The Surgical First Assistant program is an advanced level course for experienced operating room professionals who wish to become surgical assistants. As defined by the American College of Surgeons, the surgical assistant provides aid in exposure, homeostasis, and other intraoperative technical functions that will assist the surgeon to carry out a safe operation with optimal results for the patient. This role will vary based on the surgical operation, specialty area, and type of facility. Perioperative skills are performed under the direct supervision of the surgeon and may include the following:

- Patient positioning
- Surgical skin preparation
- Providing visualization for the operative site
- Utilizing appropriate techniques to assist with hemostasis
- Participating in volume replacement or auto-transfusion techniques as appropriate
- Utilizing appropriate techniques to assist with closure of body planes
- Selection and application of appropriate wound dressings
- Providing assistance in securing drainage systems to tissue

**Working conditions**
Surgical first assistants work in clean, well-lit, cool environments. They must stand for long periods and remain alert during operations and procedures. At times they may be exposed to communicable diseases and unpleasant sights, odors, and materials. Most surgical first assistants work a regular 40-hour week, although they may be on call or work nights, weekends, and holidays on a rotating basis. Workers with impaired immune systems resulting from HIV infection or other causes are at increased risk of acquiring or experiencing serious complications of infectious disease. Surgical first assistants must be aware that hospitals perform a pre-employment drug screening test and background test.

**Entrance Requirements:**
- Must possess a working knowledge of operating room fundamentals
- Must know how “scrub” and work in a sterile field
- Must be a CST, RN, or LPN, or PA-C
- Must have verifiable/document current operating room scrub experience
- Must be licensed or Certified

**Additional requirements:**
- College Transcripts
- Certification or Registration #
- If RN must be licensed in the state that your clinical will be in
- Current CPR/BLS certification
- Acceptable health and immunization records
- Computer literacy
- Able to be employed as a surgical first assist including drug testing/background testing etc.

**Physical requirements:**
Surgical first assistants must not be infected with any infectious diseases that could be transmitted to patients
Surgical first assistants must:

- Be able to bend, walk, stand for long periods of time,
- Be able to lift, carry, push, and handle equipment, supplies or patients exceeding 25 pounds.
- Be able to work in environmental temperatures from 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit range.
- Be aware that exposure to latex gloves may cause the development of allergic reactions.
- Be aware that their skin should be clear and free of conditions which would impair the integrity of the skin.
- **HEARING:** must demonstrate ability to functionally perceive the nature of sounds and spoken work. May use adaptive techniques or devices.
- **SPEECH:** must demonstrate ability to functionally express self orally and or in writing.
- **VISION:** must be able to demonstrate the functional ability to obtain impressions of shape, size, and motion by passing routine vision screening and to distinguish red and green colors.

**Mental and emotional requirements**

Surgical first assistants must be able to:

- Manage stress appropriately
- Make decisions under pressure
- Prioritize tasks
- Manage anger/fear/hostility/violence of others appropriately
- Work alone or as a team member

**Student’s Clinical Work Policy**

**Work policy:** All student activities associated with the curriculum, especially while students are completing clinical rotations, will be educational in nature. Students will not receive any monetary remuneration during this educational experience. Even if the hospital or clinical site agrees to do so.

The college is enrolled in a student blanket professional liability policy with a major insurance carrier. There is no cost to the student. The policy does **not** cover a student while working (being paid) in a facility. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in a disciplinary action that will affect the student’s grade and standing in the program.

**Wages:**
Nationally the salary for a Surgical first assistant varies from $18-22 dollars per hour and could be higher depending on call time, surgical specialty etc.