

Program Review

Executive Summary

Surgical Technology

Majors Reviewed:

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

July 2024



**Pennsylvania
College of Technology**
A Penn State Affiliate

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 program was awarded 10-year continuing accreditation in 2020. The SG major was revised in 2024 to meet the Accreditation Review Council on Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA) standards of the Core Curriculum Seventh Edition.

The Surgical Technology program at Penn College boasts a strong foundation with state-of-the-art facilities, experienced faculty and staff, and a proven track record of student success. The program maintains strong partnerships with clinical affiliates who provide the important real-world clinical opportunities for students. Our graduates are highly sought after by industry partners, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in preparing students for successful careers. Our 100% graduate placement rate speaks volumes about both the demand for surgical technologists and the quality of our graduates.

While the program excels in many areas, cost competitiveness, limited scheduling flexibility, and alternative hiring options for hospitals pose challenges. Surgical technology continues to go unnoticed as a healthcare field. Despite 100% graduation placement and competitive wages averaging \$58,000 annually, the public remains unaware of the field of surgical technology.

The surgical technology program's future looks promising due to strong job growth and high demand for surgical technologists. Since January 2022, accredited programs must offer associate degrees, which enhances the profession and gives Penn College's program an edge, as it has always been degree-granting. The possibility for hybrid and online coursework options may offer students more flexibility, potentially increasing enrollment. The program is also dedicated to supporting the health and wellness of the Penn College community and will seek ways to further this commitment.

The 2024 program review was a comprehensive assessment of program effectiveness and curriculum integrity and relevance. The following recommendations have been presented as opportunities for the future:

- Pursue robotic technology and equipment for use in the laboratory and classroom.
- Build program enrollment, focusing on CTCs and schools with a dual enrollment option.
- Explore additional certification exam preparation tools.
- Consider expanding online or hybrid program coursework.
- Compose a proposal to build/enclose a third mock operatory designed for laparoscopic and future robotic use.
- Develop a comprehensive assessment plan focused on collaboration and communication.
- Explore adding a service-learning component within the curriculum.
- Continue to seek additional clinical relationships, particularly among area surgical centers.
- Explore opportunities to increase program diversity.