

Course Code: SPT 110

Course Title: Sterile Processing

Department: Allied Health

Effective Date: Summer 2026

PCS Code: 1.2 - Occupational/Technical Instruction

CIP Code: 51.1012

Repeatability: 0

Credit Hours

Catalog Notation: 3-0.5-3

Credit Hour Distribution:

Lecture: 3

Lab: 0.5

Clinical: 0

Total: 3

General Course Information

Catalog Description

The Sterile Processing Technician training program prepares students to clean and sterilize reusable utensils and equipment, organize and package instrument trays and sets, keep detailed records of equipment maintenance, organize supplies, and maintain an adequate inventory of instruments and disposable items to meet the needs of doctors, nurses, surgeons, and technical staff throughout the hospital.

General Course Objectives

1. The student will be able to understand the role of sterile processing technicians.
2. The student will understand medical terminology and how it applies to the surgical schedule.
3. The student will understand methods and control of sterilization processes, point-of-use processing and the cleaning, processing, packaging, distributing, storing, and inventory control of sterile goods, instruments, trays, and equipment.
4. The student will gain knowledge and basic skills needed to work in a hospital, surgical center, or other facility that utilizes a central sterile supply department.
5. The program includes such topics as: anatomy and physiology; microbiology and infection control; decontamination and sterilization processing; and how to handle, care for, and identify surgical instruments.
6. Students will understand which regulatory agencies govern regulations and standards of operation.
7. Students will understand quality assurance procedures, ancillary department support, information technology, safety, and risk management.
8. Students will understand the importance of communication, teamwork, and personal and professional development.
9. Upon successful completion, the student will be eligible to sit for a national certification exam.

Minimum Placement Levels

English	Reading	Math
Placement out of ENG 098	Placement out of CCS 098	None

Prerequisites

Approval of program director or department chair

Methods of Evaluation

14-16 objective quizzes, 14-16 worksheets, and 1-2 objective exams.

Instructional Materials and Additional Supplies

Sterile Processing Technical Manual, Current edition, Healthcare Sterile Processing Association (HSPA)

Course Content

General Learning Outcomes (GLOs)

- Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to read, write, listen, and speak effectively.

Course Segments and Student Learning Outcomes

Course Segment	Learning Outcomes	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
Introduction to Central Sterile Service	1. Explain the importance of the central service department and how it plays a role in quality patient care. 2. Review the work flow process in an effectively organized central service department. 3. Identify the knowledge and skills required for working as a Central Sterile Service Technician. 4. Define the job responsibilities of the Central Sterile Service Technician. 5. Discuss concerns of central sterile processing personnel.	2.5	0	0
Medical Terminology	1. Explain the importance of medical terminology for Central Service Technicians. 2. Identify the various elements used in medical terminology including prefixes, roots, and suffixes. 3. Discuss how medical terminology can refer to human anatomy, disease processes, surgical instruments, and surgical procedures. 4. Understand medical terminology used to refer to surgical procedures in surgery schedules. 5. Understand the importance of medical terminology for service quality in the Operating Room.	2.5	0	0
Human Anatomy	1. Review the structure, function, activities, and role of cells, tissues, and organs in the body. 2. Identify and describe the structure and roles of each major body system, and indicate common surgical procedures that involve each system. 3. Explain how knowledge of anatomy can help with surgical instrument identification.	2.5	0	0

Course Segment	Learning Outcomes	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
Microbiology for Central Service	1. Define the term "microbiology", and tell why Central Service Technicians must know about it. 2. Restate basic facts about microorganisms. 3. Identify common ways to identify and classify microorganisms: by shape, color change, and need for oxygen. 4. Explain environmental conditions necessary for bacterial growth and survival. 5. Provide basic information about non-bacterial organisms: viruses, protozoa, and fungi. 6. Describe how microorganisms are transmitted between persons and places. 7. Review basic procedures to control and kill microorganisms.	2.5	0	0
Regulations and Standards	1. Identify the difference between regulations, voluntary standards, and regulatory standards. 2. Explain the roles and responsibilities of federal and state regulating agencies that have jurisdiction over processing in healthcare facilities. 3. Describe the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and its regulations that are applicable to medical device classification, pre- and post-market requirements, medical device recalls, the re-use of single use medical devices, and the FDA labeling document. 4. Discuss professional organizations and accrediting agencies that develop regulations and standards affecting central service. 5. Define the purpose of a procedure manual and explain the difference between policies and procedures in a health care facility.	2.5	0	0
Infection Prevention and Control	1. Explain the role of the Central Sterile Service Technician in a healthcare facility's infection prevention and control efforts. 2. Explain the role of Central Service in the prevention of healthcare-associated surgical infections. 3. Define standard precautions and their role in preventing disease transmission. 4. Explain the principles, practice, and importance of personal hygiene and attire including personal protective equipment. 5. Identify key elements in the Bloodborne Pathogens standard. 6. Describe the physical design of the Central Service department and how traffic control, work area cleanliness, and workflow procedures impact infection control. 7. Discuss the chain of infection and the technician's role in breaking that chain. 8. Explain the rationale for the separation of clean and dirty and the environmental requirements for maintaining that separation.	2.5	0	0

Course Segment	Learning Outcomes	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
Point of Use Preparation and Transport/Cleaning and Decontamination	1. Review the four main goals of soiled item transport. 2. Identify the sources of contaminated items. 3. Explain point-of-use preparation procedures. 4. Review basic procedures to transport soiled items from user areas to the Central Service decontamination area. 5. Discuss safety guidelines for transporting soiled items to the Central Service decontamination area. 6. Provide basic sources for education and training information applicable to the transport of contaminated items. 7. Define cleaning and identify challenges to cleaning medical devices. 8. Discuss the purpose and setup of the decontamination area. 9. Identify the importance of personal protective equipment and standard precautions. 10. Explain the role of common cleaning tools. 11. Discuss mechanical cleaners. 12. Discuss the use of chemicals in the decontamination area. 13. Explain manual cleaning processes. 14. Demonstrate and follow procedures for decontamination of instruments.	3	3	0
Disinfection/Surgical Instrumentation	1. Discuss the importance of surgical instruments and the role of the CS technician in instrument care and handling. 2. Review basic steps in the surgical instrument manufacturing process. 3. Define the basic categories of surgical instruments based upon their functions and identify the points of inspection, anatomy, and procedures to measure instruments. 4. Identify solutions that can damage stainless steel instruments. 5. Explain procedures to test instruments for sharpness and identify (mark) them. 6. Explain disinfection levels as identified in the Spaulding Classification System. 7. Define the term disinfection and explain how disinfection differs from sterilization. 8. Identify good work practices for manual disinfection processes. 9. Discuss automated equipment utilized for disinfection, and good work practices for working with automated disinfection processes. 10. Explain disinfection quality assurance practices.	3	0	0
Complex Surgical Instrumentation	1. Provide an overview of and discuss procedures to care for and effectively process powered surgical instruments. 2. Explain important basic concerns when handling and processing endoscopic instruments. 3. Discuss detailed information about rigid and flexible endoscopes and their accessories. 4. Review general processing and inspection requirements for endoscopes and accessories. 5. Identify infection prevention concerns regarding endoscopes and loaner instrumentation. 6. Identify basic protocols important for each step in the loaner instrumentation process.	3	0	0

Course Segment	Learning Outcomes	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
Assembly and Packaging/Point of Use Processing	1. Explain the setup and function of the assembly area. 2. Review basic procedures to prepare pack contents for packaging. 3. Explain the basic objectives of the packaging process and review basic selection factors for materials to be used with specific sterilization methods. 4. Provide an overview of reusable packaging materials. 5. Review general packaging concepts: package labeling, special concerns, sterility maintenance. 6. Define the term Immediate Use Steam Sterilization and review the industry standards. 7. Describe point-of-use processing and examine its requirements. 8. Explain the basic procedures necessary to safely perform Immediate Use Steam Sterilization. 9. Address point-of-use processing for heat-sensitive medical devices. 10. Demonstrate packaging surgical instruments for sterilization. 11. Demonstrate preparation of instruments to be sterilized using immediate use sterilization. 12. Demonstrate proper loading of a steam sterilizer.	3	3	0
High Temperature Sterilization/Low Temperature Sterilization	1. Discuss factors that impact the effectiveness of sterilization. 2. Discuss the advantage of steam sterilization. 3. Explain the anatomy of a steam sterilizer and identify the function of each major component. 4. Provide basic information about the types of steam sterilizers and explain steam sterilization cycles. 5. Describe the conditions necessary for an effective steam sterilization process. 6. Explain basic work practices for steam sterilization. 7. Review sterilization process indicators and explain the need for quality control. 8. Discuss basic requirements important for low-temperature sterilization systems. 9. Explain specific requirements for low-temperature sterilization methods commonly used by healthcare facilities. 10. Review important parameters of the low-temperature sterilization methods.	3	1.5	0
Sterile Storage and Transport	1. Review basic sterile storage considerations. 2. Describe basic types of sterile storage shelving. 3. Identify procedures for moving sterile storage shelving. 4. Explain the concept of event-related sterility. 5. Discuss basic storage guidelines. 6. Discuss other sterile storage and transport concerns.	3	0	0

Course Segment	Learning Outcomes	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
Monitoring and Record Keeping/Quality Assurance	1. Discuss the importance of monitoring work areas and processes within the CS department. 2. Discuss the importance of record keeping. 3. Explain the types of monitoring needed in each area of the CS department. 4. Explain the need for monitoring and review the sterilization process indicators that help assure quality control. 5. Discuss the importance of employee training and continuing education records. 6. Define quality in the context of CS operations. 7. Describe the components of a CS quality program. 8. Explain the basics of failure mode and effects analysis and root cause analysis. 9. Discuss common quality programs. 10. Review common quality procedures in the CS department.	3	0	0
Inventory Management/Ancillary Support	1. Explain the importance of inventory management in the healthcare facility. 2. Define the role of CS technicians as it relates to inventory management. 3. Explain basic inventory terms used in healthcare facilities. 4. Explain the cycle of consumable items. 5. Discuss the partnership between CS and Materials Management. 6. Describe guidelines for handling commercially sterilized packages. 7. Describe common inventory replenishment systems. 8. Discuss the role of healthcare facilities in sustainability efforts and the reduction of waste. 9. Discuss the role of the CS department in supporting ancillary departments. 10. Discuss strategies for managing patient care equipment. 11. Explain the importance of communication and coordination as it relates to ancillary support.	3	0	0
Information Technology/Safety and Risk Management	1. Provide an overview of the use of information management systems in the CS department. 2. Discuss the use of computers and information systems to support activities within the healthcare facility and the CS department. 3. Recognize that tracking systems enhance CS operations. 4. Explain why tracking systems must address the specific needs of the healthcare facility and the CS department. 5. Review some features of available instruments and equipment tracking systems. 6. Explain the importance of safety and risk management in the CS department. 7. Review the three common workplace hazards: fire, hazardous substances, and bloodborne pathogens. 8. Explain the importance of ergonomics and health awareness for CS technicians. 9. Describe special safety precautions for handling ethylene oxide. 10. Discuss the basics of internal and external disaster plans for a healthcare facility. 11. Review procedures to report employee accidents and injuries. 12. Explain the importance of education and reporting in a Central Source safety and risk management system.	3	0	0

Course Segment	Learning Outcomes	Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
Communication/Personal Professional Development	1. Explain why CS technicians must use effective communication and human relations skills. 2. Define the term "professionalism". 3. Describe behaviors that can impact success on the job. 4. Discuss basic tactics of effective communication in the workplace. 5. Recognize procedures to enhance and maintain effective working relationships. 6. Discuss tactics to improve teamwork. 7. Define the term "diversity" and explain why it is important. 8. Recognize basic customer service skills and tactics to appropriately handle customer complaints. 9. Review common workplace communication issues. 10. Explain the meaning of personal development and how it can impact a career in the CS department. 11. List possible CS career paths. 12. Review strategies to enhance professional skills and expertise. 13. Discuss resume development. 14. Review the interview process. 15. Discuss promotions within the CS department. 16. List traits of professional CS department technicians and describe their fundamental beliefs and behaviors.	3	0	0

Total Contact Hours

Lecture Hours	Lab Hours	Clinical Hours
45	7.5	0