



Surgical Technology Program Handbook

Class #19

2020—2021

**VERNON COLLEGE
SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM**

WELCOME

To the Student Surgical Technologist,

As the Program Coordinator of the Vernon College Surgical Technology Program, I want to welcome you to our program. You have chosen a challenging but rewarding career as a Surgical Technologist and your desire to make a contribution to the health and well-being of other people is an excellent virtue to possess. The Surgical Technologist is an integral part of the surgical team in the delivery of surgical patient care, a responsibility to not be taken lightly.

You will be given the best possible preparation during the didactic (classroom), clinical labs, and clinical practicum to achieve your goals. It will be my primary goal to provide you the best possible opportunity for successful completion of the Surgical Technology Program at Vernon College.

I am sure you will be a credit to your school, peers, and community. I wish you success and achievement of your ultimate goal, to become a Certified Surgical Technologist upon completion of the Vernon College Surgical Technology Program.

Sincerely,

Jeff Feix, CST, CSFA, LVN, FAST
Program Coordinator/Instructor

COVID-19 Safety Requirements—will apply to all students enrolled in the program at all times.

- **Masks/facial coverings will be worn at all times while inside the Century City Center to include the classroom and labs. The only exceptions will be when students are eating in the VC Café or student lounge.**
- **Social distancing measures will be practiced at all times and may not always be possible in the learning/performing of skills. Masks/facial covering will still be required.**
- **Clinical sites will require masks/facial coverings and students will be expected to follow additional safety measures that may be implemented by these facilities.**
- **Students should practice effective hand hygiene with washing hands frequently and using hand sanitizer as needed.**
- **Students will follow any additional recommendations/mandates for COVID-19 safety from Vernon College, local, state, or federal government agencies.**

Disclaimer Clause:

This Handbook is intended to provide guidelines and procedures for the Surgical Technology Program and does not create a contract between the student and Vernon College, nor confer any contractual right upon the student. Vernon College reserves the right to make changes to this Handbook at any time without prior notice.

Program History:

The Vernon College Surgical Technology Program began in August 2002. The program is nationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). CAAHEP Headquarters are located at 25400 U.S. Highway 19 North, Suite 158, Clearwater, FL 33763. Phone number is 727-210-2350 and web address is www.caahep.org Annual reports are filed with the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA) to demonstrate compliance with programmatic accreditation Standards and Guidelines. The program curriculum is based on 6th Edition of the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) Core Curriculum in Surgical Technology Education. The program has remained versatile in delivering the program curriculum to maintain the strong support from the communities of interest and be responsive to local employer's and clinical site's requirements for students and graduates. Graduates of the program are eligible to sit for the Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) examination administered by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA). The program curriculum, in addition to being in compliance with the current edition of the AST Core Curriculum in Surgical Technology Education also reflects local employment needs as determined by the program coordinator, administrators, and the advisory committee.

Curriculum is delivered in didactic (classroom), clinical lab skills to include mock surgeries, and clinical practicum at local clinical sites. The majority of clinical sites are located within the city of Wichita Falls with one site located in Vernon, Texas. **Clinical practicum will require travel to clinical site outside the city of Wichita Falls during each semester. Students can expect to occasionally travel up to one hour to and from clinical sites outside of Wichita Falls.**

For completion of the program and graduation the student surgical technologist must successfully complete the didactic section, master the lab skills, and perform a minimum number of clinical cases. The courses must be passed sequentially in order to remain in the program. If a student does not pass a course with a minimum grade of a (C) the student cannot continue in the program and will be withdrawn.

The Vernon College Surgical Technology Program strives to meet or exceed the program outcomes required by the ARC/STSA thresholds for Retention, CST exam participation/pass rate, Job Placement, Graduate Satisfaction, and Employer Satisfaction. These program outcomes and the Surgical Technology Program results will be published on the program webpage on the Vernon College website.

The program enrollment capacity is fifteen (15) students per program year which begins in the Fall semester in August and completion at the conclusion of the following Summer eleven (11) week semester. Employment upon completion of the program is not guaranteed, but job placement assistance is provided. Some graduates can expect to relocate after graduation as local employment opportunities fluctuate year to year.

This handbook contains the courses required and minimum cases for program completion and graduation, program policies and procedures, costs of the program year, program delivery, and other important information for students enrolled in the program. Individual course syllabi and learning outcomes are provided to students in each course and are published on the Vernon College website. Students enrolled in clinical courses are provided additional information to achieve learning outcomes,

professional behaviors and performance expected, forms related to recording clinical cases, and evaluations to determine the clinical grade.

The Vernon College Surgical Technology Program currently offers a Certificate of Completion in Surgical Technology as well as an Associates of Applied Science (AAS) Degree in Surgical Technology. Students meeting the requirements for the AAS degree in Surgical Technology will receive the AAS degree upon completion of the program. Programmatic accreditation requires the AAS degree to be the minimum degree awarded in August 2021. The Certificate of Completion in Surgical Technology will be not be offered after August 2020 and Vernon College will eliminate the Certificate of Completion at that time. Requirements for the AAS Degree are published in the Vernon College Catalog and on the college website.

Program policies and costs associated with the program can change during the program year and students will be notified in writing if any such changes occur. Programmatic accreditation, institutional accreditation, and program advisory committee actions can result in curriculum and/or program delivery modifications. If any modifications are recommended and implemented all students enrolled in the program will be notified in writing and this handbook will be updated to reflect the modifications.

Vernon College Goals:

All Vernon College CTE programs are designed to:

- a) Provide reinforcement, within the occupational setting, of the General Education Core Objectives as adopted and prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and Vernon College. These General Education Core Objectives include:
 - 1) **Critical Thinking Skills** to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
 - 2) **Communication Skills** to include effective written, oral, and visual communication.
 - 3) **Empirical and Quantitative Skills** to include applications of scientific and mathematical concepts.
 - 4) **Teamwork** to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
 - 5) **Social Responsibility** to include intercultural competence, civic knowledge, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
 - 6) **Personal Responsibility** to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- b) Provide students with a foundation of specialized knowledge and skills necessary to procure employment in their chosen occupational field. This foundation of specialized knowledge and skills is summarized by the program outcomes listed below.

Surgical Technology Program Goal:

The goal of the Vernon College Surgical Technology Program is to prepare students with the skill and knowledge base to gain employment as an entry-level surgical technologist. Competent graduates will be prepared in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains.

Program Outcomes:

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

- 1) Identify basic surgical instrumentation and demonstrate an understanding of the decontamination/sterilization processes.
- 2) Integrate principles of surgical asepsis in perioperative routines and exhibit a strong surgical conscience.
- 3) Demonstrate a safe and professional level of practice and knowledge in the perioperative routines assumed by the entry level Surgical Technologist to include; patient transportation, positioning, and emergency procedures.
- 4) Apply knowledge and skills of a professional Surgical Technologist to address the biopsychosocial needs of the surgical patient.
- 5) Apply an understanding of the ethical, legal, moral, and medical values related to the patient and the surgical team delivering perioperative care.
- 6) Communicate effectively with patients and the health care team based upon respect for the dignity, cultural diversity, and worth of each person.
- 7) Integrate a comprehensive understanding of anatomy, physiology, medical terminology, pharmacology, and pathophysiology to the role of the entry-level Surgical Technologist.
- 8) Correlate the elements, actions, and use of medications and anesthetic agents utilized during perioperative patient care.
- 9) Perform proficiently and competently as an entry-level Surgical Technologist in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains.
- 10) Demonstrate professional attributes of an entry-level Surgical Technologist consistent with the profession and employer expectations.

Program outcomes are achieved through delivery of the program curriculum and to ensure outcomes are being achieved, various assessment tools are used in the program. Each didactic course, lab skills, and clinical practicum will use assessment tools that are contained in this handbook or course syllabi. The yearly program outcomes are reported to college administration, the program advisory committee, and are included in the Annual Report to the ARC/STSA.

Program Content/Delivery Schedule:

The program is divided into a Fall, Spring and Summer semester format requiring one year to complete after pre-requisite courses have been completed.

Fall Semester 16-Week Courses:

BIOL 2420	Microbiology	T-Th	Check Biology Schedule
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Fall Semester 1st 8-Week Courses:

SRGT 1405	Intro to Surgical Technology	M-W-F	8:00 am to 11:30 am
HPRS 1206	Essentials of Medical Terminology	M-W	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Fall Semester 2nd 8-Week Courses:

SRGT 1409	Fundamentals of Aseptic Technique	M-W	8:00 am to 5:00 pm
SRGT 1160	Clinical (observation)	F	6:00 am to 1:00 pm

Spring Semester 16-Week Courses:

SRGT 1560	Clinical	T-W-Th	6:00 am to 3:30 pm
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Spring Semester 1st 8-Week Courses:

SRGT 1441	Surgical Procedures I	M	7:30 am to 11:30 am 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
		F	7:30 am to 11:30 am

Spring Semester 2nd 8-Week Courses:

SRGT 1442	Surgical Procedures II	M	7:30 am to 11:30 am 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
		F	7:30 am to 11:30 am

Summer Semester 11-Week Courses:

SRGT 2660	Clinical	T-W-Th	6:00 am to 3:30 pm
	Clinical (Classroom)	M	8:30 am to 11:30 am 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

SRGT courses with a lab component will be given a lab schedule with the course syllabi and semester calendar. All classes and labs will be conducted at the Century City Center and any changes in the above schedule will be provided to the student in a timely manner. Clinical schedules will be posted weekly and it the student's responsibility to check the schedule and attend the correct clinical site at the scheduled time.

Students are assigned one-on-one with a clinical site staff member as their preceptor with the clinical instructor coordinating clinical case assignments. In addition to passing the above program courses, all students must meet the minimum clinical case requirements for completion and graduation.

Minimum Clinical Case Requirements for Graduation:

Clinical cases will be achieved during the SRGT 1560 and SRGT 2660 clinical practicums. These minimum clinical case requirements are established by programmatic accreditation. The student must meet or surpass the following requirements:

- **Minimum of 120 Total Clinical Cases** (Note: There is no maximum limit and students will participate in more than 120 clinical cases in an average year)
- **General Surgery 30 Cases**—Minimum of 20 in First Scrub Role
- **Surgical Specialties 90 Cases**—Minimum of 60 in First Scrub Role
- With the exception of General Surgery procedures—a maximum of 15 cases in each specialty can be counted towards the 120 total overall.
- Maximum number of Second Scrub Cases that can be applied to the 120 overall total is 10 cases in General Surgery and 30 cases in Specialties for a limit of 40.
- 10 Diagnostic Endoscopy Cases and 5 Vaginal Delivery Cases may be applied toward the Second Scrub case count.
- **Observation Role cases do not count towards the 120 minimum case total minimum** but must be documented and will be recorded by the student.
- Students must perform the first or second scrub role for the clinical case to count towards the minimum clinical case requirements.
- Students are responsible to accurately record; 1) the clinical cases performed on their weekly clinical case log, 2) the surgical specialty, 3) have the clinical preceptor sign the log and mark the role the student performed. This form will be turned in with clinical grade sheet and case study each week.
- The Program Coordinator will be responsible for tracking each student's progress by recording the information from the weekly clinical case log and maintaining a permanent record of the student's overall progress.
- Each student will be provided with an up to date written copy of their overall clinical case count weekly during each clinical practicum. The program coordinator will advise each student on their individual progress in meeting the clinical case requirements for graduation.
- The Program Coordinator/Instructor will coordinate with each clinical site to ensure students are participating in surgical specialties needed to achieve the minimum clinical case total.

The following definitions will be utilized to determine the scrub role performed by the student in each clinical practicum:

FIRST SCRUB ROLE

The student surgical technologist shall perform the following duties during any given surgical procedure with proficiency*. The following list is provided to identify the items that must be completed in order to document a case in the first scrub role. A student not meeting the five criteria below cannot count the case in the first scrub role and the case must be documented in the second scrub role or observation role.

- Verify supplies and equipment needed for the surgical procedure.
- Set up the sterile field with instruments, supplies, equipment, medication(s) and solutions needed for the procedure.
- Perform counts with the circulator prior to the procedure and before the incision is closed.
- Pass instruments and supplies to the sterile surgical team members during the procedure.
- Maintain sterile technique as measured by recognized breaks in technique and demonstrate knowledge of how to correct with appropriate technique.

SECOND SCRUB ROLE

The second scrub role is defined as the student who is at the sterile field who has not met all criteria for the first scrub role, but actively participates in the surgical procedure in its entirety by completing any of the following:

- Sponging
- Suctioning
- Cutting suture
- Holding retractors
- Manipulating endoscopic camera

OBSERVATION ROLE

The observation role is defined as the student who is in the operating room performing roles that do not meet the criteria for the first or second scrub role. These observation cases are not to be included in the required case count, but must be documented by the program.

* Proficiency is defined by the preceptor assigned to the student during the surgical procedure. Student proficiency improves as the student performs more surgical procedures in the clinical practicums.

Program Cost: The following cost is based on the program year and does not reflect pre-requisite courses and their textbook costs.

Fall Semester: Includes 16-week and 8-week I & II courses—Cost based on county of residency and the student enrolling in all courses required for the semester.

	Wilbarger County Resident	Non-Wilbarger
Tuition and Fees	\$3000.00	\$3600.00
Textbooks	605.00	605.00
Uniforms (2)	80.00	80.00
Lab Jacket	25.00	25.00
AST membership Fee	45.00	45.00
Total for Fall Semester	\$3755.00	\$4355.00

Spring Semester: Includes 16-week and 8-week I & II course—based on Non-Wilbarger County Residency Status. Cost based on student enrolling in all courses required for the semester.

Tuition and Fees	\$2600.00	\$3120.00
Textbook	150.00	150.00
Total for Spring Semester	\$2750.00	\$3270.00

Summer Semester: Includes Summer 11-week course—based on Non-Wilbarger County Residency Status. Special fee included for CST examination preparation and the CST exam administered the last week of the semester.

Tuition and Fees (Includes CST Exam Special Fee)	\$1480.00	\$1720.00
CST Exam Study Guide (Textbook)	75.00	75.00
Pin	11.50	11.50
Total for Summer Semester	\$1566.50	\$1806.50
Total Cost of the Program Year:	\$8071.50	\$9431.50

Tuition and fees must be paid by registration payment deadlines. **No Late Registration period exists in the Vernon College schedule.** Textbooks must be purchased before the start of classes in each semester. The above textbook list reflects the current Vernon College Bookstore charges for textbooks required for the ST Program.

All financial aid issues must be resolved prior to registration each semester or the student cannot attend class or clinical; and standing in the program can be jeopardized if the student is not able to attend class due to non-payment of tuition and fees. Current editions of textbooks and study guides must be used during the program.

ALL PROGRAM COSTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME.

Financial Aid and Scholarships:

Vernon College has a Financial Aid Office located on the Vernon campus and Century City Center to assist students with these matters. The program qualifies for all financial aid and scholarships available to students enrolled full time. Students should always complete the federal financial aid applications, apply for grants, and seek all avenues of state assistance available.

The ST Program has two scholarships dedicated to Surgical Technology students each academic year. In May 2002, the Bonnie Barnard Memorial Scholarship was established at Vernon College. The Cindy Asher Memorial Scholarship was established in May 2011. Both scholarships are awarded by the Surgical Technology Program Scholarship Committee based on financial need. Hardship cases that arise during the academic year may be considered for Barnard and Asher funds by the Surgical Technology Program Scholarship Committee. Funds available for hardship awards will be dependent upon the scholarship fund balances. ST Program scholarship applications are distributed at the July orientation to students accepted into the upcoming academic year.

Surgical Technology Students enrolled in accredited programs qualify for national scholarships from the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST) Foundation, the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA), and the Accreditation Review Council on Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA). These scholarship applicants are due in February and March annually and require a short essay to be written. The funds are awarded in May and the student receives the funds directly from the awarding entity. The Program Coordinator will provide students more details on these scholarships, the application process, and other important information during the academic year.

Program Evaluation and Grading Policy:

Students will be given a detailed course syllabus and calendar for all courses within the program. The grades in each course will be determined according to the course syllabus. The instructor will verbally read the course calendar and syllabus for each course, each semester to reduce any misunderstanding or confusion about how grades are earned. Clinical practicum packets will be provided to the students at the start of each clinical practicum with syllabi, clinical site schedule, grading system, and final assessment tools.

Written assignments and examinations will be given to evaluate the student's retention of the program curriculum. Courses may contain additional assignments such as term papers or surgical procedure projects to provide re-enforcement of course objectives. Online resources will be used to accompany the textbook. Significant reading is involved to complete assignments and be successful on examinations.

All assignments not turned in on due date will earn an automatic ten (10) point deduction. If the assignment is late it must be turned in by next scheduled class day or a zero (0) will be given. Assignments include written assignments such as homework, term papers, projects, tests, and any other graded project assigned by the instructor(s).

Surgical courses with a lab require the student to pass the written course section and the lab section. The lab grading system is based upon the student's ability to competently perform the tasks necessary to perform as a Surgical Technologist using skill rubrics. If a student cannot pass the minimum skill

requirements for the lab component of the course, a failing grade will be issued. Students will be provided additional lab remediation after normal class/lab/clinical times with the instructor if the student cannot master the lab skills required. The technical skills and sterile technique concepts must be mastered to advance in the course/program. After remediation, if the student cannot pass the lab skills a failing grade will be issued and the student cannot remain enrolled in the program.

Clinical grades are based on student attendance, critical professional behaviors, performance in the role of a ST student, and a written case study each week. The clinical instructor determines the clinical grade from direct observation of student behavior and performance in conjunction with written clinical preceptor evaluations. The grading formula is detailed for each clinical practicum in the clinical packet provided to each student with the course syllabus and clinical schedule.

The Program Coordinator will keep all grades, written tests, and evaluations on file. Students will be regularly informed of their grades and students are encouraged to meet with the Program Coordinator if grades are not meeting the program standards. Failure to meet program minimum grades or performance/behaviors expected in clinical practicum will result in dismissal from the program.

All grades are the final decision of the instructor; the student has the right to appeal any grade they feel is not fair through the academic grievance policy. The Academic Grievance Policy is published in the *Vernon College Student Handbook*.

The Microbiology course must be passed with a minimum grade of 70% (C) in the same manner as the surgical technology courses. A Vernon College Biology faculty member will teach this course and students will be provided a course syllabus and course outline with the individual faculty member's evaluation and grading process. This course can be taken before applying to the ST Program and is included in the Fall semester program delivery schedule if it is not taken before applying to the program.

Clinical Student Work Policy

During clinical practicums within the Surgical Technology Program students participate as a member of the surgical team. A clinical instructor or the ST Program Coordinator will be responsible for assigning students with qualified clinical preceptors/staff. Students may NOT be substituted for clinical staff at any time and a clinical staff member must be with the student providing direct one-on-one supervision at all times. Furthermore, as stated in the Vernon College Catalog course descriptions, clinical packets, and this program handbook, all clinical practicums are a NON-PAID work based learning experience for the student.

To be eligible to attend the clinical practicum, the student must:

- Be registered in the appropriate clinical practicum and all tuition and fees paid before the first day of the semester.
- Be current in CPR certification.
- Provide documentation of current immunizations to include the Hepatitis B series.
- Read the Surgical Technology Program Handbook and return signed acknowledgement of receipt form to the program coordinator.
- Adhere to the Surgical Technology Program and clinical facility's policies.

Instructor and Student Conferences:

The Program Coordinator will conduct a one-on-one conference each semester with all students enrolled in the program to assess the student's performance in meeting the program's standards. Students will be responsible for keeping scheduled conference appointments and should remember the conference is provided to aid the student in successful completion of the program requirements.

Guidance and Counseling:

The Program Coordinator is the academic advisor for students enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program. Vernon College also provides guidance and counseling in the Student Services Department. Students enrolled in the program are encouraged to seek guidance and counseling for any issues that may be affecting their educational goals.

Tutoring Center, Library, and Computer Labs:

Vernon College provides the Tutoring Center with a coordinator to assist students with academic skills or subjects requiring additional assistance. The Tutoring Center provides an opportunity for additional one-on-one instruction for the student to achieve his or her educational goals. Students are encouraged to visit the Tutoring Center, meet the coordinator, and learn about the services available at no charge to the student. These services can prove effective in assisting students during the pre-requisite courses and the general education courses for the AAS degree. The ST Program Faculty is available for individual tutoring for students enrolled in the ST Program. Student success is the key priority for students enrolled at Vernon College and the student should seek out all available options for assistance in achieving course and program outcomes.

Vernon College provides a modern library with a librarian to assist students in their educational goals. Study rooms, reference texts, books, periodicals, and computers with Internet accessed databases are available to currently enrolled students. The student is encouraged to visit the library, meet the librarian, and learn about the services available at no charge to the student.

Computer labs are located in the library and the Allied Health section of Century City Campus. Current Vernon College students have access to these labs and are encouraged to use them as needed. Students can access the Internet for registration, checking college e-mails, researching or writing assignments, etc.

Inclement Weather Policy:

During winter weather conditions the program coordinator may determine if the clinical day is cancelled prior to the college announcing a closure due to weather. Student safety is the priority and the program coordinator will notify students of any clinical day being cancelled. Students should be advised of weather conditions and adjust time schedule, to ensure timely and safe arrival for clinical practicum in adverse weather when clinical is not cancelled. All classroom and lab activities at the Century City Center will be cancelled if Vernon College closes due to weather conditions.

Program Attendance Policy:

The Surgical Technology Program has a challenging curriculum and significant sections of materials are delivered each day. The program requires a commitment by the student to be in attendance in order to be successful in completing the program.

Attendance requirements are equivalent to those imposed upon employees in business and industry. Prompt attendance in all classes, lectures, labs, and clinical assignments is expected of the student. The Program Coordinator will keep attendance and all absences and any tardy will be recorded. Vernon College and the Surgical Technology Program believes that learning cannot take place if the student is not in attendance. Therefore, the student must be in attendance.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ATTENDANCE LIES WITH THE STUDENT

Classroom Absences:

No more than two (2) classroom sessions can be missed per semester.

Clinical Absences:

No more than three (3) clinical sessions can be missed per semester. Note: The Fall SRGT 1160 Clinical Practicum is eight (8) weeks in length. Clinical grading system requires attendance and more than one (1) absence in the Fall SRGT 1160 Clinical Practicum will result in the student failing the course.

If absent for more than two consecutive classroom or clinical days due to illness, the student must present a written statement from a physician before returning to class or clinical for physical clearance. Failure to comply with the attendance policy will result in the student being issued demerits and could result in being administratively withdrawn from the program.

Exemptions:

Absences due to jury duty, military duty, school sanctioned activities, subpoena, job-related exams, job interviews, bereavement leave, job orientations, and professional conferences are exempt and do not count against attendance. Written documentation may be required to receive an exemption and exemptions not listed will be awarded at the discretion of the Program Coordinator.

Students who are absent during clinical must notify the Program Coordinator before clinical duty time. Students should never leave class or clinical without notifying the Program Coordinator.

Tardiness:

Students not in class at scheduled start time, leaving class early, not being dressed in proper attire in clinical at scheduled duty time, and leaving clinical early will constitute a tardy. If the student is more than two (2) hours late for class, it will count as an absence. If the student is more than one (1) hour late for clinical, it will count as an absence. Excessive tardiness will result in the student being counseled, issued demerits, and possible dismissal from the program.

The Program Coordinator will document and record any tardy in the attendance record.

Association of Surgical Technologists (AST)

All students are required to join AST during the first semester of the program. The student will be required to pay \$45 to AST for a one-year student membership and provide the Program Coordinator a copy of the AST membership card. Students must be a member of AST and provide a copy of the AST membership card to the ST Program Coordinator the first class day in December of the Fall semester.

AST is the only national professional organization that is dedicated to being an advocate of the Surgical Technologists. AST offers members the following benefits:

- The monthly publication, *The Surgical Technologist*, provides articles related to Surgical Technology and related organizations, Continuing Education Units (CEU) articles, job opportunities, and the monthly CEU articles are incorporated into courses of the program.
- Providing continuing education by offering national specialty forums throughout the year and a national conference each May for members to attend educational sessions, view the latest technology in surgical procedures, network with fellow members from across the country and meet recruiters from potential employers.
- AST maintains a record of CEU's earned and provides an annual statement to the member and the certification provider making renewal of the CST credential streamlined for the member.
- AST represents Surgical Technologists in legislative activities to protect the profession and seek recognition of the role played in the operating room.
- AST represents Surgical Technologists in employment by providing support in lobbying employers for better pay and working conditions.
- AST maintains a website, www.ast.org, which provides an online university for CEU's, employment opportunities, and information about the profession and organization as well as links to related organizations.
- Members receive a discount at AST sponsored events and a discount on the certification exam for Surgical Technologists.

AST Honor Society:

Students from each graduating class can be nominated for the AST Honor Society if they meet the following requirements:

- An overall GPA of 3.75 or higher
- Program attendance of 95% or better
- Good student conduct with no disciplinary action
- Be a member of AST.

AST Honor Society Inductees receive a certificate of recognition, an AST Honor Society Pin, and are recognized in the AST monthly magazine, *The Surgical Technologist*. In addition, the inductees receive additional scholarship opportunities from the AST Foundation to further their education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting.

The Program Coordinator is responsible for nominating the students, AST determines if the student meets eligibility, and the induction into the AST Honor Society is performed at the pinning ceremony.

Texas State Assembly of AST, Inc.:

The Texas State Assembly of AST, Inc. is the state branch of AST and members of AST who reside in the state of Texas are automatically members. TxSA conducts continuing education workshops throughout the year in different locations to provide Texas CST's the opportunity to earn CEU's necessary for certification renewal. Information about the activities of the organization can be found on their website, www.texasstateassembly.org.

Program students are required to attend the Texas State Assembly Annual Business Meeting and Elections held in Fort Worth, Texas the first weekend of March during the Spring semester. This educational workshop/business meeting will require attendance from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm on Saturday and from 7:45 am to 1:00 pm on Sunday. Attendance is MANDATORY.

National Certification Examination:

Students will sit for the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certified Surgical Technologists (CST) examination the week of the August graduation date. The CST exam is required by programmatic accreditation standards as an outcomes measurement tool for program curriculum delivery. The CST credential is also required by Texas law to practice as a Surgical Technologist after graduation from an accredited educational program.

Passing the CST exam demonstrates entry-level skills and knowledge necessary to practice surgical technology and become employed upon graduation. A special fee is added to the student's Summer semester tuition/fees for the CST exam fee, CST Exam Study Guide, and two (2) Self-Assessment Examinations (SAE) fee. The SAE is a practice certification exam and two different versions will be given prior to the actual CST exam.

Students must adhere to the following procedure in regards to the national certification examination.

1. Students will complete the NBSTSA certification examination application and provide a passport photo by the posted deadline.
2. The Program Coordinator will submit the application with the appropriate fees and supporting documentation that the student is eligible to sit for the examination.
3. The NBSTSA will notify the Vernon College Testing Center Proctor that the eligibility requirements have been met and the student will then sit for the CST examination on the posted testing date.
4. **Results of the CST examination will not be released to the student or program until after the August graduation date as this is considered a pre-graduate test.**

The Program Coordinator will notify the NBSTSA on the graduation date with the required documentation of the students who have officially graduated. Results are provided to the Program Coordinator by E-mail, who then notifies the students of the results of their individual exam score.

Program Honors:

Surgical Technology Program Student of the Year:

Awarded to the student who excels in both academic and clinical skills, has excellent attendance and demonstrates professional behavior and team concepts.

Perfect Attendance:

Awarded to the student(s) that maintained perfect attendance throughout the classroom, lab, and clinical components of the program.

Clinical Student of the Year:

Awarded to the student who demonstrates excellent clinical skills, professional behavior, and team concepts in the clinical practicums above and beyond the expectations of a student surgical technologist.

STSA Student of the Year:

Awarded to the student who excels in the program, has excellent attendance, professional behavior, and demonstrates exemplary leadership in the student association activities.

Surgical Technology Student Association (STSA):

The STSA is a voluntary student organization composed of students currently enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program and the Faculty Advisor. The purpose of this association is to establish and promote an atmosphere conducive to optimum learning and career preparation based on a sense of tradition, camaraderie, and teamwork encompassing all students currently enrolled in the Surgical Technology Program.

STSA officers are nominated and elected by the members and include a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian. All meetings of the STSA will be held at the CCC campus of Vernon College. The Program Coordinator is the Faculty Advisor.

Goals of the STSA include performing community service activities, supporting fellow student organizations, and fundraising to attend AST sponsored educational workshops/conferences. Annual dues for membership are \$10.

Graduation:

The student is eligible for graduation upon successful completion of the program requirements for graduation. Students will be responsible to complete the Application for Graduation in the summer semester during the month of June. Failure to apply for graduation will result in the surgical technology student being unable to complete the program requirements for graduation.

A pinning ceremony is conducted in August, after completion of the summer semester in Wichita Falls to honor graduates of the program. Students will purchase the pins from the Vernon College Bookstore in Wichita Falls during the summer semester of the program. Attendance is mandatory for the pinning ceremony and is the last requirement for graduation and completion of the program.

Program Standards of Conduct:

1. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain a friendly but dignified relationship with patients and clinical staff. **Constructive criticism should be accepted as a basis for self-improvement.**
2. The student must recognize his/her responsibility for the correct and careful use of the school/hospital property and the patient's personal possessions.
3. Students will maintain patient confidentiality at all times and refrain from discussing his/her condition or personal problems, except with authorized faculty and surgical staff.
4. Students should adhere to a strict surgical conscious and practice the patient first approach to surgical patient care.
5. Broken, damaged, or lost property resulting from the student's negligence may be charged at a cost to him/her by the hospital and/or the school.
6. Students should refrain from visiting patients, unless they are a relative, and then not during school hours or in program uniform.
7. Alcohol or drug use at any time, in any degree, will not be tolerated and will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
8. The student must abide by the program's written dress code, while on campus and in the clinical area.
9. When the student desires to meet with the Program Coordinator, an appointment should be made, and if unable to maintain the appointment, then the student should cancel prior to the appointment time as soon as time allows.
10. Student conduct at all times should reflect the professional demeanor required of Surgical Technologists.
11. The AST Code of Ethics for Surgical Technologists should be kept in mind as a guide for conduct at all times.

AST Code of Ethics for Surgical Technologists:

1. To maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and patient care.
2. To hold in confidence, with respect to patient's beliefs, all personal matters.
3. To respect and protect the patient's legal and moral rights to quality patient care.
4. To not knowingly cause injury or any injustice to those entrusted to our care.
5. To work with fellow technologists and other professional health care groups to promote harmony and unity for better patient care.
6. To always follow the principles of asepsis.
7. To maintain a high degree of efficiency through continuing education.
8. To maintain practice skills willingly, with pride and dignity, and full regard to limitations.
9. To report any unethical conduct or practice to the proper authority.
10. To adhere to the code of ethics at all times in relationship to all members of the health care team.

AST Standards of Practice:

1. Teamwork is essential for preoperative patient care and is contingent upon interpersonal skills.
2. Preoperative planning and preparation for surgical interventions are individualized to meet the needs of each patient and his/her surgeon.

3. The preparation of the surgical suite/clinical area and all supplies and equipment will ensure environmental safety for the patient and personnel.
4. Application of basic and current knowledge is necessary for proficient performance of assigned functions.
5. Each patient's right to privacy, dignity, safety, and comfort are respected and protected.
6. Every patient is entitled to the same application of aseptic techniques within the physical facilities.

Violations of the Program Standards of Conduct, AST Code of Ethics, and AST Standards of Practice are considered to be extremely serious. At the Program Coordinator and/or clinical instructor's discretion, the student may be removed from the clinical site immediately. Such a violation(s) will result in the student being issued demerits and/or administratively withdrawn from the program depending upon the severity of the violation.

Student Health Policy:

It is **highly recommended** all students be actively enrolled in a health insurance plan and have a personal physician for treatment of illnesses, accidents or injuries. While safety training and practices are employed during the program, a student can potentially suffer a needle stick or "sharps" injury during the program year. Clinical sites will provide testing of the surgical patient to ensure no communicable diseases are present in the patient. Testing to determine if the student contacted a communicable disease will be at the STUDENT'S expense. Vernon College and student liability insurance does not provide coverage or payment for this testing.

Sharps injuries and exposure to patient body fluids through splashes can occur but are not common. It is **highly recommended** all students maintain a health insurance policy for general health/wellness and in the rare occasion when a clinical injury occurs.

All students:

1. Must prove evidence of good health, by submitting a completed physical form contained in the application packet before the Fall semester start.
2. Submit evidence of current immunizations including program and college required immunizations.
3. Must be able to lift 25 to 35 pounds without restrictions.
4. Must be able to stand for extended periods of time.
5. Must not be infected with any infectious diseases, which could be transmitted to patients.
6. Must be able to meet the following physical demands; bending, walking, standing, lifting, carrying, pushing, and handling equipment, supplies or patients exceeding 25 pounds.
7. Must be able to tolerate environmental temperatures in the 60 degree Fahrenheit range.
8. Must begin the Hepatitis B (HBV) vaccination series before the student can attend the clinical practicum. The student must begin the injections started before Fall semester registration and provide documentation to the ST Program Coordinator.
9. If you know that you have an impaired immune system for whatever reason, you should discuss with your personal physician whether this program can put you at risk of acquiring or experiencing serious complications of an infectious disease. It is also your ethical duty to report any immune system impairment to the ST Program Coordinator due to potential student, patient, or instructor impact on your disease process or their health.

10. Must not have any open lesions on hands or arms, such as psoriasis or dermatitis. This prevents not only participation in clinical practicums but also employment as a CST.
11. Will not be permitted to scrub in the clinical practicum if open cuts, sores, or any break in the skin of the hands and arms exists.

Pregnancy:

1. There are certain dangers associated with working in surgery while pregnant, such as exposure to radiation and anesthetic gases, and standing for extended periods of time.
2. To protect the student and fetus from these dangers, the student must notify the Program Coordinator in writing at the earliest possible date.
3. The student must obtain a “release to work” from their personal physician to provide proper individual guidelines during the pregnancy and ensure the safety and fetus.
4. It is the student’s responsibility to inform their clinical preceptor and charge nurse that they are pregnant and should not be in any procedures in which x-ray or any radiation will be used.
5. Pregnancy severely restricts the student’s ability to complete the clinical requirements of the program. The student should seek guidance from the Program Coordinator and Student Services should pregnancy occur during the program.
6. The student may decide to withdraw from the program and not have it reflect negatively on their readmission to the program.
7. Failure to notify the Program Coordinator of pregnancy will result in administrative withdrawal from the program.

Latex Hypersensitivity (Allergy) Policy:

Latex hypersensitivity (allergy to latex products) is a risk of health care workers, and can be life-threatening in severe cases. Latex products are used extensively in surgery and in this program. Latex hypersensitivity increases with continued exposure to latex products and individuals who have hypersensitivity frequently experience contact dermatitis, itching, open and weeping lesions, and difficulty breathing. The ST Program makes every effort to use latex free supplies when economically feasible.

If a student has a known latex allergy, the student must notify the Program Coordinator immediately and should seriously consider the health risks involved of being exposed to latex on a daily basis in this program. Students with a known latex hypersensitivity that elect to remain in the program must provide written guidelines from their personal physician concerning the level of safe latex exposure. Students who develop a latex hypersensitivity during the course of the program will be held accountable to the same guidelines as a student with a known hypersensitivity. Vernon College and the Surgical Technology Program are **NOT** responsible for **ANY** health problems related to a student who has a known latex hypersensitivity or who develops a latex hypersensitivity during the course of the program and elects to remain in the program.

Program Dress Code:

All students will abide by the Vernon College dress code standards for all classes while on campus. Program uniforms will be required for lab sections of surgical courses and may be required for the campus classroom if class is held in conjunction with a lab.

All Surgical Technology Program students will be required to purchase their program uniforms from the Uniform Shop located at 1714 9th Street in Wichita Falls. The Uniform Shop has a layaway program to help with this cost and students are encouraged to order their program uniform by the first week of September. Program uniforms will be required to be worn to and from all clinical sites. Clinical dress code requires the student to always display their Vernon College Student picture ID at all times to identify the student as a Student Surgical Technologist. Clean, white, leather or vinyl duty shoes must be worn in the clinical or lab area and at any time the student is wearing the program uniform. Open-toed shoes, clogs, flip-flops, and sandals will not be allowed.

A white lab jacket with the Vernon College logo must be worn to and from clinical sites during clinical. The lab jacket must be clean and free of wrinkles and is required to be worn over clinical scrub attire when leaving the semi-restricted area of the surgical department. The lab jacket is not to be worn into the restricted area of the surgical department. Students should refrain from wearing excessive layers of clothing under clinical scrub attire and undershirts should be clean and free of imprints or lettering.

Safety Apparel—Clinical Areas:

Safety glasses/goggles are required for the clinical area and must be worn at all times while in the operating room. Safety glasses are provided at all clinical sites.

Safety glasses will be worn in the clinical lab or anytime students are practicing lab skill assignments. Safety glasses are provided in the lab. Safety glasses must have brow guards and side guards. Students will be sent home if they fail to wear safety glasses in the clinical practicum and will have points deducted from the clinical daily grade. Demerits will be issued for continued violation of this policy. The Occupational Health Service Administration (OSHA) requires safety glasses to be worn by every member of the surgical team and the clinical site can be fined for violations.

Grooming Policy—Clinical:

- Good personal hygiene must and will be maintained at all times by the students enrolled in the program. Use of deodorant is required.
- Special precautions should be taken to prevent halitosis (bad breath). Those students, who smoke, should take special measures in this area.
- Should poor hygiene be noted, the Program Coordinator will counsel the student.
- False eyelashes are not permitted in the operating room.
- Perfumes, colognes, body spray, and lotions should be used in extreme moderation. The student will be sent home if his or her perfume or cologne is too strong while in the clinical area.
- **Nail polish, sculpted nails, and artificial nails are positively not allowed** in the operating room. Nails should be kept short and trimmed.
- Hair should be kept neat and clean and must be covered with a disposable surgical cap in the clinical areas. Cloth surgical hats may not be worn at any time in clinical areas.
- Facial hair must be trimmed according to clinical site policy and special head cover worn.

Jewelry Policy—Clinical:

- Wedding rings and wristwatches may be worn, but must be removed when assigned to scrub on a surgical procedure. The student is advised to leave these items at home to prevent loss.
- When scrubbing in the operating room, no jewelry of any kind may be worn on the hands or arms.
- Religious insignias on small neck chains may be worn out of sight.
- Earrings may be worn, but must be simple studs with no stones or jewels; absolutely no earrings that dangle or hang off the ear may be worn in clinical. Head cover must cover ears if earrings are worn.
- **Tongue studs and tongue bars are prohibited at all clinical sites.**
- **Facial piercing and the wearing of facial piercing/jewelry of any kind to include eye brow, nose, lips, and chin is prohibited to be worn/displayed at all clinical sites.**

The grooming and jewelry policy of the Vernon College Surgical Technology Program is based on local industry standards and policies. These policies must be followed and will be enforced to reduce the risk of infection for the surgical patient. Failure to follow these policies will result in demerits being issued.

Safety Policy:

All students are encouraged to be actively enrolled in a health insurance plan and have a personal physician for treatment of illnesses, accidents or injuries. Vernon College, the Surgical Technology Program, its' faculty, and all clinical providers are **NOT** responsible for any accident of injury occurring while enrolled in this program. Any accident or injury incurred and any testing and/or treatment is the responsibility of the student.

The student will follow clinical facility policy and provide necessary documentation in reporting accidents or injuries. The student is responsible for completing an incident report at the clinical site should an injury occur and must report to the Employee Health Nurse for appropriate follow up. Furthermore, any infection, disease, or condition resulting from an accidental needle stick, laceration, or respiratory exposure during the clinical practicum will be the responsibility of the student.

Drug and Alcohol Policy:

Vernon College desires and will do everything possible to maintain a drug free learning environment. Students should refer to the *Vernon College Student Handbook* for the complete drug and alcohol policy. The Surgical Technology Program will have a zero tolerance policy regarding drug and alcohol use during classes, labs, or clinical practicums, and reserves the right to ask students to submit to a drug test if the situation warrants. Clinical facilities may require surgical technology students to submit and pass a drug test. Any additional drug/alcohol testing costs will be the responsibility of the student. If a drug test is requested by program personnel or a clinical site, any refusal or a positive drug test will result in immediate administrative withdrawal from the program.

Background Searches:

The Surgical Technology program reserves the right to perform additional criminal background searches on students enrolled in the program with the student being responsible for the cost. In addition, if program clinical sites require students to have additional background searches performed then the student will be responsible for the cost. Criminal offenses revealed in any criminal background search can result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Program Discipline Policy:

The program strives to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment free of abuse and distractions. When students violate standards of conduct or act in a manner that disrupts the learning process, it is not fair to the students who do act appropriately. Students who do not comply with the policies of the program, college, and/or clinical facilities will face disciplinary action to encourage compliance. The Program Coordinator will initiate disciplinary measures to prevent the violations from becoming excessive or detrimental to the student's progress in the program.

Individual counseling will occur with all violations; the student may be given demerits, and for more serious or continued violations dismissed from the program. All violations resulting in disciplinary action and/or dismissal will be documented in the student's permanent record. The student will be provided an opportunity to document their account of the violation(s) and this documentation will be retained in the student's record as well.

The disciplinary measures implemented are at the discretion of the Program Coordinator and in accordance with written program policies described within this handbook. The student has access through the academic grievance policy for an appeals process for any disciplinary action the student feels is unwarranted or unfair. The academic and non-academic grievance policy is outlined in the *Vernon College Student Handbook*.

Social Media Policy

The explosion of social media to include, but not limited to; Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Smart phones, and various discussion boards/blogs has created an increase in liability for violations of the federal Health Insurance and Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA). This law establishes a felony penalty for violations of patient privacy at any level of care. Thus, Vernon College and the Surgical Technology Program will have a zero tolerance for violations of patient privacy via any social media outlet. Vernon College maintains a Facebook page and the Surgical Technology Program students are encouraged to access the page. It will contain information about the college, activities, and important information to all students.

The Surgical Technology Program does NOT maintain a Facebook page. The Surgical Technology Program maintains a webpage on the Vernon College website and it can be accessed at www.vernoncollege.edu/surgical-technology-home and it will contain program information, photos, and updates about student activities.

Students are reminded that employers are increasingly asking for access to Social Media outlets such as Facebook as a condition of potential and continuing employment. The Allied Health Profession requires the utmost in professional and ethical behavior and students are encouraged to ensure their Social Media Outlets do not contain images or content that may be perceived as negative, unprofessional, and/or unethical. The Vernon College Surgical Technology Program recommends students maintain a professional, ethical, and positive image through Social Media Outlets to ensure success in the program and employment upon graduation.

The Social Media Policy contained in this handbook should not be deviated from at any time during the program year and violations may result in immediate dismissal from the program. Depending upon the violation of patient privacy violation, federal felony charges could be filed against the offending student.

- 1) **Vernon College is not responsible** for any student posting private information through any social media outlet. The **student assumes all responsibility** for the violation to include removal from the program and potential federal felony charges.
- 2) In order to exemplify professional and ethical standards of conduct, and to comply with HIPAA, students should NOT post any of the following information in any social media outlet:
 - a. Any identifying patient information to include; patient's name, surgeon's name, surgical procedure being performed, patient tattoos, piercing, or other identifying birthmarks.
 - b. No information will be posted as to the clinical site the student is performing clinical practicum to include; information listed in 2) a, clinical staff preceptors, the student's opinion of the clinical site's level of care or system of operation within the department. Note: If a clinical site has a current or develops a Social Media Policy, the student will be expected to follow the policy.
 - c. Students should not post negative comments about fellow students, the institution, and its employees. If a student believes a problem exists the student should seek the advice of the ST Program Coordinator and/or the Dean of Instructional Services to resolve the issue.
- 3) Students may be asked to provide access to their Social Media outlets such as Facebook if a violation has been reported to include, but not limited to:
 - a. If any clinical site, students in the program, or the general public reports a potential privacy violation.
 - b. A college employee reports a violation to the ST Program Coordinator or any other Vernon College department such as Student Services.
 - c. A graduate of the ST Program reports a potential violation to the ST Program Coordinator or Vernon College.

Program Demerit Policy:

In order to function effectively in a health care profession, certain personal and professional characteristics must be demonstrated. If students are not demonstrating the personal and professional characteristics necessary for successful completion of the program courses and clinical practicum then demerits will be issued according to the area of concern. Students will be advised and counseled when trends occur and demerits will be given as necessary when counseling is not effective in encouraging improvement in the area(s) of concern.

The demerits will be given, but not limited to the following situations:

A. Dress Code Violations:

A minimum of one demerit will be given for each violation. If a student appears in the classroom or clinical area and does not have a clean and wrinkle free uniform on, the student will be sent home, counted absent for the day, and given a demerit.

B. Professional Behavior:

A minimum of one demerit will be given for each infraction listed below. More demerits can be given based on the judgment of the instructor or coordinator.

1. Excessive clinical or classroom tardiness.
2. Smoking while in uniform in non-smoking areas.
3. Obscene or crude language or gestures.
4. Displaying disrespectful attitude to faculty, clinical staff, peers, and especially patients.
5. Failure to display team behavior concepts in classroom, clinical lab, and clinical practicum.
6. Disrupting class or clinical includes receiving calls/texts from cell phones, eating in class, and leaving class before break or class is dismissed.
7. Failure to return from meals or breaks at the assigned time.
8. Leaving class and not returning without prior permission from the instructor.
9. Leaving clinical area without prior permission from the program coordinator. If the clinical instructor is someone other than the coordinator, the student must notify the coordinator before they leave the clinical site. Note: Leaving the clinical site without notifying the coordinator and clinical site charge nurse can result in immediate dismissal from the program.
10. Failure to call the instructor prior to start of clinical shift if not coming in that day.
11. Being absent more than once for a test, the student will earn a demerit and 10 points will be deducted from the test.
12. Failure to complete assignments or turn in assignments to the instructor in a timely manner.
13. Violation of the Social Media Policy

C. Unsafe Practice or Actions:

A minimum of one demerit will be given for each infraction listed below, with the instructor or ST Program Coordinator having the discretion to add more.

1. Failing to follow instructions.
2. Showing poor judgment in a consistent manner.
3. Repeating poor clinical practices/classroom lab practices after being counseled by the instructor or coordinator.
4. Contaminating a sterile field and not admitting the infraction immediately. This is a serious infraction and will be a four (4) demerit occurrence and could result in immediate dismissal from the program.
5. Failure to participate in team concepts in clinical practicum.
6. Removing knife blades by hand will be an immediate two (2) demerit occurrence.
7. Failure to consistently wear eye protection in clinical practicum.

Demerits will be issued to help the student focus on the area(s) of concern. The student will be counseled, provided written notification of the demerit, provided an opportunity to document their account of the area(s) of concern, and the demerit form will be placed in the student's permanent record. A copy will be provided to the student upon request.

During the course of the program, any student that accumulates six (6) demerits will be administratively withdrawn from the program. The student that has been issued a demerit(s) should focus on the area(s) of concern and work to correct the deficiency. Demerits will be issued at the Program Coordinator's discretion and the student may appeal through the student grievance policy. The student should refer to the *Vernon College Student Handbook* for the grievance policy.

The Demerit Policy will apply to activities of the Surgical Technology Student Association (STSA) to include any trips taken or workshops attended. While the STSA is a voluntary student association the student surgical technologist and their actions will be considered a reflection of the program and Vernon College. Professional, adult behavior will be expected to be demonstrated at all times within the program and STSA.

Dismissal from the Program:

Administrative withdrawal or dismissal from the program can occur for, but not limited to the following reasons:

- Attendance and/or Tardy violations not resolved.
- Grades inconsistent with program standards.
- Violation of the Vernon College Academic Integrity Policy.
- Falsifying admission information.
- Acts of sexual harassment at any time.
- Fighting on college property or in the clinical area.
- Abusing or destroying any property while on college or clinical premises.
- Sleeping in class or at the clinical site during assigned shift.
- Failure to abide by the program standards of conduct
- Accepting gifts, gratuities, tips, or personal property from patients or visitors.
- Failure to maintain satisfactory performance in classroom, lab, and/or clinical areas.
- Smoking in a prohibited area.
- Smell of alcohol on student's breath, signs of intoxication, drinking alcoholic beverages, and possessing or selling illegal drugs or controlled substances on college or clinical premises.
- Inability to comply with the student health policy at any time during the program.
- Upon recommendation from clinical facility for behavior which may be considered unprofessional or for behavior which is deemed UNSAFE FOR PATIENT CARE.
- Being barred from returning to any clinical site.
- Violation of the Social Media Policy

Unprofessional conduct: The term unprofessional conduct shall include but not be limited to:

- Use of profanity.
- Inaccurate recording, falsifying, or altering records.
- Leaving an assignment without properly advising appropriate personnel.
- Violating the confidentiality of information or knowledge concerning the patient.

- Discrimination in the rendering of patient care services as it relates to human rights and dignity of the individual.
- Possession of guns or other weapons in clinical areas.
- Violation of student health policies.
- Exhibiting unethical or immoral behavior.
- Insubordination, which is defined as “a willful or intentional disregard of the policies and reasonable instructions of the faculty”.
- Any activity that would JEOPARDIZE THE HEALTH AND WELFARE of a patient, the clinical staff, students, faculty, and/or self.

The Program Coordinator will initiate administrative withdrawal procedures for the violation(s) if the student fails to meet the rules, policies, and/or standards of the program at any time in the program year. Students have the right to appeal the decision of administrative withdrawal through the grievance policy as outlined in the *Vernon College Student Handbook*.

Voluntary Withdrawal:

Any student considering withdrawing from the program should contact the Program Coordinator immediately to discuss the possible withdrawal. The student is advised to meet with a Counselor from Student Services before a final decision is made. After an exit interview with the Program Coordinator, the student will be required to go to the Admissions Department and follow the withdrawal procedures.

Program Readmission Policy:

Students who wish to be considered for readmission to the program at a later date should:

1. Follow voluntary withdrawal policy when withdrawing from original program year. Failure to meet with the program coordinator upon withdrawal from the original program will reflect negatively upon the student’s application.
2. Re-apply to the program during the application acceptance period.
3. Provide additional documentation with program application concerning reasons for withdrawing and corrective action(s) taken.
4. Student may be required to repeat courses depending on the amount of time that has passed since original program start.

Students may be readmitted only one (1) time to the program. Students who are administratively withdrawn for behavior/demerits will NOT be readmitted to the program.

Readmission after student withdrawal whether voluntary or not will be at the discretion of the Program Coordinator and the Surgical Technology Selection Committee.

Cell Phone and Electronic Devices Policy:

Cell phones are utilized in classroom activities and for students to communicate with the program coordinator throughout the program. While in clinical students will have limited use of cell phones and must follow clinical facility policy concerning cell phone usage. The Program Coordinator’s cell phone number should be provided as the emergency contact number for students while in clinical rotations.

The coordinator will know the location of each student and can relay the urgent message in a timely manner.

Students will be encouraged to use text messaging to remain in contact with the Program Coordinator after school hours and during the clinical practicum. Cell phones are not allowed to be turned on in any operating room at any clinical site, but the student will be allowed to turn on these devices in the break rooms and dressing rooms during breaks and lunch. Students are not allowed to take pictures or video recordings with any cell phone or other electronic device of any patient undergoing a surgical procedure. Students who do not adhere to the cell phone and electronic devices policy in the clinical practicum can be barred from the clinical site which will result in being dismissed from the program.

Security and Video Surveillance:

The Century City Center has installed security measures to provide a safe environment for the students and employees. Video cameras are installed throughout the building in hallways, at exits, outside the building, and the video feed is monitored during school hours. Faculty offices, labs, and classrooms are equipped with emergency telephones and alerts. Entrance and exits are automatically locked and unlocked according to school hours. In the case of an emergency these doors may be automatically locked by security and while no one can enter the building, students will be able to exit the building.

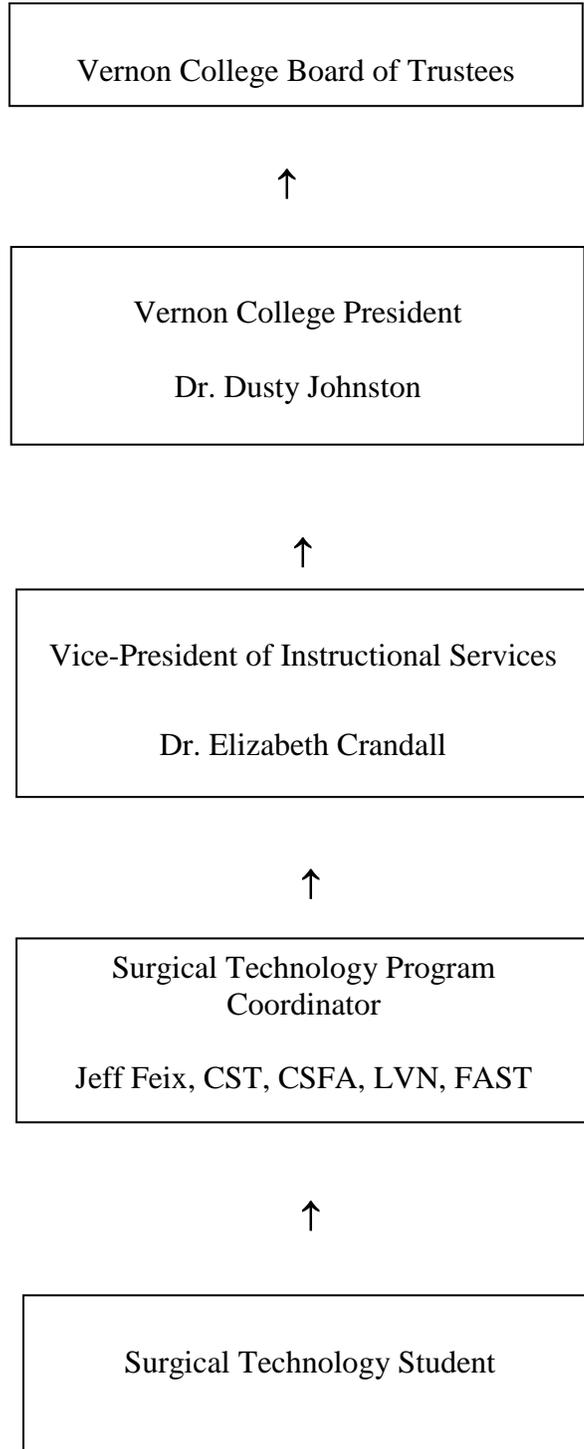
Emergency exits are clearly marked and students should not use these exits unless an actual emergency exists. Emergency phones are located in each classroom, lab, and faculty office suites and should only be used in case of an emergency.

Campus Police:

Vernon College employs police officers for your security. The officer has an office in the main entrance of the Century City Center across from the library and is available for any problem you have relating to security and safety. Private security agencies may be used to provide additional support to the campus police department. Vernon College wants to provide the safest and most secure environment for your learning experience. It is highly recommended that students report any suspicious activity or persons to faculty/staff or campus police. Any individuals making threatening statements or demonstrating stalking type behavior should be reported immediately as well.

Students who are experiencing problems of harassment or threats by any student or other member of the community should notify the ST Program Coordinator and Campus Police to ensure not only the student's safety, but the safety of other students and college employees.

Surgical Technology Program Organizational Chart



**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Student Handbook of the Vernon College
Surgical Technology Program**

I, _____, have received the handbook for the Vernon College Surgical Technology Program. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have received answers about this program and the policies contained in this handbook.

I further agree to abide by all policies and rules in the handbook.

I am also aware that by participating in health care occupations that there is an inherent risk of infections, exposure to latex products, and potential sharps injuries.

I will abide by any change(s) in the program's policies and rules or Vernon College policies and procedures upon written notice notification of the change(s).

Student Signature

Date

Program Coordinator Signature

Date

Disclaimer Clause:

This Handbook is intended to provide guidelines and procedures for the Surgical Technology Program and does not create a contract between the student and Vernon College, nor confer any contractual right upon the student. Vernon College reserves the right to make changes to this Handbook at any time without prior notice.