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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 Undergraduate 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, M.S., CST, CSFA, CRCST, LPN
Department Chair, Surgical Processing Technician Program

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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 Undergraduate Catalog. Students should refer to the Undergraduate 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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The Surgical Processing Technician program at Berkeley College prepares students to become surgical processing technicians in healthcare settings. Students are provided with the knowledge and skills needed to receive and process supplies and equipment from operating rooms and nursing units throughout the hospital. The role of the surgical processing technician is demanding. Indicated below are several examples of the scope of practice, roles, and competencies that surgical processing technicians may encounter.

The Department will consider any applicant who demonstrates the ability to learn to perform all the competencies listed and does not present any safety hazard towards self or recipient of care. These competencies are required skills in order to render safe care while in the clinical setting.

Some chronic or recurrent illnesses and problems could interfere with safety, and may be incompatible with surgical processing technician education and practice, since they may lead to a higher chance of absences. Surgical processing technician students are not required to disclose any chronic or recurrent illness and/or disability; however, students with concerns about meeting these technical standards are strongly encouraged to discuss the issues with the Department Chair. Deficiencies in knowledge, skills, judgments, integrity, or professional attitude may jeopardize patient safety and, as a result, may be grounds for course failure and possible dismissal from the Surgical Processing Technician program.

Students must have the aptitude and abilities in six areas: sensory ability and skills; fine and gross motor skills; strength, mobility, and physical endurance; the ability to communicate, comprehend, read, and write in English; behavioral stability; and cognitive ability and critical thinking skills.

- Stand and/or walk for extended periods of time
- Continuously bend, squat, and stoop to process instruments, supplies, and equipment
- Lift instrument sets weighing up to 20 pounds
- Demonstrate manual dexterity to process microsurgical instruments
- Push and/or pull carts weighing up to 100 pounds
- Withstand continuous, controlled exposure to contaminants including blood and body fluids
- Withstand continuous, controlled exposure to hazardous supplies such as cleaning and disinfecting solutions and sterilization agents
- Hear activation/warning signals on equipment
- Detect odors sufficient to maintain environmental safety and patient needs
- Ambulate/move around without assistive devices
- Communicate effectively, both verbally and nonverbally, with other medical staff personnel
- Follow oral and written instructions and procedures
- Use independent judgment
- Maintain accurate records and prepare detailed reports

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- **Add/Drop Policy**
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- **Class Hours**
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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+ (75 percent). Any grade below a C+ (75 percent) is a failing grade. In addition, the minimum passing grade required for Microbiology is a C+ (75 percent).

Repeating a Surgical Processing Technician Course

Students in the Surgical Processing Technician program who receive a grade of C or below in any surgical processing technician (SPT) course must repeat that course in order to progress in the program. The minimum passing grade required for a repeated course is a C+.

Repeating a Science Course

Students in the Surgical Processing Technician program who receive a grade of C or below in Microbiology must repeat that course in order to progress in the program. A minimum grade of C+ on the repeated course is required to pass the course.

Note that failed courses may lead to repeat charge fees and may also delay graduation.

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Add/Drop Policy

Students interested in adding a course or courses to their schedule must meet with the
Academic Advisement Department to obtain approval prior to the start of the second week
of the term. 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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Attendance

Students enrolled in the Surgical Processing program are expected to demonstrate a commitment and dedication to the healthcare profession through professional conduct that is consistent with the requirements needed to be successful in the industry. Healthcare is a profession that demands attention to detail and commitment to caring for others who are in need of assistance and who are vulnerable without it. For this reason, students are expected to exemplify this level of professionalism in their school attendance and participation.

Excused Absences

Excused absences can only be granted by the Department Chair or the Clinical Coordinator and may, at the discretion of the Department Chair, require proper documentation (e.g., a physician's letter).

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the student's final course grade, which could lead to course failure.

Make-up Work

Make-up days are not available at clinical sites. Since clinical hours are tallied in accordance to eligibility rules for certification, absences may adversely affect a student's eligibility to take the national certification exam and endanger a student's ability to successfully complete the course.

Students are reminded of the mandatory C+ (75 percent) grade requirement for all SPT courses.

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Class Hours

Generally, classes are in session from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM Monday through Saturday. 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 term, 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 term, the student must contact the Clinical Coordinator and the instructor immediately.

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Credit for Prior Learning

Students in the Surgical Processing Technician program who possess active, current healthcare certifications issued by IAHCSMM or CSPD may be eligible to receive credit for prior learning for some SPT courses. Students requesting credit for prior learning must provide evidence of their active IAHCSMM or CSPD certification(s) to the Department Chair for review.

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 term. 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, students in the Surgical Processing Technician program must fulfill the following requirements:

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

Students must meet all of the graduation requirements listed above in order to participate in the formal graduation ceremony.

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Transfer Credit

In addition to the transfer credit guidelines outlined in the **Berkeley College 2016-2017 Undergraduate Catalog** (http://berkeleycollege.edu/catalog-2016-2017/catalog-2016-2017-15510.htm) , students enrolled in the Surgical Processing Technician program who wish to have credits considered for transfer must note the following:

- A grade of C+ or higher is required for all SPT and SCI transfer credits.
- Courses that contain clinical or laboratory credits are not eligible for transfer credit due to the affective and psychomotor learning domains covered in clinical and laboratory experiences.

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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 who is identified by name or whose identity can be derived from other circumstances (or the condition of such patient) 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) .

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Criminal Background Check

A criminal history background check is required for all students in the Surgical Processing Technician program. A positive background check may prohibit the student from being admitted to, and progressing in, the program and from becoming certified to work in the field. Criminal background checks may be conducted annually or at the discretion of clinical affiliates.

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 within two business days 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. Failure to notify the Department Chair of a conviction or arrest may result in the student being removed from the Surgical Processing Technician program.

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, a student must undergo a criminal background check. A positive background check may prohibit the student from returning to the Surgical Processing Technician program and from becoming certified to work in the field. 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 attending on-campus laboratory classes and while at a clinical site participating in clinical practicum. 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 pulled back and cannot fall forward in front of shoulders while providing patient care. Hair accessories must maintain a professional appearance, safety, and hygiene. Hair of an unnatural color of fad designs is not permitted. Avoid highly colored sprays and maintain only natural-looking hair color. Male students must be neatly shaven and well groomed. Facial hair should be kept trimmed and neat.
- Fingernails must be kept short, clean, and filed. Artificial nails, nail polish, and added stick-on jewels are not permitted as they harbor microorganisms.
- Dangle earrings, rings, or other visible body jewelry (nose rings, lip rings, tongue piercing, bracelets, necklaces which can become entangled in equipment) are not permitted while working in the laboratory and/or clinical setting.
- Cosmetics should be worn in moderation. Students are not permitted to wear fragrant products (cologne, perfume, aftershave, lotion, etc.) in clinical settings due to potential patient allergic response. Strong odors, including the odor of a smoker, can be apparent and offensive to patients who are ill.
- Consumption of food, candy, and gum is prohibited while working in any laboratory or clinical setting.
- Unless other facility-specific guidelines are provided, students are required to wear a clean and pressed surgical processing technician uniform with the Berkeley College insignia. Appropriate undergarments are to be worn and be undetectable through the uniform.
- Shoes must be professional in nature; clean operating room (OR) clogs, white sneakers, or black sneakers are acceptable provided they contain no mesh and/or open areas. No sandals, clogs, open-toed, or sling back shoes 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 assignments.

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Health Requirements

Students in the Surgical Processing Technician program must complete a physical assessment by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant at least 10 weeks prior to enrolling in the clinical practicum course. In addition to meeting any general immunization requirements applicable to admission, students also must meet the following requirements prior to participating in a clinical practicum: Provide 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 within the past 10 years. An influenza vaccine is required for most clinical facilities. A negative 12-panel, pre-employment urine toxicology screening is also required. This includes screening for:

- Amphetamines
- Barbituates
- Benzodiazepine
- Cannabinoids
- Cocaine
- Meperidine
- Methadone
- Opiates
- Oxycodone
- Phencyclidine
- Propoxyphene
- Tramadol

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

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, a student must repeat the drug screening outlined above prior to participating in any clinical rotations. If during the course of study a student is suspected of drug use, he/she 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.

Berkeley College's Surgical Processing Technician program is physically and mentally challenging. During the clinical portion of the program, students will be exposed to healthcare situations where there is an increased risk of exposure to strenuous activity, communicable diseases, radiation, and toxic substances.

Due to the increased risk of exposure to a variety of situations and substances that could potentially affect a developing fetus, any student who believes she may be pregnant, has recently given birth, or has recently terminated a pregnancy is strongly encouraged to speak with her healthcare provider immediately to determine whether she is physically capable of remaining in the program and meeting all relevant technical standards outlined in this Handbook. Neither Berkeley College nor its affiliating clinical agencies shall be responsible for any harm that might occur to a fetus or pregnant student.

Any student who is unable to continue in clinical courses based on the recommendation of her/his healthcare provider will be afforded the opportunity, once medically cleared, to return to the program pending course availability.

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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 reputation of 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 remove the student immediately from the clinical setting. For more general conduct requirements applicable to all Berkeley College students, go to **BerkeleyCollege.edu/student-handbook/student-handbook-2016-2017-5923.htm** (/student-handbook/student-handbook-2016-2017-5923.htm) .