Program Review Executive Summary

Surgical Technology

Majors Reviewed:

- *Surgical Technology, A.A.S.*

April 2019

The Surgical Technology program (SG) was redesigned and reinstituted as an associate degree program at Penn College in 2003. The program earned initial accreditation in 2005 and graduated its first class in August 2006. The SG major was revised in 2012 to meet the Accreditation Review Council on Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA) standards of the Core Curriculum Sixth Edition.

The curriculum of the surgical technology major is designed to ensure that graduates are strong entry-level surgical technologists. Among the highlights of the curriculum is the extensive surgical exposure students receive. During their clinical experience, students complete over 120 surgical procedures in various surgical specialties and case difficultly levels. To prepare students for those experiences, instructional facilities include two functional surgical suites, a laparoscopic surgical training area, and a sterile processing area complete with all surgical specialty instrumentation. The hands-on skills developed in the laboratory environment give students the confidence and ability needed to work at local medical centers at a high performing level.

The current high demand for surgical technologists, both regionally and nationally, provides graduates excellent placement opportunities as well as opportunities for the program to expand/grow enrollment. The program has strong relationships with local medical centers, providing the students opportunities to gain a wide range of surgical specialty experience using the latest technology. The program has an active advisory committee from various medical centers along with community members, through which the program receives important feedback on the latest surgical technical advances and trends relating to the care of the surgical patient.

The program has continued to meet and, in many cases, surpass the thresholds required by ARC/STSA. While the program has demonstrated excellence in graduate placement and credential pass rates, the staff looks forward to a process of continued program improvement.

Recommendations:
1. Examine the feasibility of increasing the maximum cohort selection from 18 to 20 through study of trends and available growth in clinical placements;
2. Increase use of online learning platform tools to enhance education;
3. Integrate other types of software and technology, such as virtual reality, available at the College to expand learning experiences;
4. Expand current marketing efforts and continue working with local partners to increase awareness of the program;
5. Incorporate alumni in marketing and recruitment events for the program;
6. Provide training for all program staff on assessment and evaluation; and
7. Ensure part-time faculty achieve minimum levels of annual professional development, both academic and technical in nature.