

Surgical Technology

Texas State Technical College
Harlingen Campus

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DEPARTMENT CHAIR



Student Learning Objectives

- Students will learn program description and expectations.
- Students will learn about job outlook, projected salary and career advancement.



A blurred background image of a surgical team in an operating room. In the foreground, a surgical technologist wearing blue scrubs and a surgical cap is visible, with their gloved hand resting on a tray of surgical instruments. The instruments include several long, thin metal rods, a pair of scissors, and other surgical tools. The scene is dimly lit, with a blue tint, suggesting a sterile and professional environment.

Do you want to be a
surgical technologist?

Association of Surgical Technologists

- AST's primary purpose is to ensure that surgical technologists have the knowledge and skills to administer patient care of the highest quality and is the principal provider in conjunction with AST state organizations of continuing education for surgical technologists.

AST also works with ARC/STSA and NBSTSA to set standards for education and certification and represents the profession at state and national levels to ensure graduation from a CAAHEP-accredited program in surgical technology and that all surgical technologists attain the CST credential as a condition of employment.

Program Description

- TSTC offers a hybrid program providing online didactic instruction and a supervised clinical/lab experience in a face-to-face setting. Students take courses in anatomy and physiology, microbiology, pharmacology, biology, professional ethics, medical terminology, speech and psychology.
- Other studies cover the care and safety of patients during surgery, aseptic techniques, and surgical procedures. Students also learn to sterilize instruments, prevent and control infection, and handle special drugs, solutions, supplies and equipment.

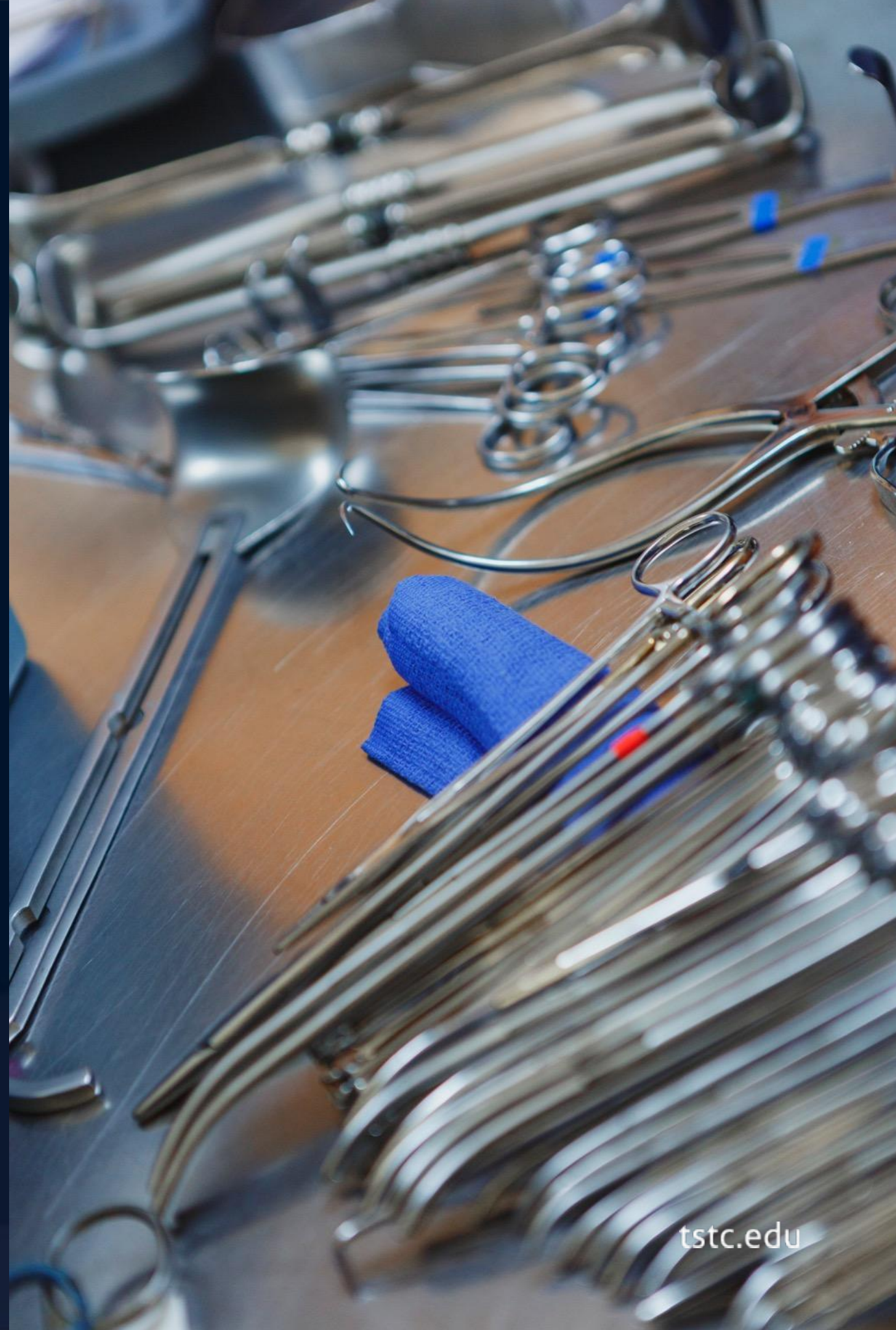




Program Expectations

The responsibilities, expectations and personal characteristics desired of a surgical technologist include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ability to work under stress.
- Alertness of mind to think and plan logically to organize work.
- Ability to anticipate patients' and surgeons' needs.
- Ability and interest in learning and transferring knowledge to clinical situations.
- Ability to work effectively with people in authority and with co-workers.
- Ability to accept constructive criticism and show behavioral change.



Program Expectations, continued

- Physical stamina – ability to stand for long periods of time, without breaks, for 4–6 hours or longer during procedures and have good bladder control for extended periods of time 4–6 hours or longer.
- Ability to reach and lift heavy (20 lbs. or more) operating room instruments and equipment.
- Ability to help lift and move anesthetized surgical patients (some may weigh in excess of 200 lbs.). Ability to adapt to early-morning work schedules and rotating shifts, and be on call for emergency surgeries.

Surgical Technology Program

- First class accepted in 1970.
- Became accredited in 2000 by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education (CAAHEP).
- Changed to an associate degree program in 2001.
- Maintains affiliation agreements with 16 local hospitals for diverse clinical training.
- Offers online didactic courses and face-to-face clinical experience.
- Historical job placement rates over 95%.
- Historical national exam pass rates over 82%.

Must possess the following characteristics:

- Personal integrity.
- Emotional stability.
- Flexibility.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective interpersonal relationships.
- No active skin conditions, such as psoriasis or eczema, or allergic reactions to soaps, latex gloves or strong chemical solutions.
- Normal vision — glasses or contact lenses are acceptable.
- Normal hearing — a surgical technologist needs to be able to hear and clearly understand masked surgeons and surgical team members.

Must possess the following characteristics, continued

- Must be chemically free.
- Must be free of active contagious diseases such as tuberculosis, etc.
- Digital dexterity, e.g., able to handle surgical instruments with both left and right hands at an extremely rapid pace, able to supinate and pronate at the wrist.
- Must be willing to dedicate 4–5 hours daily to studies.
- At times may be exposed to communicable diseases and unpleasant sights, odors and materials.

Career Outlook

Most graduates are employed by hospitals, mainly in operating rooms and delivery rooms. Others are employed in clinics, surgical centers, and in the offices of physicians and dentists who perform outpatient surgery. A few technologists, known as private scrubs, are employed directly by surgeons who have special surgical teams, such as those for liver and kidney transplants.



Job opportunities will be best for technologists who are certified and willing to relocate. Texas graduates must now be certified in order to gain employment.

Projected Salary

Job opportunities will be best for technologists who are certified and willing to relocate.

With the Rio Grande Valley's rapidly growing population, quality health care has become vital to the area's existence. Employment of surgical technologists is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2022 as the volume of surgery increases. The number of surgical procedures is expected to rise as the population grows and ages.

Technological advances, such as fiber optics and laser technology, will also permit new surgical procedures to be performed.

Hospitals will continue to be the primary employer of surgical technologists, although much faster employment growth is expected in offices of physicians and in outpatient care centers, including ambulatory surgical centers.

- Vary by state: According to AST, the median hourly rate in Texas is \$24.25.
- 2019 median salary according to BLS.
- \$48,300 per year.
- \$23.22 per hour.



Earnings

Median annual wages of wage-and-salary surgical technologists in 2019 was \$48,300. The top 10 percent earned more than \$60,240. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$29,710. Median annual wages in the industries employing the largest numbers of surgical technologists were as follows:

Wages of surgical technologists vary with their experience and education, the responsibilities of the position, the working hours, and the economy of a given region of the country. Benefits provided by most employers include paid vacation and sick leave; health, medical, vision, dental and life insurance; and a retirement program.

A few employers also provide tuition reimbursement and child care benefits.

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/surgical-technologists.htm>

Career Advancement

Technologists advance by specializing in a particular area of surgery, such as neurosurgery or open-heart surgery. With additional training, some technologists advance to first assistant. Some surgical technologists manage central supply departments in hospitals or take positions in sterile supply services or operating equipment firms.

Advancement for most surgical technologists means an increase in pay, which comes with additional experience, training or certification. Some may advance to operating room supervisors, directing other technicians, or become assistant operating room administrators who order supplies and arrange work schedules among other administrative duties. With additional education and training, surgical technologists may advance to become registered nurses or physicians assistants.

Admission Requirements

- Completion of all admission requirements to Texas State Technical College.
- See enrollment coach for registration and class selection. Applicants must have earned a high school diploma or a GED certificate.
- All students must be TSI complete. Students must visit the advisement center for advisement and clarification for their academic standing.
- Attend program information session.
- Submit online application for Surgical Technology program during open application period.

Surgical Technology Class Entry Requirements

1. Completion of all academic courses.
2. Current immunization documentation. (Students without a current immunization card will have to acquire one from their doctor or clinic where immunizations were taken. Needed prior to being accepted into the program.* Complete hepatitis B series, proof of MMR, varicella and Tdap. Student will be responsible for all of the vaccines.
3. Current physical examination from personal physician. The applicant must be in good physical and mental health. The applicant must be able to meet the physical requirements of the educational program, as detailed in the form. Applicant's signature denotes ability to meet the essential physical and mental requirements. In the event that applicant cannot meet the requirements at any time throughout the entire course, he or she must voluntarily withdraw from the program.

*Needed upon commencement of SRGT 1405/1409 and 1491.
Applicants must have a minimum of a 2.0 grade-point average.

Surgical Technology Class Entry Requirements, continued

4. Completion of the HESI A2 with Critical Thinking Surgical Technology entrance exam.
5. Completion of criminal background check to be conducted by GroupOne enrollment services. The applicant must have all civil rights at the time of application and throughout the program. Prior and present felony convictions may restrict admission and continuation in the program, depending on the specific nature of the crime. Each circumstance will be reviewed on an individual basis by program director.
6. Drug screen test must be done prior to acceptance into the program. The drug screen test will be scheduled prior to start of program and after being accepted.
7. Must have a Social Security number to obtain employment and admission into the program.

Selection Process for Applicants

- The program director and academic advisors will review all submitted applications to make sure all forms have been received, are properly completed, and minimum requirements are met.
- Thirty students will be selected each fall and spring semester to enter SRGT 1405/1409/1491 based on the results of the HESI A2 with critical thinking entrance exam, completion of prerequisites, immunizations, criminal background check, and successfully passing a drug screen test. Students will be ranked accordingly and will be accepted into the program.
- All other applicants will be placed on a waiting list based on total points. If an opening occurs in the program prior to the start of the academic year, students on the waiting list may be called.
- The accepted candidates will be notified of a meeting to complete class registration forms and other related forms.

Criminal Background Check

- Allied health students entering any of the Valley-area hospitals must meet the community standards criteria to participate in clinicals.
- The criminal background check is performed by GroupOne. A link will be provided to the student during the program application process.
- The Program Director and Clinical Coordinator will be responsible for reviewing all relevant materials related to any adverse background check report containing information that pertains to the student's suitability for participation in clinical rotations.
- Students accepted to the program with prior offenses will require additional vetting from the various clinical affiliates. Students are advised of the possibility of being denied privileges to clinical sites as a result of their background. If a student is unable to obtain privileges, then the student will be advised to voluntarily withdraw from the program.

Drug Testing Guidelines

- Any student found to have illegal or unauthorized drugs in their drug screen test will not be allowed to attend clinicals for a year and will need to reapply for admission depending on their status. Subsequent approval to attend will depend on a clean drug test.
- Drug screen tests will be conducted prior to the first semester of SRGT courses.
- A random drug screen test may be conducted during SRGT 1461 or SRGT 2462.

Immunizations

- Hepatitis B (3 doses)
 - MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
 - Varicella (Chickenpox)*
 - TB Test (Tuberculosis)**
 - Tdap
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- It is the student's responsibility to acquire the immunizations from their doctor or clinic and submit the required documentation in a timely manner.

* If prospect had illness, this must be documented.

** Must have TB test prior to commencement of SRGT courses.

Hospital Tour/ Observation (when available)

Purpose: A major goal of the SRT program is to assist you in understanding the role of the surgical technologist and the many career-related experiences you may encounter in health care-related work environments.

An orientation visit to the operating room at Valley Baptist Medical Center and/or Harlingen Medical Center is required so that pre-Surgical Technology students can observe a surgical procedure.

Some considerations:

- Pre-Surgical Technology students need to provide their own transportation to and from the hospital.
- Only two students allowed per observation.
- Sign up for orientation and observations.
- On-time arrival at the hospital is mandatory.

**Emergency
Room**



**Main
Entrance**



What to Expect After Acceptance

Reliable transportation is imperative.

A flexible schedule is necessary as your schedule will vary.

Clinical Experience:

- Students will continue with theory classes (online) and will participate in clinical experience at various area hospitals. The ST program is affiliated with many hospitals, day-surgery clinics and eye clinics. Students are evaluated by a clinical instructor randomly throughout the semester. Supervision is provided by the affiliated hospital personnel and management. Clinical instructors will receive a weekly report on the student's performance.
- Students are expected to be punctual and well-prepared when attending the clinical sites. Students' performance evaluations will be submitted to the clinical instructor on a weekly basis.

What type of surgery will I participate in?

Surgical technologists are trained in several areas, which include:

- General
- Orthopedic
- Neuro
- Plastic and Reconstructive
- Obstetric/ Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- ENT
- Cardiovascular
- Genitourinary
- Thoracic
- Transplant



What Will I Be Called When I Complete the Program?

- Students will take the National Certifying Exam a few weeks before graduation. The exam is given by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting.
- Upon mastering the exam, you will be credentialed as a Certified Surgical Technologist.
- He/she can use the initials CST behind his/her name.

Credentials

- Certification is conferred by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA). Initial certification as a Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) is based upon satisfactory performance on the national certifying examination following completion of a CAAHEP accredited program in surgical technology.
- CSTs maintain their credential by completing continuing education (CE) credits of AST-approved continuing education during the two-year certification cycle or by successfully retaking the certifying examination at the end of the two-year period.

Opportunities for Advancement

- CST
- Leveling/Clinical Ladder
- SFA/CFA (First Assistant)
- Education (Surgical Tech Instructor)
- Sales Rep
- Sterile Processing Supervisor



How to Get Started

- You have already completed the first step by viewing this presentation.
- Next step is to connect with the ST enrollment coach, Samantha Resendez:
 - Email: samantha.resendez@tstc.edu
 - Office: 956-364-4336
- Register for courses following the ST degree plan.
- Applications will be accepted twice a year in June and October. Therefore, be sure to check in with your enrollment coach to be sure you have everything you need to be a candidate for the fall or spring semester.
- The following will be submitted when applying to the program.
 - Electronic application (found on our webpage and on student portal).
 - Unofficial transcript (only if you have classes that have not been entered in the TSTC system).
 - Immunization records.
 - HESI A2 results (department will obtain from test center).
 - Criminal background check (ST program will provide a link).

Resources

Bureau of Labor Statistics

bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/surgical-technologists.htm

O*Net

onetonline.org

TSTC Surgical Technology page

tstc.edu/programs/SurgicalTechnology

ST Instructors/Advisors



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