



SURGICAL SERVICES

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Surgical Technology (AAS) | Sterile Processing (Certificate)

EDUCATE | EMPOWER | ELEVATE

Table of Contents

- 1. Welcome Letter**
- 2. Handbook Provision**
- 3. PPSC Mission, Vision & Values**
- 4. Surgical Services Department Mission, Values & Goals**
- 5. Program Descriptions**
 - Surgical Technology – Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
 - Sterile Processing – Certificate
- 6. Outside Employment & Military Students**
 - Outside Employment
 - Military Students
- 7. Program Learning Outcomes**
 - Surgical Technology – Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
 - Sterile Processing – Certificate
- 8. Program Requirements & Admissions**
 - Surgical Technology – Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
 - Program Overview
 - Application Timeline
 - Application Requirements
 - Clinical Compliance
 - Prerequisite Coursework
 - Required STE Courses
 - Clinical Requirements
 - Sterile Processing – Certificate
 - Program Overview
 - Enrollment Requirements
 - Clinical Compliance
 - Required SPI Courses
 - Clinical Requirements
- 9. Evaluation & Performance Expectations**
 - Purpose of Evaluation
 - Evaluation Domains
 - Evaluation Expectations
- 10. Grading & Testing Policy**
 - Grading Scale & GPA Requirements
 - Clinical Performance Requirements

- Grade Calculations
- Testing & Exam Policies
- Exam Environment Rules
- Unannounced Quizzes
- Review & Appeal of Grades
- Skill Evaluations

11. Accessibility & Accommodations

- Eligibility & Limitations
- Accessibility Services Support
- Student Responsibility
- Clinical Education & Accommodations

12. Dress Code & Appearance Standards

- Required Attire
- Hair, Nails & Hygiene
- Appearance Standards
- Electronic Devices & Earbuds

13. Essential Skills & Functional Abilities

- Personal Hygiene & Appearance
- Substance Use
- Interpersonal & Communication Abilities
- Critical Thinking & Decision-Making
- Physical & Motor Abilities
- Auditory & Visual Abilities
- Tactile Abilities
- Emotional Stability & Mental Alertness
- Olfactory Abilities

14. Attendance Policy

- Clinical Attendance
- Classroom & Laboratory Attendance
- Tardiness & Early Departure
- Religious Observances & Emergencies
- Student Responsibility

15. Professional Conduct Standards

- General Conduct
- Communication Guidelines
- Professional Boundaries

- Confidentiality & Ethics
- Safety & Compliance
- Technology & Social Media
- Accountability

16. Laboratory Information & Safety

- Attendance & Supervision
- Laboratory Safety
- Handling Equipment & Materials
- Spills & Cleanliness
- Personal Items

17. Clinical Education Policies

- Clinical Placement
- Professional Behavior at Clinical Affiliates
- Attendance & Punctuality
- Clinical Schedule Changes
- Illness, Injury & Return to Clinical
- Removal or Dismissal from a Clinical Affiliate
- Clinical Documentation
- Transportation & Scheduling

18. Academic Integrity & Artificial Intelligence Policy

- Academic Integrity
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

19. Substance Use & Drug Screening

- Substance Use
- Alcohol
- Drug Screening Requirements
- Suspected Impairment
- Accountability

20. Pregnancy & Radiation Safety

- Pregnancy
- Radiation Safety
- Student Responsibility

21. Incident Reporting: Injury, Infectious Disease & Exposure

- Incidents Requiring Reporting
- Immediate Response
- Incidents at PPSC

- Incidents at a Clinical Affiliate
- Blood & Body Fluid Exposure
- Chemical & Hazardous Material Exposure
- Infectious Disease & Illness
- Communicable Disease Exposure
- Medical Evaluation & Return to Program Activities
- Documentation
- Confidentiality
- Failure to Report
- Student Responsibility

22. Harassment, Discrimination & Title IX

- Nondiscrimination
- Prohibited Conduct
- Title IX
- Reporting
- Retaliation
- Clinical Education
- Supportive Measures
- Pregnancy & Related Conditions
- Confidential Resources
- Reporting Information & Governing Policies
- Student Conduct

23. Disciplinary Action, Program Dismissal & Readmission

- Grounds for Corrective or Disciplinary Action
- Progressive Corrective Action
- Academic & Program Probation
- Probation Conditions & Duration
- Immediate Safety or Educational Action
- Serious Violations
- Program Dismissal
- Notice of Program Action
- Readmission Policy
- Eligibility for Readmission
- Readmission Process
- Skills & Knowledge Assessment
- Readmission Limitations & Decision

- Withdrawal & Incompletes
- Student Concerns, Complaints & Appeals
- Protection from Retaliation

24. Graduation

- Eligibility for Graduation
- Certification Exams
- Pinning & Recognition Ceremony
- Student Responsibility

25. Transportation & Parking

- Transportation Requirements
- Campus Parking
- Clinical Affiliate Parking
- Travel Between Locations
- Student Responsibility

26. Weather Closures & Emergencies

- PPSC Closures & Delays
- Clinical Education During PPSC Closures
- Clinical Affiliate Closure or Restricted Operations
- Severe Weather & Unsafe Travel Conditions
- Emergencies During Class, Lab or Clinical
- Emergency Communication
- Student Responsibility

27. Campus Safety & Emergency Alerts

- Emergency Alerts
- Reporting an Emergency
- Emergency Procedures
- Emergency Drills
- Laboratory Safety Emergencies
- Clinical Affiliate Safety
- Personal Belongings
- Weapons & Threatening Behavior
- Student Responsibility

28. Student Acknowledgment

- Student Acknowledgment
- Student Information

1. Welcome to the Surgical Services Department

Welcome to the Surgical Services Department at Pikes Peak State College.

You are beginning a challenging and rewarding educational journey that will prepare you for an important role in healthcare. Whether your path is in Surgical Technology or Sterile Processing, your education will require technical skill, critical thinking, professionalism, accountability, and a commitment to patient safety.

Throughout your program, you will build knowledge in the classroom, develop and demonstrate skills in the laboratory, and apply what you have learned in professional healthcare environments. Each experience is intentionally designed to prepare you for the expectations and responsibilities of your chosen profession.

Our faculty, staff, and clinical partners are committed to supporting your education and professional development. Your success, however, requires your active participation. Students who are successful in the Surgical Services Department attend consistently, communicate professionally, remain engaged in their learning, accept feedback, take responsibility for their performance, and seek assistance when needed.

This handbook serves as an important guide throughout your time in the Surgical Services Department. It outlines departmental policies, expectations, program requirements, and resources that apply to your education. You are responsible for becoming familiar with its contents and referring to it throughout your program.

The work performed by surgical technologists and sterile processing professionals directly contributes to safe patient care. The knowledge you gain, the skills you practice, and the professional behaviors you develop throughout your education will prepare you for that responsibility.

We are pleased to welcome you to the Surgical Services Department and look forward to supporting your growth as you progress from student to healthcare professional.

Antoinette Trujillo-Fergus, MBA, CST, CRCST
Director of Surgical Services

2. Handbook Provision

This handbook serves as a reference for students enrolled in the Surgical Services Department at Pikes Peak State College (PPSC). It outlines departmental expectations, academic and clinical requirements, procedures, and policies that apply throughout the student's program of study.

This handbook is intended to be used in conjunction with applicable PPSC policies and procedures, Colorado Community College System (CCCS) Board Policies (BPs) and System Procedures (SPs), and federal and state laws and regulations. In the event of a conflict, applicable federal or state law, CCCS policy or procedure, and PPSC policy or procedure take precedence over this handbook.

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with applicable college and departmental policies. Current CCCS Board Policies and System Procedures are available at:

<https://www.cccs.edu/about-cccs/state-board/policies-and-procedures/>

This handbook does not constitute a contract and does not guarantee admission, clinical placement, program completion, graduation, certification, licensure or registration, or employment.

The Surgical Services Department and PPSC reserve the right to revise program requirements, procedures, and handbook provisions as necessary to maintain compliance with institutional, accreditation, certification, legal, and regulatory requirements, as well as clinical affiliate expectations.

When handbook changes affect currently enrolled students, the department will communicate those changes through appropriate college communication methods, including PPSC email, D2L, written notification, and announcements during class, laboratory, or clinical activities.

Students are responsible for reviewing departmental communications, staying informed about current requirements, and seeking clarification when they have questions about a policy or expectation.

3. PPSC Mission, Vision & Values

PPSC Vision: Students succeed at PPSC.

PPSC Mission: Pikes Peak State College provides high-quality educational opportunities for all learners, with a strong focus on student success and community needs. This includes:

- Occupational programs, such as certificates, associates, and bachelor's degrees, that prepare students for immediate employment in healthcare and technical fields.
- Transfer programs that give students a strong academic foundation for continuing their education at four-year institutions.
- Personal enrichment and career development opportunities that support lifelong learning.

Additional information about Pikes Peak State College and the Colorado Community College System is available at:

Pikes Peak State College: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/>

Colorado Community College System: <https://www.cccs.edu/>

CCCS Board Policies and System Procedures: <https://www.cccs.edu/about-cccs/state-board/policies-and-procedures/>

Colorado Revised Statutes: <https://leg.colorado.gov/agencies/office-legislative-legal-services/colorado-revised-statutes>

PPSC Values

At PPSC, we value a community built on learning, respect, and diversity. These values guide how we teach, learn, and grow together:

- Teaching and Learning: Commitment to student achievement and access to high-quality, affordable education.
- Mutual Respect and Accountability: A culture of civility, trust, and shared responsibility.
- Community and Diversity: Active engagement with our community and recognition of diversity as essential to a rich educational experience.

4. Program Mission, Values & Goals

Mission

The mission of the Surgical Services Department at Pikes Peak State College is to prepare students for entry-level employment in healthcare through high-quality education, hands-on training, professional development, and technical skill preparation. Graduates are prepared to contribute to safe, efficient patient care and function as responsible members of the healthcare team.

Values

The Surgical Services Department is guided by the following values:

- Professionalism: Demonstrate conduct, communication, reliability, and ethical behavior consistent with expectations in healthcare environments.
- Accountability: Take responsibility for actions, academic and clinical performance, communication, and continued professional development.
- Equity: Promote an inclusive learning environment that provides students with equitable opportunities and resources to support success.
- Workforce Readiness: Provide education and practical experiences that prepare students for the expectations of contemporary healthcare environments.
- Community Engagement: Maintain meaningful relationships with healthcare organizations, clinical partners, employers, and professional organizations to support student learning and program relevance.
- Patient Safety: Promote practices that protect patients, healthcare personnel, and the public through consistent application of safety principles and professional standards.

Goals

The Surgical Services Department is committed to the following goals:

- To prepare entry-level Surgical Technologists who are competent in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains to enter the profession.
- Incorporate Civic and Ethical Values: Promote respect, integrity, ethical decision-making, patient advocacy, and responsibility in professional practice.
- Promote Academic Excellence: Maintain rigorous academic and performance standards that prepare students for program completion, professional certification, and entry into the workforce.
- Encourage Lifelong Learning: Promote continuing education, professional involvement, certification, and ongoing development throughout each graduate's career.

- **Cultivate a Student-Centered Learning Environment:** Provide structured instruction, meaningful feedback, appropriate resources, and opportunities for students to develop academically and professionally.
- **Promote Diversity and Inclusion:** Support recruitment, retention, and educational practices that contribute to an inclusive learning environment and a healthcare workforce reflective of the communities it serves.
- **Address Workforce Needs:** Maintain programs that respond to healthcare workforce needs within Colorado and the communities served by Pikes Peak State College.
- **Optimize Program Resources:** Use faculty expertise, facilities, equipment, technology, clinical partnerships, and other resources effectively to support student learning and program outcomes.
- **Maintain Current Practice:** Regularly evaluate curriculum, laboratory experiences, equipment, technology, and clinical education to remain responsive to changes in surgical technology, sterile processing, healthcare practice, and professional standards.

5. Program Descriptions

Surgical Technology – Associate of Applied Science (AAS)

The Surgical Technology Associate of Applied Science program prepares students for entry-level practice as surgical technologists and for their role as members of the surgical team. Following completion of required prerequisite coursework and admission to the program, students complete three consecutive semesters of full-time Surgical Technology coursework.

The curriculum integrates classroom instruction, hands-on laboratory education, and supervised clinical experiences. Students develop the knowledge, technical skills, critical thinking, and professional behaviors necessary to support safe patient care throughout the perioperative environment.

Students learn to:

- Prepare and maintain the sterile field and surgical environment.
- Apply principles of aseptic technique and infection prevention.
- Prepare, organize, and manage surgical instruments, supplies, and equipment.
- Anticipate the needs of the surgical team and provide appropriate intraoperative assistance.
- Apply knowledge of surgical procedures, anatomy and physiology, microbiology, pharmacology, and surgical technology principles.
- Demonstrate professional communication, teamwork, accountability, and ethical behavior.

Clinical education provides students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in operating rooms and other surgical settings under appropriate supervision.

Graduates who meet applicable eligibility requirements are eligible to take the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) examination.

The Surgical Technology Associate of Applied Science program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA).

Sterile Processing – Certificate

The Sterile Processing Certificate program prepares students for entry-level employment in sterile processing departments and other healthcare settings responsible for the reprocessing and management of reusable medical and surgical instrumentation.

The curriculum combines classroom instruction, hands-on laboratory education, and a 400-hour clinical internship. Students develop the knowledge and technical skills necessary to safely process instrumentation and equipment while supporting infection prevention, quality assurance, and patient safety.

Students gain education and experience in areas including:

- Infection prevention and decontamination.
- Inspection, assembly, and preparation of instruments and procedural sets.
- Sterilization and high-level disinfection processes.
- Sterilization monitoring and quality assurance.
- Storage and distribution of sterile supplies.
- Instrument identification, care, handling, and inventory management.
- Professional communication, teamwork, accountability, and ethical behavior.

The clinical internship provides students with supervised experience in the major functional areas of sterile processing and enables them to apply classroom and laboratory learning in healthcare settings.

Graduates are prepared to pursue the Certified Registered Central Service Technician (CRCST) credential administered by the Healthcare Sterile Processing Association (HSPA). Eligibility for certification is determined by HSPA and includes completion and documentation of required hands-on experience.

6. Outside Employment & Military Students

Outside Employment

Students may maintain employment while enrolled in the Surgical Services Department; however, employment schedules do not take priority over academic, laboratory, or clinical requirements.

Students are responsible for arranging employment and other personal commitments around their assigned program schedule. Employment is not considered an acceptable reason for missing or leaving early from scheduled classes, laboratory activities, examinations, clinical assignments, or other required program activities.

Students should carefully consider the time commitment associated with their program when determining whether and how much to work while enrolled. Program schedules may include early mornings, extended clinical shifts, and other required activities that fall outside a student's preferred schedule.

The Surgical Services Department cannot modify academic or clinical requirements to accommodate a student's employment schedule.

Military Service

The Surgical Services Department supports students who are serving on Active Duty, in the National Guard, or in the Reserves.

Students should communicate known military obligations to program faculty as early as possible and provide appropriate documentation when required. Students are encouraged to work proactively with their military leadership and program faculty when scheduled military responsibilities may affect coursework, laboratory activities, examinations, or clinical education.

Military-related absences and accommodations will be addressed in accordance with applicable federal and state law and PPSC and Colorado Community College System policies and procedures.

Because Surgical Services programs include sequential coursework, competency-based laboratory education, and clinical requirements, an absence may affect a student's ability to meet required competencies, clinical hours, or course outcomes. When a military

obligation affects program participation, faculty will work with the student and appropriate college resources to determine available options that are consistent with applicable policies and program requirements.

Students remain responsible for communicating with faculty and completing applicable academic and clinical requirements necessary for successful program completion.

7. Program Learning Outcomes

Surgical Technology – Associate of Applied Science (AAS)

Upon successful completion of the Surgical Technology program, graduates will be able to:

- **Apply Medical and Surgical Knowledge:** Apply knowledge of medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, microbiology, pharmacology, and surgical procedures to the practice of surgical technology.
- **Identify and Manage Surgical Instruments and Equipment:** Identify surgical instruments, supplies, and equipment by name, function, and application and prepare them appropriately for surgical procedures.
- **Apply Principles of Aseptic Technique:** Apply principles of asepsis, infection prevention, and sterile technique throughout the perioperative environment.
- **Establish and Maintain the Sterile Field:** Prepare the operating room, open sterile supplies, establish the sterile field, and maintain its integrity throughout surgical procedures.
- **Perform Surgical Technologist Responsibilities:** Demonstrate appropriate preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative responsibilities of the surgical technologist.
- **Anticipate Procedural Needs:** Apply knowledge of surgical procedures and procedural sequence to anticipate the needs of the surgeon and surgical team.
- **Support Safe Patient Care:** Apply principles of patient safety, positioning, specimen handling, medication management, counts, and other perioperative safety practices within the surgical technologist's role.
- **Communicate and Collaborate Effectively:** Use appropriate communication, teamwork, and critical-thinking skills when interacting with patients, faculty, surgeons, and other members of the healthcare team.
- **Demonstrate Professional and Ethical Practice:** Demonstrate accountability, integrity, professional conduct, appropriate appearance, respect, and ethical decision-making in classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments.
- **Practice Within Professional and Legal Standards:** Perform surgical technology responsibilities consistent with applicable laws, regulations, facility policies, professional standards, and the responsibilities of the surgical technologist.

Sterile Processing – Certificate

Upon successful completion of the Sterile Processing program, graduates will be able to:

- **Apply Infection Prevention Principles:** Apply principles of microbiology, infection prevention, standard precautions, and safe work practices throughout the medical device reprocessing cycle.
- **Perform Decontamination Processes:** Demonstrate appropriate receiving, sorting, cleaning, decontamination, and disinfection processes for reusable medical devices and surgical instrumentation.
- **Identify, Inspect, and Assemble Instrumentation:** Identify surgical instruments and equipment and demonstrate appropriate inspection, testing, assembly, preparation, and packaging techniques.
- **Apply Sterilization and Disinfection Principles:** Select and apply appropriate sterilization and high-level disinfection methods based on device requirements, manufacturer instructions for use, and established standards.
- **Perform Quality Assurance Activities:** Apply monitoring, documentation, recordkeeping, and quality assurance practices associated with medical device reprocessing.
- **Manage Storage and Distribution:** Apply principles of sterile storage, inventory management, distribution, and environmental control to maintain the integrity and availability of processed supplies and equipment.
- **Apply Industry Standards and Instructions for Use:** Locate and follow applicable standards, policies, procedures, and manufacturer instructions for use when performing sterile processing responsibilities.
- **Communicate and Collaborate Effectively:** Communicate professionally and collaborate with sterile processing personnel, operating room staff, and other members of the healthcare team to support safe and timely patient care.
- **Demonstrate Professional and Ethical Practice:** Demonstrate accountability, integrity, professional conduct, appropriate appearance, respect, and ethical decision-making in classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments.

8. Program Requirements & Admissions

Admission, enrollment, and clinical participation requirements vary between the Surgical Technology and Sterile Processing programs. Students are responsible for meeting all requirements and deadlines associated with their program and cohort.

Admission to Pikes Peak State College does not guarantee admission to the Surgical Technology program, enrollment in Sterile Processing courses, or eligibility for clinical placement.

Surgical Technology – Associate of Applied Science (AAS)

Program Overview

The Surgical Technology program is a selective-admission, full-time program that admits cohorts in both the Fall and Spring semesters.

Following completion of required prerequisite coursework and acceptance into the program, students complete three consecutive semesters of Surgical Technology coursework. The sequence of courses and clinical education depends on the semester in which the student begins the program.

Students must be formally accepted into the Surgical Technology program before registering for restricted STE courses.

The program includes classroom, laboratory, and clinical education. Because clinical education occurs in healthcare facilities throughout the region, students must have sufficient scheduling availability to participate in assigned clinical experiences. Clinical schedules are determined by the program and clinical affiliates and may include early mornings and varying shift times.

Application Timeline

Fall Cohort:

- Application Window: May 1 through June 1
- Program Start: August

Spring Cohort:

- Application Window: September 1 through October 1
- Program Start: January

Accepted students are required to attend a mandatory program orientation before beginning their first semester. Orientation dates and requirements are communicated to accepted students.

Application dates and admission requirements are subject to change. Students should refer to the current Surgical Technology program information published by Pikes Peak State College when preparing to apply.

Application and Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet current program admission requirements, which include:

- Admission to Pikes Peak State College.
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75.
- Completion of required prerequisite coursework as specified by the program.
- Attendance at a Surgical Technology information session.
- Completion of the departmental application process.
- Participation in a departmental interview.
- Ability to meet the Essential Skills and Functional Abilities described in this handbook, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Additional requirements may be established as part of the competitive admission process. Meeting minimum eligibility requirements does not guarantee admission.

Requirements Following Acceptance

Students accepted into the Surgical Technology program must complete all required onboarding and clinical compliance requirements by established deadlines. Requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Mandatory program orientation.
- American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers certification.
- Criminal background screening.
- Drug screening.
- Required health and immunization documentation.

- Clinical affiliate onboarding requirements.
- Documentation required through CastleBranch, myClinicalExchange, or other systems designated by the program or clinical affiliate.

Failure to complete required documentation by established deadlines may prevent a student from beginning or continuing in the program or participating in clinical education.

Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screening

Students participating in clinical education must meet the background screening and drug screening requirements established by PPSC, CCCS, the Surgical Services Department, and participating clinical affiliates.

Clinical affiliates may establish eligibility requirements beyond those required by the College and may decline to accept a student based on background screening, drug screening, or other onboarding requirements.

The College cannot guarantee clinical placement when a student does not meet the eligibility requirements of available clinical affiliates.

Additional information regarding substance use and drug screening is provided in Section 19 of this handbook.

Health and Immunization Requirements

Students must maintain all health and immunization requirements necessary for participation in clinical education. Requirements may include:

- Tuberculosis screening.
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap).
- Hepatitis B vaccination or other acceptable documentation.
- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR).
- Varicella.
- Seasonal influenza vaccination.
- Other vaccinations, testing, health documentation, or protective measures required by PPSC or assigned clinical affiliates.

Requirements may vary by clinical affiliate and may change in response to facility policy, public health guidance, or regulatory requirements.

Students are responsible for maintaining current documentation throughout enrollment.

Prerequisite and General Education Coursework

The Surgical Technology AAS includes prerequisite and general education coursework that must be completed to fulfill the degree requirements.

The following courses must be completed before entry into the Surgical Technology program:

- ENG 1020, ENG 1021, or ENG 1022 – English Composition
- MAT 1120, MAT 1140, or approved higher-level mathematics course
- BIO 2101 – Human Anatomy & Physiology I
- BIO 2104 – Microbiology
- HPR 1045 – Medical Record Terminology

The following courses are required for completion of the Surgical Technology AAS but may be completed during the professional program sequence:

- BIO 2102 – Human Anatomy & Physiology II
BIO 2102 may be taken concurrently with STE 1000, STE 1001, and STE 1005 during the student's first semester of Surgical Technology coursework. BIO 2102 must be successfully completed before the student progresses to STE 1010, STE 1015, and STE 1020.
- PSY 2440 – Human Growth & Development
PSY 2440 may be taken concurrently with STE 1000, STE 1001, and STE 1005 or with STE 1010, STE 1015, and STE 1020. PSY 2440 must be successfully completed before the student progresses to the clinical internship sequence.

BIO 2101, BIO 2102, and BIO 2104 must meet the program's seven-year science recency requirement.

Students are encouraged to complete BIO 2102 and PSY 2440 before beginning the professional program sequence when possible. Students who complete these courses concurrently with STE coursework should consider the additional academic workload when planning employment and other responsibilities.

Required Surgical Technology Courses

Students complete the following Surgical Technology courses during the three-semester professional sequence:

- STE 1000 – Introduction to Surgical Technology
- STE 1001 – Surgical Technology Lab
- STE 1005 – Surgical Pharmacology
- STE 1010 – Surgical Procedures I
- STE 1015 – Surgical Procedures II
- STE 1020 – Surgical Procedures III
- STE 1081 – Surgical Technology Clinical Internship I
- STE 1082 – Surgical Technology Clinical Internship II
- STE 1083 – Surgical Technology Clinical Internship III
- STE 2068 – Surgical Technology Seminar

The semester in which individual courses are completed depends on whether the student enters with the Fall or Spring cohort.

Students must meet the minimum grade and progression requirements established in Sections 9 and 10 of this handbook to continue in the program.

Clinical Requirements

Clinical education is an integral component of the Surgical Technology program. Students are assigned to clinical affiliates by the Surgical Services Department based on educational needs, clinical capacity, affiliate availability, and program requirements.

Clinical schedules vary by affiliate and may require students to report early in the morning. Students must be available for the complete assigned clinical schedule.

Students must complete the clinical hours, competencies, surgical experiences, and case requirements established by the program and applicable accreditation standards.

Students are required to document a minimum of 120 surgical cases distributed among general surgery and surgical specialties in accordance with current ARC/STSA surgical case requirements.

Additional Surgical Technology clinical requirements, including clinical attendance, documentation, case requirements, evaluations, and clinical performance expectations, are provided in the Surgical Technology Clinical Handbook and Section 17 of this handbook.

Certification

Graduates who meet applicable eligibility requirements are eligible to take the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) examination.

Sterile Processing – Certificate

Program Overview

The Sterile Processing Certificate program admits students in the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.

The program combines classroom instruction, laboratory education, seminar activities, and a 400-hour clinical internship. The curriculum is designed to prepare students for entry-level employment in sterile processing and to support eligibility for professional certification.

Fall and Spring cohorts complete the program during the standard academic semester. The Summer cohort follows an accelerated schedule. Because of the substantial clinical-hour requirement, students should expect a significant weekly time commitment regardless of the semester in which they enroll.

Enrollment is subject to program capacity, completion of required onboarding requirements, and availability of clinical placements.

Enrollment

Students seeking enrollment in the Sterile Processing program must:

- Be admitted to Pikes Peak State College.
- Meet current program eligibility requirements.
- Complete required program enrollment procedures.
- Attend the required program information session or other designated pre-enrollment activity.
- Complete mandatory program orientation.
- Complete all clinical compliance requirements by established deadlines.
- Enrollment and clinical placement are subject to program and clinical affiliate capacity.

Clinical Compliance

Before participating in clinical education, students must complete required onboarding and clinical compliance requirements, including:

- Criminal background screening.
- Drug screening.
- Required health and immunization documentation.
- American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers certification when required.
- Clinical affiliate onboarding requirements.
- Documentation required through CastleBranch, myClinicalExchange, or other systems designated by the program or clinical affiliate.

Clinical affiliates may impose additional requirements, including health screenings, respirator fit testing, facility-specific training, additional documentation, or other onboarding requirements.

Failure to meet clinical eligibility requirements may prevent placement and may affect the student's ability to complete the program.

Additional information regarding substance use and drug screening is provided in Section 19 of this handbook.

Required Sterile Processing Courses

Students complete the following courses:

- SPI 1000 – Sterile Instrument Processing
- SPI 1001 – Sterile Instrument Lab Skills
- SPI 1081 – Internship: Sterile Processing
- SPI 2079 – Seminar

Students must meet the minimum grade and progression requirements established in Sections 9 and 10 of this handbook.

Clinical Internship Requirements

Students must complete at least 400 hours of hands-on sterile processing experience.

The required clinical experience includes:

- Decontamination: 120 hours
- Preparation and Packaging of Instruments: 120 hours

- Sterilization and Disinfection: 120 hours
- Storage and Distribution: 24 hours
- Quality Assurance: 16 hours

Clinical schedules are determined by the assigned clinical affiliate and may vary by semester and location. Clinical experiences are unpaid unless a separate employment relationship exists between the student and the healthcare facility, which has been reviewed and approved in accordance with program requirements.

Clinical placements are coordinated by the Surgical Services Department. Students may not independently arrange or change clinical placements without authorization from the program.

Additional clinical education requirements are provided in Section 17 of this handbook.

Certification

Graduates are prepared to pursue the Certified Registered Central Service Technician (CRCST) credential administered by the Healthcare Sterile Processing Association (HSPA).

HSPA establishes certification eligibility requirements, including requirements related to documented hands-on experience. Students are responsible for meeting the current HSPA certification requirements when they apply for the examination or credential.

9. Evaluation and Performance Expectations

Students in the Surgical Services Department are evaluated throughout their program in the areas of knowledge, technical skill, professional behavior, and readiness for safe practice. Evaluation is continuous and is used to measure student progress, provide feedback, identify areas requiring improvement, and determine whether students are meeting established course, program, laboratory, and clinical expectations.

Successful progression requires more than earning a passing numerical grade. Students must demonstrate satisfactory performance in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains applicable to their program.

Purpose of Evaluation

Evaluation is designed to:

- Measure achievement of course and program learning outcomes.
- Monitor development of knowledge, technical skills, and professional behaviors.
- Identify strengths and areas requiring additional development.
- Provide students with meaningful feedback regarding their performance.
- Evaluate readiness to progress to increasingly complex laboratory and clinical experiences.
- Promote safe, competent, ethical, and professional practice.
- Identify performance concerns that may require remediation or additional intervention.

Students are expected to review and apply feedback, seek clarification when needed, participate in required remediation, and take responsibility for their continued development.

Evaluation Domains

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge and Critical Thinking

Students must demonstrate the knowledge and critical-thinking abilities necessary to understand concepts, analyze situations, make appropriate decisions, and apply classroom learning to laboratory and clinical environments.

Evaluation methods may include:

- Examinations and quizzes.
- Written assignments.
- Case studies.
- Scenario-based activities.
- Discussions and presentations.
- Clinical or laboratory application of course concepts.

Psychomotor Domain: Technical Skills

Students must demonstrate the technical skills and competencies required for their respective profession.

Surgical Technology skills may include aseptic technique, surgical instrumentation, operating room preparation, establishment and maintenance of the sterile field, procedural skills, and the performance of surgical technologist responsibilities.

Sterile Processing skills may include decontamination, instrument identification and inspection, assembly and packaging, sterilization and disinfection processes, quality assurance, storage, and distribution.

Evaluation methods may include:

- Skills checklists.
- Return demonstrations.
- Laboratory practical examinations.
- Simulations.
- Competency assessments.
- Direct observation by faculty, clinical instructors, or approved clinical personnel.
- Clinical performance evaluations.

Students must demonstrate required skills at the level of competency established by the course or program before progressing when competency is required for subsequent laboratory or clinical activities.

Affective Domain: Professional Behavior

Professional behavior is an essential component of healthcare education and is evaluated throughout the program.

Students are expected to demonstrate:

- Accountability and reliability.
- Professional and respectful communication.
- Ethical behavior and integrity.
- Appropriate response to instruction, correction, and feedback.
- Preparedness and active participation.
- Teamwork and cooperation.
- Respect for patients, peers, faculty, clinical personnel, and others.
- Appropriate professional boundaries.
- Compliance with safety, confidentiality, academic, laboratory, and clinical expectations.

Professional behavior may be evaluated through faculty observation, professionalism assessments, clinical evaluations, attendance and punctuality records, communication, preparedness, and feedback from clinical instructors, preceptors, and other authorized clinical personnel.

Performance Expectations

Students must demonstrate satisfactory performance in all required evaluation domains to remain eligible for progression.

A passing overall course grade does not override an unsatisfactory required competency, unsafe performance, failure to meet clinical requirements, or significant professional conduct concerns when those requirements are identified as necessary for successful course or program completion.

Evaluation criteria, grading requirements, competency expectations, and applicable rubrics will be provided through course syllabi, D2L, skills documentation, clinical evaluation tools, or other program materials.

When performance does not meet established expectations, faculty may require additional instruction, remediation, reassessment, a performance improvement plan, or other corrective action consistent with the nature and severity of the concern.

Continued or significant failure to meet academic, technical, professional, safety, or clinical expectations may result in disciplinary action, academic probation, failure of a

course, inability to progress, or dismissal from the program in accordance with applicable departmental and College policies.

Students are responsible for monitoring their academic and professional progress, reviewing evaluation results, completing required remediation, and seeking assistance when needed.

10. Grading and Testing Policy

Students in the Surgical Services Department must meet established academic, laboratory, and clinical performance standards to successfully complete courses and progress through their program.

Grading Requirements

Students must:

- Earn a final course grade of 76% or higher in each required program course.
- Maintain a minimum cumulative program GPA of 2.75.
- Successfully complete all required skills, competencies, laboratory practicals, and clinical requirements associated with each course.
- Meet the progression requirements established by the Surgical Services Department.

A passing numerical course average does not automatically result in successful course completion when a student has not successfully completed a required competency, clinical requirement, or other separately identified course requirement.

Letter Grade Scale

The Surgical Services Department uses the following grading scale:

- A = 90–100%
- B = 83–89%
- C = 76–82%
- D = 69–75%
- F = Below 69%

A final course grade below 76% is not considered passing for progression in the Surgical Services program.

Grades are not rounded. For example, a final course grade of 75.9% remains 75.9% and does not meet the minimum requirement of 76%.

Grade Calculation

Course grades are calculated according to the grading categories and weights identified in the individual course syllabus.

Assignments, examinations, quizzes, laboratory activities, skills evaluations, clinical evaluations, professionalism assessments, participation, or other course requirements may contribute to the final grade depending on the course.

Students are responsible for reviewing the syllabus and D2L gradebook for each course and monitoring their academic progress throughout the semester.

Testing and Examination Expectations

Examinations and quizzes are used to evaluate student knowledge, critical thinking, application of course concepts, and readiness to progress.

Students are expected to:

- Complete examinations at the scheduled date and time.
- Arrive before the examination begins.
- Follow all testing instructions provided by the instructor.
- Use only materials specifically authorized for the examination.
- Maintain academic integrity throughout the testing process.

Examinations will not normally be administered before the scheduled examination date.

Missed and Make-Up Examinations

Students who are unable to complete a scheduled examination must notify the instructor as soon as possible and comply with the attendance and communication requirements established in the course syllabus and this handbook.

Make-up examinations are not automatically granted. When a make-up examination is approved, the instructor determines the date, time, location, and format of the examination.

A make-up examination may differ from the original examination in format or question type while assessing the same course learning outcomes.

Failure to complete an examination without appropriate communication or authorization may result in a grade of zero in accordance with the course syllabus.

Late Arrival for Examinations

Students arriving after an examination has begun may be denied entry to the testing environment when their arrival could compromise examination security or disrupt other students.

The instructor will determine whether the student may begin the examination, complete an alternate assessment, or incur the consequence specified in the course syllabus and attendance policy.

Testing Environment

During examinations, students must comply with all instructor directions and testing security requirements.

Unless specifically authorized, students may not have access to:

- Books, notes, study materials, or papers.
- Cell phones, smart watches, headphones, or other electronic devices.
- Unauthorized calculators or technology.
- Personal items that could compromise examination security.

Hats, sunglasses, or other items that interfere with testing security may be required to be removed unless worn for an approved accommodation, religious observance, or other authorized purpose.

Only instructor-approved materials may be present in the testing area.

Students may not photograph, record, copy, reproduce, retain, distribute, or share examination questions or other secured testing materials.

Faculty may clarify typographical, formatting, or technical errors during an examination but will not interpret examination questions or provide information that could assist a student in selecting an answer.

Violations of examination security or academic integrity are subject to the Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence Policy in Section 18 and may result in disciplinary action.

Quizzes

Faculty may administer announced or unannounced quizzes as part of course assessment.

Students are responsible for completing quizzes according to the requirements established in the course syllabus. Missed quizzes and opportunities for make-up work are governed by the individual course syllabus and applicable attendance requirements.

Review of Examinations and Grades

Students are encouraged to review assessment results and seek clarification when they do not understand their performance.

A student who believes an examination, quiz, assignment, or other assessment has been scored incorrectly should contact the instructor within one week of the grade being posted or the assessment being returned.

Requests for reconsideration should identify the specific item or grading concern and provide the student's rationale. A request for review does not guarantee a change in grade.

Formal grade appeals are governed by applicable PPSC and CCCS policies and procedures.

Skills and Competency Evaluations

Students must successfully demonstrate required laboratory and clinical skills before progressing when those skills are prerequisites for subsequent learning or safe clinical practice.

Students are permitted up to three attempts to successfully complete a required skills competency unless otherwise specified in the course syllabus.

First Attempt

If the student is unsuccessful on the first attempt:

- The unsuccessful attempt is documented.

- The student receives feedback regarding areas requiring improvement.
- Remediation is required before the second attempt.
- The student is responsible for completing assigned remediation and preparing for reassessment.

Second Attempt

If the student is unsuccessful on the second attempt:

- Additional remediation is required.
- The student is placed on academic probation for the remainder of the semester.
- The student must successfully complete the competency on the third and final attempt to remain eligible to continue in the course and program.
- The maximum recorded score for the competency is 76%.

Third Attempt

Failure to demonstrate the required competency on the third attempt results in course failure and dismissal from the program.

A student who fails to achieve the required competency may not compensate for that failure through points earned in other course components.

Academic probation, dismissal, readmission eligibility, and appeals are addressed in Section 23 of this handbook.

Clinical Performance

Clinical education is evaluated separately from classroom academic performance when identified in the course requirements.

Students must demonstrate satisfactory clinical performance, professional behavior, patient safety practices, and required competencies.

An unsatisfactory or failing clinical evaluation may result in failure of the associated clinical course regardless of grades earned in other components when successful clinical performance is an identified requirement of the course.

Students who fail a course must repeat the course and any associated components required by the approved curriculum and program progression plan.

Requirements related to clinical performance, clinical removal, and clinical dismissal are addressed in Section 17. Requirements related to program dismissal and readmission are addressed in Section 23.

11. Accessibility and Accommodations

Accessibility Services

Pikes Peak State College is committed to providing equitable access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Students who believe they may need accommodations should contact PPSC Accessibility Services to begin the accommodation process.

Accessibility Services determines eligibility for accommodations and works with students and faculty to identify and implement reasonable accommodations in accordance with applicable law and College policy.

Students should not submit disability documentation or medical records directly to Surgical Services Department faculty unless specifically directed to do so through an established College process.

Requesting Accommodations

Students seeking accommodations are responsible for completing the process established by PPSC Accessibility Services. This may include:

- Registering with Accessibility Services.
- Providing documentation when required.
- Participating in the Accessibility Services review process.
- Receiving an approved accommodation plan or notification.
- Following current Accessibility Services procedures for communicating and renewing accommodations.

Students are encouraged to begin this process as early as possible. Accommodations are not retroactive and generally cannot be applied to coursework, examinations, attendance, skills evaluations, or other activities completed before an accommodation was approved and communicated through the appropriate College process.

Essential Program Requirements

Students in the Surgical Services Department must meet the essential academic, technical, safety, and clinical requirements of their program, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Reasonable accommodations may provide alternative methods of accessing instruction or demonstrating learning. Accommodations do not eliminate essential course or program requirements, fundamentally alter academic or clinical standards, or waive competencies necessary for safe participation in laboratory or clinical education.

The Surgical Services Department will work with Accessibility Services to determine how approved accommodations can be appropriately implemented in College classrooms and laboratories.

Essential Skills and Functional Abilities for Surgical Services programs are addressed in Section 13 of this handbook.

Clinical Education and Accommodations

Clinical education takes place at external healthcare facilities that are separate from Pikes Peak State College. An accommodation approved by PPSC Accessibility Services does not automatically apply to or require the same implementation by a clinical affiliate.

Clinical affiliates may maintain their own disability accommodation processes, essential function requirements, occupational health requirements, safety standards, and documentation procedures. Students may be required to complete a separate accommodation request or interactive process with the clinical affiliate before an accommodation can be considered or implemented at that location.

Students who anticipate needing an accommodation during clinical education should contact PPSC Accessibility Services and the Surgical Services Department as early as possible before the clinical experience begins. When appropriate and permitted, the College will assist with communication and coordination; however, PPSC cannot guarantee that a clinical affiliate will approve or implement an accommodation in the same manner as the College.

Students remain responsible for meeting the essential academic and clinical requirements of their program, with or without reasonable accommodation. An accommodation cannot eliminate an essential program competency, fundamentally alter the educational experience, or compromise the safety of patients, students, or healthcare personnel.

If a clinical affiliate cannot accommodate a student's needs, the Surgical Services Department will review available options in consultation with Accessibility Services and

other appropriate College personnel. Alternative clinical placement depends on the availability of an appropriate clinical affiliate and cannot be guaranteed.

Students should not independently contact a clinical affiliate to request an accommodation unless directed to do so by Accessibility Services, the Surgical Services Department, or the clinical affiliate's established accommodation process.

Student Responsibilities

Students receiving accommodations are responsible for:

- Completing the Accessibility Services process.
- Following current procedures for maintaining or renewing approved accommodations.
- Providing or authorizing appropriate accommodation notification according to College procedures.
- Communicating with faculty regarding implementation of approved accommodations.
- Initiating clinical accommodation discussions early enough to allow time for review and coordination when applicable.
- Completing any separate accommodation process required by a clinical affiliate.
- Discussing concerns regarding implementation of an accommodation promptly with the appropriate faculty member and/or Accessibility Services.
- Continuing to meet applicable academic, professional, behavioral, laboratory, and clinical requirements with approved accommodations in place.

All students remain subject to applicable PPSC Student Code of Conduct requirements and Surgical Services Department policies.

Confidentiality

Disability-related information is handled in accordance with applicable law and College policy. Faculty and clinical personnel will receive only information appropriate and necessary to coordinate approved accommodations or support the student's participation in the educational environment.

Students may be required to provide information directly to a clinical affiliate when participating in that organization's separate accommodation process.

Additional Information

Students should refer to PPSC Accessibility Services for current procedures, documentation requirements, contact information, and available services:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/student-support/accessibility-services/>

12. Dress Code & Appearance Standards

Students in the Surgical Services Department are expected to maintain a clean, professional appearance consistent with healthcare, infection prevention, safety, and clinical affiliate requirements.

Dress and appearance standards apply during scheduled classroom, laboratory, clinical, simulation, and other program activities unless otherwise directed by faculty or the clinical affiliate.

Clinical affiliates may establish dress and appearance requirements that are more restrictive than those of the Surgical Services Department. Students assigned to those facilities are responsible for complying with the clinical affiliate's requirements.

Required Attire

The standard Surgical Services Department uniform is black scrubs.

- Black scrubs must be worn for scheduled Surgical Services classes and laboratory activities unless otherwise directed by faculty.
- Scrubs must be clean, in good condition, appropriately fitted, and suitable for professional healthcare activities.
- Students must wear the uniform or attire required by their assigned clinical affiliate. Clinical affiliates may be required to wear facility-provided scrubs or other designated attire.
- Appropriate undergarments must be worn and should not interfere with the professional or functional use of the uniform.
- Students must wear required PPSC identification and/or clinical affiliate identification according to College and facility requirements.
- Closed-toe, closed-heel shoes appropriate for the healthcare environment are required.
- Surgical Technology students must maintain dedicated operating room shoes when required by the program or clinical affiliate. OR shoes must be clean and used in accordance with facility infection-prevention requirements.
- Jackets, hoodies, coats, and other outerwear may not be worn in laboratory or restricted clinical areas unless specifically permitted by faculty or the clinical affiliate.
- Required personal protective equipment must be worn as directed.

Hair and Facial Hair

- Hair must be clean, neat, and secured when necessary to prevent interference with patient care, equipment, sterile technique, decontamination activities, or personal protective equipment.
- Hair must be completely contained when required in restricted or semi-restricted areas.
- Facial hair must be maintained in a manner that does not interfere with required personal protective equipment.
- Students required to wear tight-fitting respirators must meet applicable fit-testing and facial-hair requirements.

Nails

Because students participate in environments where infection prevention and hand hygiene are essential:

- Artificial nails, nail enhancements, acrylics, gels, extensions, and other artificial nail products are not permitted.
- Nail polish is not permitted.
- Fingernails must be clean, natural, and maintained at a length that does not extend beyond the fingertip.
- Nails must not interfere with hand hygiene, glove integrity, sterile technique, instrumentation, or other required tasks.

Clinical affiliates may impose additional nail requirements.

Eyelashes and Cosmetics

- False eyelashes and eyelash extensions are not permitted when they create infection prevention, contamination, PPE, or safety concerns within laboratory or clinical environments.
- Cosmetics and personal care products must not interfere with the proper use of personal protective equipment or create contamination or safety concerns.

Jewelry and Piercings

Jewelry must not interfere with hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, sterile technique, equipment operation, or safe performance of laboratory and clinical responsibilities.

- Jewelry may be restricted or prohibited in laboratory, sterile processing, operating rooms, or other clinical environments based on the activity being performed or clinical affiliate policy.
- Students must comply with clinical affiliate requirements regarding rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, watches, facial jewelry, and other piercings.

Personal Hygiene and Fragrances

Students are expected to maintain personal hygiene appropriate for close interaction with patients, classmates, faculty, and healthcare personnel.

- Students must report to class, laboratory, and clinical activities clean and appropriately groomed.
- Uniforms and clothing must be clean and free from excessive stains, odors, pet hair, or damage.
- Strong perfumes, colognes, body sprays, scented lotions, and other heavily fragranced products are not permitted.
- Students must be free from strong odors that may interfere with the healthcare environment, including tobacco, marijuana, or other smoke odors.
- Oral and personal hygiene must be maintained throughout scheduled program activities.

Tattoos and Body Art

Visible tattoos and body art are permitted unless they violate applicable College policy, create a safety or infection prevention concern, or are restricted by the assigned clinical affiliate.

Clinical affiliates may be required to cover tattoos or other body art. Students are responsible for complying with the requirements of their assigned facility.

Headwear and Religious or Medical Considerations

Hats and non-clinical headwear are not permitted during scheduled program activities unless authorized for the environment or worn for religious, cultural, medical, or approved accommodation purposes.

Head coverings worn in laboratory or clinical environments must be compatible with required personal protective equipment, infection prevention practices, sterile technique, and safety requirements.

Students requiring an accommodation should follow the process described in Section 11.

Electronic Devices and Earbuds

Earbuds, headphones, and other personal listening devices may not be worn or used during scheduled classroom instruction, laboratory activities, clinical education, skills evaluations, examinations, or other instructional activities unless specifically authorized by faculty for an educational purpose or permitted as part of an approved accommodation.

Students must be able to hear instructions, alarms, safety information, faculty direction, clinical communication, and other information necessary for safe participation.

Cell phones and other personal electronic devices must be silenced and stored during laboratory and clinical activities unless their use is specifically authorized.

Clinical affiliates may establish additional restrictions on cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, headphones, cameras, and other electronic devices. Students must comply with the requirements of their assigned facility.

Clinical Affiliate Requirements

Students must comply with the dress, grooming, identification, PPE, and appearance requirements of their assigned clinical affiliate.

Clinical affiliate requirements may be more restrictive than the standards established by the Surgical Services Department. When requirements differ, students must follow the requirements applicable to the environment in which they are participating, provided it is consistent with applicable College requirements.

Students are responsible for reviewing and following facility-specific requirements provided during clinical onboarding or orientation.

Non-Compliance

Students who report to a classroom, laboratory, or clinical environment without meeting applicable dress, hygiene, infection prevention, identification, or safety requirements may be required to correct the concern before participating.

When a concern cannot be corrected immediately, the student may be removed from the activity. Any resulting absence or missed instructional time will be addressed in accordance with the applicable attendance policy.

Repeated or significant violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Section 23 of this handbook.

13. Essential Skills and Functional Abilities

Students enrolled in the Surgical Services Department must be able to perform the essential academic, technical, cognitive, communication, behavioral, physical, and safety functions required for participation in classroom, laboratory, and clinical education, with or without reasonable accommodation.

These standards describe functional abilities necessary for safe participation in Surgical Technology and Sterile Processing education. The examples provided are representative and are not intended to include every activity a student may encounter.

Students who believe they may require an accommodation to meet an essential function should contact PPSC Accessibility Services as described in Section 11. Clinical affiliates may maintain separate essential function and accommodation requirements.

Communication

Students must be able to communicate effectively and accurately with faculty, patients, peers, clinical personnel, and other members of the healthcare team.

Examples include:

- Understand and follow verbal and written instructions.
- Communicate clearly and accurately in verbal and written form as required for safe healthcare practice.
- Give and receive information accurately and within appropriate time frames.
- Communicate effectively when masks, face shields, respirators, or other personal protective equipment are worn.
- Read and interpret policies, procedures, safety information, labels, instructions for use, medical terminology, and clinical documentation.
- Report changes, concerns, errors, safety issues, or other relevant information promptly.
- Use electronic communication and documentation systems required by the program or clinical affiliate.
- Communicate professionally and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Cognitive and Critical-Thinking Abilities

Students must be able to acquire, retain, apply, and evaluate information necessary for safe performance.

Examples include:

- Apply classroom knowledge to laboratory and clinical situations.
- Recognize relationships among clinical information, procedures, equipment, and patient safety.
- Prioritize tasks appropriately.
- Follow multistep procedures and sequences.
- Recognize deviations from expected conditions or processes.
- Identify and respond appropriately to safety concerns.
- Anticipate procedural or workflow needs.
- Perform calculations required for the student's professional role.
- Adapt to changes in procedures, assignments, priorities, or clinical conditions.
- Locate and apply policies, procedures, professional standards, and manufacturer instructions for use when appropriate.
- Make timely decisions appropriate to the student's level of education and professional role.
- Recognize personal limitations and seek assistance when appropriate.

Observation and Sensory Abilities

Students must be able to obtain and interpret information necessary for safe performance through appropriate sensory or adaptive methods.

Examples include:

- Observe the condition and integrity of instruments, equipment, supplies, packaging, and sterile barriers.
- Read labels, indicators, displays, documentation, medication information, and equipment settings.
- Detect visual changes relevant to contamination, processing, equipment function, or patient safety.
- Recognize alarms, verbal instructions, equipment sounds, and other safety signals.
- Understand verbal communication in environments where masks and other PPE are being worn.

- Identify information necessary to distinguish instruments, supplies, medications, solutions, or equipment.
- Recognize environmental conditions that may indicate a safety or processing concern.

Corrective devices and approved assistive technology may be used when they allow the student to safely meet the essential requirement.

Motor and Physical Abilities

Students must be able to perform the physical and motor activities necessary to participate safely in laboratory and clinical environments, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Examples include:

- Move safely and efficiently within operating rooms, sterile processing departments, laboratories, and other healthcare environments.
- Navigate around sterile fields, operating room tables, equipment, case carts, workstations, and other personnel without compromising patient, personnel, or environmental safety.
- Stand and remain actively engaged for extended periods as required during surgical procedures, sterile processing activities, laboratory experiences, and clinical assignments.
- Bend, reach, stoop, squat, and change body position as necessary to perform required tasks.
- Lift and carry instrument sets, supplies, equipment, and other materials weighing up to 50 pounds.
- Push and pull loaded case carts, instrument carts, equipment, patient beds, stretchers, and other items commonly encountered in surgical and sterile processing environments.
- Assist with lifting, positioning, transferring, and moving patients using appropriate equipment, safe body mechanics, and assistance from other healthcare personnel when indicated.
- Reach, grasp, manipulate, position, transfer, and safely handle surgical instruments, supplies, equipment, and packaging materials.

- Perform repetitive hand, wrist, arm, and upper-extremity movements associated with surgical instrumentation, equipment processing, assembly, packaging, and other required tasks.
- Perform fine and gross motor activities necessary for safe instrument handling, sterile technique, equipment operation, and medical device processing.
- Maintain appropriate positioning and physical activity for the duration necessary to participate in surgical procedures and sterile processing functions.
- Perform Basic Life Support (BLS) skills, including chest compressions, when required.
- Don, wear, and remove required personal protective equipment safely.
- Respond promptly to urgent situations requiring movement, repositioning, or assistance.

Students are expected to use appropriate lifting techniques, available mechanical equipment, and team assistance when required by safe patient-handling practices or clinical affiliate policy. Students are not expected to independently lift or transfer patients when doing so would be unsafe or inconsistent with facility procedures.

Tactile and Fine Motor Abilities

Students must be able to perform tasks requiring appropriate tactile awareness, coordination, and fine motor control.

Examples include:

- Handle surgical instruments safely and accurately.
- Assemble and disassemble instrumentation and equipment.
- Inspect instruments and devices for cleanliness, function, and integrity.
- Manipulate small components, packaging materials, sutures, sharps, and other supplies as appropriate to the student's program.
- Perform required Surgical Technology or Sterile Processing skills while maintaining applicable safety and infection prevention practices.
- Detect differences in instrument function, alignment, movement, or condition when tactile assessment is required.
- Perform tasks requiring coordinated use of both hands.

Behavioral and Professional Functioning

Students must be able to demonstrate behaviors necessary for safe, professional participation in healthcare environments.

Examples include:

- Maintain attention and respond appropriately during classroom, laboratory, and clinical activities.
- Function effectively in environments that may be fast-paced, unpredictable, physically demanding, or stressful.
- Respond appropriately to urgent and unexpected situations.
- Accept instruction, correction, and constructive feedback and make appropriate adjustments to performance.
- Demonstrate reliability, accountability, integrity, and professional judgment.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Work effectively as a member of a healthcare team.
- Manage multiple responsibilities while maintaining safety and accuracy.
- Adapt appropriately to changes in assignments, workflow, procedures, and patient care needs.
- Recognize personal limitations and request assistance when appropriate.
- Maintain confidentiality and comply with ethical and professional expectations.

Environmental Tolerance and Safety

Surgical Technology and Sterile Processing education occurs in environments where students may encounter conditions commonly associated with healthcare practice.

Students must be able to participate safely in environments that may include:

- Blood and other potentially infectious materials.
- Cleaning chemicals, disinfectants, sterilants, medications, and other healthcare products.
- Sharps and surgical instrumentation.
- Heat, moisture, noise, odors, and varying environmental conditions.
- Surgical smoke and other procedural exposures.
- Personal protective equipment worn for extended periods.
- Restricted and semi-restricted areas.

- Equipment with moving, heated, pressurized, electrical, or mechanical components.
- Individuals with communicable diseases or other health conditions.
- Environments requiring frequent hand hygiene and prolonged or repeated use of gloves and other PPE.

Students must consistently follow the required infection prevention, PPE, occupational safety, and exposure control practices.

Program-Specific Functional Expectations

Surgical Technology

Surgical Technology students must be able to perform the essential functions associated with perioperative practice. These may include:

- Preparing the operating room and sterile supplies.
- Establishing and maintaining a sterile field.
- Performing surgical hand antisepsis, gowning, and gloving.
- Handling, organizing, and passing surgical instruments, supplies, and equipment.
- Anticipating procedural needs and responding appropriately to changes during surgical procedures.
- Participating in surgical counts.
- Managing specimens and medications within the surgical technologist's role.
- Assisting with patient positioning and transfer as appropriate.
- Moving and positioning equipment used during surgical procedures.
- Maintaining attention and sterile technique throughout surgical procedures.
- Responding appropriately to urgent and emergent situations.

Sterile Processing

Sterile Processing students must be able to perform the essential functions associated with medical device reprocessing. These may include:

- Receiving and transporting contaminated instrumentation and equipment.
- Performing decontamination and cleaning activities.
- Identifying, inspecting, testing, assembling, and packaging instrumentation.
- Lifting and carrying instrument sets weighing up to 50 pounds.
- Loading, unloading, pushing, pulling, and transporting case carts, instrument carts, sterilizer racks, and other equipment.
- Operating equipment used for cleaning, disinfection, sterilization, and quality assurance.
- Following manufacturer instructions for use and established processing procedures.
- Performing repetitive instrument inspection, assembly, and packaging activities.
- Maintaining appropriate workflow between contaminated, clean, and sterile areas.
- Storing and distributing processed instrumentation and supplies.
- Completing required documentation and quality assurance activities.

Ability to Meet Essential Requirements

Meeting essential skills and functional abilities is an ongoing requirement throughout the program.

A student who experiences a temporary or permanent change in functional ability that may affect safe participation in classroom, laboratory, or clinical education should contact PPSC Accessibility Services and the Surgical Services Department as soon as possible so appropriate next steps can be determined.

The Surgical Services Department does not independently diagnose disabilities or determine eligibility for accommodations. Accommodation requests are handled in accordance with the processes described in Section 11.

Clinical affiliates may establish their own essential function, occupational health, safety, and accommodation requirements. An accommodation approved by PPSC does not automatically require a clinical affiliate to implement it. Students should refer to Section 11 for additional information regarding accommodations during clinical education.

Students must continue to meet essential program requirements, with or without reasonable accommodation, to participate safely and progress through the program.

14. Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance and punctuality are essential to successful completion of Surgical Services programs. Classroom instruction, laboratory practice, skills development, and clinical education are sequential and competency-based. Missing scheduled instructional time may affect a student's ability to meet course outcomes, demonstrate required competencies, complete clinical requirements, and progress through the program.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, laboratories, clinical experiences, examinations, simulations, orientations, and other required program activities.

Attendance requirements apply regardless of whether missed work can be completed independently.

Classroom and Laboratory Attendance

Attendance is monitored separately for each course.

For courses scheduled two days per week:

- Students may have a maximum of two absences during the semester.
- A third absence places the student on academic probation.
- A fourth absence may result in failure of the course and dismissal from the program.

For courses scheduled one day per week:

- Students may have a maximum of one absence during the semester.
- A second absence places the student on academic probation.
- A third absence may result in failure of the course and dismissal from the program.

These limits apply to each individual course rather than to the student's combined attendance across all courses.

An absence does not relieve the student of responsibility for material presented, assignments, examinations, skills, competencies, or other course requirements.

Missed Classroom and Laboratory Time

Classroom and laboratory instructional time generally cannot be recreated or made up.

Faculty are not required to provide individual instruction, repeat lectures, recreate laboratory experiences, or offer alternative activities due to a student's absence.

Students are responsible for:

- Reviewing missed course content.
- Obtaining appropriate notes or course information.
- Completing assignments by established deadlines unless an extension has been approved.
- Communicating with faculty regarding missed examinations, skills evaluations, or other required assessments.
- Maintaining competency in material and skills presented during an absence.

Completion of missed assignments does not remove an absence from the student's attendance record.

Clinical Attendance

Clinical education requires consistent attendance and completion of all applicable hours, competency, case, and performance requirements.

Surgical Technology

Surgical Technology students must complete the clinical requirements established for their assigned clinical semester.

Clinical schedules may vary based on the academic calendar, clinical affiliate availability, holidays, and program scheduling. Students must complete the minimum clinical hours, surgical cases, competencies, and other clinical requirements established for their cohort.

Depending on the approved clinical calendar, clinical education may include:

- A 12-week clinical schedule requires a minimum of 432 clinical hours; or
- A 15-week clinical schedule requires a minimum of 540 clinical hours.

Students must also meet all required surgical case and competency requirements regardless of hours completed.

Sterile Processing

Sterile Processing students must complete a minimum of 400 clinical internship hours and the required distribution of experience identified in Section 8.

Clinical Absences

Students are permitted a maximum of one clinical absence per semester.

The clinical absence limit applies regardless of the reason for the absence except when otherwise required by applicable law, approved College policy, or an authorized accommodation.

A clinical absence does not reduce the student's obligation to complete required clinical hours, competencies, surgical cases, or other clinical requirements.

Students who exceed the permitted clinical absence limit may be placed on probation, become ineligible to continue at the clinical affiliate, fail the associated clinical course, or be dismissed from the program depending on the circumstances and the student's ability to meet course and program requirements.

Reporting a Clinical Absence

Students who will be absent or late to clinical must notify both:

- The appropriate clinical affiliate contact or site representative; and
- The assigned Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Notification must occur before the scheduled clinical start time whenever possible.

When an illness, emergency, or unexpected circumstance prevents advance notification, the student must communicate as soon as reasonably possible.

Notification of an absence does not automatically excuse the absence or guarantee an opportunity to make up missed clinical time.

Failure to appropriately notify the clinical affiliate and program may be considered a no-call/no-show and may result in additional disciplinary action.

Clinical Make-Up Time

Clinical make-up opportunities are not guaranteed.

Any clinical make-up time must:

- Be approved by the Surgical Services Department.
- Be accepted by the clinical affiliate.
- Occur when appropriate supervision and educational experiences are available.
- Comply with applicable course and semester deadlines.

Students may not independently arrange clinical make-up time, attend additional clinical shifts, change their clinical schedule, or report to a clinical affiliate outside of their assigned schedule without prior authorization.

Completing make-up hours does not remove the original absence from the student's attendance record.

If sufficient clinical make-up opportunities are unavailable, the student may be unable to meet course requirements and may receive an incomplete, fail the clinical course, or be unable to progress, as permitted by applicable College and program requirements.

Additional costs associated with extended or repeated clinical education may be the responsibility of the student when permitted by College policy.

Tardiness and Early Departure

Punctuality is an expectation in classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments.

A student is considered tardy if they arrive after the scheduled start time.

Arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 15 minutes before the scheduled end of a class, laboratory, or clinical experience is considered a partial absence.

Two partial absences equal one full absence for attendance purposes.

Repeated tardiness or early departures, including instances of less than 15 minutes, may be addressed as a professionalism concern even when they have not accumulated to a full absence.

Students may not remain beyond their assigned clinical hours, arrive early to accumulate additional hours, or alter scheduled clinical times without authorization.

No-Call/No-Show

Failure to attend a scheduled clinical experience without notifying both the clinical affiliate and appropriate program representative is considered a no-call/no-show.

A no-call/no-show is a serious professional conduct concern and may result in disciplinary action in addition to being recorded as an absence.

Repeated no-call/no-show behavior may result in removal from the clinical affiliate, course failure, or program dismissal.

Religious Observances

Students who anticipate an absence related to a religious observance should notify faculty in writing as early as possible, preferably within the first two weeks of the semester.

Requests will be addressed in accordance with applicable PPSC and CCCS policies and procedures.

Students remain responsible for completing essential course, competency, and clinical requirements.

Military Obligations

Military-related absences will be addressed in accordance with Section 6 of this handbook and applicable PPSC, CCCS, state, and federal requirements.

Students should notify faculty of known military obligations as early as possible so that available options can be evaluated.

Illness and Emergencies

Students who are ill, injured, or experiencing an emergency should communicate with faculty as soon as possible.

Documentation may be requested when appropriate and consistent with College policy.

Documentation of an illness or emergency does not automatically remove an absence from the attendance record or eliminate essential course and clinical requirements.

Requirements related to illness, injury, communicable disease, and return to clinical education are addressed in Section 17.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- Arriving on time and prepared for all scheduled activities.
- Monitoring their attendance in each course.
- Communicating promptly and professionally regarding absences or tardiness.
- Following both program and clinical affiliate notification procedures.
- Completing required coursework and assessments following an absence.
- Maintaining required skills and competencies.
- Completing all required clinical hours, cases, and competencies.
- Seeking assistance before attendance concerns jeopardize successful course or program completion.

Students are encouraged to communicate with faculty as early as possible when circumstances begin affecting attendance rather than waiting until attendance limits have been exceeded.

Attendance concerns that result in probation, course failure, or program dismissal will be addressed in accordance with Section 23 of this handbook.

15. Professional Conduct Standards

Students in the Surgical Services Department are expected to demonstrate professional, ethical, respectful, and responsible behavior throughout their education. These expectations apply in classrooms, laboratories, clinical environments, online learning environments, College activities, and other situations in which a student represents Pikes Peak State College or the Surgical Services Department.

Professional conduct is an essential component of Surgical Technology and Sterile Processing education and is evaluated throughout the program.

General Conduct

Students are expected to:

- Treat patients, peers, faculty, staff, clinical personnel, visitors, and others with dignity and respect.
- Arrive on time, prepared, and ready to participate.
- Follow reasonable instructions provided by faculty, clinical instructors, preceptors, and authorized clinical personnel.
- Participate actively and appropriately in learning activities.
- Demonstrate honesty, reliability, accountability, and professional judgment.
- Maintain appropriate behavior even during disagreement, correction, stressful situations, or conflict.
- Contribute to a learning and clinical environment that supports safety, respect, and collaboration.
- Avoid disruptive, threatening, intimidating, discriminatory, harassing, retaliatory, or otherwise inappropriate behavior.
- Follow applicable PPSC, Surgical Services Department, and clinical affiliate policies.

Communication Guidelines

Students are expected to communicate professionally in person, by telephone, electronically, and through all College and clinical systems.

Students must:

- Use respectful and professional language.

- Communicate concerns directly and through the appropriate chain of command.
- Monitor PPSC email, D2L, and required clinical communication systems regularly.
- Respond to faculty and program communications within a reasonable timeframe when a response is requested.
- Provide accurate and complete information when communicating about academic, laboratory, clinical, or compliance matters.
- Maintain professionalism in group messages, discussion boards, electronic communication, and other digital environments.

Official program communication should occur through PPSC-approved platforms whenever possible. Students are responsible for monitoring their PPSC email and D2L accounts for program information, deadlines, schedule changes, and other official communication.

Faculty Communication & Response Expectations

Students are expected to communicate professionally with faculty and instructors and to allow reasonable time for a response.

- Faculty and instructors will respond to student communication within 48 business hours.
- Business hours do not include evenings, weekends, holidays, or scheduled College closures.
- Students may send messages outside normal business hours; however, they should not expect an immediate response.
- Students should plan ahead when asking questions related to assignments, examinations, deadlines, clinical requirements, or other time-sensitive matters.
- Messages sent shortly before a deadline do not relieve the student of responsibility for meeting the established requirement.
- Students should not send repeated messages through multiple communication methods because an immediate response has not been received.
- Urgent clinical attendance or safety concerns must follow the established clinical notification procedures and should not rely solely on email.

Students should not use gossip, rumors, group messaging, social media, or public commentary as a substitute for appropriately addressing an academic, interpersonal, or clinical concern.

Disagreement with another individual does not excuse disrespectful or unprofessional communication.

Chain of Command

Students are encouraged to address questions or concerns at the level closest to the issue whenever appropriate.

Depending on the concern, the appropriate progression may include:

1. The faculty member, clinical instructor, or individual directly involved.
2. The appropriate program faculty or Clinical Coordinator.
3. The Director of Surgical Services.
4. The Health Sciences Division Associate Dean
5. The Health Sciences Division Executive Dean

Students are not prohibited from using formal College reporting processes, including grievance, Title IX, safety, accessibility, or other protected reporting processes, when applicable.

Nothing in this section requires a student to address a concern directly with an individual when doing so would be inappropriate or inconsistent with College policy.

Professional Boundaries

Students must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with patients, faculty, staff, clinical personnel, and others encountered through the program.

Students must not:

- Engage in conduct that exploits a professional or educational relationship.
- Use access obtained through the program for inappropriate personal purposes.
- Seek or accept inappropriate gifts, favors, financial arrangements, or other benefits from patients.
- Develop relationships with patients that interfere with professional responsibilities or appropriate boundaries.
- Engage in conduct that creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest within the educational or clinical environment.

Students who believe a personal, financial, family, employment, or other relationship may create a conflict of interest should disclose the potential conflict to the Director of Surgical Services so appropriate steps can be considered.

Faculty and Student Communication

Faculty and students must maintain appropriate educational and professional boundaries.

Official academic and program communication should occur through PPSC-approved communication systems, including PPSC email, and other College-authorized platforms.

Students should not rely on student group chats, personal social media accounts, personal messaging applications, or other unofficial communication methods for required academic or clinical communication unless specifically authorized for a program-related purpose.

Confidentiality and Patient Privacy

Students must protect confidential information encountered during classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical education.

Students must comply with applicable privacy and confidentiality requirements, including HIPAA, FERPA, College policy, and clinical affiliate requirements.

Students may not:

- Discuss identifiable patient information with unauthorized individuals.
- Access patient information unless necessary for an authorized educational or clinical purpose.
- Photograph, record, copy, download, transmit, or retain protected patient information without authorization.
- Remove patient records or other confidential information from a clinical affiliate.
- Discuss patient information in hallways, elevators, cafeterias, public spaces, social media, or other inappropriate environments.
- Use patient information for assignments or educational activities except as specifically authorized and appropriately de-identified.
- Share confidential information regarding peers, faculty, staff, or clinical personnel when the information is protected by law or policy.

A suspected or actual confidentiality breach must be reported immediately to the appropriate faculty member, clinical instructor, and/or clinical affiliate representative.

Confidentiality violations may result in removal from a clinical affiliate, disciplinary action, course failure, or program dismissal depending on the nature and severity of the violation and applicable College procedures.

Academic and Professional Integrity

Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in all academic, laboratory, and clinical activities.

Students may not falsify, fabricate, alter, or intentionally misrepresent:

- Attendance records.
- Clinical hours or time records.
- Surgical case logs.
- Sterile Processing clinical documentation.
- Skills or competency records.
- Clinical evaluations.
- Assignment or examination work.
- Health or compliance documentation.
- Signatures or approvals.
- Communications with faculty or clinical personnel.
- Any other academic or clinical record.

Falsification or intentional misrepresentation of academic or clinical documentation is a serious professional conduct concern and may result in disciplinary action.

Academic integrity and the use of artificial intelligence are addressed further in Section 18.

Safety and Compliance

Students must follow all applicable safety, infection prevention, occupational health, laboratory, and clinical requirements.

Students are expected to:

- Follow required Standard Precautions and transmission-based precautions when applicable.
- Use required personal protective equipment.
- Follow sharps safety and exposure-control procedures.
- Operate equipment only after receiving appropriate instruction and authorization.
- Follow manufacturer instructions for use and established procedures when applicable.
- Report unsafe conditions, injuries, exposures, equipment concerns, or errors promptly.
- Follow faculty and clinical affiliate instructions related to patient and personnel safety.

Students may not remove instruments, supplies, medications, equipment, documentation, or other property from a classroom, laboratory, or clinical affiliate without authorization.

Technology and Electronic Devices

Technology must be used in a manner consistent with patient privacy, academic integrity, safety, and professional conduct.

- Personal electronic devices must be silenced and stored during laboratory and clinical activities unless specifically authorized.
- Earbuds, headphones, and personal listening devices must comply with the requirements established in Section 12.
- Students may not photograph, video, or audio record patients, clinical environments, clinical personnel, documents, computer screens, equipment displays, or other clinical information.
- Recording classroom instruction requires faculty authorization unless recording is specifically permitted through an approved accommodation.
- Recording laboratory activities involving other students, faculty, skills assessments, or protected educational information requires authorization.
- Students may not use personal devices in a manner that interferes with patient care, instruction, sterile technique, infection prevention, safety, or professional responsibilities.

Social Media and Online Conduct

Students are responsible for maintaining professional standards when using social media and other online platforms.

Students may not post or share:

- Patient information or clinical experiences that could reasonably identify a patient.
- Photographs, videos, or recordings taken in restricted clinical environments without authorization.
- Confidential information obtained through the program or clinical education.
- Content that violates applicable PPSC policies, clinical affiliate requirements, privacy laws, or professional standards.

Students should understand that removing a patient's name does not necessarily make information anonymous. Details such as location, procedure, date, diagnosis, circumstances, photographs, or other information may allow an individual to be identified.

Students may express concerns or opinions about their educational experiences, but doing so does not remove their responsibility to comply with confidentiality requirements, College policies, and applicable professional standards.

Accountability

Students are expected to take responsibility for their actions, decisions, communication, preparation, and performance.

Professional accountability includes:

- Acknowledging mistakes or errors.
- Reporting safety concerns promptly.
- Accepting appropriate feedback and correction.
- Completing assigned remediation or corrective action.
- Seeking assistance when needed.
- Following through on academic, laboratory, and clinical responsibilities.
- Communicating proactively when circumstances may affect performance or participation.
- Making appropriate changes when performance or behavior does not meet expectations.

Students are evaluated on their response to feedback and their ability to demonstrate sustained improvement when concerns are identified.

Violations of Professional Conduct Standards

Professional conduct concerns will be evaluated based on the nature, severity, frequency, and potential impact of the behavior.

Depending on the circumstances, a concern may result in:

- Coaching or documented counseling.
- Required remediation.
- A performance improvement plan.
- Academic or program probation.
- Removal from a classroom, laboratory, or clinical activity.
- Removal from a clinical affiliate.
- Referral through applicable College processes.
- Course failure.
- Program dismissal.

Not every concern requires progressive discipline before more significant action is taken. Conduct involving patient safety, threats, violence, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, significant dishonesty, falsification, confidentiality violations, impairment, or other serious misconduct may require immediate intervention.

Disciplinary action, dismissal, appeals, and due process are addressed in Section 23 of this handbook.

16. Laboratory Information & Safety

The Surgical Services Department laboratory provides students with opportunities to develop, practice, and demonstrate technical skills before applying those skills in clinical environments.

Students are expected to treat the laboratory as a professional healthcare environment. Safety, infection prevention, appropriate use of equipment, professional conduct, and respect for the learning environment are required at all times.

All requirements established elsewhere in this handbook, including dress and appearance, attendance, professional conduct, and essential functional abilities, apply during laboratory activities.

Laboratory Access and Supervision

Students may use Surgical Services laboratory spaces only during scheduled instructional activities, approved open laboratory sessions, or other times specifically authorized by Surgical Services faculty.

- Students must follow faculty instructions while using laboratory facilities.
- Students may not independently access or use laboratory spaces, equipment, instruments, or supplies without authorization.
- Open laboratory sessions require student sign-in and compliance with established laboratory procedures.
- Students may practice only those skills for which they have received appropriate instruction or faculty authorization.
- Students may not perform unauthorized procedures or use equipment for purposes unrelated to assigned educational activities.
- Students must leave the laboratory when directed by faculty or staff.

The level of supervision required may vary depending on the activity, equipment, and potential safety risks. Certain skills or equipment may require direct faculty supervision.

Laboratory Attendance

Attendance at scheduled laboratory sessions is required and is governed by the attendance requirements established in Section 14.

Laboratory experiences are competency-based and may include demonstrations, guided practice, simulations, skills assessments, and other activities that cannot be independently recreated.

Students who miss laboratory instruction remain responsible for the skills and competencies taught during the absence. Faculty are not required to recreate a missed laboratory session.

General Laboratory Safety

Students must:

- Follow faculty instructions and posted safety procedures.
- Follow applicable infection prevention and Standard Precautions.
- Wear required personal protective equipment.
- Wear closed-toe, closed-heel shoes appropriate for the laboratory environment.
- Maintain clear aisles, exits, workspaces, and access to emergency equipment.
- Use equipment, instruments, chemicals, and supplies only as instructed.
- Report unsafe conditions, damaged equipment, injuries, exposures, spills, or other unusual events immediately.
- Know the location of applicable emergency equipment and follow faculty directions during an emergency.
- Follow established procedures for sharps, biohazardous materials, chemicals, electrical equipment, and other laboratory hazards.

Horseplay, practical jokes, intentionally unsafe behavior, or misuse of laboratory equipment is prohibited.

Personal Protective Equipment

Students must use appropriate personal protective equipment based on the activity being performed.

PPE may include:

- Gloves.
- Protective gowns or other protective clothing.
- Masks or respirators.
- Eye protection.

- Face shields.
- Other protective equipment designated by faculty.

Students are responsible for appropriately donning, using, removing, and disposing of or reprocessing PPE according to faculty instruction.

Failure to use required PPE may result in immediate removal from the activity until the safety concern is corrected.

Sharps and Exposure Safety

Needles, scalpels, blades, suture needles, and other sharps must be handled in accordance with established safety procedures.

Students must:

- Dispose of sharps immediately in designated sharps containers.
- Never reach into sharps containers or other receptacles containing potentially hazardous items.
- Follow faculty instructions regarding passing, handling, loading, unloading, and disposal of sharps.
- Report all needlesticks, cuts, punctures, splashes, or other potential exposures immediately.

Any injury or potential exposure must be reported and documented in accordance with PPSC and Surgical Services Department procedures.

Additional requirements for injury, exposure to infectious disease, and incident reporting are provided in Section 21.

Simulated Medications, Solutions, and Specimens

Medications, solutions, specimens, and related materials used in the laboratory are for educational simulation unless specifically identified otherwise.

Students may not ingest, inject, administer, remove, or use laboratory medications, solutions, or supplies for any purpose other than the authorized educational activity.

Students must treat simulated medications, labels, specimens, and documentation using the same safety principles expected in clinical practice.

Items used for simulation must be clearly identified and managed in accordance with faculty instructions.

Equipment and Instrument Use

Students are responsible for using Surgical Services equipment and instrumentation safely and appropriately.

Students must:

- Receive instruction before operating unfamiliar equipment.
- Inspect equipment and instruments for visible damage or safety concerns before use.
- Report damaged, malfunctioning, or missing equipment immediately.
- Discontinue use of equipment when a safety concern is identified.
- Follow operating instructions and manufacturer instructions for use when applicable.
- Use equipment only for its intended educational purpose.
- Turn off, disconnect, clean, and store equipment appropriately after use when instructed.
- Return instruments, supplies, and equipment to their designated locations.

Students may not attempt to repair electrical, mechanical, or other equipment unless specifically trained and authorized to do so.

Electrical Safety

Students must inspect electrical equipment before use when appropriate.

Equipment with frayed cords, damaged plugs, exposed wiring, unusual heat, unusual odor, visible damage, or suspected malfunction must not be used.

Students must immediately notify faculty of suspected electrical hazards.

Electrical equipment must be used in a manner that prevents cords from creating trip hazards or interfering with work areas.

Cleaning, Decontamination, and Laboratory Reset

Students are responsible for maintaining a clean and organized laboratory environment.

At the conclusion of laboratory activities, students must:

- Clean and disinfect work surfaces as directed.
- Reprocess instruments and equipment according to established laboratory procedures.
- Dispose of waste in the appropriate receptacles.
- Return supplies and equipment to designated locations.
- Reset operating rooms, sterile processing areas, workstations, and other laboratory spaces as directed.
- Remove personal belongings.
- Leave aisles, exits, and emergency equipment unobstructed.

Laboratory cleanup and reset are part of the learning experience and professional expectations. Students may not leave until assigned cleanup responsibilities are completed or they are released by faculty.

Spills

Students must report spills immediately.

Students should not attempt to clean a chemical, biological, or other potentially hazardous spill unless they have been instructed to do so and have the appropriate PPE and supplies.

Faculty will determine the appropriate response based on the material involved.

Food, Beverages, and Tobacco Products

Food, beverages, and gum are not permitted in Surgical Services laboratory areas.

Tobacco, marijuana, vaping devices, electronic cigarettes, and related products may not be used in laboratory spaces.

Students must comply with applicable PPSC policies regarding tobacco, vaping, and substance use on College property.

Personal Items

Backpacks, purses, coats, and other personal belongings must be stored in designated areas and may not obstruct walkways, work areas, doors, emergency equipment, or exits.

School-provided lockers may be used in accordance with established locker procedures.

Students are responsible for securing their personal property. The Surgical Services Department is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, headphones, and other personal electronic devices must comply with Sections 12 and 15 of this handbook.

Personal devices must be silenced and stored during laboratory activities unless faculty specifically authorizes their use for an instructional purpose or they are permitted as part of an approved accommodation.

Photography, video recording, or audio recording in the laboratory requires faculty authorization.

Simulation and Student Participation

Laboratory activities may require students to participate as members of simulated healthcare teams and, when appropriate, as simulated patients.

Students must follow faculty instructions and maintain appropriate professional boundaries during simulation activities.

Students must immediately communicate any safety concern or inability to participate in a particular simulation activity to the instructor.

Simulation activities must not involve unnecessary exposure, inappropriate touching, or procedures that exceed the educational purpose of the activity.

Removal from Laboratory Activities

Faculty may immediately stop an activity or remove a student from laboratory participation when the student's actions create an actual or potential safety concern.

Examples may include:

- Failure to follow safety instructions.
- Failure to use required PPE.

- Unsafe handling of sharps, instruments, chemicals, or equipment.
- Unauthorized use of equipment or supplies.
- Behavior that compromises infection prevention or sterile technique.
- Suspected impairment.
- Disruptive or intentionally unsafe conduct.
- Continued performance of an activity after being instructed to stop.

Removal from a laboratory activity may result in missed instructional time and does not guarantee an opportunity to repeat or make up the activity.

Repeated or significant violations of laboratory safety requirements may result in remediation, probation, disciplinary action, course failure, or program dismissal in accordance with Section 23.

17. Clinical Education Policies

Clinical education provides students with supervised opportunities to apply classroom and laboratory learning in professional healthcare environments. Clinical experiences are an essential component of the Surgical Technology and Sterile Processing programs and require students to meet academic, technical, professional, safety, attendance, and clinical affiliate expectations.

Students participating in clinical education represent Pikes Peak State College, the Surgical Services Department, and their future profession. Students must comply with applicable PPSC policies, Surgical Services Department requirements, the Clinical Handbook applicable to their program, and the policies and procedures of their assigned clinical affiliate.

When clinical affiliate requirements are more restrictive than departmental requirements, students are expected to comply with the requirements applicable to the clinical environment unless otherwise directed by PPSC.

Clinical Placement

Clinical placements are coordinated and assigned by the Surgical Services Department.

Students may not independently arrange, solicit, negotiate, exchange, or change clinical placements.

Placement decisions may consider:

- Clinical affiliate availability and capacity.
- Program and accreditation requirements.
- Educational experiences available at the affiliate.
- Student progression and readiness.
- Required surgical cases, competencies, or sterile processing experiences.
- Clinical affiliate eligibility and onboarding requirements.
- Scheduling and supervision availability.
- Other educational or operational considerations.

Student preference, employment location, residence, transportation needs, childcare responsibilities, or preferred schedule do not guarantee placement at a particular facility.

Clinical placement at a specific facility, department, shift, or geographic location is not guaranteed.

Clinical Affiliate Eligibility and Onboarding

Students must remain eligible to participate at their assigned clinical affiliates.

Clinical affiliates may establish requirements in addition to those required by PPSC or the Surgical Services Department. These may include:

- Facility orientation.
- Background screening.
- Drug screening.
- Immunization or health documentation.
- Respirator fit testing.
- Occupational health clearance.
- Additional training or competency requirements.
- Confidentiality or security documentation.
- Electronic learning modules.
- Facility-specific identification.
- Other onboarding requirements.

Students are responsible for completing all required onboarding activities by established deadlines.

Failure to complete affiliate requirements may delay or prevent clinical placement and may affect the student's ability to complete the course or program.

The Surgical Services Department cannot guarantee an alternative placement if a student is unable to meet the requirements of a clinical affiliate.

Clinical Assignment and Scheduling

Students must follow the clinical schedule assigned or approved by the Surgical Services Department.

Students may not independently:

- Change assigned clinical days or hours.

- Exchange schedules or placements with another student.
- Arrive early or remain late for the purpose of accumulating additional clinical hours.
- Attend clinical on an unscheduled day.
- Arrange make-up time directly with a clinical affiliate.
- Change departments, shifts, preceptors, or clinical locations without authorization.
- Deviate from the assigned schedule based solely on verbal permission from clinical affiliate personnel.

If a clinical affiliate requests a change to a student's established schedule, the change must be communicated in writing by the appropriate clinical affiliate representative to the Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services, and approved by the program before it takes effect.

Students must continue to follow their existing approved schedule until a schedule change has been authorized.

Clinical Days and Hours

Clinical schedules are based on educational requirements and clinical affiliate availability.

Clinical experiences generally occur Monday through Friday. Start and end times vary by clinical affiliate and assignment and may begin as early as approximately 5:00 a.m. or extend into the evening.

Weekend clinical shifts are not routinely available and should not be expected as an option for completing required hours or making up missed time.

Students are responsible for arranging personal, employment, transportation, and family obligations around their assigned clinical schedule.

Clinical Affiliate Operating Days

Students are expected to attend clinical according to their assigned schedule whenever the clinical affiliate is operating, and the student's assigned experience remains available, unless the Surgical Services Department communicates otherwise.

A College closure, holiday, delayed start, or other change does not automatically mean that a clinical affiliate is closed or that the student is excused from clinical.

Students must follow program communication regarding clinical attendance during College closures, weather events, holidays, or other schedule disruptions.

Students should not independently determine whether to attend clinical based solely on the operating status of the College or clinical affiliate.

Weather closures and emergencies are addressed further in Section 26.

Attendance and Punctuality

Clinical attendance and punctuality are governed by Section 14 and the applicable Clinical Handbook.

Students must report to clinical on time, prepared, appropriately dressed, and ready to participate for the entire assigned shift.

Students who will be absent or late must notify:

- The appropriate clinical affiliate contact or site representative; and
- The assigned Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Notification must occur before the scheduled start time whenever possible.

Leaving clinical before the scheduled end of the assigned shift requires authorization from both the appropriate clinical affiliate representative and the program.

Leaving a clinical affiliate without appropriate notification or authorization may be treated as a violation of attendance and professional conduct.

Clinical Make-Up Time

Clinical make-up time is governed by Section 14.

Make-up opportunities are not guaranteed and depend on clinical affiliate capacity, appropriate supervision, available educational experiences, semester deadlines, and program approval.

Students may not independently arrange make-up hours with a clinical affiliate.

Completion of make-up hours does not remove the original absence from the student's attendance record.

Professional Behavior at Clinical Affiliates

Students must demonstrate professional behavior throughout clinical education.

Students are expected to:

- Follow instructions from authorized clinical personnel and program faculty.
- Communicate respectfully and professionally.
- Maintain patient privacy and confidentiality.
- Demonstrate appropriate professional boundaries.
- Arrive prepared and ready to participate.
- Accept instruction, correction, and feedback appropriately.
- Work collaboratively with clinical personnel and other members of the healthcare team.
- Follow applicable facility policies and procedures.
- Maintain required dress, hygiene, identification, and PPE standards.
- Demonstrate integrity and accountability.
- Report errors, exposures, injuries, safety concerns, and other significant events promptly.
- Remain within the responsibilities appropriate to the student's educational preparation and level of supervision.

Clinical personnel, preceptors, managers, and other authorized affiliate representatives may provide feedback regarding student performance, attendance, conduct, safety, and readiness.

Feedback from clinical affiliates may be incorporated into the student's clinical evaluation and program assessment.

Student Role and Supervision

Students participate in clinical education as learners.

Students may perform activities for which they have received appropriate education and authorization and must work under the supervision required by the program, clinical affiliate, and the student's level of competency.

Students must not:

- Perform activities for which they have not been appropriately prepared or authorized.
- Represent themselves as employees or independently credentialed practitioners when participating in their student role.
- Perform a task they believe is unsafe without first communicating the concern to the appropriate clinical or program representative.
- Continue an activity after being instructed to stop.
- Practice outside the responsibilities appropriate to their educational role.

Students are expected to ask for assistance when they are uncertain about a task or procedure.

Illness During Clinical Education

Students must not participate in clinical education when an illness creates a risk to patients, personnel, or the student's ability to perform safely.

Students who become ill during clinical must notify the appropriate clinical affiliate representative and the Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Clinical affiliates may require students to leave the facility due to symptoms, infection-prevention requirements, occupational health policies, or patient-safety concerns.

Time missed because of illness is subject to the attendance and clinical-hour requirements established in Section 14.

Injury and Change in Functional Status

Students who are injured during clinical must immediately report the injury to:

- The appropriate clinical affiliate representative; and
- The Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Required incident and exposure procedures must be followed.

A student who experiences an injury, surgery, hospitalization, medical restriction, or other change that may affect the ability to safely meet essential program requirements must notify the appropriate program representative before returning to clinical.

The student may be required to complete an appropriate return-to-clinical or medical clearance process when necessary to demonstrate the student's ability to participate safely.

The Surgical Services Department does not require disclosure of a diagnosis beyond information necessary to determine functional restrictions, safety, or compliance with applicable College or clinical affiliate requirements.

Essential Skills and Functional Abilities are addressed in Section 13. Accessibility and accommodations are addressed in Section 11.

Return to Clinical

Students may return to clinical when they can safely meet the applicable essential, infection prevention, and clinical affiliate requirements, with or without approved accommodations.

Depending on the circumstances, return may require:

- Medical or occupational health clearance.
- Documentation of applicable restrictions.
- Review by PPSC Accessibility Services.
- Clinical affiliate occupational health review.
- Completion of a clinical affiliate's return-to-work or return-to-clinical process.
- Confirmation that the student can safely participate in required clinical activities.

A clinical affiliate may establish return requirements separate from PPSC requirements.

Students may not return to clinical while contagious or when symptoms, restrictions, or impairment prevent safe participation.

Removal or Dismissal from a Clinical Affiliate

A clinical affiliate may remove a student from an activity or request that a student leave the facility when the affiliate identifies concerns involving safety, conduct, performance, policy compliance, eligibility, or other circumstances affecting the clinical environment.

Students must comply immediately when directed to leave a clinical area or facility.

Removal from a clinical affiliate does not automatically determine the student's final course or program status. The Surgical Services Department will review the circumstances and determine the appropriate academic or disciplinary response in accordance with applicable College and program requirements.

Depending on the circumstances, removal from a clinical affiliate may result in:

- Counseling or remediation.
- A performance improvement plan.
- Probation.
- Reassignment when an appropriate alternative placement is available and warranted.
- Inability to complete required clinical experiences.
- Clinical course failure.
- Program dismissal.

An alternative clinical placement is not guaranteed.

When a clinical affiliate permanently refuses to allow a student to return and no appropriate alternative placement is available, the student may be unable to meet required course or program outcomes.

Clinical Documentation

Students are responsible for timely, complete, and accurate documentation of clinical education.

The Surgical Services Department may use Trajecsyst or another designated clinical tracking system for:

- Time records.
- Attendance.
- Surgical case documentation.

- Sterile Processing experience documentation.
- Skills and competencies.
- Evaluations.
- Clinical site evaluations.
- Other required clinical records.

Students must complete documentation according to deadlines established in the applicable course, Clinical Handbook, or clinical tracking system.

Students may not document clinical time, cases, procedures, competencies, or experiences they did not personally complete or observe as required.

Students may not alter, fabricate, falsify, duplicate, or intentionally misrepresent clinical documentation.

Falsification of clinical records is a serious violation of academic and professional integrity and may result in course failure or program dismissal following applicable review and disciplinary procedures.

Clinical Time Records

Students must accurately record clinical arrival and departure times using the designated clinical tracking system.

Students may not:

- Clock in or out for another student.
- Ask another individual to record time on their behalf.
- Record time when they were not physically present at the assigned clinical location.
- Intentionally alter time records to increase clinical hours.
- Remain at clinical beyond approved hours solely to accumulate additional time.
- Submit inaccurate clinical time records.

Students are responsible for reviewing their clinical time records and promptly reporting errors through the established process.

Clinical Evaluations

Clinical performance is evaluated throughout the clinical experience.

Evaluations may be completed by clinical instructors, preceptors, clinical managers, faculty, or other authorized clinical personnel.

Students are expected to review clinical feedback and evaluations, discuss areas of concern when appropriate, and demonstrate improvement when deficiencies are identified.

A satisfactory number of clinical hours alone does not establish successful clinical performance. Students must also meet applicable competency, professional behavior, safety, documentation, case, and course requirements.

Clinical performance requirements are addressed further in Sections 9 and 10.

Transportation

Students are responsible for reliable transportation to and from assigned clinical affiliates.

Clinical placements may occur throughout the region and are not assigned based solely on proximity to a student's residence.

Transportation difficulties, vehicle problems, employment schedules, childcare responsibilities, or travel distance do not excuse attendance or punctuality requirements.

Students should plan for transportation alternatives before clinical education begins.

Employment at a Clinical Affiliate

Employment by a healthcare organization does not guarantee clinical placement at that organization and does not permit a student to substitute employment hours for required clinical education.

When a student is employed by the same organization in which clinical education occurs, employment responsibilities and student clinical responsibilities must remain separate.

Only hours completed as part of the authorized clinical assignment may be documented toward program clinical requirements unless otherwise specifically approved under applicable program and certification requirements.

Additional Clinical Requirements

Students must comply with the applicable Surgical Technology or Sterile Processing Clinical Handbook, course syllabus, clinical tracking requirements, and clinical affiliate policies in addition to the requirements established in this handbook.

Students are responsible for reviewing and understanding clinical requirements before beginning clinical education.

Violations involving clinical attendance, performance, professional conduct, safety, documentation, or clinical affiliate requirements may result in corrective or disciplinary action in accordance with Section 23.

18. Academic Integrity & Artificial Intelligence Policy

Academic integrity, honesty, accountability, and ethical conduct are essential expectations within the Surgical Services Department. Students are responsible for submitting work that accurately represents their own knowledge, skills, participation, and performance.

Students must comply with the academic integrity and Artificial Intelligence (AI) policies contained in the Pikes Peak State College Institutional Syllabus, applicable College policies, and the requirements established within each individual course syllabus.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating or attempting to gain an unauthorized advantage on an examination, quiz, assignment, skills evaluation, or other assessment.
- Plagiarizing another person's words, ideas, or work.
- Submitting work completed by another person as one's own.
- Providing or receiving unauthorized assistance.
- Fabricating or falsifying information, sources, citations, records, or documentation.
- Altering or falsifying attendance records, clinical hours, case logs, competency records, evaluations, or other academic or clinical documentation.
- Sharing, copying, photographing, recording, reproducing, or distributing secured examination or assessment materials without authorization.
- Using unauthorized materials, technology, or resources during an examination or assessment.
- Misrepresenting individual participation in group or collaborative work.

Students who are uncertain whether collaboration, outside assistance, technology, or another resource is permitted must ask the instructor before using it.

Academic Integrity in Clinical Education

Clinical documentation is an academic and professional record and must accurately reflect the student's actual attendance, participation, experiences, and performance.

Students may not fabricate, alter, duplicate, or falsify:

- Clinical hours or time records.

- Surgical case logs.
- Sterile Processing experience documentation.
- Skills or competency records.
- Clinical evaluations.
- Preceptor or clinical personnel signatures or approvals.
- Patient or procedural information.
- Other required clinical documentation.

Students may document only experiences they personally completed or participated in as required by the applicable course and clinical documentation standards.

Falsification of clinical documentation is a serious violation of academic and professional integrity and may result in disciplinary action, course failure, or program dismissal in accordance with applicable College and program procedures.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

Students must follow the AI Policy outlined in the PPSC Institutional Syllabus.

Individual instructors or departments may establish additional expectations regarding the use of generative AI tools within their courses. Students are responsible for reviewing the AI expectations in each course syllabus and assignment instructions, and for asking the instructor for clarification when expectations are unclear.

When AI use is permitted, students must disclose when and how AI tools were used and provide appropriate citation or acknowledgment as required by the instructor.

An example of citing generative AI may be found in the Brown University Library Generative AI LibGuide. The LibGuide can be found at:

<https://libguides.brown.edu/c.php?g=1338928&p=9868287&utm>

Permission to use AI in one course, assignment, or activity does not constitute permission to use AI in another. Instructor and assignment-specific requirements must be followed.

Clinical and Confidential Information

Regardless of whether AI use is permitted for academic work, students may not enter confidential, protected, proprietary, or personally identifiable information into public or unauthorized AI systems.

This includes:

- Patient names or identifiers.
- Protected health information.
- Clinical records or documentation.
- Photographs or recordings from clinical environments.
- Confidential clinical affiliate information.
- Personally identifiable information about classmates, faculty, staff, patients, or clinical personnel.
- Secured examinations, quizzes, competency evaluations, or other protected assessment materials.

Removing a patient's name does not necessarily make clinical information appropriate for use with an AI system. Other details may still allow the patient, procedure, clinical affiliate, or circumstances to be identified.

Students must continue to comply with HIPAA, FERPA, clinical affiliate policies, PPSC requirements, and the confidentiality expectations established in Section 15.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for understanding and following the AI requirements applicable to each course and assignment.

When AI use is permitted, students remain responsible for:

- The accuracy of submitted information.
- Verifying information and sources.
- Ensuring citations and references are accurate.
- Disclosing AI use as required.
- Maintaining academic integrity.
- Protecting confidential information.
- Ensuring submitted work meets the expectations established by the instructor.

Use of an AI tool does not transfer responsibility for the submitted work to the technology.

Violations

Unauthorized or inappropriate use of artificial intelligence may constitute an academic integrity violation.

Academic integrity concerns will be addressed according to applicable PPSC policies, the Institutional Syllabus, course requirements, and Surgical Services Department policies.

Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, consequences may include a reduced or failing grade on an assignment or assessment, academic or program probation, course failure, referral through applicable College processes, or program dismissal.

Violations involving falsification of clinical records, patient confidentiality, secured assessments, or other serious professional misconduct may also be addressed under Section 15 and the disciplinary procedures established in Section 23.

19. Substance Use & Drug Screening

Students in the Surgical Services Department must participate safely and without impairment in all classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical activities.

Because students participate in safety-sensitive healthcare environments, substance use, impairment, and drug-screening requirements may affect a student's eligibility for laboratory and clinical education.

Students must comply with applicable PPSC and CCCS policies, Surgical Services Department requirements, and clinical affiliate drug and alcohol policies.

Fitness for Participation

Students must report to all program activities able to safely perform required academic, laboratory, and clinical responsibilities.

Students may not participate while impaired by:

- Alcohol.
- Marijuana or cannabis products.
- Illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Misused prescription or over-the-counter medications.
- Any other substance that impairs judgment, coordination, alertness, communication, reaction time, or safe performance.

Possession, use, distribution, or other conduct involving alcohol or controlled substances is also subject to applicable PPSC and CCCS policies.

Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications

Students are responsible for understanding whether any prescribed or over-the-counter medication may affect their ability to participate safely in program activities.

Students are not routinely required to disclose specific medications or diagnoses to Surgical Services faculty.

When a medication, treatment, medical condition, or associated restriction may affect the student's ability to safely perform essential program functions, the student should contact

the appropriate College resource and notify the Surgical Services Department of applicable functional restrictions.

Depending on the circumstances, appropriate documentation, medical clearance, Accessibility Services involvement, or clinical affiliate occupational health review may be required before the student participates or returns to laboratory or clinical activities.

Students may not participate when medication-related effects prevent safe performance of essential functions.

Alcohol

Students may not consume alcohol before or during a scheduled program activity when alcohol remains present at a level that may impair performance or when its effects interfere with safe and professional participation.

Students may not possess or consume alcohol during classroom, laboratory, or clinical activities except when specifically authorized by applicable College policy for an unrelated College activity.

Students must not report to class, laboratory, simulation, or clinical education smelling of alcohol.

An odor consistent with alcohol does not, by itself, establish impairment. However, because of the safety-sensitive nature of Surgical Services education, an odor of alcohol or other observable indicators may provide a basis for immediate removal from the activity and further evaluation under applicable College or clinical affiliate procedures.

Suspected Impairment

Faculty, clinical instructors, preceptors, or authorized clinical personnel may intervene when a student's appearance, behavior, speech, coordination, judgment, odor, alertness, or performance creates a reasonable concern regarding possible impairment or the ability to participate safely.

Observable concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Odor of alcohol or marijuana.
- Slurred or unusually altered speech.

- Unsteady movement or impaired coordination.
- Significant changes in behavior.
- Confusion or difficulty following instructions.
- Unusual drowsiness or inability to remain alert.
- Unsafe judgment or performance.
- Other observable signs suggesting that the student may not be able to participate safely.

When impairment is reasonably suspected, the student may be immediately removed from the classroom, laboratory, or clinical activities pending further evaluation.

Removal from an activity is a safety measure and does not, by itself, constitute a final determination that the student violated policy.

The student must comply with applicable PPSC, CCCS, clinical affiliate, and drug-testing procedures.

Safety Following Removal

A student who has been removed because of suspected impairment may not be permitted to drive from the College or clinical affiliate when there is a reasonable concern that doing so would be unsafe.

Appropriate transportation arrangements may be required consistent with College or clinical affiliate procedures.

If the student refuses to comply with required safety procedures, the matter may be referred for additional disciplinary action.

Drug Screening Requirements

Students must successfully complete required drug screening to remain eligible for clinical education.

The Surgical Services Department currently requires a 10-panel drug screen through the designated compliance system as part of clinical eligibility.

Additional screening may be required:

- Before initial clinical placement.

- By a clinical affiliate.
- Following a break in enrollment.
- Annually or upon expiration when required.
- For reasonable suspicion or cause when permitted by applicable policy.
- Following an incident when required by the clinical affiliate.
- At other times required by applicable College, program, or clinical affiliate requirements.

Students are responsible for completing required screening within established deadlines.

Marijuana and Cannabis

Marijuana remains subject to clinical affiliate, healthcare employer, federal, and program-related requirements regardless of its legal status under Colorado law.

A clinical affiliate may prohibit a student from participating when a drug screen is positive for marijuana or cannabis metabolites.

Students should not assume that medical or recreational marijuana use will be accepted by a clinical affiliate because use is permitted under Colorado law.

If a drug-screen result makes a student ineligible for available clinical placement, the Surgical Services Department cannot guarantee an alternative clinical placement.

Because clinical education is an essential program requirement, inability to obtain or maintain clinical eligibility may prevent the student from progressing in or completing the program.

Positive Drug-Screen Results

Positive drug-screen results will be addressed in accordance with applicable PPSC and CCCS requirements, the testing provider's procedures, and clinical affiliate requirements.

A positive result may result in:

- Additional review or verification when applicable.
- Ineligibility for clinical placement.
- Removal from an existing clinical placement.
- Required repeat testing when permitted.

- Referral through applicable College procedures.
- Inability to complete required clinical education.
- Course failure or program dismissal when the student cannot meet essential program requirements.

The Surgical Services Department does not independently overturn or reinterpret verified laboratory drug-screen results.

Dilute, Invalid, Adulterated, or Substituted Specimens

A dilute specimen is not automatically considered a positive drug screen.

Dilute, invalid, inconclusive, adulterated, substituted, or otherwise unacceptable specimens will be handled in accordance with the testing provider, PPSC, Surgical Services Department, and/or clinical affiliate requirements.

A student may be required to complete another drug screen within a specified timeframe.

Evidence of intentional tampering, substitution, falsification, or interference with the drug-screening process may constitute a serious violation of professional conduct and academic integrity.

Failure to complete required repeat testing within the established timeframe may result in loss of clinical eligibility.

Refusal or Failure to Complete Testing

Failure or refusal to complete a required drug or alcohol screening may result in the student becoming ineligible to participate in clinical education.

Examples include:

- Refusing a required test.
- Failing to report for testing within the required timeframe.
- Failing to complete required repeat testing.
- Failing to follow required specimen-collection procedures.
- Interfering with or attempting to falsify the testing process.

If loss of clinical eligibility prevents completion of essential course or program requirements, the student may be unable to progress in the program.

Clinical Affiliate Requirements

Clinical affiliates are separate healthcare organizations and may establish drug and alcohol screening requirements that are more restrictive than those of PPSC or the Surgical Services Department.

Students must meet the requirements of their assigned clinical affiliate to participate in that facility.

A clinical affiliate may refuse or discontinue a student's placement based on its drug-screening, substance-use, occupational health, or safety policies.

PPSC cannot require a clinical affiliate to accept a student who does not meet the affiliate's eligibility requirements.

Alternative clinical placement is not guaranteed.

Cost of Screening

Students are responsible for the cost of required initial drug screening and may also be responsible for costs associated with repeat, additional, or clinical affiliate-required screening when permitted by College policy.

Confidentiality

Drug screening and related health information will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy requirements and College procedures.

Faculty and clinical affiliates will receive information necessary to determine clinical eligibility or safe participation as permitted by applicable requirements.

Consequences and Program Progression

Substance-related concerns will be evaluated based on the circumstances, applicable policies, safety implications, clinical affiliate requirements, and available evidence.

Depending on the circumstances, consequences may include:

- Immediate removal from an educational or clinical activity.
- Required evaluation or testing.

- Loss of clinical eligibility.
- Removal from a clinical affiliate.
- Referral through applicable College processes.
- Probation.
- Course failure.
- Program dismissal.

Students must remain eligible to participate safely in required classroom, laboratory, and clinical education throughout the program.

Disciplinary action and dismissal procedures are addressed further in Section 23.

20. Pregnancy & Radiation Safety

Pregnancy does not automatically prevent a student from participating in or progressing through a Surgical Services program. Students may continue classroom, laboratory, and clinical education during pregnancy when they are able to meet applicable program requirements, with or without reasonable accommodations or modifications.

The Surgical Services Department will address pregnancy-related needs in accordance with applicable PPSC policies, Title IX requirements, clinical affiliate requirements, and applicable law.

Pregnancy Disclosure

Disclosure of pregnancy to the Surgical Services Department is voluntary.

Students who are pregnant are encouraged to contact the appropriate College resources when pregnancy or a pregnancy-related condition may affect their participation in classroom, laboratory, or clinical activities.

Early communication can assist with coordination of:

- Pregnancy-related accommodations or modifications.
- Clinical affiliate requirements.
- Radiation safety considerations.
- Temporary functional restrictions.
- Attendance or scheduling concerns.
- Return to laboratory or clinical activities following a change in medical status.

A student is not required to disclose pregnancy solely because they are enrolled in a Surgical Services program.

Pregnancy-Related Accommodations and Modifications

Students who need pregnancy-related accommodations or modifications should follow applicable PPSC procedures.

Depending on the student's needs and the educational activity, reasonable modifications may include adjustments related to:

- Physical activities.

- Personal protective equipment.
- Seating or positioning.
- Breaks.
- Attendance for pregnancy-related medical care.
- Temporary restrictions.
- Laboratory activities.
- Clinical assignments or activities when appropriate and available.

Pregnancy does not eliminate essential academic, laboratory, competency, or clinical requirements necessary for completion of the program.

The Surgical Services Department will work with appropriate College offices to determine how approved modifications can be implemented while maintaining essential educational and safety requirements.

Clinical Education

Clinical affiliates are separate healthcare organizations and may maintain their own occupational health, radiation safety, infection prevention, and pregnancy-related procedures.

A student who voluntarily discloses pregnancy may be required to complete a clinical affiliate's established pregnancy declaration, occupational health, radiation safety, or accommodation process when applicable.

PPSC cannot require a clinical affiliate to modify its established safety or occupational health requirements.

If pregnancy-related restrictions affect participation at an assigned clinical affiliate, the Surgical Services Department will review available options with the student and appropriate College personnel.

Alternative clinical placement depends on the availability of clinical affiliates and cannot be guaranteed.

Medical Restrictions and Clearance

Pregnancy alone does not require medical clearance to participate in the program.

When a student has pregnancy-related medical restrictions that may affect the ability to safely perform essential program functions, documentation of functional restrictions or appropriate medical clearance may be required consistent with College procedures and the requirements applied to other temporary medical conditions.

Students are not required to provide unnecessary diagnostic or medical information directly to Surgical Services faculty.

Students should communicate applicable functional restrictions so that appropriate College and clinical processes can be followed.

Essential Skills and Functional Abilities are addressed in Section 13.

Radiation Exposure

Surgical Technology students may participate in procedures involving ionizing radiation, including fluoroscopy and other radiographic imaging.

All students must follow applicable radiation safety practices and clinical affiliate requirements.

Radiation safety practices may include:

- Wearing required lead aprons, thyroid protection, or other protective equipment.
- Maximizing distance from the radiation source when appropriate.
- Using available protective barriers.
- Avoiding unnecessary exposure.
- Following instructions from authorized clinical personnel.
- Wearing radiation monitoring devices when required.
- Following clinical affiliate procedures for fluoroscopy and other radiation-producing equipment.

Students may not operate radiation-producing equipment unless specifically authorized, appropriately trained, and permitted by applicable requirements.

Pregnancy and Radiation

A student who is pregnant may choose whether to voluntarily declare the pregnancy for purposes of radiation protection procedures.

When pregnancy is voluntarily declared, the student may be subject to additional radiation monitoring or protective measures established by the clinical affiliate's radiation safety program.

These measures may include:

- Additional dosimetry.
- Placement of monitoring devices according to facility protocol.
- Review of radiation exposure practices.
- Education regarding occupational radiation exposure.
- Assignment modifications when appropriate.
- Additional protective measures recommended by the clinical affiliate's Radiation Safety Officer or other qualified personnel.

Radiation precautions will be determined in accordance with applicable clinical affiliate policies and radiation safety requirements, rather than by a blanket restriction imposed by the Surgical Services Department.

Pregnancy alone does not automatically exclude a student from participating in procedures involving ionizing radiation.

Other Clinical Exposures

Clinical and laboratory education may involve exposure to conditions or substances that require additional consideration during pregnancy, including:

- Blood and other potentially infectious materials.
- Surgical smoke.
- Chemicals, disinfectants, and sterilants.
- Medications and pharmaceutical agents.
- Anesthetic gases.
- Infectious diseases.
- Physical demands associated with patient positioning, lifting, pushing, pulling, and prolonged activity.
- Other occupational exposures encountered in healthcare environments.

Students must follow applicable PPE, infection prevention, occupational health, and clinical affiliate safety requirements.

Students with concerns about a specific exposure should consult their healthcare provider and the appropriate College or clinical affiliate resource.

Attendance and Program Progression

Pregnancy-related absences and medically necessary pregnancy-related care will be addressed in accordance with applicable PPSC policies, Title IX requirements, and law.

Students remain responsible for completing essential course and program requirements, including required competencies and clinical education.

When pregnancy-related restrictions or absences prevent completion of essential requirements within the scheduled semester, the Surgical Services Department will work with the student and appropriate College personnel to determine available academic options.

Depending on the circumstances, options may include an approved modification, incomplete when permitted, leave or withdrawal, or completion of outstanding requirements at a later time.

Availability of a particular clinical placement or clinical schedule cannot be guaranteed.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- Following applicable laboratory and clinical safety procedures.
- Using required personal protective equipment.
- Following radiation safety requirements.
- Communicating approved restrictions or modifications to appropriate program personnel.
- Completing applicable College or clinical affiliate processes when requesting accommodations or modifications.
- Following clinical affiliate occupational health and safety requirements.
- Promptly reporting safety concerns or exposures.

Students are encouraged to communicate early when pregnancy-related needs may affect program participation, so appropriate resources and options can be identified.

Additional information regarding accommodations, essential functional abilities, clinical education, incident reporting, and Title IX is provided in Sections 11, 13, 17, 21, and 22 of this handbook.

21. Incident Reporting: Injury, Infectious Disease & Exposure

Students must promptly report injuries, exposures, illnesses, safety events, and other incidents that occur during or may affect participation in Surgical Services Department activities.

Prompt reporting enables appropriate action to protect students, patients, classmates, faculty, clinical personnel, and others. Students must follow applicable PPSC procedures, Surgical Services Department requirements, and clinical affiliate policies.

Students should never delay reporting an injury, exposure, or safety event because they are concerned about disciplinary consequences or believe the event is minor.

Incidents Requiring Reporting

Reportable incidents may include, but are not limited to:

- Student injury.
- Patient injury or potential patient safety event involving the student.
- Needlestick or other sharps injury.
- Exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.
- Splash to the eyes, nose, mouth, or non-intact skin.
- Chemical exposure.
- Exposure to hazardous medications, sterilants, disinfectants, or other hazardous substances.
- Equipment malfunction or equipment-related injury.
- Burns.
- Falls.
- Breach of sterile technique that creates or may create a patient safety concern.
- Medication or solution error involving the student.
- Specimen handling error involving the student.
- Exposure to a communicable disease.
- Other events that create an actual or potential safety concern.

When uncertain whether an event requires reporting, students should report the concern to faculty or the appropriate clinical representative.

Immediate Response

The student's first responsibility following an injury or exposure is to take appropriate immediate safety measures.

Depending on the incident, this may include:

- Stopping the activity.
- Moving away from the hazard.
- Washing an affected area with soap and water.
- Flushing exposed mucous membranes or eyes with water according to applicable procedures.
- Removing contaminated clothing or PPE when appropriate.
- Obtaining emergency assistance.
- Following the clinical affiliate's exposure-control procedure.
- Notifying the appropriate faculty or clinical personnel.

Students should not delay immediate first aid or emergency treatment while completing documentation.

Incidents at PPSC

An injury, exposure, or other reportable incident occurring during a PPSC classroom, laboratory, simulation, or other College activity must be reported immediately to the supervising faculty member.

The student must follow the applicable PPSC incident-reporting procedures and complete the required documentation within the timeframe established by the College.

Faculty will assist the student in identifying the appropriate reporting process and next steps.

Incidents at a Clinical Affiliate

An injury, exposure, or other reportable incident occurring during clinical education must be reported immediately to:

- The appropriate clinical preceptor, manager, charge person, or other designated clinical affiliate representative; and

- The Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Students must follow the clinical affiliate's immediate response and incident-reporting procedures.

Completion of a clinical affiliate incident report does not replace any PPSC or Surgical Services Department reporting requirement.

Students may be required to complete documentation for both the clinical affiliate and PPSC.

Blood and Body Fluid Exposure

Students who experience a needlestick, sharps injury, splash, or other potential exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials must report the exposure immediately.

Students must:

- Perform appropriate immediate first aid.
- Notify the supervising clinical or faculty representative.
- Follow the exposure-control procedures of the location where the exposure occurred.
- Complete required incident documentation.
- Obtain recommended medical evaluation as soon as possible.
- Follow recommendations regarding baseline testing, follow-up testing, treatment, or other post-exposure care.

Time is important following certain occupational exposures. Students should not wait until the end of a shift, class, or clinical day to report an exposure.

Chemical and Hazardous Material Exposure

Students exposed to a chemical, disinfectant, sterilant, hazardous medication, or other potentially hazardous material must immediately stop the activity and notify the appropriate faculty or clinical representative.

Students must follow:

- Applicable emergency procedures.
- Safety Data Sheet guidance when appropriate.

- Eyewash, emergency shower, or decontamination procedures when indicated.
- Clinical affiliate or PPSC exposure procedures.
- Medical evaluation recommendations when applicable.

Students must not independently attempt to manage a significant chemical spill or exposure unless they have been trained and authorized to do so.

Infectious Disease and Illness

Students should not attend laboratory or clinical activities when symptoms of illness may create a risk of transmission or prevent safe participation.

Symptoms or conditions requiring additional evaluation may include:

- Fever.
- Vomiting or diarrhea.
- Unexplained or potentially infectious rash.
- Symptoms of a significant respiratory illness.
- Known or suspected communicable disease.
- Other symptoms that may create an infection prevention or patient safety concern.

Students who are unable to attend must follow the notification and attendance procedures established in Sections 14 and 17.

Students should provide information necessary to determine safe participation but are not routinely required to disclose detailed medical information or a specific diagnosis directly to Surgical Services faculty.

Communicable Disease Exposure

Students who are notified of or become aware of a significant exposure to a communicable disease during clinical or program activities must follow applicable PPSC and clinical affiliate procedures.

Depending on the exposure, students may be required to:

- Complete an occupational health evaluation.
- Provide documentation of immunity or vaccination.
- Complete testing.

- Follow temporary work or clinical restrictions.
- Use additional PPE.
- Receive appropriate medical evaluation.
- Obtain clearance before returning to activities.

Clinical affiliates may establish requirements that differ from or are more restrictive than College requirements.

Medical Evaluation and Return to Program Activities

An injury, illness, exposure, surgery, or other change in health status may require evaluation before a student returns to laboratory or clinical education when the condition may affect safe participation.

Depending on the circumstances, the student may be required to provide documentation of functional restrictions or clearance consistent with applicable College or clinical affiliate procedures.

The purpose of documentation is to determine the student's ability to safely participate and meet essential program requirements. Students should not provide unnecessary diagnostic information directly to Surgical Services faculty.

Return-to-clinical requirements are addressed further in Section 17.

Costs Associated with Evaluation and Treatment

Students may be responsible for costs associated with medical evaluation, laboratory testing, treatment, follow-up care, or other services resulting from an injury or exposure when those costs are not otherwise covered through an applicable College process, clinical affiliate process, insurance plan, or other available coverage.

Students should follow established PPSC and clinical affiliate procedures to ensure that available coverage or resources are appropriately identified.

The Surgical Services Department cannot guarantee that a clinical affiliate or PPSC will pay costs associated with an injury, exposure, testing, or treatment.

Documentation

Students must complete required incident documentation accurately and within established timeframes.

Documentation may include:

- PPSC incident reports.
- Clinical affiliate incident reports.
- Exposure documentation.
- Occupational health documentation.
- Other reports required by applicable procedures.

Students must provide requested program documentation necessary to verify completion of required reporting, restrictions, or clearance.

Medical records or detailed diagnostic information should be submitted only through the appropriate College, healthcare, occupational health, or clinical affiliate process.

Confidentiality

Information related to student health, injuries, exposures, and medical evaluations will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy requirements and College procedures.

Information may be shared with appropriate College or clinical affiliate personnel when necessary to address safety, clinical eligibility, accommodations, or other legitimate educational requirements.

Failure to Report

Students are expected to report incidents honestly, accurately, and promptly.

Failure to report or intentional concealment of an injury, exposure, patient safety event, or other required incident may constitute a professional conduct violation.

Falsifying, altering, or intentionally misrepresenting incident information is a serious concern for academic and professional integrity.

Depending on the circumstances, failure to follow required incident-reporting procedures may result in remediation, removal from an activity or clinical affiliate, probation, course failure, or disciplinary action under Section 23.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- Immediately reporting injuries, exposures, and safety events.
- Following appropriate first-aid and emergency procedures.
- Following PPSC and clinical affiliate reporting requirements.
- Completing required documentation accurately and promptly.
- Participating in recommended medical or occupational health evaluation when required for safe return.
- Following applicable restrictions.
- Communicating changes that may affect safe participation.
- Completing applicable return-to-class, laboratory, or clinical requirements before resuming restricted activities.

Students must never allow concern about attendance, clinical hours, grades, or disciplinary consequences to delay reporting an injury, exposure, or safety event.

22. Harassment, Discrimination & Title IX

Pikes Peak State College and the Surgical Services Department are committed to maintaining educational environments in which students, faculty, staff, patients, and clinical partners are treated with dignity and respect.

Students participating in the Surgical Services Department are subject to applicable PPSC and Colorado Community College System policies regarding discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation.

The Surgical Services Department does not maintain a separate investigation or resolution process for these concerns. Reports are addressed through the appropriate PPSC and CCCS processes.

Nondiscrimination

PPSC prohibits discrimination and harassment based on protected status as established by applicable federal and state law and CCCS policy.

Protected categories include, as applicable:

- Sex or gender.
- Race or color.
- Age.
- Creed.
- National or ethnic origin.
- Ancestry.
- Physical or mental disability.
- Familial status.
- Veteran or military status.
- Pregnancy or related conditions.
- Marital status.
- Religion.
- Genetic information.
- Gender identity.
- Sexual orientation.
- Sex characteristics.
- Sex stereotypes.
- Gender expression.

- Other protected classes or categories under applicable local, state, or federal law.

PPSC's current Notice of Nondiscrimination and related information are available through the College's Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct resources.

Prohibited Conduct

Conduct prohibited under applicable PPSC and CCCS policies may include:

- Discrimination.
- Harassment.
- Sex-based harassment.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual assault.
- Dating violence.
- Domestic violence.
- Stalking.
- Retaliation.
- Other conduct prohibited by applicable civil rights laws or College policy.

The definitions and procedures established by PPSC and CCCS govern the determination of whether conduct constitutes a policy violation.

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

PPSC's Title IX protections include applicable protections related to sex discrimination, sex-based harassment, pregnancy and related conditions, sexual misconduct, and retaliation.

Students may contact the PPSC Title IX/Equal Opportunity Coordinator for information about their rights, reporting options, available resources, supportive measures, and applicable resolution processes.

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, or Sexual Misconduct

Any person who believes they have experienced or become aware of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or sexual misconduct may use the reporting options established by PPSC.

Students do not need to resolve the concern through the Surgical Services Department before contacting the Title IX/Equal Opportunity Coordinator or using another applicable College reporting process.

Concerns involving discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct should be addressed through the appropriate PPSC and CCCS civil rights process rather than the Surgical Services Department's ordinary academic chain of command.

Students may also speak with a faculty member or College employee when seeking assistance. Students should understand that some College employees may have obligations to share certain information with the appropriate College official.

Retaliation

Retaliation is prohibited.

Students may not retaliate against another person because that individual:

- Reported or opposed discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
- Participated or was perceived to have participated in a complaint or investigation.
- Sought assistance or supportive measures.
- Exercised rights protected by applicable civil rights laws or College policy.

Concerns regarding retaliation should be reported through the appropriate PPSC process.

Clinical Education

The expectations of professional conduct and nondiscrimination continue to apply during clinical education.

Students who experience or become aware of concerning conduct at a clinical affiliate should prioritize immediate safety and may report the concern through appropriate PPSC processes.

When appropriate, students should also notify the Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services so that concerns affecting the student's clinical education, placement, or immediate safety can be addressed.

A clinical affiliate's internal reporting process does not replace a student's right to access applicable PPSC reporting processes.

Students are not required to confront the individual involved before reporting discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, retaliation, or another safety concern.

Supportive Measures

Students affected by discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct may be eligible for supportive measures through PPSC.

Depending on the circumstances and applicable College procedures, supportive measures may include academic, scheduling, safety, or other individualized assistance.

Students should contact the Title IX/Equal Opportunity Coordinator or appropriate College resource to discuss available options.

Pregnancy and Related Conditions

Title IX includes protections related to pregnancy and related conditions.

Students seeking pregnancy-related modifications, accommodations, or information should follow applicable PPSC procedures.

Additional information regarding pregnancy and participation in laboratory and clinical education is provided in Section 20.

Confidential Resources

Students who want to discuss a concern confidentially should consult PPSC's current Title IX and Civil Rights resources to identify services designated as confidential.

Not every College employee or resource can guarantee confidentiality. Students who want confidential assistance should verify the resource's confidentiality status before disclosing information they wish to keep confidential.

Current Reporting Information

PPSC currently identifies the Vice President for Human Resource Services as the College's Title IX Compliance/Equal Opportunity Officer.

Current College information lists:

Kim Hennessy

Vice President for Human Resource Services
Title IX Compliance/Equal Opportunity Officer
Pikes Peak State College
5675 South Academy Boulevard
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
719-502-2600

Because personnel and contact information may change, students should verify current information through PPSC's official Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct webpage.

PPSC Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct information:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/administration-operations/human-resource-services/civil-rights-sexual-misconduct/>

PPSC reporting and student concern information:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/administration-operations/disclaimers-legal-notice/student-grievance-procedure.php>

Governing Policies

PPSC follows the Colorado Community College System policies and procedures governing discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and sexual misconduct, including:

- BP 19-60: Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation
- SP 19-60a: Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct Resolution Process

Students should consult the current versions of these policies and PPSC procedures because institutional and legal requirements may change.

Student Conduct

Students in the Surgical Services Department are expected to contribute to an educational and clinical environment characterized by professional and respectful behavior.

Conduct that may violate anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, anti-retaliation, sexual misconduct, or other civil rights requirements will be referred to the appropriate College process.

The Surgical Services Department will not independently investigate or determine responsibility for allegations that fall within PPSC's Title IX or civil rights processes. The Department may take appropriate educational or safety-related actions consistent with College direction while a matter is being addressed.

Nothing in this handbook limits a student's rights, reporting options, supportive measures, or protections available under PPSC or CCCS policy or applicable law.

23. Disciplinary Action, Program Dismissal & Readmission

The Surgical Services Department holds students to high standards of academic performance, clinical competence, professionalism, accountability, integrity, and safety.

Students who do not meet established course, program, laboratory, clinical, professional, or safety requirements may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, including remediation, probation, course failure, removal from clinical education, or dismissal from the program.

Program actions will be administered in accordance with applicable PPSC and CCCS policies and procedures. When conduct may constitute a violation of the CCCS Student Code of Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities, civil rights requirements, or another College policy, the matter may also be referred to the appropriate College process.

Grounds for Corrective or Disciplinary Action

Corrective or disciplinary action may result from concerns including, but not limited to:

- Failure to maintain required academic performance.
- Failure to demonstrate required skills or competencies.
- Unsafe laboratory or clinical performance.
- Failure to follow infection prevention, safety, or PPE requirements.
- Failure to meet attendance or punctuality requirements.
- Failure to complete required clinical hours, cases, competencies, or documentation.
- Unprofessional behavior or communication.
- Failure to respond appropriately to instruction, correction, remediation, or feedback.
- Academic dishonesty.
- Falsification or alteration of academic or clinical records.
- Misrepresentation of attendance, clinical hours, case logs, competencies, evaluations, or other documentation.
- Breach of patient confidentiality or privacy requirements.
- Failure to comply with clinical affiliate requirements.
- Removal from or refusal of continued placement by a clinical affiliate.
- Substance-related concerns or loss of required clinical eligibility.
- Unauthorized use or removal of equipment, instruments, supplies, medications, or other property.

- Conduct that creates an actual or potential patient, student, personnel, or environmental safety concern.
- Violations of applicable PPSC, CCCS, Surgical Services Department, or clinical affiliate requirements.

The appropriate response will depend on the nature, severity, frequency, and impact of the concern.

Progressive Corrective Action

When appropriate, the Surgical Services Department uses a progressive approach intended to identify concerns, establish expectations, and provide students an opportunity to improve.

Progressive corrective action may include:

1. Coaching or Verbal Warning

Faculty identify the concern, review applicable expectations, and communicate the corrective action expected from the student.

Faculty may document the conversation for program records.

2. Written Warning

The student receives written documentation identifying:

- The concern.
- The applicable requirement or expectation.
- Required corrective action.
- Any applicable deadline.
- Potential consequences if the concern continues.

3. Probation or Performance Improvement Plan

A student may be placed on academic or program probation and required to complete a written improvement or remediation plan.

The plan may identify:

- Specific deficiencies.
- Required actions.
- Measurable performance expectations.
- Required meetings or remediation.
- Applicable deadlines.
- Duration of probation.
- Consequences for failure to meet the plan.

4. Course Failure or Program Dismissal

Failure to demonstrate required improvement or continued violation of program requirements may result in course failure or dismissal from the Surgical Services program when supported by applicable academic and program requirements.

Progressive steps are not required in every circumstance.

A serious safety, integrity, clinical eligibility, competency, or professional concern may require immediate action.

Academic and Program Probation

Probation is formal notice that a student's academic performance, skills, attendance, clinical performance, professional behavior, or other program requirement does not meet established standards.

Probation is intended to provide an opportunity for correction when continued participation remains academically and safely appropriate.

Grounds for probation may include:

- Academic performance below the required course standard.
- Attendance reaching the probation threshold established in Section 14.
- Failure to meet clinical performance expectations.
- Professional behavior concerns.
- Failure of a second skills evaluation attempt as established in Section 10.
- Failure to meet documentation requirements.
- Repeated tardiness or early departure.
- Repeated failure to follow program procedures.
- Other performance concerns requiring formal remediation.

Probation Conditions

Students placed on probation may be required to complete a written improvement plan.

Conditions may include:

- Meeting specified academic benchmarks.
- Completing remediation.
- Repeating or demonstrating designated skills.
- Meeting with faculty at established intervals.
- Improving attendance or punctuality.
- Demonstrating required professional behaviors.
- Completing missing or deficient documentation.
- Demonstrating sustained improvement in clinical performance.
- Meeting other requirements directly related to the identified deficiency.

Failure to meet the conditions of probation may result in additional action, including course failure or program dismissal.

Duration of Probation

The duration of probation will be identified in the student's written notice or improvement plan.

Probation may continue for a defined period, through the remainder of a course or semester, or for another period appropriate to the concern.

Successful completion of probation does not remove the underlying documentation from the student's program record.

Immediate Safety or Educational Action

Faculty or authorized clinical personnel may immediately stop a student from participating in an activity when continued participation presents an actual or potential concern involving:

- Patient safety.
- Student or personnel safety.
- Unsafe clinical or laboratory performance.

- Suspected impairment.
- Significant breach of sterile or aseptic technique.
- Unauthorized activity.
- Serious professional misconduct.
- Failure to follow a direct safety instruction.
- Other circumstances requiring immediate intervention.

A student may be temporarily removed from a classroom, laboratory, clinical activity, or clinical affiliate while the concern is reviewed.

Immediate removal from an activity is a safety or educational action and does not, by itself, constitute a final determination of misconduct or permanent program dismissal.

Serious Violations

Certain concerns may be sufficiently serious that progressive corrective steps are not appropriate before course or program action is considered.

Examples may include:

- Intentional falsification of clinical or academic records.
- Serious or intentional patient safety violations.
- Intentional breach of patient confidentiality.
- Theft or unauthorized removal of property.
- Significant academic dishonesty.
- Deliberate misrepresentation of clinical hours, cases, competencies, or evaluations.
- Practicing outside the authorized student role after instruction not to do so.
- Reporting to laboratory or clinical activities while impaired.
- Conduct resulting in loss of clinical eligibility when clinical education cannot be completed.
- Serious misconduct resulting in removal from a clinical affiliate.
- Other conduct that makes continued participation academically, professionally, or safely inappropriate.

When the alleged conduct also falls under a College-level conduct, civil rights, or other formal process, the Surgical Services Department will refer the matter as appropriate.

Program Dismissal

Program dismissal means the student is no longer eligible to continue in the Surgical Technology or Sterile Processing program for the applicable enrollment period.

Program dismissal may result from:

- Failure of a required course.
- Failure to demonstrate required competency.
- Failure to meet attendance requirements.
- Failure to complete essential clinical requirements.
- Loss of clinical eligibility when an appropriate clinical placement cannot be obtained.
- Failure to successfully complete required remediation or probation.
- Serious academic, safety, integrity, or professional concerns.
- Other circumstances in which the student no longer meets essential program progression requirements.

Program dismissal does not necessarily constitute dismissal or suspension from Pikes Peak State College.

College-level disciplinary outcomes are administered through the applicable PPSC or CCCS process.

Notice of Program Action

When a student is placed on formal probation, fails to meet program progression requirements, or is dismissed from the program, the student will receive written notification identifying, as applicable:

- The action being taken.
- The basis for the action.
- Relevant course, handbook, or program requirements.
- Effective date.
- Requirements for continued participation, when applicable.
- Available review or appeal processes.
- Readmission eligibility when known.

Students are responsible for monitoring their PPSC email for official program and College communication.

Readmission Policy

A student who withdraws, fails a required course, or is dismissed from a Surgical Services program may request readmission when eligible.

Readmission is not automatic and is not guaranteed.

Readmission decisions consider the circumstances surrounding the student's separation from the program, evidence of readiness to return, program capacity, clinical placement availability, curriculum sequencing, accreditation requirements, and the student's ability to meet current program requirements.

Eligibility for Readmission

Eligibility will be evaluated individually.

A student may be considered for readmission following:

- Academic course failure.
- Withdrawal from the program.
- Attendance-related separation.
- Inability to complete a semester because of circumstances that no longer prevent participation.
- Other situations in which faculty determine that successful return may be reasonably possible.

A student requesting readmission must be able to meet all current admission, compliance, academic, clinical, essential function, and program requirements applicable at the time of return.

Readmission Following Professional, Safety, or Integrity Concerns

Students separated from the program due to concerns about professional behavior, clinical performance, safety, attendance, or integrity will receive an individualized review.

Evidence of remediation, changed circumstances, demonstrated readiness, or other corrective action may be required before readmission is considered.

Some circumstances may make a student ineligible for readmission when continued participation cannot be accomplished safely or when required clinical eligibility cannot be restored.

The Department will not automatically classify every student involved in an ethical, substance-related, confidentiality, or safety concern as permanently ineligible without considering applicable College procedures and the circumstances of the case.

Readmission Process

A student requesting readmission must:

- Submit a written request to the Director of Surgical Services by the established deadline.
- Identify the circumstances that resulted in withdrawal, failure, or dismissal.
- Explain what has changed since leaving the program.
- Provide documentation of remediation or corrective action when required.
- Meet with designated Surgical Services faculty or administration when requested.
- Complete skills, knowledge, or readiness assessments when required.
- Complete current clinical compliance and onboarding requirements before returning to clinical education.

Additional conditions may be established based on the circumstances of the student's previous enrollment.

Skills and Knowledge Assessment

Because Surgical Services education is sequential and competency-based, students returning after an interruption may be required to demonstrate continued competency before reentering laboratory or clinical education.

Assessment may include:

- Surgical skills.
- Sterile technique.
- Instrumentation.
- Sterile Processing competencies.
- Knowledge assessments.
- Simulation.

- Other competencies necessary for safe progression.

Students must meet the established performance standard before progressing when an assessment is required.

Readmission Limitations

Readmission is subject to the following:

- Readmission may generally be granted only once.
- Readmission is dependent upon available program capacity.
- Clinical placement is not guaranteed.
- Students must meet current program and clinical affiliate requirements.
- Students may be required to repeat coursework or an entire semester based on curriculum sequencing and competency requirements.
- Previously completed clinical hours, cases, competencies, or coursework may not automatically carry forward when repetition is necessary to meet current course or program requirements.
- Students may be required to return with the next appropriate cohort.
- A student may not be able to return immediately following withdrawal, failure, or dismissal because courses are offered in sequence.

Readmission into one Surgical Services program does not create an entitlement to admission or readmission into another program.

Readmission Decision

Readmission requests will be reviewed by the Director of Surgical Services and appropriate academic leadership, with input from program faculty when applicable.

The student will receive the readmission decision and any conditions of return in writing.

Approval may include specific conditions that must be satisfied before or during the student's return.

Withdrawal and Incompletes

Withdrawal

Students considering withdrawal are strongly encouraged to meet with the Director of Surgical Services or appropriate faculty before withdrawing so that academic, clinical, financial aid, progression, and readmission implications can be reviewed.

The student is responsible for completing the official PPSC withdrawal process within applicable College deadlines.

Stopping attendance does not constitute official withdrawal.

Course grades resulting from failure to officially withdraw will be determined according to applicable PPSC academic policies.

Withdrawal from one or more required courses may prevent continued progression in the Surgical Services program, as its courses are sequential and may be co-requisites.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are governed by current PPSC academic policy and the Institutional Syllabus.

An Incomplete is not an alternative to a failing grade and is not automatically granted because a student cannot complete a course.

When an Incomplete is permitted, the student and instructor must follow current College requirements regarding eligibility, remaining required work, documentation, completion deadlines, and conversion of the grade if the requirements are not completed.

Because Surgical Services courses are sequential and may contain laboratory, competency, or clinical requirements, an Incomplete may delay progression into subsequent coursework or clinical education.

Student Concerns, Complaints, and Appeals

Students have the right to raise concerns regarding their educational experience and to use applicable PPSC complaint and appeal procedures.

The appropriate process depends on the nature of the concern.

Academic or Instructional Concerns

Concerns involving instruction, course requirements, grading, faculty decisions, or other academic matters should follow the current PPSC academic concern process.

Students are encouraged to address the concern with the faculty member involved when appropriate. If the concern is not resolved, students may use the PPSC Academic Concern process and subsequent levels of review established by the College.

Students are not required to confront an individual before reporting discrimination, harassment, retaliation, safety concerns, or other matters for which a separate College reporting process applies.

Program-Level Concerns

Students may bring program-specific questions or concerns to the Director of Surgical Services when the matter cannot be appropriately resolved with the faculty member involved or when the Director is the appropriate first point of contact.

Students should clearly identify:

- The concern.
- Relevant course, clinical, or program information.
- Steps already taken to address the concern.
- Supporting documentation when applicable.
- The resolution being requested.

Program-level review does not replace a formal College process when one applies.

College Complaint and Conduct Processes

Different concerns are governed by different PPSC and CCCS processes.

Examples include:

- Academic or instructional concerns through the PPSC Academic Concern process.
- General student complaints under applicable PPSC procedures and CCCS SP 4-31a.
- Student conduct matters under CCCS BP 4-30 and SP 4-30a.

- Discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and Title IX matters under the applicable civil rights process.
- Accessibility concerns through the appropriate College accessibility or grievance process.

Students should use the process applicable to the nature of their concern.

Appeals and Due Process

Students are entitled to the review, appeal, or due process protections provided by applicable PPSC and CCCS policies.

Program-level academic decisions will follow applicable College academic review procedures.

When an allegation involves the CCCS Student Code of Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities, the student conduct process provides applicable notice and opportunity to respond.

The Surgical Services Department does not replace or limit College-level appeal or due process rights.

Protection from Retaliation

Students may raise concerns, participate in applicable complaint processes, request review of decisions, or exercise rights provided by College policy without retaliation.

Retaliation concerns should be reported through the appropriate PPSC process.

Students remain responsible for complying with course, program, clinical, professional, and safety requirements while a concern or appeal is under review, unless the College or Surgical Services Department provides written direction to the contrary.

Current Policies and Resources

Students should consult current PPSC and CCCS resources because procedures, titles, forms, and deadlines may change.

PPSC Institutional Syllabus and Student Concerns:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/academics/instructional-services/syllabus/institutional-syllabus.php>

PPSC Academic Appeals and Concerns:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/admissions/appeal.php>

CCCS SP 4-30a: Student Behavioral Expectations and Responsibilities Resolution

Procedure: <https://cccs.edu/about/governance/policies-procedures/sp-4-30a-student-behavioral-expectations-and-responsibilities-resolution-procedure>

CCCS SP 4-31a: Student Complaint Procedure:

<https://cccs.edu/about/governance/policies-procedures/sp-4-31a-student-complaint-procedure>

24. Graduation

Graduation represents the successful completion of all academic, laboratory, and clinical requirements in the Surgical Services Department. It marks the transition from student to entry-level healthcare professional.

Eligibility for Graduation

To graduate, students must:

- Successfully complete all required program courses with a grade of 76% or higher.
- Meet all applicable laboratory and competency requirements.
- Meet all clinical hour, case, and experience requirements applicable to their program.
- Maintain the GPA required by the Surgical Services Department.
- Complete all required clinical documentation and evaluations.
- Complete the PPSC graduation application and meet all applicable College graduation requirements.

Students are responsible for reviewing current PPSC graduation requirements and submitting their graduation application by the published deadlines.

PPSC Graduation Information:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/admissions/records/graduation/index.php>

Certification Exams

Surgical Technology: Graduates who meet applicable eligibility requirements may sit for the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) examination.

NBSTSA CST Certification Information: <https://www.nbstsa.org/cst-prepare-for-exam>

Sterile Processing: Students completing the Sterile Processing program may pursue the Healthcare Sterile Processing Association (HSPA) Certified Registered Central Service Technician (CRCST) credential after meeting applicable examination and hands-on experience requirements.

HSPA CRCST Certification Information: <https://myhspa.org/certification/certification-overview/certified-registered-central-service-technician-crcst/>

Professional certification is awarded by the applicable certification organization and is separate from graduation from PPSC.

Pinning and Recognition Ceremony

- Graduates are honored in a Surgical Services Department ceremony recognizing their accomplishments and entry into the profession.
- Participation in the ceremony is encouraged but is not required for program completion or PPSC graduation.
- The Surgical Services recognition ceremony is separate from the official PPSC commencement ceremony.
- Students who are unable to attend remain eligible to receive their applicable program recognition.

Student Responsibility

It is each student's responsibility to:

- Monitor progress toward completion of all program requirements.
- Apply for graduation by the PPSC deadline.
- Complete all required academic, laboratory, and clinical requirements.
- Complete certification examination applications and required documentation as directed.
- Meet the requirements established by the applicable certification organization.
- Maintain professional behavior through completion of all program activities.

Graduation recognizes successful completion of the Surgical Services program and the student's transition toward entry-level professional practice.

25. Transportation & Parking

Students are responsible for arranging reliable transportation to and from PPSC campuses, laboratory activities, clinical affiliates, and other required program activities.

Transportation is the student's responsibility and is not provided by the Surgical Services Department.

Clinical placements may occur throughout the Colorado Springs region and surrounding communities. Students should be prepared to travel to the clinical affiliate assigned by the program.

Transportation Requirements

- Students must maintain reliable transportation throughout the program.
- Students are responsible for arriving at all classes, labs, clinical assignments, and required program activities on time.
- Clinical assignments are not based solely on a student's residence, transportation preference, employment location, or proximity to a clinical affiliate.
- Students may not request a clinical placement change solely because of transportation difficulties, travel distance, parking availability, or associated costs.
- Vehicle problems, transportation difficulties, traffic, parking delays, or similar circumstances do not automatically excuse an absence or tardiness.
- Students should develop a backup transportation plan before beginning the program.

Attendance and punctuality requirements remain in effect regardless of transportation circumstances and are addressed in Sections 14 and 17.

Campus Parking

Students must follow current PPSC parking and transportation requirements.

- Students are responsible for understanding parking requirements for the campus they attend.
- Vehicles must be parked only in authorized areas.
- Students are responsible for citations, towing charges, or other costs resulting from parking violations.
- Parking availability does not excuse tardiness or absence.

Students should review the current PPSC parking information, as parking procedures and requirements may change.

PPSC Parking Information: <https://www.pikespeak.edu/administration-operations/campus-police/parking.php>

Clinical Affiliate Parking

Parking procedures vary by clinical affiliate.

Students must follow all parking and transportation instructions provided by the assigned facility.

Depending on the clinical affiliate:

- Designated student or employee parking may be required.
- Students may be prohibited from parking in patient or visitor areas.
- Off-site parking or shuttle transportation may be required.
- Parking permits, badges, or vehicle registration may be required.
- Parking fees may apply.

Students are responsible for transportation and clinical affiliate parking costs unless otherwise communicated by the program or clinical affiliate.

Failure to follow a clinical affiliate's parking requirements may result in parking penalties, loss of parking privileges, or other action by the facility and may be addressed as a professional conduct concern when appropriate.

Travel Between Locations

Students may occasionally be required to travel between PPSC locations, clinical affiliates, or other approved educational locations.

Students are responsible for allowing sufficient travel time between required activities.

The Surgical Services Department does not provide transportation between locations and is not responsible for arranging carpools or other transportation.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- Maintaining reliable transportation.
- Planning routes and travel time in advance.
- Allowing additional time for traffic, weather, parking, and facility access.
- Understanding campus and clinical affiliate parking requirements.
- Paying applicable transportation and parking expenses.
- Developing an alternative transportation plan in case their primary transportation becomes unavailable.
- Arriving at all required activities on time and prepared to participate.

Transportation or parking difficulties do not alter the attendance and punctuality requirements of the Surgical Services Department.

26. Weather Closures & Emergencies

Weather, natural disasters, utility disruptions, public safety events, or other emergencies may affect scheduled classes, laboratories, clinical education, or other program activities.

Students are responsible for monitoring official communications from Pikes Peak State College, the Surgical Services Department, and their assigned clinical affiliate.

PPSC Closures and Delays

PPSC determines whether College campuses will close, operate on a delayed schedule, or modify operations because of weather or emergency conditions.

Students should monitor official PPSC communication channels for current information.

When PPSC announces a campus closure or delay:

- On-campus classes and laboratory activities will follow the College's announced operating status.
- Students should not report to a closed PPSC campus unless specifically instructed to do so.
- A delayed opening may affect the start time of scheduled on-campus activities.
- Online coursework, assignments, or other remote activities may remain due unless the instructor communicates an adjustment.
- Faculty may provide additional course-specific instructions through PPSC email or D2L.

Students should not rely solely on social media, classmates, or unofficial sources for closure information.

Clinical Education During PPSC Closures

Clinical affiliates are separate healthcare organizations and may remain open when PPSC campuses are closed or delayed.

A PPSC closure or delayed opening does not automatically cancel or delay clinical education.

Students must follow the Surgical Services Department's communication regarding clinical attendance during a College closure or delay.

If the assigned clinical affiliate remains operational and the student's clinical experience remains available, students may be expected to attend according to their assigned clinical schedule unless directed otherwise by the Surgical Services Department.

Students should not independently determine that clinical is canceled solely because PPSC has announced a closure or delay.

Clinical Affiliate Closure or Restricted Operations

A clinical affiliate may independently close, delay operations, restrict student access, cancel elective procedures, modify department operations, or otherwise determine that students should not report.

If a clinical affiliate communicates directly with a student regarding a closure, delay, cancellation, or restriction, the student must promptly notify the Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Students may not independently substitute another clinical day or arrange make-up hours with the clinical affiliate.

Any required make-up time will be addressed in accordance with Sections 14 and 17.

Severe Weather and Unsafe Travel Conditions

Students are expected to plan appropriately for Colorado weather and allow additional travel time when conditions warrant.

Students should never place themselves or others in immediate danger to travel to a program activity.

If weather or road conditions create a significant safety concern and the program activity has not been officially canceled, the student must notify the appropriate program and clinical personnel as soon as possible.

For clinical education, the student must notify:

- The appropriate clinical affiliate contact; and
- The Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services.

Notification of unsafe travel conditions does not automatically excuse an absence. Attendance will be addressed in accordance with applicable program requirements and the circumstances of the event.

Emergencies During Class, Lab, or Clinical

Students must follow the emergency procedures of the location where they are participating.

During an emergency:

- Follow instructions from PPSC officials, faculty, clinical affiliate personnel, law enforcement, or emergency responders.
- Evacuate, shelter in place, or take other protective action when directed.
- Do not interfere with emergency response activities.
- Do not return to an evacuated or restricted area until authorized.
- Notify appropriate program personnel when an emergency affects attendance or continued participation.

When participating at a clinical affiliate, students must follow the facility's emergency procedures and instructions.

Communication During Emergencies

Students are responsible for maintaining current contact information with PPSC and regularly monitoring:

- PPSC email.
- D2L.
- Official PPSC emergency notifications.
- Surgical Services Department communications.
- Clinical tracking or communication systems when applicable.
- Clinical affiliate communications when applicable.

Students should ensure that emergency notification settings remain up to date throughout their enrollment.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- Enrolling in or enabling available PPSC emergency notifications.
- Monitoring official College and program communications.
- Monitoring clinical affiliate communication when applicable.
- Planning for weather and allowing adequate travel time.
- Following PPSC and clinical affiliate emergency procedures.
- Communicating promptly when weather or an emergency affects attendance.
- Following the established clinical schedule unless an authorized change or cancellation has been communicated.
- Avoiding independent schedule changes or arrangements with clinical affiliates.

Weather closures and emergencies do not automatically waive required clinical hours, competencies, cases, or other program requirements. When required activities are canceled, the Surgical Services Department will determine whether and how affected requirements can be completed.

27. Campus Safety & Emergency Alerts

Pikes Peak State College and the Surgical Services Department are committed to maintaining a safe learning environment. Students are expected to become familiar with emergency procedures and follow instructions from authorized College personnel, clinical affiliates, law enforcement, and emergency personnel.

Safety requires awareness, appropriate communication, and prompt action when an emergency or potential hazard occurs.

Emergency Alerts

PPSC uses emergency notification systems to communicate urgent information regarding campus safety, closures, delays, severe weather, and other emergencies.

Students are responsible for:

- Ensuring their contact information with PPSC is current.
- Enabling available emergency notifications.
- Monitoring PPSC email and official College communications.
- Following instructions contained in emergency notifications.
- Monitoring Surgical Services Department communications when an emergency affects program activities.

Students should not rely solely on social media, classmates, or unofficial sources for emergency information.

Current emergency and campus safety information is available through PPSC Campus Police.

PPSC Campus Police & Safety Information:

<https://www.pikespeak.edu/administration-operations/campus-police/>

Reporting an Emergency

For an immediate or life-threatening emergency, students should call **911**.

Students should promptly report suspicious activity, threats, unsafe conditions, or other safety concerns through the appropriate PPSC reporting or Campus Police process.

Students should not place themselves at risk when attempting to intervene in an emergency or suspicious situation.

Emergency Procedures

Students must follow emergency instructions applicable to the location where they are participating in program activities.

Depending on the emergency, students may be instructed to:

- Evacuate.
- Shelter in place.
- Secure or leave an area.
- Follow fire or severe weather procedures.
- Remain in a designated safe location.
- Avoid a particular building or area.
- Follow other directions provided by authorized personnel.

Students must comply promptly with instructions from faculty, PPSC officials, Campus Police, law enforcement, emergency responders, or other authorized personnel.

Students may not return to an evacuated, secured, or restricted area until authorized to do so.

Emergency Drills

Students are expected to participate appropriately in emergency drills conducted during scheduled program activities.

Drills may include:

- Fire evacuation.
- Severe weather response.
- Lockdown or secure-area procedures.
- Evacuation exercises.
- Other emergency preparedness activities.

Students must treat drills as safety activities and follow all instructions provided by faculty or authorized personnel.

Laboratory Safety Emergencies

Because Surgical Services laboratories contain instruments, sharps, chemicals, equipment, and other materials that may create additional hazards during an emergency, students must follow faculty instructions before evacuating or securing the laboratory when circumstances permit.

Students should never delay evacuation or other emergency action to clean equipment, retrieve belongings, or complete a laboratory activity.

Injuries, exposures, or other incidents that occur during an emergency must be reported in accordance with Section 21.

Clinical Affiliate Safety

Clinical affiliates maintain their own emergency management and safety procedures.

Students must:

- Complete required clinical affiliate safety orientation.
- Become familiar with emergency exits and procedures applicable to their assigned area.
- Follow instructions from clinical affiliate personnel during an emergency.
- Follow facility evacuation, fire, severe weather, security, and other emergency procedures.
- Remain within the student's authorized role during an emergency.
- Avoid interfering with patient care or emergency response activities.

Students should not independently assume responsibilities outside their level of training or student role during an emergency.

When an emergency affects the student's clinical assignment or ability to remain at the clinical affiliate, the student must notify the Clinical Instructor, Clinical Coordinator, or Director of Surgical Services as soon as reasonably possible.

Personal Belongings

Students are responsible for securing their personal belongings while participating in program activities.

Personal items should:

- Be stored in designated areas when available.
- Not obstruct hallways, exits, laboratory work areas, or emergency equipment.
- Not create a safety or infection prevention concern.

Students should avoid bringing unnecessary valuables to campus, laboratory, or clinical activities.

Weapons and Threatening Behavior

Students must comply with all applicable PPSC and CCCS policies regarding weapons, threats, violence, and disruptive or dangerous behavior.

Students should report any behavior or circumstances that pose an immediate safety concern.

Students should not attempt to personally investigate or confront an individual who may present a threat.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for:

- Maintaining awareness of their surroundings.
- Following applicable safety procedures.
- Monitoring official emergency communications.
- Participating appropriately in required safety drills.
- Promptly reporting emergencies and significant safety concerns.
- Following instructions from authorized personnel.
- Knowing emergency exits and procedures in frequently used program areas.
- Following clinical affiliate emergency procedures while participating in clinical education.

Students should prioritize immediate personal and public safety during an emergency. Academic, attendance, and clinical requirements will be addressed after the immediate safety concern has been resolved.

Additional requirements regarding weather closures and emergency-related schedule changes are provided in Section 26.

28. Student Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received access to, read, and understand the Pikes Peak State College Surgical Services Student Handbook.

I understand that I am responsible for complying with the policies, procedures, requirements, and expectations applicable to my Surgical Services program.

I understand that failure to meet academic, attendance, professional, safety, laboratory, clinical, or other program requirements may result in corrective action, probation, course failure, removal from a clinical affiliate, loss of clinical eligibility, or program dismissal, as applicable.

Student Acknowledgment

By signing this acknowledgment, I understand and agree that:

- The Surgical Services Student Handbook contains important policies, procedures, requirements, and expectations governing my participation in the program.
- I am responsible for reading and understanding the entire handbook and asking for clarification when I do not understand a requirement.
- I am responsible for complying with applicable PPSC and CCCS policies and procedures in addition to Surgical Services Department requirements.
- I am responsible for reviewing and complying with the syllabus for each course in which I am enrolled.
- I am responsible for reviewing and complying with the Clinical Handbook and clinical education requirements applicable to my program.
- I must comply with applicable requirements of my assigned clinical affiliate while participating in clinical education.
- Clinical affiliates are separate organizations and may establish requirements that are different from or more restrictive than PPSC or Surgical Services Department requirements.
- Clinical placement at a specific facility, location, department, shift, or schedule is not guaranteed.
- I am responsible for maintaining all academic, clinical, health, compliance, certification, and documentation requirements applicable to my enrollment.
- I am responsible for monitoring my PPSC email, D2L, clinical tracking systems, and other designated communication systems for official information.

- I am accountable for my attendance, punctuality, academic performance, clinical performance, professional behavior, communication, and conduct.
- I am responsible for protecting patient privacy, confidential information, and clinical affiliate information.
- I understand that program requirements may be revised when necessary to maintain compliance with PPSC or CCCS requirements, accreditation standards, certification requirements, clinical affiliate expectations, safety requirements, or other applicable standards.
- I am responsible for reviewing and complying with revisions communicated to me through official College or program communication.
- If a provision of this handbook conflicts with applicable law, CCCS Board Policy, CCCS System Procedure, or controlling PPSC policy, the applicable higher-level requirement governs.
- This handbook does not constitute a contract or guarantee graduation, clinical placement, certification eligibility, certification, employment, or any specific educational outcome.

My signature confirms that I have received access to the handbook and understand my responsibility to comply with the requirements applicable to my participation in the Surgical Services Department.

Student Information

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student ID: _____

Program: ☐ Surgical Technology (AAS) ☐ Sterile Processing (Certificate)

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Cohort/Start Term: _____