



Surgical Technology Program Student Handbook

Academic Year 2021-22

Surgical Technology Overview

Surgical technologists are allied health professionals who are integral parts of the medical team providing surgical care to patients in a variety of settings. The surgical technologist works under medical supervision to facilitate the safe and effective conduct of invasive surgical procedures. This individual works under the supervision of a surgeon to ensure that the operating room or environment is safe, that equipment functions properly, and that the operative procedure is conducted under conditions that maximize patient safety. A surgical technologist possesses expertise in the theory and application of sterile and aseptic technique. By combining knowledge of human anatomy, surgical procedures and surgical instrumentation, surgical technologists facilitate surgeons' performance of invasive therapeutic and diagnostic procedures.

Surgical Technology (SUTE) Program

The Surgical Technology (SUTE) program at Colorado Mesa University (CMU) is five semesters in length. University-required Essential Learning and pre-requisite courses are completed during the first two semesters and first summer session. Students begin SUTE courses in the fall of their third semester and continue SUTE courses for the duration of the program. Upon completion of SUTE courses, students spend a summer session in applied experiences at affiliated hospital surgery areas located in western Colorado. Students must participate in surgical cases (observation cases, first and second scrubbing). In order to obtain the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, students must complete all required coursework with a minimum grade of C (76.5%), maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 in all CMU coursework, and complete a minimum of 120 surgical cases. Upon program completion, students are eligible to take the National Board for Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) certification exam. The majority of SUTE courses are delivered in a lecture and lab setting. Resource material is delivered online while lab sessions are held at St. Mary's Surgical Lab (located on the second floor) in Grand Junction, CO. Meetings on the CMU campus may be required at times. Students take the SUTE courses in the specified order as course progressions build upon knowledge obtained in earlier coursework. Part-time coursework is not allowed.

Program Philosophy. SUTE encompasses practice in a broad number of settings and requires preparation in a number of subjects and practice areas. The objective of this program is to provide students with the background and tools necessary to successfully navigate the national credentialing process and secure entry-level employment in a variety of surgical work environments. Equally important is the transition from student to professional and the beginning of a lifetime of learning. Our role as educators is to mentor, guide, and provide an environment in which learning can take place. The learning styles of students vary, so material is presented in various formats. Learning is an active process on the part of the student. The transition from student to professional is neither easy nor fast and will not occur without commitment on the part of the student, no matter how skilled or dedicated the teaching staff. In order to reach the entry-level competencies, motivation on the part of the student is essential. Much of this program is based on class participation, building on fundamental cases and progressing in skill level. Concentrate on building critical thinking skills as much as mastery of facts and processes. There is no way that in the short time allotted that all of the entry-level competencies can be covered. You will become responsible for your own education.

Program Mission. The mission of the SUTE program include the following:

1. To provide students with a body of knowledge and clinical training to develop entry-level competencies in all routine areas of the Surgical Technology area.
2. To produce graduates who demonstrate ethical behavior and professional attitudes.

3. To provide a quality program, with ongoing assessment, evaluation and revision.
4. To fill a community need for well-trained certified surgical technologies to staff surgical suites.
5. To provide accessible, affordable education and training for residents of western Colorado who are seeking employment in the expanding health care industry.
6. To promote membership and active participation in professional societies.

Goals for Standards of Practice of Surgical Technologists. Goals established by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) in relation to SUTE Standards of Practice include:

1. Providing guidance to surgical technologist practitioners, students, educators, and the healthcare environment.
2. Promoting and contributing to the enhancement of quality care for the surgical patient.
3. Informing the public of the standards of care they are entitled to receive from the surgical technologist.

Institutional Student Learning Outcomes. Students graduating with an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree from **CMU** should be able to:

1. Locate, gather, and organize evidence on an assigned topic addressing a course or discipline-related question of practice in a work or community setting (Applied Learning/Specialized Knowledge).
2. Use program-level mathematical concepts and methods to understand, analyze, and explain issues in quantitative terms (Quantitative Fluency).
3. Make and defend claims in a well-organized, professional document and/or oral presentation that is appropriate for a specific audience (Communication Fluency).
4. Identify and gather the information/data relevant to the essential question, issue and/or problem and develop informed conclusions (Critical Thinking).
5. Reflect on and respond to ethical, social, civic, and/or environmental challenges at local, national, and/or global levels (Personal and Social Responsibility).
6. Identify, utilize and cite various sources of information in academic assignments, projects or performances (Information Literacy).

Program Student Learning Outcomes. Students graduating with an AAS degree in **Surgical Technology** should be able to:

1. Define and demonstrate the scope and breadth of surgical technology and related skills using evidence-based resources.
2. Identify and calculate therapeutic interventions for selected patient populations.
3. Summarize discipline-specific case presentations to professionals and peers.
4. Interpret administrative and clinical policies to advocate for patient safety during surgical procedures.
5. Translate discipline-specific concepts into clinical surgical practice.

Student learning outcomes for each **SUTE course** are included in course syllabi.

Standards and Guidelines. The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA), the American College of Surgeons (ACS), and the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) establish, maintain and promote standards of quality for educational programs in SUTE. These accreditation agencies also provide recognition for educational programs that meet or exceed the minimum standards outlined in the Accreditation *Standards and Guidelines*.

Program Accreditation. The **SUTE Program** is accredited by:

- The Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARCST/SA), 6 West Dry Creek Circle, Suite 110, Littleton, CO 80120.
- The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

National Testing. The National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) retains the sole authority to establish eligibility requirements and to make all final decisions regarding eligibility. Before testing, individuals must first establish eligibility by submitting the appropriate examination application form along with the correct fees. NBSTSA does not refund processing fees for ineligible candidates. Once approved, NBSTSA provides candidates with an Authorization to Test number (ATT), and both the phone number and web address to contact the testing agency to schedule the test. NBSTSA accepts all properly completed applications from qualified applicants regardless of the applicant's age, sex, race, religion, marital status, disability or national origin.

Professional Societies and Certifying Agency Links

<https://nbstsa.org/examinations-cst.html>

www.surgicalassistant.org/index.php/surgical-assisting

<http://www.arcstsa.org/>

http://www.ast.org/AboutUs/Guidelines_Best_Practices/

SUTE Faculty

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Program Cost Estimates. Tuition and university-related fees can be found at <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/student-accounts/expenses.html>. Additional estimated SUTE program fees include:

Additional Estimated Surgical Technology Program Fees*		
	SUTE courses Tuition & Student fees	354.83
	SUTE Lab Fees	125.00
Miscellaneous		
	Background Check	60.00
	Liability insurance (annually)	37.00
	Drug Screen	55.00
	TEAS V Exam (at time of application)	90.00
	Parking pass	110.00
Health & Immunizations		
	Varicella (Chicken Pox) Immunization (if needed, or titer)	110.00
	Hepatitis B Immunizations (\$60 x 3)	180.00
	Tetanus immunization (if needed)	15.00
	TST (TB Skin Test/PPD) Testing (annually)	10.00
	Influenza vaccine	15.00
	MMR (proof of two vaccinations or titers)	variable
	Personal Health Insurance	variable
	Immutrax Immunization Tracker	50.00
	Physical Examination	variable
Books-CMU Bookstore		
	Surgical Technology Program Books	800.00
	Lab materials	100.00
Uniforms-used in theory & applied courses		

	Uniforms (\$45 x 2 recommended)	90.00
Incidentals		
	Surgical Technology patch (each)	4.00
	Office Supplies	variable

* This list is an estimate to assist students in budgeting. The costs are approximate and are subject to change without notice.

Application and Program Admission

Application

Students may apply to the SUTE program in the spring semester, provided they have completed (or are completing) prerequisite coursework. The application deadline is June 1. Students may visit the SUTE website, located at <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/health-sciences/degrees/surgical-technology.html>, for frequently asked questions, accreditation status, program requirements, Test of Essential Academic Skills V for Allied Health (TEAS V) exams, and the program application. Applicants who meet the minimum requirements are interviewed in person by program faculty.

Admission Requirements

Students accepted into the SUTE program are required to comply with all regulatory, health, and safety requirements. All requirements must be met for the entirety of the program. Students are required to renew requirements that expire annually (e.g. annual flu shot) prior to the applied experience. Minimum requirements are outlined below.

Physical examination. All students must have a physical examination performed by a healthcare provider. At the time of the examination, the student should ask the provider to complete and sign the *Essential Requirements for Surgical Technology* list. Once completed and signed by the provider, this document should be given to the Department of Health Sciences (DHS) administrative assistant to be kept in as part of the student's record.

Immunizations. Students are required to have proof of immunization or immunity of the following: Measles/ Mumps/ Rubella, Varicella, Tetanus, Hepatitis B, influenza. Students are also required to have a current TB skin test.

Personal health insurance. Student must submit proof of personal health insurance. Students must obtain this at their own expense and maintain it for the duration that the student is in the program. Students must submit proof of personal health insurance prior to enrollment. The SUTE program clinical sites are only those sites in which a contract is in place that stipulates that emergency care will be provided if the student is injured on site. Students are responsible for all health care expenses incurred if exposed or injured on site, unless that site is covered by CMU Worker's Compensation. Students are not required to be tested for HIV or disclose their HIV status. However, if a patient, instructor, or student is exposed to another student's blood through an accidental needle stick, that student has a moral obligation to be tested at their expense. If the results are positive, the exposed person will be notified of the results. If a significant exposure occurs, CDC guidelines will be followed at the student's expense. The student should see his/her own physician for follow-up treatment and testing if necessary.

Professional liability insurance. Students are required to maintain professional liability insurance as a surgical technology student. The policy must be comprehensive general liability insurance covering bodily injury and property damage liability with minimum coverage limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000,000 general total limit, and medical professional liability insurance with minimum coverage limits of \$1,000,000 per claim / \$3,000,000 annual aggregate. Students must obtain this at their own expense and maintain for the period of enrollment in the program.

Drug Screen. A mandatory drug screen is required upon admission.

Criminal Background Investigation. Potential students who have been provisionally accepted into the SUTE program will undergo a criminal background investigation. CMU has partnered with CastleBranch to provide these background checks. The criminal background investigation will include a record of all convictions. A “conviction” is a verdict, guilty plea or Nolo Contendere (“No contest”) plea. Health science programs may conduct follow up background investigations at selected intervals to comply with clinical placement requirements. Clinical sites may request a copy as part of Joint Commission accreditation procedures.

- Upon notification for need for background investigation, the incoming SUTE student will access the CastleBranch website (<https://www.castlebranch.com/>). Applicants who refuse to complete this section or who do not answer truthfully and fully will not be allowed to enter the SUTE program.
- Individuals must complete the application online, including paying the associated fees directly to CastleBranch.
- CastleBranch will update the status of the background check report via their website. Administrative assistants and the Department Head have login access to the administrative site to review and process the background check. The applicant may review the criminal background investigation information completed by using their CastleBranch login and password created when the background check was ordered.
- A flagged background check will be reviewed initially by the Department Head. Additional information related to the offenses may be requested from the applicant for consideration by the Department Head and Background Check Committee. If the applicant feels that there are extenuating circumstances to be considered, he/she may submit a written request to the Department Head.
- Additional information must be submitted to the Department Head within 10 business days. The Background Check Committee will review all criminal background investigation results and additional information submitted by the student within 7 business days. The committee will be responsible for making the final decision regarding whether results will disqualify an applicant from admission. The Background Check Committee may make exceptions where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the CMU Department of Health Sciences. The applicant will be notified in writing of the Background Check Committee decision.
- The applicant has the right to appeal the decision of the Department Head and/or Background Check Committee to the Vice President for Student Services within 10 days. The decision of the Vice President for Student Services is final.
- Students are responsible for self-reporting offenses that occur after admission to a health sciences program to the Department Head. The Department Head will review offenses with the respective Program Coordinator and Background Check Committee to determine whether the student can continue in the program. Failure to self-report an offense may lead to immediate removal from the program.

Email. Upon admission, students are provided with a CMU email address. Students should use this email address for all program communication, including course enrollment, course assignments, and any other program- or course-related information. Email is the preferred method of communication with program faculty. Students are required to activate their CMU email account by going to the Tomlinson Library computer room (if not already activated). This account is free for CMU students. It is the student’s responsibility to check his/her email on a routine basis.

Nametag. All students must wear name tags when in the clinical setting. Name Tags should list the student’s name, institution, and student’s status as a SUTE student. Students need to obtain the ordering forms from the Department of Health Sciences administrative assistant.

Additional requirements. Clinical sites may have additional requirements for students performing clinical rotations at their facilities. Students are required to meet these requirements prior to beginning clinical rotations.

Proof of Understanding. After reading the materials associated with the SUTE Student Handbook, students must sign the *Statement of Understanding* and submit the signed document to the Department of Health Sciences administrative assistant.

Transfer Students

Courses from ARC/STSA-accredited SUTE programs will be evaluated on a case by case basis for transfer eligibility. Students wishing to transfer are required to submit syllabi from their previous program to the Program Coordinator for review. Students are directed to CMU's Admissions office for a complete listing of transfer policies and procedures.

Acceptance

Students that are accepted into the program are those who meet the minimum academic qualifications, pass the interview, and rank highly among the applicant pool. The minimum academic qualifications are a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above, TEAS V science and math scores of at least 70, and all Essential Learning and prerequisite coursework completed.

Academic Services

Enrollment

CMU is required by law to verify enrollment of students who participate in Federal Title IV student aid programs and / or who receive educational benefits through other funding sources. CMU is responsible for identifying students who have not attended a class for which they are registered. After of the first week of a semester, instructors report any students who have "Never Attended" a class so that those students are administratively withdrawn from that class.

Advising

Students assume responsibility for planning their academic programs in accordance with CMU and DHS policies. The Program Coordinator (or his/her designee) is responsible for all SUTE student advising.

1. Student Responsibilities:
 - a. Students are responsible for obtaining program sheets when they begin their program. Program sheets detail the requirements for the degrees being pursued. Students are ultimately and solely responsible for knowing the requirements for their degrees and for fulfilling those requirements.
 - b. Students are urged to consult with their advisors. The University assumes no responsibility for difficulties arising when students fail to establish and maintain contact with their faculty advisors and/or program directors.
 - c. Students must make an appointment to meet with the Program Coordinator at the time of graduation petition (January) for signatures and review of all coursework required for the degree.
2. Faculty responsibilities:
 - a. Faculty discuss instructional program requirements and design academic plans for students prior to application to the SUTE program.
 - b. Students' progress in pre-SUTE course work is monitored through the Early Alert system and end of semester review of transcripts for each advisee.
 - c. Advisees assigned to the SUTE Program Coordinator are contacted early to arrange advising appointments at regular intervals, at the discretion of the faculty, and as needed by students.
 - i. Topics include curriculum, student progress in the classroom and applied experience sites, utilization of learning resources and other academic matters.
 - ii. Confidentiality and impartiality are maintained in dealing with student issues.
 - iii. Audits of all pre-SUTE coursework are done at the time of application to the program, at admission, and periodically throughout the length of the program.

Degree Requirements

The SUTE program is 68 credits taken over five semesters. Required Essential Learning and pre-requisite courses are completed the first year and summer. SUTE courses begin in the fall of year two. SUTE coursework continues over the spring semester. Clinical practica occur in the summer at area hospitals. Students generally complete the SUTE program in August. Regular class attendance is expected. For every hour spent in class, students should spend at least two hours outside of class. The Curriculum Policy at CMU expects that for every credit hour granted, a minimum of 45 hours of work is expected. For every hour of credit, expect to spend two to three hours per week outside of class. Plan to spend roughly six to nine hours a week per 3-credit hour course.

Program Progression

- All SUTE courses are taken in sequence each semester to build upon concepts and skills introduced in earlier courses. Students are expected to demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills in the clinical practica.
- Once a student fails one or more courses in a semester, he/she is not allowed to progress in the program and must reapply. A letter grade of “C” is required to pass all SUTE courses.
- A grade of incomplete (I) may be granted in limited circumstances. Check with your instructor for eligibility for an I and required timelines for completion of coursework.

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

It is the student's responsibility to withdraw, using the appropriate CMU form, from any class which she/he is no longer attending or risk receiving a failing grade in that class. Students wishing to withdraw must complete and submit the appropriate CMU form by the established withdrawal deadline. The SUTE program will utilize all official withdrawal deadlines set forth by CMU and applicable refund policies.

Grading Policies

Evaluation criteria (e.g. skills check-offs, attendance) for each course are specified in course syllabi. Students must earn a cumulative grade of “C” or higher in all required courses listed toward an A.A.S in Surgical Technology (including Essential Learning or transfer). All applied courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or higher. Due to the nature of patient care responsibilities and national standards for Surgical Technologists, a modified grading scale is utilized. The grading scale is as follows:

92.5 - 100%	A
84.5 – 92.4%	B
76.5 – 84.4%	C
76.4% ≥	F

A minimum competency level of “C” or 76.5% must be achieved in all SUTE courses in order to proceed through the program. Overall competency for each of the courses is achieved by successfully completing at least 76.5% of the total points allowable by course assessments. Proficiency for each unit of material presented in the course is expected. Each course syllabus has specific standards for late assignments. Contact the course instructor to inquire about specific course expectations.

Clinical Experience Information and Policies

Completion of the SUTE Program requires satisfactory performance of the clinical practicum. Students are placed at a clinical site for a 15-week rotation where they will apply the theoretical knowledge, technical skills, and professional behaviors in the clinical setting. See the Professional Standards section of this *Handbook*. Student rotations are scheduled by course instructors. Students are expected to prepare for the day by reviewing material from the clinical courses. Each affiliate site has requirements that must be met by students prior to admittance to that site. Student are responsible for meeting requirements of the site prior to admittance. Failing to meet the requirements will preclude the student from attending that clinical site.

Clinical Site Placement

The number of clinical sites supporting SUTE practicums fluctuates each year. Consequently, the SUTE Program only admits the number of students that can be supported with a clinical site. Placement for SUTE practica in the last semester is determined by the course instructors. Students are notified of their practica sites in the spring prior to the start of their summer session. If students cannot attend the summer practicum experience, they are dismissed from the program and must reapply.

Practica sites are assigned where CMU has current, signed clinical affiliation agreements on file. Securing a second clinical site occurs on a space available-basis only. Students entering the SUTE program must be able and willing to travel or relocate to a site for the Practicum. Although CMU has affiliation agreements with a number of hospitals located in western Colorado, placement within a commutable distance cannot be guaranteed for any student. Plans should be made well in advance to secure the finances to complete this requirement of the program. Keep in mind the fact that it may be necessary to spend time away from one's city of residence when signing leases, accepting jobs or making personal plans. Students are asked to list their top three affiliate sites in preferential order from a list of sites available. Selection of sites is ultimately the decision of the course instructor. Site assignment considerations can include GPA of SUTE courses, courses completed toward degree, best fit, surgical management input, family, and financial considerations.

All CMU holidays are observed. Students do not attend the clinical site during these days unless specifically scheduled by the instructor. Students performing their practica at the Veteran's Hospital will not be allowed in the clinical site during federal holidays. Hours will be made up with extended shifts during the week. Generally, students perform the practicum experience four days per week during peak operating hours of the surgical suites, for 40 hours a week. Hospital surgeries operate 24 hours a day. Students may be requested to come in during different times of the day to observe surgeries or other tasks done only at special times with qualified supervision. Students must be flexible to accommodate the affiliate sites schedule as well. Due to the short duration of the practicum, no absences are allowed.

Surgical Case Definitions and Requirements

Definitions

- **First Scrub:** The student surgical technologist shall perform the following duties during any given surgical procedure with proficiency. The following list is provided to identify the items that must be completed in order to document a case in the *First Scrub* role. A student not meeting the five criteria below cannot count the case in the *First Scrub* role and the case must be documented in the *Second Scrub* role or *Observation* role.
 - Verify supplies and equipment needed for the surgical procedure.
 - Set up the sterile field with instruments, supplies, equipment, medication(s) and solutions needed for the procedure.
 - Perform counts with the circulator prior to the procedure and before the incision is closed.
 - Pass instruments and supplies to the sterile surgical team members during the procedure.
 - Maintain sterile technique as measured by recognized breaks in technique and demonstrate knowledge of how to correct with appropriate technique.
- **Second Scrub:** The *Second Scrub* role is defined as a student who is at the sterile field who has not met all criteria for the *First Scrub* role, but actively participates in the surgical

procedure in its entirety by completing any of the following:

- Sponging
- Suctioning
- Cutting suture
- Holding retractors
- Manipulating endoscopic camera
- **Observation:** The *Observation* role is defined as a student who is in the operating room performing roles that do not meet the criteria for *First Scrub* or *Second Scrub* roles. *Observation* cases are not included in the required case count, but must be documented by the student.

Case Requirements. The following cases are required for program completion.

Surgical Specialty	Total # of Cases Required	Minimum # of 1st Scrub Cases	Maximum # of 2nd Scrub Cases That Can Be Applied Towards 150 Cases
General Surgery	30	20	10
Surgical Specialties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cardiac/Thoracic ● ENT ● Eye ● CV ● Neuro ● OB-GYN ● Oral/Maxillofacial ● Orthopedics ● Peripheral Vascular ● Plastic/Reconstructive ● Procurement/Transplantation 	90	60	30
Diagnostic Endoscopy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bronchoscopy ● Colonoscopy ● Cystoscopy ● EGD ERCP ● Esophagoscopy ● Laryngoscopy ● Panendoscopy ● Sinuscopy ● Ureteroscopy 			10 diagnostic cases may be applied towards 2 nd Scrub cases
Labor & Delivery			5 vaginal deliveries may be applied towards 2 nd Scrub cases
Totals	120	80	40

*These case requirements exceed the Standards set forth by CAAHEP. Students are required to meet the CAAHEP minimums in addition to extra cases that the RCHC Surgical Technology Program requires. Descriptions of clinical requirement numbers will be given to students at the beginning of each term and proper documentation must be submitted by the student to show proof of case number completion.

120 Total Cases

- 30 General *First Scrub* cases
- 90 Specialty *First Scrub* cases
- 10 *First Scrub* cases evenly distributed in six of the above listed specialties
- 10 Additional *First Scrub* or *Second Scrub* cases
- 30 additional *Scrubs* in six of the above listed specialties
- 20 additional *Scrubs* in General cases

Student Documentation

Clinical Case Log Sheets & Clinical Summary Totals Sheets*

- **Surgical Case Logs (SCL)** are accurate records of surgical procedures on which students participate, and identify roles students perform in those procedures (*First Scrub, Second Scrub, or Observation*). Students complete their SCL **daily** to maintain accurate, up-to-date records of their progress.
- **General Surgery, Diagnostics, L&D Reports** are accurate records of surgical procedures in the areas of General Surgery, Diagnostics, and Labor and Delivery (L&D). Here, students differentiate between procedures where they participate as *First Scrub* or *Second Scrub*.
- **Surgical Specialties Summary Reports** assess numbers of cases within each specialty other than General Surgeries. Students differentiate between procedures where they participate as *First Scrub* or *Second Scrub*.
- **Observation Role Documentation** shows student participation in procedures but as *First Scrub* or *Second Scrub*. Observations do NOT count towards total case numbers for Surgical Specialties or General Surgeries, Diagnostics, or L&D.
- **Clinical Summary Totals** show students' numbers of cases within each specialty and students' total number of *First Scrub* and *Second Scrubs* roles in each specialty.

*These data are mandatory requirements of our accrediting agency, CAAHEP. The Surgical Case Log Sheets and Clinical Summary Totals Sheet are part of your permanent file. Incomplete, inaccurate, intentional falsification of records or failure to turn in forms are grounds for dismissal from the program!

Grade Appeals

Students wishing to appeal grades must schedule a meeting with the clinical mentor or faculty member within five (5) days to discuss the grievance. If the problem is resolved through the initial meeting, no further action is indicated. Failing successful resolution, the student may wish to appeal, doing so within five (5) working days by filing a written appeal with the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will render a decision in writing, with explanation, within 10 days. If dissatisfied with the Program Coordinator's decision, within five (5) working days, the student will file a written appeal with the Department Head. The Department Head will investigate and render a decision in writing within 10 days. If the student still does not believe the conflict has been resolved, the student is directed to the CMU *Student Handbook* for further steps.

Graduation Requirements

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all paperwork is completed by the appropriate deadline. Instructions, forms and deadlines can be found on the MavZone at: [Colorado Mesa University Petition to Graduate](#). General graduation requirements include:

1. The student must have completed all required courses in the SUTE program curriculum.
2. A grade of "C" (76.5%) or higher must be achieved in coursework toward major content area.
3. The student must have a cumulative "C" average (2.0 GPA) or higher in all CMU coursework.

The AAS Surgical Technology degree conferred is not contingent upon passing a national certification exam.

Safety and Health Standards

Essential Functions

Health care professionals perform essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, to provide safe care, generate accurate data and communicate effectively to patients and other health care personnel. SUTE essential functions are incorporated throughout the program to effectively train SUTE professionals. Students must be proficient in these functions in campus and hospital settings. Students requiring special accommodations must notify the Program Coordinator at the time of program application.

Essential functions include, but are not limited to:

1. Intact gross and fine motor skills; precise hand/eye coordination and dexterity; ability to discriminate tactile sensations
2. Clear speech (not required for Sterile Processing Technician Program)
3. Congruent verbal/nonverbal behavior; emotional stability; cooperative; no signs of impaired judgment
4. Ability to walk, bend, stoop, kneel, stand, twist, sit, carry, lift, reach hands overhead
5. Ability to evacuate a 4-story building in less than 3 minutes
6. Ability to sit and stand for long periods of time (4-7 hours in class; 8-12 hours in clinical)
7. Ability to pull 75 lbs.; lift 35 lbs.; push 100 lbs.
8. Ability to travel independently to clinical sites as assigned
9. Intact short and long-term memory
10. Visual color discrimination, depth perception; near/far vision 20/20 (may be corrected with lenses)
11. Ability to hear and discriminate alarms (may be corrected with a hearing aid)
12. Ability to detect odors sufficient to maintain environmental safety, including smoke and noxious odors
13. Frequent exposure to electricity, electromagnetic fields, electronic media, latex, chemical hazards (e.g. disinfecting solutions, dyes, acetone, bleach, alcohol)
14. Possible exposure to toxic drugs, anesthetic gases, ionizing radiation, infectious agents (e.g. blood, urine, etc.)
15. Read, comprehend and accurately remember and apply oral and written procedures
16. Measure, calculate, interpret, analyze, reason, evaluate and explain equipment, procedures, and policies
17. Solve problems, make critical judgments and initiate corrective action to ensure accuracy and reliability of results in a timely fashion
18. Organize and prioritize work for completion in a timely fashion

The behavioral and emotional demands required include:

1. Interpersonal abilities sufficient to effectively communicate, verbally and non-verbally, in a professional, respectful manner with patients, physicians, health care and non-health care employees, students, and laboratory personnel.
2. Emotional stability to recognize and respond quickly and efficiently in unsafe and emergency situations to minimize injury to patients, self and nearby individuals.
3. Compassion and tolerance for others, including the respect for cultural diversity.
4. Emotional stability to function effectively in stressful situations and complete all responsibilities, exercise sound judgment, be flexible and adapt to sudden unpleasant situations possible in the clinical setting.
5. Professional appearance by being well-groomed and punctual.

6. Patient confidentiality, ethical judgment, integrity, honesty, dependability, accountability in laboratory responsibilities.
7. Evaluate own performance, accept constructive criticism and seek performance improvement.
8. Maintain cooperative and productive working relationships with peers, patients and other health professionals.

Hospital and Campus Safety

Students are trained in safety procedures and regulations for handling biological specimens before participating in clinical experiences. All biological specimens are considered potentially infectious and must be treated utilizing universal/standard precautions. Safety precautions to be followed in the surgical suite include:

- OSHA regulations must be followed at all times.
- Use standard precautions at all times.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) during surgical procedures and when working with biological specimens.
- Follow engineering and work practice controls (e.g. hand washing, handling sharps, disposing of biohazardous materials, refraining from eating or drinking in clinical settings, etc).

Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure and Injury Prevention

All students and faculty who have the potential for occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens receive training prior to entering the clinical environment. Training includes the following information based on OSHA Standards:

- The epidemiology, symptoms and modes of transmission of blood borne pathogen diseases.
- An explanation of the OSHA standard.
- An explanation of methods for recognizing tasks and other activities that may involve exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials, including what constitutes an exposure incident.
- A review of the use and limitations of engineering controls, work practices and PPE.
- An explanation of the types, uses, location, removal, handling, decontamination and disposal of PPE.
- An explanation of the criteria for PPE selection.
- Information about the Hepatitis B vaccine series including information on its efficacy, safety, method of administration, the benefits of being vaccinated and that the vaccine will be offered free of charge.
- Information on the appropriate actions to take and persons to contact if an exposure incident involving blood or other potentially infectious materials occurs, including the method of reporting the incident and the medical follow-up that will be made available.
- Information on the post-exposure evaluation and follow-up that the employer is required to provide for the employee following an exposure incident.
- An explanation of the signs and labels and/or color coding required by the standard and used by this organization.

The SUTE program clinical sites are only those sites in which a contract is in place that stipulates that emergency care will be provided if the student is injured on site. The student will comply with the site's policy regarding student injuries. Students are covered by Worker's

Compensation under CMU in which designated providers will be assigned for care.

- Immediate Care:
 1. Perform first aid from the training instructions for sharps injuries and/or mucous membrane exposure.
 2. Customarily, St. Marys' clinical mentors will escort students with an exposure or non-life threatening injury to their Employee Health Department during regular work hours (Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm), or the Emergency Department if after hours or on weekends for evaluation and treatment.
 3. In the case of an emergency, which is defined as the possibility of loss of sight, limb, or life, St. Mary's and Community Hospital are designated to provide emergency care for our students. Your clinical mentor will escort you to the emergency room.
 4. For other sites, follow your clinical site's policy for emergent and non-emergent injuries.
- Notification and Documentation
 1. Notify your clinical mentor immediately following first aid. Department Head must be notified immediately.
 2. All students sustaining an injury at the clinical site will complete an EMPLOYEE ACCIDENT REPORT (located in the Appendices). This form will be turned into the CMU Human Resources office within 24 hours of injury.
 3. Optimally, the student will make an appointment with Human Resources to discuss the incident and fill out a claim form (attached in Appendices) within four days. Human resources will determine if medical treatment is desired or needed, and make an appointment with a designated provider for the student. Students will be advised during this appointment of follow-up appointments needed for exposures. The student may be requested to take a Human Resources representative to the site for an accident investigation.
- Emergent injury protocol: Notify the Program Coordinator immediately. The Program Coordinator will contact Human Resources at 248-1655.
- Non-emergent exposure/injury during regular hours: Notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours. Call Human Resources at 248-1655 or go to the office located at Lowell Heiny Hall, Room 237.
- Non-emergent exposure/injury after 5:00 pm or weekends: Notify the Program Coordinator by phone message within 24 hours. Call or visit Human Resources at Lowell Heiny Hall Room 237 248-1655, at the start of the next business day.
- Exposure to Subsequently Reported Infectious Disease Procedure (Tuberculosis, hepatitis, varicella) at the clinic site:
 1. The CMU Surgical Technology Program Coordinator will notify the student of potential exposure to an infectious disease.
 2. The student will immediately report the notification of potential exposure, or within 24 hours, to the CMU Human Resources Department (248-1820).
 3. The student will complete a Workers' Compensation form with the CMU Human Resources Department within four days of notification of the potential exposure.

Professional Standards

Code of Ethics, Association of Surgical Technology

Students enrolled in a program of professional study are expected to abide by their discipline's professional conduct standards. SUTE's Code of Ethics is outlined below.

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 this Code of Ethics at all times in relationship to all members of the healthcare team.

Confidentiality

A confidential communication is one that contains information given by one person to another under circumstances of trust and confidence with the understanding that such information must not be disclosed. Information about a patient—gathered by examination, observation, conversation, or treatment—is the type of confidential information the law protects. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires all healthcare professionals to keep confidential any information about a patient's illness or treatment that is obtained in the normal course of their professional duties.

Patient's Right to Privacy

Every person has the right to withhold his or her person, personality, and property from unwarranted public scrutiny. This right—called the right of privacy—includes the freedom to live one's life without having one's name, photograph, or private affairs made public against one's will. A negligent violation can have serious legal consequences. In general, if information from a patient's chart is disclosed without the patient's express consent, or without a court order or express statutory authority, the hospital—as well as those who actually made the disclosure—may be held liable in damages should the patient be able to prove invasion of privacy or perhaps defamation of character.

All members of the healthcare team are duty-bound to treat patients with decency, respect, and the greatest degree of privacy possible. At the very least, this means that the patient should be seen, examined, and handled only by those persons directly involved in his or her care and treatment. Unnecessary exposure of the patient's body or unwarranted discussion of his or her care with third parties will give rise to a legal cause of action for invasion of privacy, with appropriate damages assessed against the offending party. Students must always be alert to any witting or unwitting violation of the patient's right of privacy. Only individuals directly involved in the care of a patient or client shall have access to patient records or information, whether in electronic or paper format. Students may not access patient records of themselves, other students, family members, or patients unless they are directly involved in the care as a student. Students may discuss patient information with their instructor and mentor or others involved in

the care of a patient. All student assignments should be deidentified. Identity refers to name, initials, age, sex, room number, name of hospital, physician, and date of birth. Students may not take photographs or videos of patients or of patient information. Cell phones are not permitted in the clinical setting for this reason.

In the academic setting, a patient may be extended to include a guest speaker or individual whose knowledge or experience is used to assist with students' learning. Faculty may also ask students to maintain confidentiality during other learning experiences in which confidential or sensitive information is shared. (i.e. case studies, group discussions). Students may discuss their patient with other students to assist with students' learning in the classroom or in the clinical laboratory site. No discussions (e.g. direct conversations, cell phones, text messaging) can occur outside of these confidential settings, including lunchroom or break rooms, hallways, non-clinical settings, or via social networking media (ie.g. Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, Twitter etc.). Students receive initial and ongoing education about confidentiality and patient privacy during their education.

During the summer prior to the Applied Experience, students watch a video on HIPAA privacy to prepare for the Applied Experience. Students' signatures are required on *Statement of Understanding* forms, indicating students' agreement to comply with this policy. The form must be signed and a copy returned to the Program Coordinator to be placed in the student's file before being allowed to attend clinical. All clinical sites provide students with confidentiality training and documentation as well. SUTE students will provide evidence of confidentiality training at their respective institution and must also submit the signed Confidentiality agreement forms from the clinical site.

Professional Appearance and Grooming

The purpose of this standard is to prepare students for the workforce. All instances of professional dress, appearance and personal hygiene are impossible to list, so it is up to the student to use good judgment. The following standards must be maintained at all times.

1. The hair, body, and mouth are clean and free from offensive odor.
2. Gum chewing, eating, or drinking in a clinical area is prohibited.
3. Tobacco use is prohibited, as is the use of any electronic cigarettes.
4. Hair is short or styled in a controlled, restrained manner so hair does not fall into the eyes or face. Hair longer than chin length is styled off the face with a simple band or hair clip. Caps or adorned/colorful restraints are inappropriate. Dyed hair must be of a natural color.
5. Facial hair is clean-shaven or neatly trimmed.
6. Artificial nails or long natural nails are not appropriate for health care workers for infection control reasons. Natural nails shall be no longer than ¼ inch and clean. Nail polish is prohibited.
7. Personal fragrances are not allowed.
8. Makeup is conservative and tastefully applied. Neutral eye, lip, and cheek color that compliments the natural skin color may be used.
9. No jewelry is allowed in surgical areas.

Dress Code

White scrubs should be worn for all SUTE classroom settings. Once students enter clinical coursework, students must wear scrubs provided by the clinical site. Surgical technologist professional attire is expected in all clinical settings. Professional attire includes:

1. Uniform: Scrubs will be used from the facility you are working in and must be clean, in good repair and neatly pressed.
2. Fit: Uniforms must be well fitted such that skin is not exposed while either upright or bending over in the chest or seat area. All students admitted to the Surgical Technology program will have the SUTE patch sewn on the upper left sleeve of the scrub top and lab coat.
3. Length: Hem of pants must be full length, reach the top of your shoes and not drag on the floor.
4. Undergarments: Undergarments must not be visible through the scrub fabric.
5. Shoes: Professional or athletic shoes with a closed toe and heel (lace-up shoe preferred). Shoes should not be perforated or made of absorbent material.
6. Nametag: CMU SUTE Student nametag on the outer garment at all times in class and at the clinical site. A clinical site badge (if required) worn on the outer garment at all times.

Personal and Professional Conduct

The student is expected to attend all mandatory scheduled classes and clinical experiences and to be prepared and on time. The student who is habitually late or frequently absent may be considered for dismissal from the program. Attendance for the full class/clinical session is required. In case of emergency, students should notify the course instructor as soon as possible.

Students are required to demonstrate professional attitudes, behaviors and practice by:

1. Meeting the attendance requirements for class/applied experience, being on time for class and turning in assignments on time.
2. Preparing for class/clinical practica.
3. Participating in learning activities and displaying an independent learning effort.
4. Managing use of time, working independently, following instructions, performing accurately and efficiently learning procedures in a reasonable amount of time under minimal supervision.
5. Projecting a positive attitude.
6. Using appropriate conversation and refraining from inappropriate discussions.
7. Functioning competently during stressful situations.
8. Demonstrating respect and appreciation for the diversity of team members.
9. Following established rules, policies and/or commonly accepted professional practice (e.g., academic integrity, confidentiality, error corrections, ethical practices, etc.)
10. Accepting responsibility for mistakes and holding oneself accountable at all times.
11. Knowing and adhering to the roles and responsibilities of the profession.
12. Exhibiting legal and ethical behaviors, including confidentiality.
13. Adhering to the safety policies and performing duties in a safe manner that minimizes risk to client/patient/customer, self and others.

Disciplinary Actions

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Exams. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on exams and quizzes, talking to another student during an exam or quiz, unauthorized entry into test banks or examinations, sharing the details of an exam or competency check-off with other students, and having a copy of the exam outside the time and place of test administration or review.

Homework. Academic dishonesty includes unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work for fulfillment of course requirements, sharing or posting coursework/assignments for courses on the internet other than organized group work authorized by the instructor, assisting others in cheating or plagiarizing, or accepting homework from previous students. Students might participate in a study group, but each student is responsible for his/her own assignment. Study groups exist for the purpose of studying, not for collaborating on assignments.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is an intentional act of fraud in which an individual claims credit for work belonging to another individual. According to *CMU Student and Academic Policies Guide*,

“Plagiarism is the act of appropriating the written, artistic, or musical composition of another, or portions thereof; or the ideas, language, or symbols of same and passing them off as the product of one’s own mind. Plagiarism includes not only the exact duplication of another’s work but also the lifting of a substantial or essential portion thereof. Regarding written work in particular; direct quotations, statements which are a result of paraphrasing, summarizing the work of another, and other information which is not considered common knowledge must be cited or acknowledged. As long as a student adequately acknowledges his or her sources and as long as there is no reason to believe that the student has attempted to pose as the originator, the student shall not be charged with plagiarism even though the form of the acknowledgement may be unacceptable. However, students should be aware that most professors require certain forms of acknowledgment and some may evaluate a project on the basis of form.”

Students who become aware of acts of academic dishonesty can file a written report and turn it into the Program Coordinator. Students may appeal sanctions for academic dishonesty reports made against them as stipulated in the *CMU Catalog* and *The Maverick Guide*.

Sanctions and Disciplinary Action for Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism. Faculty members reserve the right to enforce sanctions for academic dishonesty. Students who observe academic dishonesty can also file a written report and turn it into the Program Coordinator. Sanctions for academic dishonesty and plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

1. Activity will be reported to the Director of Health Sciences and/or VP of Academic Affairs, The length of time the report will stay in the student’s file will be observed per the *CMU Handbook* policy.
2. Lowering grades or complete failure for assignments, tests, or the entire course.
3. Withdrawing the student from course at any time at the discretion of the department.
4. Expulsion from the program.
5. Students may appeal sanctions for academic dishonesty reports made against them as outlined in *The Maverick Guide*.

Breach of Patient Confidentiality

Students who violate a patient's right to privacy or HIPAA will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate expulsion of the student(s) involved. The Department Head and/or Program Coordinator will meet with the student(s) to discuss the breach and develop a disciplinary contract that will be in effect for the remainder of the student's degree program. Any subsequent breach of confidentiality or patient privacy will result in immediate administrative withdrawal from the program. The Department Head will notify the Vice President for Student Affairs to inform them of the disciplinary contract. The Department Head and/or Program Coordinator will notify the surgical department director when a breach has occurred for a patient at a healthcare facility, and provide information to assist the agency in their investigation. The clinical site most likely will request removal of the student from their facility. In such a case, the student will be dismissed from the program without the possibility of readmission.

Violations of Personal and Professional Conduct

Disciplinary action, up to and including program dismissal, may occur for the following:

- Acts that disrupt or interfere with the orderly operation of teaching and other academic activities.
- Behavior that causes, or can reasonably be expected to cause, physical harm to a person.
- Physical or verbal threats against or intimidation of any person that results in limiting his/her access to all aspects of life at the University.
- Refusing to comply with the directions of University officials, instructors, administrators, or staff acting in the performance of their duties.
- Refusing to appear or giving false statements when one is asked to present evidence or respond to an investigation involving the conduct code.
- Intentionally or recklessly interfering with normal University activities or emergency services.
- The unauthorized or improper use of University property, facilities, equipment, keys, identification cards, documents, records, or resources, including misuse of electronic resources and equipment.
- Violations of criminal law that occur on University premises or in connection with University functions, that affect members of the University community, or that impair the University reputation.
- Sexual harassment, including any communication or behavior that may be construed as sexual harassment. Students shall not create "hostile working environments" according to the *CMU Student Handbook*.

Student Medication/Substance Use/Misuse

Students are prohibited from possessing, using or consuming illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages on college premises and clinical settings. Students are prohibited from attending class and clinical/practicum sites under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or medications that impair or make the student unsafe. Students taking medication who may appear impaired/unsafe may be asked to leave the classroom or clinical site.

Tobacco Use

Tobacco use is not permitted in clinical sites. Students must not smell of smoke prior to direct patient contact. The use of smokeless tobacco or "vaping" is not permitted while in the applied experience.

Appendix

Surgical Technology Program-Statement of Understanding Form

Initials	Policy
	<p>Student Handbook & CMU Student Handbook I understand that I am responsible for the information contained in course syllabi, <i>CMU Student Handbook</i> and the <i>Surgical Technology Student Handbook</i>. I will refer to them as long as I am in the SUTE program.</p>
	<p>Criminal Background Investigation I have read the policy and understand that criminal background investigations are performed prior to admittance into the SUTE program. Students are responsible for self-reporting offenses that occur after admission to the Program Coordinator. Failure to self-report an offense may lead to immediate removal from the program.</p>
	<p>Substance Use/Misuse I have read the policy and I understand that I am subjected to drug screening upon admission and at random times during clinical rotations at some health care facilities. Illegal drugs and/or alcohol must not be consumed when professional CMU attire is worn, either on campus or in the community.</p>
	<p>Academic Integrity I agree to conduct myself in an honest, accountable manner in course and clinical work. I will not collaborate/cheat on online exams or assignments with other students or health care professionals. I will take responsibility for my own learning and professional growth. I understand if I participate in any academic dishonesty, I may be subject to dismissal from the course and possibly the SUTE program.</p>
	<p>Personal and Professional Conduct and Behavior I have read the policy and I agree to conduct myself in a manner becoming the profession I am entering, showing respect to my faculty, classmates, and any community or agency staff. I understand that failure to do so may result in dismissal from the course and the SUTE Program. I will adhere to the personal grooming and professional dress outlined in the <i>Surgical Technology Student Handbook</i>.</p>
	<p>Agreement to Respect Confidentiality & HIPAA I have read the policy regarding confidentiality, privacy, and security and I understand the importance of keeping all information I encounter during classroom and clinical experiences in confidence. I understand that violating this policy may result in removal from the clinical site, the course, and program.</p>
	<p>Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure and Injury Policy I have read the policy and I will attend training sessions for blood borne pathogens and clinical safety. I understand that my safety is my responsibility and the use of PPE is required in clinical settings.</p>
	<p>Degree Requirements and Program Progression I have read the policies. I understand the degree requirements, grading and withdrawal policies, and the causes for program dismissal and eligibility for readmission.</p>

Date and initial where indicated at student orientation. The signed form is kept in the student's permanent file.

Print Student Name

Student Signature

Date
