking has become one of the main sources of communicating in today's world. However, its use can have major legal and ethical implications for healthcare workers with regard to patient privacy and confidentiality. Students must comply at all times with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and must be especially mindful of patients when using social media. For instance:

- References to patients, patient data, or clinical experiences involving patients or their family members are not to be included in any part of the social networking environment. Social media breaches include, but are not limited to, tweeting confidential or proprietary information about clinical facilities and/or rotations and taking 'selfies' while participating in clinical rotations and posting them on social media sites.

- Students are strictly prohibited from posting any information pertaining to or descriptive of a clinical site, instructor/preceptor, patient, employee, fellow student, or procedure. This includes revealing the location of a clinical site either by posting or by providing content with GPS locator evidence (such as digital photographs).

Students who disclose restricted patient information may face serious consequences. For example, federal law provides for fines up to \$250,000 and imprisonment up to 10 years for misusing protected patient information for commercial advantage or malicious harm. Students found in violation of the Berkeley College Confidentiality Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate suspension or dismissal from the College. For additional requirements concerning the use of social media in connection with Berkeley College matters, go to

[BerkeleyCollege.edu/files_bc/Social_Media_Policy.pdf](http://berkeleycollege.edu/files_bc/Social_Media_Policy.pdf)
(/files_bc/Social_Media_Policy.pdf).

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Criminal Background Check

A criminal history background check is required for all surgical processing technician students. If the results are positive, the student will not be permitted to progress in the program.

If a conviction or arrest occurs while a student is enrolled in the Surgical Processing Technician program, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Department Chair. This notification must be in writing and must occur promptly after the event occurs. The required notification must include a description of the circumstances surrounding the conviction. Subsequent to this notification, the student should make an appointment with the Department Chair to discuss options.

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, students must undergo a criminal background check. If the results are positive, the student will not be permitted to return to the Surgical Processing Technician program. Any fees involved with the repeat background check will be the responsibility of the student.

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Dress Code

All surgical processing technician students are required to follow the professional appearance code while on campus as well as when at a clinical site. A neat, clean, and professional appearance is expected at all times. Working closely with surgical processing equipment, as well as with other staff members, requires that students maintain strict personal hygiene standards. Students will be working on making a lasting impression at the clinical site, and maintaining a professional appearance is an important part of making a good impression.

Failure to adhere to the professional appearance code will result in a warning and, if not corrected, can result in dismissal from the clinical site and possibly the program.

The following are the guidelines of the professional appearance code:

- Hair must be clean. Long hair must be secured within a surgical cap to avoid contact with equipment and patients. Facial hair should be kept trimmed and neat. Avoid highly-colored sprays and maintain only natural-looking hair color.
- Fingernails must be kept short, clean, and filed. Artificial nails, nail polish, and added stick-on jewels are not permitted as they harbor microorganisms.
- Earrings are not permitted. Dangles or other visible body jewelry (nose rings, lip rings, tongue piercing, bracelets, necklaces which can become entangled in equipment) are not permitted.
- Cosmetics should be worn in moderation. Avoid strong perfumes as they may bother the patient or other staff. Wedding rings may be worn when not scrubbed. Avoid large stone rings.
- Consumption of food, candy, and gum is prohibited while working with sterile equipment.
- Students are required to wear a clean and pressed maroon-colored surgical processing technician uniform with the Berkeley College insignia. Shoes must be professional in nature; navy blue OR clogs, solid black sneakers, or solid white sneakers are permitted.
- Students are required to wear their Berkeley College IDs at all times while on campus and at the clinical sites. If a student is employed at the same facility, the employment name badge may not be worn during clinical.
- The Berkeley College surgical scrub uniform must be worn to and from the clinical site.

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Health Requirements

Students must submit the following documentation at least ten (10) weeks prior to enrolling in the clinical practicum course:

- A complete physical assessment by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant.
- Appropriate proof of immunity (blood titers or immunization records) to measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and Hepatitis B vaccine series; a two-step TB skin test within the last year or a negative chest x-ray within three months; and a tetanus shot administered within the past 10 years are required. An influenza vaccine may be required for some facilities.
- A negative ten-panel, pre-employment urine toxicology screening is also required. This includes screening for:
 - Amphetamines
 - Barbituates
 - Cannabinoids
 - Cocaine
 - Opiates
 - Oxycodone
 - Phencyclidine
 - Methadone
 - Meperidine
 - Methaqualone
- Immunization and communicable disease history that meets the requirements of the affiliating agencies.

Any student who fails to submit the documentation outlined above will not be permitted to enroll in Surgical Processing Clinical Practicum (SPT150).

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, students must repeat the drug screening outlined above prior to participating in any clinical rotations. If during the course of study students are suspected of drug use, they may be asked to provide an updated urine toxicology screening.

A negative drug screen is required to progress in the Surgical Processing Technician program. Students with a positive drug screen will be removed from the Surgical Processing Technician program immediately and will not be eligible for reentry.

By submitting the results of a urine toxicology screening to the College, the student thereby authorizes the College to share those results with any individual clinical facilities that request such information.

PREGNANCY WARNING:

Surgical Processing Technician students may be subjected to radiation and anesthesia gases, which are harmful to an unborn fetus. If a pregnant student chooses to request a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the Surgical Processing Technician program, for the safety of herself and the unborn fetus, the Surgical Processing Technician program will hold a space for the student in a subsequent cohort.

Because of the increased radiation sensitivity of the developing fetus, the National Council of Radiation Protection and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission recommends limiting exposure to radiation. Pregnant students should consult with their physician prior to participating in clinical practicum.

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Professionalism

Students are expected to present themselves in a professional manner at all times by demonstrating integrity, respect, and compassion. While participating in the clinical portion of the program, students should realize that their behavior may positively and/or negatively affect the judgments of others about Berkeley College. Students are expected to be thoughtful and professional when interacting with faculty, patients and their families, nurses, attending physicians, preceptors, affiliated institutional staff, other students, other members of the healthcare team, and the general public.

Professional demeanor is also required while students are in virtual sites, such as online social networking sites. Students are required to comply with the Berkeley College Social Media Policy, which governs the use of College and personal social media sites with respect to matters related to the College.

Under no circumstances are students permitted to engage in personal phone conversations or text messaging while participating in the clinical portion of their program. Students are preparing for membership in a profession that serves the public – a public that expects a high standard of professionalism.

If, while enrolled in a clinical course, a student's level of professionalism and/or performance presents a potential harm to the welfare of clients, the faculty will determine, based on written and/or oral documentation, whether or not the student will be permitted to continue in the course. If a student's performance presents an immediate potential harm to either the student or his/her clients, the program faculty and/or preceptors have the responsibility to immediately remove the student from the clinical setting. For more general conduct requirements applicable to all Berkeley College students, go to

BerkeleyCollege.edu/student_handbook/student_handbook_2014_8146.htm
 (http://BerkeleyCollege.edu/student_handbook/student_handbook_2014_8146.htm).

While the surgical processing technician department encourages students to continue in the program during pregnancy, it is vitally important that the Department Chair and the Surgical Processing Technician faculty be informed of the pregnancy as soon as the student knows that she is pregnant. Pregnant students are required to obtain and submit a signed medical statement from their obstetrician verifying that the student may safely participate in the program. Any change(s) to the health status of the student during or after a pregnancy must be reported to the Department Chair and current faculty members and further documentation may be required.

A student who is less than six weeks postpartum must have written medical documentation from her obstetrician stating she can safely meet the technical standards of the surgical processing technician program in order to return to clinical rotation.