Dear Prospective Student,

Thank you for your interest in the Gulf Coast State College Surgical First Assistant Program! We are located in beautiful Panama City, FL, just minutes to the emerald green waters and white sand beaches of the Gulf of Mexico.

The surgical services faculty and staff are very proud of the exceptional program and state-of-the-art Surgical Services Lab, and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have as you begin your new career as a Surgical Assistant. We are proud to offer two program options: a dual track Surgical Technology/Surgical First Assistant option for the non-experienced student, and a CST to SFA option for currently certified surgical technologists.

If you have not already applied for admission to Gulf Coast State College, you should do this first by contacting Enrollment Services at 850.872.3892 or by visiting www.gulfcoast.edu/. This will not only start the college admissions process but will also permit you access to a variety of services available at the college. We also invite you to visit our program website at https://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/academic-divisions/health-sciences/surgical-technology/index.html to better familiarize yourself with all aspects of our educational programs.

We are grateful you are considering Gulf Coast State College for your educational needs. If you have any questions or need to schedule an advising appointment, please contact:

- Brittany Page, Interim Program Coordinator, (850) 769-1551, Ext. 5881
- Alyssa Evans, Academic Program Specialist, (850) 913-3311
- Mrs. Rebecca Acton, Surgical Services Senior Administrative Assistant, (850) 873-3589

Sincerely,

Brittany Page
Brittany Page, AS, CST, CSFA
Interim Program Coordinator, Surgical Services
Gulf Coast State College
Health Sciences Room 325
5230 West U.S. Highway 98
Panama City, FL 32401-1058
Office: 850.769.1551, x5881
Email: bpage2@gulfcoast.edu

Rev. 10/2023
Surgical First Assistant Program

Thank you for your interest in the Surgical First Assistant Program at Gulf Coast State College. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment for surgical technologists and surgical assistants is growing faster than the national average for all occupations.

Gulf Coast State College offers two program options for Surgical First Assisting:

1. **Dual track ST/SFA program**
   - Designed for the non-experienced student
   - Associate of Science Degree program
   - Enrollment
     - August; application deadline by 11:59 p.m., C.S.T., on June 1st
   - Course delivery:
     - Traditional classroom, laboratory, and supervised clinical settings
   - Upon successful program completion, students are eligible to take the dual certification examinations to become a Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) and a Certified Surgical First Assistant (CSFA) through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA).

2. **CST to SFA program**
   - Designed for the experienced Certified Surgical Technologists and military-trained surgical technologists maintaining the CST credential
     - CST applicants can receive up to a maximum of 45 external credits and will enter the program as a 2nd-year student
   - Two completion options:
     - College Credit Certificate (59 credits)
     - Associate of Science Degree (74 credits)
   - Enrollment
     - January; Application deadline by 11:59 p.m., C.S.T., on December 1st
     - May; Application deadline by 11:59 p.m., C.S.T., on April 1st
     - August; Application deadline by 11:59 p.m., C.S.T., on July 1st
   - Course delivery:
     - Didactic courses are delivered via online format/distance learning
     - One 4-day lab week completed on campus at Gulf Coast State College in Panama City, FL. Lab week is mandatory and is only offered in the spring and fall semesters.
     - Clinical experience is gained in the student’s home area via an affiliation agreement.
   - Upon successful program completion, students are eligible to take the certification examination to become a Certified Surgical First Assistant (CSFA) through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA).

Please review the information contained within this application packet to learn about student responsibilities and technical standards required for the occupation as well as the job classification of the surgical assistant. Additional information regarding this exciting and rewarding career can be found at [www.surgicalassistant.org](http://www.surgicalassistant.org), the official website of the Association of Surgical Assistants.
Field Description

As defined by the American College of Surgeons, the Surgical First Assistant provides aid in exposure, hemostasis, closure, and other intraoperative technical functions that help the surgeon carry out a safe operation with optimal results for the patient. In addition to intraoperative duties, the Surgical First Assistant also performs preoperative and postoperative duties to better facilitate proper patient care. The Surgical First Assistant gives assistance to the surgeon during the operation and does so under the direction and supervision of that surgeon and in accordance with hospital policy and appropriate laws and regulations.

In general, Surgical First Assistants have the following responsibilities:

- Determine specific equipment needed per procedure
- Review surgical permit to confirm procedure and special needs
- Select and placement of X-rays for reference
- Assist in moving and positioning of patient
- Insert and remove Foley urinary bladder catheter
- Place pneumatic tourniquet
- Confirm procedure with the surgeon
- Drape patient within the surgeon’s guidelines
- Provide retraction of tissue and organs for optimal visualization with regard to tissue type and appropriate retraction instrument and/or technique
- Assist in maintaining hemostasis by direct pressure, use and application of an appropriate surgical instrument for the task, placement of ties, placement of suture ligatures, application of chemical hemostatic agents, or other measures as directed by the surgeon
- Use electrocautery mono and bipolar
- Clamp, ligate, and cut tissue per surgeon’s directive
- Harvest saphenous vein, including skin incision per surgeon’s directive
- Dissect common femoral artery and bifurcate per surgeon’s directive
- Maintain integrity of sterile field
- Close all wound layers (facia, subcutaneous and skin) per surgeon’s directive
- Insert drainage tubes per surgeon’s directive
- Select and apply wound dressings
- Assist with resuscitation of patient during cardiac arrest or other life-threatening events in the operating room
- Perform any other duties or procedures incident to the surgical procedure deemed necessary and as directed by the surgeon

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the Surgical First Assistant Program take the first step toward becoming an integral part of the surgical team. Hospitals, outpatient surgery clinics, private practice, and other surgical centers are extremely interested in hiring skilled individuals to assist in surgical procedures to promote optimal patient outcomes. There are many areas of surgery that rely on quality assisting. Surgical First Assistants learn skills for a variety of surgery specialties:

- Cardiovascular surgery
- General surgery
- Genitourinary surgery
- Head and neck surgery
- Neurosurgery
- Orthopedic surgery
- Plastic surgery
- Robotic surgery
- Spinal surgery
- Thoracic surgery
- Trauma surgery
- Vascular surgery
Advanced surgical first assistants gain respect of peers, become members of various professional organizations and create opportunities within the workforce.

**Earnings Potential**

Based on salary information gathered in May 2021 from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the overall median average salary for a Surgical First Assistant in Florida is $60,530.

**Professional Organizations**

- Association of Surgical Assistants: [https://www.surgicalassistant.org/](https://www.surgicalassistant.org/)
- National Surgical Assistant Association: [https://www.nsaa.net](https://www.nsaa.net)

**Gulf Coast State College Consumer Information Notification**

The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 is a federal law which authorizes student aid programs. Reauthorizations of this act prescribe disclosure requirements for institutions wishing to participate in the federal student aid program. As a prospective student or enrolled student of GCSC you have a right to the following consumer and safety information. Paper copies of this information will be provided upon request to the Financial Aid Office. Please call (850) 872-3845 or visit the Financial Aid Office in person if you have any questions.

- General disclosures, including GCSC’s report on athletic program participation rates and financial support data, is found at: [http://www.gulfcoast.edu/tuition-aid/financial-aid/consumer-information.html](http://www.gulfcoast.edu/tuition-aid/financial-aid/consumer-information.html)
- Info on financial aid available to students is found at: [http://www.gulfcoast.edu/tuition-aid/financial-aid](http://www.gulfcoast.edu/tuition-aid/financial-aid)
- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is found [http://www.gulfcoast.edu/admissions/ferpa.html](http://www.gulfcoast.edu/admissions/ferpa.html)

**Program specific GCSC Gainful Employment (GE) webpage:**

- Surgical First Assistant Certificate GE Information, click on the specific program Surgical First Assistant: [https://www.gulfcoast.edu/ge/sfa](https://www.gulfcoast.edu/ge/sfa)

**Professional Licensure**

If applicants or students are earning an online degree while residing outside of the state of Florida, Gulf Coast State College will provide them with current contact information for any applicable licensing boards and will help them determine whether the program meets requirements for licensure in the state where they are located.

Gulf Coast State College Surgical Technology and Surgical First Assistant Programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). This Disclosure is strictly limited to GCSC’s determination of whether the Program if successfully completed, would be sufficient to meet the educational licensure requirements in a State, as defined as 34 C.F.R. § 600.2. GCSC cannot provide verification of an individual’s ability to meet licensure requirements unrelated to its educational programming.

This Disclosure does not provide any guarantee that any particular State licensure entity will approve or deny your application. Furthermore, this Disclosure does not account for changes in state law or regulation that may affect your application for licensure and occur after this disclosure has been made. Enrolled students and prospective students are strongly encouraged to contact their State’s licensure entity to review all licensure or certification requirements imposed by their State(s) of choice.

In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 668.43, GCSC has determined the Surgical Technology and Surgical First Assistant programs meet the educational licensure requirements for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the US protectorates, as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 600.2.
It is strongly encouraged that students, applicants, and prospective students determine any additional requirements for licensure in the State in which they seek to be licensed. Information regarding State licensure can be found at:

https://www.ast.org/Public_Policy/Legislative_Overview/
https://assa.memberclicks.net/surgical-assistant-legislative-efforts
https://www.gulfcoast.edu/academics/online/professional-licensure-disclosure.html

If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact Brittany Page at bpage2@gulfcoast.edu or 850-769-1551 x5881.

Accreditations

Gulf Coast State College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), 1866 Southern Lane; Decatur, Georgia, 30033-4097; Phone: 1-404-679-4500; Fax: 1-404-679-4558. Website: www.sacscoc.org; http://sacscoc.org/membershipInfo.asp

The Surgical Technology and Surgical First Assistant programs are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA). Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, 9353 – 113th St. N, #7709 Seminole, FL 33775; Phone: 727-210-2350; website: www.caahep.org

CAAHEP-ARC/STSA Standards

All programs are required to publish the approved Outcomes Assessment Exam (OAE) pass-rate from the program’s most recently submitted Annual Report. Students take the National Board of Surgical Technologist and Surgical First Assistant Examination to become dually certified as a Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) and Certified Surgical First Assistant (CSFA) which are nationally recognized accredited certifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surgical First Assistant School Year</th>
<th>CAAHEP Annual Report Year</th>
<th>Certification Pass Rate</th>
<th>NBSTSA National Average</th>
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<tr>
<td>8/1/2021-7/31/2022</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
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<td>85%</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/1/2018-7/31/2019</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Statistics not accurate due to issue with testing per NBSTSA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surgical Technology School Year</th>
<th>CAAHEP Annual Report Year</th>
<th>Certification Pass Rate</th>
<th>NBSTSA National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/1/2021-7/31/2022</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/1/2020-7/31/2021</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>2021</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/1/2018-7/31/2019</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criminal Background Checks

Gulf Coast State College (GCSC) students that are granted conditional acceptance into a Health Sciences program must receive a satisfactory criminal background check prior to final acceptance into the program. The background check will be scheduled and performed at the discretion of the Division to which the student has applied. Information and instructions on how to complete the background check will be sent by the applicable program coordinator.

Please Note: Criminal background checks performed through other agencies will not be accepted. Also, be aware that clinical agencies may require an additional background check prior to clinical access. Although background checks are required before program entry, it is possible to graduate from a program at GCSC and be denied the opportunity for licensure because of an unfavorable background check. Even if the student has been accepted into and completed a program at GCSC, this does not guarantee authorization for licensure or eligibility to take the licensure exam. Those authorizations are granted by the Health Sciences governing professional licensure boards. This is a notification to the applicant that Gulf Coast State College has no authority over any state-level medical licensure board and cannot be held responsible if the student is accepted into or completes a Health Sciences program and subsequently is denied authorization to take the program-specific licensure exam due to criminal background information.

An applicant must consider how his/her personal history may affect the ability to meet clinical requirements, sit for various licensure exams, and ultimately gain employment. Most healthcare boards in the State of Florida make decisions about licensure on an individual basis. You may visit the Florida Department of Health website at https://www.floridahealth.gov/ for more information regarding licensure. We offer this information so that you can make an informed decision regarding your future.

Student applicants DO NOT complete background checks until provisionally accepted into the Surgical Technology Program. Information and instructions on how to complete the background check will be given to you during the Surgical Services Orientation prior to beginning the Fall semester.

Please read the following information carefully: Any student who has been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere, or guilty to, any offense under the provision of 456.0635 (see below) may be disqualified from admission to any Health Sciences program. In addition to these specific convictions, there are other crimes which may disqualify applicants from entering into the Health Sciences programs and/or clinical rotations. The statute listed below can also be found online:


456.0635 Health care fraud; disqualification for license, certificate, or registration.-

(1) Healthcare fraud in the practice of a healthcare professional is prohibited.
(2) Each board within the jurisdiction of the department, or the department if there is no board, shall refuse to admit a candidate to any examination and refuse to issue a license, certificate, or registration to any applicant if the candidate or applicant or any principal, officer, agent, managing employee, or affiliated person of the applicant:
(a) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under chapter 409, chapter 817, or chapter 893, or a similar felony offense committed in another state or jurisdiction, unless the candidate or applicant has successfully completed a drug court program for that felony and provides proof that the plea has been withdrawn or the charges have been dismissed. Any such conviction or plea shall exclude the applicant or candidate from licensure, examination, certification, or registration unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended:
1. For felonies of the first or second degree, more than 15 years before the date of application.
2. For felonies of the third degree, more than 10 years before the date of application, except for felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a).
3. For felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a), more than 5 years before the date of application;
(b) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under 21 U.S.C. ss. 801-970, or 42 U.S.C. ss. 1395-1396, unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended more than 15 years before the date of the application;
(c) Has been terminated for cause from the Florida Medicaid program pursuant to s. 409.913, unless the candidate or applicant has been in good standing with the Florida Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years;
(d) Has been terminated for cause, pursuant to the appeals procedures established by the state, from any other state Medicaid program, unless the candidate or applicant has been in good standing with a state Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years and the termination occurred at least 20 years before the date of the application; or
(e) Is currently listed on the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General’s List of Excluded Individuals and Entities, except when such applicant is listed solely based on a default or delinquency on a student loan as provided in s. 120.82.
This subsection does not apply to an applicant for initial licensure, certification, or registration who was arrested or charged with a felony specified in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) before July 1, 2009.

(3) The department shall refuse to renew a license, certificate, or registration of any applicant if the applicant or any principal, officer, agent, managing employee, or affiliated person of the applicant:
   (a) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under chapter 409, chapter 817, or chapter 893, or a similar felony offense committed in another state or jurisdiction, unless the applicant is currently enrolled in a pretrial diversion or drug court program that allows the withdrawal of the plea for that felony upon successful completion of that program. Any such conviction or plea excludes the applicant from licensure renewal unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended:
      1. For felonies of the first or second degree, more than 15 years before the date of application.
      2. For felonies of the third degree, more than 10 years before the date of application, except for felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a).
      3. For felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a), more than 5 years before the date of application.
   (b) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under 21 U.S.C. ss. 801-970, or 42 U.S.C. ss. 1395-1396 since July 1, 2009, unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended more than 15 years before the date of the application.
   (c) Has been terminated for cause from the Florida Medicaid program pursuant to s. 409.913, unless the applicant has been in good standing with the Florida Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years.
   (d) Has been terminated for cause, pursuant to the appeals procedures established by the state, from any other state Medicaid program, unless the applicant has been in good standing with a state Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years and the termination occurred at least 20 years before the date of the application.
   (e) Is currently listed on the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General’s List of Excluded Individuals and Entities, except when such applicant is listed solely based on a default or delinquency on a student loan as provided in s. 120.82.

This subsection does not apply to an applicant for renewal of licensure, certification, or registration who was arrested or charged with a felony specified in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) before July 1, 2009.

(4) Licensed health care practitioners shall report allegations of health care fraud to the department, regardless of the practice setting in which the alleged health care fraud occurred.

(5) The acceptance by a licensing authority of a licensee’s relinquishment of a license which is offered in response to or anticipation of the filing of administrative charges alleging health care fraud or similar charges constitutes the permanent revocation of the license.

Important Note: After acceptance and during enrollment in this program, the student is responsible for notifying the program coordinator of any arrest, regardless of adjudication, that occurs after acceptance through graduation. Failure to promptly notify the Program Coordinator shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.
**Readmission Guidelines:**

1. A student who withdraws from or earns a grade lower than a "C" in any HSC or STS course will not be permitted to continue in the Surgical First Assistant Program. A student who does not meet the Core Performance Standards of the program will not be permitted to continue in the program.

2. Applicants who wish to apply for readmission should do so prior to March 1 if planning to enroll in the Fall semester, October 1 if planning to enroll in the Spring semester, and February 1 if planning to enroll in the Summer semester.

3. Readmission to the Surgical First Assistant Program will be dependent upon available resources.

4. In order to be considered for readmission by the Admissions Committee, the applicant must do the following:
   
   a. Submit a written request letter (not e-mail) to the Surgical Services Coordinator/ Program Director presenting evidence to justify readmission.
   
   b. Meet current guidelines for admission to the College and the Surgical First Assistant Program.

5. Readmission may be contingent upon the candidate’s agreeing to audit previously completed course work. **Students may not be re-admitted to the last semester they attended.**

6. A student who applies for readmission to the Surgical First Assistant Program must provide significant evidence, which suggests the potential for future success in the program. This evidence may address such things as unusual circumstances, remedial study, and/or additional preparation.

**Surgical Services Transfer Policy:**

Applicants who wish to transfer from another Surgical Assisting Program to a GCSC Surgical First Assistant Program must:

- meet all current admission requirements,
- apply at least two months prior to the expected date of enrollment,
- notify the Program Director/Coordinator in writing, stating the anticipated entry date and reason for transfer,
- provide evidence of successful completion of previous core Surgical First Assistant courses from a CAAHEP-accredited program, and
- provide a letter from the Program Director stating that the student is in good academic and clinical standing and is eligible to return to the Surgical First Assistant program they wish to transfer from.

Acceptance of any transfer student will be dependent upon available resources. Transferability of GCSC Surgical First Assistant courses to another institution will be dependent upon the acceptance of the receiving institution.
1. How do I get my clinical cases?
   *Clinical cases cannot be counted until after the student has attended and passed the mandatory lab week skills assessment.*
   
a. Students will complete their clinical cases in their home area. After provisional acceptance into the program, a clinical planning packet will be sent to you with the following documents to help you plan your clinical requirements. After completion of the clinical application packet, including the following information, the Clinical Manager, George Sasser, will work with you to establish an affiliation agreement with your facility if one is not already in place.

2. How many specialties are required to complete the clinical cases?
   
   a. A **minimum** of 3: General Surgery and two other specialties.
   
   b. If you work with a surgeon, you can do a majority with that specialty surgeon.

3. What is the program format?
   
   This is a distance education program for currently working surgical technologists certified through the NBSTSA as a CST. All the didactic courses are delivered through an online format with the exception of a 4-day Lab session for the course STS2330C, which provides skills assessment and hands-on instruction regarding your suturing and other skills for assisting. **This course is offered in the spring and fall semesters. An email confirming the lab week dates is sent to students the semester prior to the scheduled lab week.**

   a. You can transfer in previous prerequisite anatomy and physiology courses provided you earned a total of 8 college credits from an accredited institution that included a hands-on lab segment. Otherwise, you can complete your A&P with Labs (8 college credits) at your local college and transfer the credits to GCSC. As another alternative, you can complete them as a GCSC transient student (do not have to request transcripts, etc.) at your local college or complete them online as offered for class and lab combination classes (BSC1085C and BSC1086C) using Florida Shines. Transient student status can be awarded after 15 credits taken at GCSC.

   b. **You must take 25% of the certificate or degree credits from Gulf Coast State College,** which is 15 credits for the **College Credit Certificate** and 19 credits for the **A.S. Degree.** We will work with you through advising to ensure you meet this requirement. If you are transferring credits, you will need to verify that your institution is accredited and acceptable for transfer through our Enrollment Services Office.

4. How long is the program?
   
   a. It is expected that **full time students should complete the college credit certification segment of the program within one year (4 semesters).**

   i. The AS Degree general education classes can be taken after the CCC program is completed or concurrently.

   b. **Work must be submitted weekly in all courses.** All classes (current semester) must be completed to continue enrollment into the next semester.

5. How do I get experience when I graduate?
   
   a. Work for a hospital or surgery center
   
   b. Contact “surgical assisting” groups to see if you want to join their group.
   
   c. Familiarize yourself with the surgeons and their practice philosophy to determine if you would like to join their team.

   d. Attend the Association of Surgical Assistants workshops to network, obtain advanced CEs and learn about billing, etc.
Surgical First Assistant
Application Requirements

“It is the Applicant’s responsibility to make sure their application folder is complete prior to the application deadline.

____ Step 1. New students should apply for General Admission to GCSC – Choose Planned Course of Study. Applications are available online at: https://www.gulfcoast.edu/admissions/index.html. You may also call or visit GCSC Enrollment Services to obtain information on the college admissions process, or call (850) 872-3892. Returning students who have not attended GCSC in the past year must re-apply for admission.

While working on admission to this program, you may choose the Associate of Arts as your major only if you intend to complete that separate degree either before or after this limited access program. To request a major change, visit: https://www.gulfcoast.edu/admissions/documents/program-change-form.pdf. Students declaring an unintended major for the sole purpose of receiving financial aid, may be subject to penalties including repayment of any financial aid received.

Students already enrolled at GCSC can change their Major Code at the Enrollment Services Office; complete the Program Change Form and either fax or mail it to the Enrollment Services Office.

____ Step 2. New students complete a free online College Orientation. This must be completed prior to course registration. If not completed, a “hold” will be placed on the student's account. The online instructions can be found at https://www.gulfcoast.edu/current-students/index.html/admissions/new-student-orientation/index.html

____ Step 3. Submit the completed, signed Surgical Technology application. At the top of the application, select the option that corresponds to your program of interest. ‘Note: The CCC option is ONLY available to current CST applicants; all others must choose the AS Degree option.

Please submit the following items to Alyssa Evans, Academic Programs Specialist, at HealthSciencesGCSC@gulfcoast.edu:

-Proof of age - Copy of Driver's License or personal ID required
-2 Personal Reference forms - References can be from a pastor, family friends, former teachers, or current/past employers. Be sure to sign the top section giving permission to fill out the form. Original must be mailed to Brittany Page.
-Submit a copy of the current CPR certification card and maintain certification throughout the entire program. Acceptable card must be from an American Heart Association BLS Healthcare Provider course.
-“FOR CURRENT CST APPLICANTS - Proof of current certification as a CST and college transcripts must be submitted with the external portfolio packet for external credit and/or course substitution consideration. The external credit packet will be sent to you after acceptance and upon enrollment into STS2954.

____ Step 4. Request OFFICIAL High School transcripts, or GED equivalent with scores, and have them sent to GCSC Enrollment Services Office. Evidence of high school graduation date must be on file to register for classes, per Florida law. Forms are available in the Enrollment Services Office, online, or at the end of this application packet.

____ Step 5. Request OFFICIAL transcripts from all colleges attended, and have them sent to GCSC Enrollment Services. These must be received and evaluated by Enrollment Services before the application can be considered.

NOTE:

- When applying to the program, if you have any type of degree including a Bachelor's Degree or higher, any course substitutions must be made on an External Credit Evaluation form. You must request this analysis of your transcripts with the Enrollment Services Office.
- In order for credits to transfer, the college or university must be accredited by a regional or nationally accepted accreditation program as approved by GCSC policies as outlined by Florida State Department of Education and SACS/CAAHEP (Accreditation Standards). Please verify that the course(s) you will be taking from other institutions (a regionally accredited institution) qualify for transfer prior to enrollment in that course.
Step 6. Demonstrate competency in Math/Algebra, English, and Reading using one of the following methods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>PERT</th>
<th>Accuplacer (CPT)</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>College Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>≥ 103</td>
<td>≥ 83</td>
<td>≥ 17</td>
<td>Old: ≥ 440 (verbal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New: ≥ 24</td>
<td>Successful completion of ENC 1101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/Algebra</td>
<td>≥ 114</td>
<td>≥ 72</td>
<td>≥ 19</td>
<td>Old: ≥ 440 (math)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New: ≥ 24</td>
<td>Successful completion of a 3-credit minimum course with prefix MAC, MGF, or STA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the applicant wishes to use test scores to demonstrate competency for any of the above, and the test was not administered at GCSC, the applicant must have an official score report mailed to the GCSC Testing Center. Test scores that have been in the student’s possession, regardless of whether they are “sealed”, stamped, or in a sealed envelope are not considered official and will not be accepted. All applicants are responsible for ensuring their scores are received and posted to their GCSC record prior to the application deadline.


**THE REQUIREMENTS BELOW ARE FOR NON-EXPERIENCED STUDENTS ONLY.**

After provisional acceptance into the Surgical First Assistant program, students are required to complete the following items before the first day of class. Students are responsible for the expenses associated with these items. Specific instructions will be provided in the acceptance packet.

1. Completion of BSC2085, BSC2085L, BSC2086, BSC2086L, and HSC1531
2. Report of Vaccination History to include:
   a. Hepatitis B Surface Antigen test
   b. Hepatitis B vaccine series, if surface antigen is positive (or signed declination waiver)
   c. PPD Mantoux/TB Test (may require chest radiograph if previously positive PPD Mantoux/TB test)
   d. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
   e. Varicella (Chicken Pox)
   f. Tetanus-Diphtheria (Tetanus every 10 years)

*NOTE: Gulf Coast State College is not requiring a COVID-19 vaccination; however, clinical facilities may require proof of COVID-19 vaccination status prior to student clinical assignments. Satisfactory completion of clinical requirements is a requirement of the program and GCSC does not control the clinical site requirements. Exemptions to clinical site vaccination requirements will occur between the clinical site and the student since GCSC does not have a COVID-19 vaccination requirement.*

3. Copy of current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certificate (BLS for Healthcare Providers) by the AHA
4. Satisfactory fingerprint/criminal background check
5. Interprofessional Healthcare Training (every 2 years)
   a. HIPAA
   b. HIV/AIDS
   c. Prevention of Medical Errors
   d. Domestic Violence
   e. Infection Control
   f. Human Trafficking
   g. Interprofessional Education
   h. TB w/Mask Fit

6. Satisfactory physical examination (less than a year old) signed by a licensed physician/health care provider.
7. Satisfactory drug screening results

CST applicants will submit an attestation form from their clinical facility and employer attesting to clinical clearance in lieu of creating a PreCheck account prior to clinical rotations. The required forms are included in the Clinical Planning Packet and will be sent to you via email after you have been accepted into the program.
**Student Planning Guide**

*Please complete, in full, and submit this form with your application packet.* As an Instructor, I want to be sure that you have been fully informed and understand the career field that you have chosen, so that you can be successful in the completion of this program. For further information about the profession, please visit the GCSC Surgical First Assistant program page at [https://www.gulfcoast.edu/academics/academic-division/health-sciences/surgical-technology/index.html](https://www.gulfcoast.edu/academics/academic-division/health-sciences/surgical-technology/index.html) or the Association of Surgical Assistants at [www.surgicalassistants.org](http://www.surgicalassistants.org). If you still have questions, please contact Brittany Page, Surgical Services Interim Program Coordinator at bpage2@gulfcoast.edu, or 850.769.1551 x5881.

1. Describe what you can expect to earn as a Surgical First Assistant.

   Per Hour _______________ Per Year _______________
   Call pay if hospital setting? ______________
   In Florida or locally? __________ Do you want to travel? __________
   What about other areas of the country? ________________________________

2. Why do you want to be a Surgical First Assistant?

   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________

3. What are your goals 5 years from now?

   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________

**BE SURE YOU HAVE THE TIME TO COMMIT TO BE SUCCESSFUL.** Our goal is to help you plan for all of the things you will need to succeed. You need to plan for and consider these resources to minimize your stress and be successful. Do you currently have the following?

   Family support:
   Transportation:
   Tuition/fee/supplies:
   Living expenses/ bill management:

   Computer resources for online segments (computer with camera, internet access, etc.)
Time Management

To be successful, you will need to allocate the following hours per day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Low – High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>2 - 3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class/lab/clinical</td>
<td>4 - 8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>6 - 8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise/Time for Self</td>
<td>½ - 1 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathing</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveling to and from school</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chores/Paying Bills</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Time</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What will be your time challenge?

___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

How will you manage it?

___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
Personal Reference Form

**COMPLETED BY STUDENT:**  I, (PRINT NAME) ____________________________, give permission to ___________________________ to fill out this personal reference for me. I appreciate their candor and understand that this form is confidential. However, Under Federal law entitled the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974”, students are given the right to inspect their records including recommendation forms. I ______ do ______ do not waive my rights to review the content of this form. I do release them from any liability regarding their completion of this form. I have supplied the person completing this form with a stamped addressed envelope to the following address: Gulf Coast State College, Attn: Academic Program Specialist, Health Sciences, Rm. 234, 5230 West Highway 98, Panama City, Florida 32401.

Applicant’s Signature ___________________________ Date________________________

**Completed by person authorized to complete Reference:**

1. How long have you known this applicant and in what capacity?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How well do you know the applicant?  ____Very Well  ____Fairly Well  ____Slightly

2. In the healthcare field, healthcare personnel have access to confidential information from charts and files and are required to handle drugs and controlled substances. With this in mind, do you place full confidence in the applicant’s integrity?  YES _____  NO ______ If no, please explain:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Would you allow this individual to provide healthcare for you or your family if you were ill?

YES_______ NO________ If no, please explain:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. To your knowledge, is there anything that might interfere with or limit the success of this applicant in the healthcare field?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. How do you perceive this person reacting when placed in a stressful situation or working under pressure?

Circle one:  Wise  Sensible  Irrational  Impractical  Hysterical  Other ______________________

6. Please indicate whether or not you recommend this applicant as being suitable to enter the Healthcare program.

Circle one:  RECOMMEND WITH ENTHUSIASM  RECOMMEND

RECOMMEND WITH RESERVATIONS  DO NOT RECOMMEND
Please check or write in the spaces to indicate the traits that best describes the applicant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>No Basis to Judge Applicant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills, clarity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation, team player, gets along w/others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability or Reliability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful to others, motivated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership ability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity, Emotional Stability, Coping, Conflict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neatness, Appearance (tidy, clean)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance, Stamina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptness (responsiveness)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Work, Accuracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks help when needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Signature:**

(Person Completing Reference)

**Position/Title:**

**Address:**

_________________________________________________________________________________________

**Phone No.:**

_________________________________________________________________________________________
Completed by person authorized to complete Reference:

1. How long have you known this applicant and in what capacity?

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How well do you know the applicant?  ____ Very Well  ____ Fairly Well  ____ Slightly

2. In the healthcare field, healthcare personnel have access to confidential information from charts and files and are required to handle drugs and controlled substances. With this in mind, do you place full confidence in the applicant's integrity?  YES _____  NO _______  If no, please explain:

________________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

3. Would you allow this individual to provide healthcare for you or your family if you were ill?

YES_______NO________  If no, please explain:

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

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<th>Below Average</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Signature:**

(Person Completing Reference)

**Position/Title:**

**Address:**

**Phone No.:**
NON-EXPERIENCED APPLICANT – OPTION 1
ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE DEGREE - COURSE REQUIREMENTS and CURRICULUM PLAN

Courses that may be taken prior to entering OR during the Surgical First Assistant Program and must be completed with a “C”, or higher, are indicated below. Students are strongly encouraged to take as many of these courses as possible prior to entering the Surgical First Assistant Program.

### GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>CRN</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSC 2085</td>
<td>HSC 1000</td>
<td>Orientation to Perioperative Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSC 2085L</td>
<td>HSC 1000L</td>
<td>Orientation to Perioperative Services Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSC 2520</td>
<td></td>
<td>Microbiology for Periop Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSC 2086</td>
<td>STS 1310</td>
<td>Surgical Techniques and Procedures</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSC 2086L</td>
<td>STS 1310L</td>
<td>Surgical Techniques and Procedures Lab</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXX XXXX</td>
<td>STS 1340C</td>
<td>Pharmacology and Anesthesia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENC 1101</td>
<td>STS 1940C</td>
<td>Intro to Surgery Clinical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXX XXXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course in Humanities I, II, or III (designated by • in College Catalog)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>English Composition I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychology or SYG 2000 Sociology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SURGICAL FIRST ASSISTANT CORE COURSES

| Semester 1: | HSC 1000 | Orientation to Perioperative Services | 3 |
| Fall        | HSC 1000L | Orientation to Perioperative Services Lab | 1 |
|            | HSC 2520 | Microbiology for Periop Services         | 3 |
|            |          | *BSC 2086 and BSC 2086L may be taken this semester for an addition 4 credits. | |
| Semester 2: | STS 1310 | Surgical Techniques and Procedures        | 5 |
| Spring      | STS 1310L | Surgical Techniques and Procedures Lab    | 2 |
|            | STS 1340C | Pharmacology and Anesthesia               | 3 |
|            | STS 1940C | Intro to Surgery Clinical                 | 2 |
| Semester 3: | STS 2323 | Surgical Procedures I                     | 4 |
| Summer      | STS 2323L | Surgical Simulation Lab I                 | 1 |
|            | STS 2361 | The Art of Teamwork in Surgery            | 1 |
|            | STS 2944C | Surgical Clinical I                       | 3 |
|            | STS 2953 | Surgical Technologist Portfolio I         | 1 |
|            |          | *PSY2012 OR SYG2000 may be taken this semester for an additional 3 credits. | |
| Semester 4: | STS 2324 | Surgical Procedures II                    | 3 |
| Fall        | STS 2324L | Surgical Procedures II Lab                | 1 |
|            | STS 2365 | Professional Skills for the OR Team       | 1 |
|            | STS 2945C | Surgical Clinical II                      | 3 |
|            | STS 2936 | Surgical Certification Symposium          | 1 |
|            | STS 2330C | Principles of Surgical Assisting          | 2 |
|            | STS 2954 | Surgical Technologist Portfolio II        | 1 |
|            |          | *Humanities may be taken this semester for an additional 3 credits. | |
| Semester 5: | STS 2335 | Advanced Integrated Surgical Sciences      | 2 |
| Spring      | STS 2336 | Advanced Surgical Procedures for the SA     | 2 |
|            | STS 2370 | Surgical Assisting Clinical I              | 2 |
|            | STS 2366 OR STS 2367 | Professional Skills for the SA OR Management in Healthcare | 2 |
|            |          | *Humanities may be taken this semester for an additional 3 credits. | |

**Total Credits: 74**
Articulation for the CST to CSFA Student (CCC and AS Degree):

All students must demonstrate proof of 8 college credits of Anatomy and Physiology with labs either through transfer credits or course completion.

Students who are military trained or maintain a nationally accredited certification as a surgical technologist (CST) through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting can enter the SFA program via this GCSC Articulation as a second-year student. Up to 45 college credits may be awarded by submission of their portfolio and validated proof of a nationally accredited and current certification as a surgical technologist (CST) and/or military proof of surgical technology training.

*Note: According to state law, Residency requires 25% of the program credits must be taken at GCSC (15 credits for CCC; 19 credits for AS Degree). However, if any of the above are transfer credits, the student may be required to take additional program classes to meet that residency requirement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>CRN</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semester 1:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSC 2520</td>
<td></td>
<td>Microbiology for Periop Services (Review)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 1340C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pharmacology and Anesthesia (Review)</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2361</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Art of Teamwork in Surgery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*HSC 1531</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Medical Terminology can be taken this semester (prn-residency) for an additional 2 credits.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semester 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2330C</td>
<td></td>
<td>Principles of Surgical Assisting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2335</td>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Integrated Surgical Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2370</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surgical Assisting Clinical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2954</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surgical Technologist Portfolio II-EXTERNAL CREDIT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semester 3:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2336</td>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Integrated Surgical Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2365</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Skills for the OR Team</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STS 2936</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surgical Certification Symposium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*A&amp;P I with Lab, prn</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Semester 4:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*A&amp;P II with Lab, prn</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CCC Option - Total Credits (*including credits for A&P) 26

AS Degree - Total Credits (*including credits for A&P) 43
### ENROLLMENT FEES

**CST to CSFA only pay GCSC app fee unless completing clinical at Panama City.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>In-State</th>
<th>Out-of-State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement Tests (if needed)</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSC - application fee (new students)</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Background Check (Level II)</td>
<td>$85.00</td>
<td>$85.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreCheck: Drug Screening/Compliance Tracker</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interprofessional Healthcare Training</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TEXTBOOK FEES

Textbooks, list provided (approx.)

- Required texts $1,000.00

### ASSOCIATION DUES

- Association Surgical First Assistant Student Fee $45.00

### TUITION FEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>In-State</th>
<th>Out-of-State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-experienced Applicant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS Degree (74 cc including Gen Ed courses)</td>
<td>$7,307.50</td>
<td>$26,618.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CST Applicant:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC-option (18 college credits)</td>
<td>$1,777.50</td>
<td>$6,474.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 8 credits A&amp;P, if no transfer credits</td>
<td>$790.00</td>
<td>$2,877.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS Degree-Option (35 cc including Gen Ed courses)</td>
<td>$3,456.25</td>
<td>$12,589.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 8 credits A&amp;P, if no transfer credits</td>
<td>$790.00</td>
<td>$2,877.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LAB FEES

(includes student accident/liability insurance)

- CST Applicant
  - STS2330C Principles Surg Assist Lab $324.00
  - STS2370 Surg. Assisting Clinical I (Includes Exam) $244.00

### SUPPLIES/UNIFORMS:

- $350.00**

### TOTAL PROGRAM FEES (APPROX.)

- Non-Experienced Applicant (AS Degree) $9,827.00
- CST Applicant
  - CCC Option $4,197.50
  - AS Option $7,314.50

Fee schedule includes approximate fees for the entire program. See current information available in the Enrollment Services Office. Anyone requiring financial aid must initiate arrangements with the Financial Aid Office. Refund policy is outlined in the current Gulf Coast State College Catalog.

** Fees listed above are based on the 2022-2023 academic year and are subject to change without notice due to price changes from the other requirements, manufacturer, or provider.