



Student Catalog



2015—2016



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Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting
“The Leader in Surgical Training”
www.Meridian-Institute.edu

1507 County Hospital Road
Nashville, TN 37218
Phone: 615-678-8196
Fax: 615-499-4795
Email: info@Meridian-Institute.edu

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting began operations in December of 1999 and is currently located at 1507 County Hospital Road, Nashville, TN 37218

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting is a proprietary post-secondary institution owned by:

Dennis A. Stover, CST, CSA

ADMINISTRATION:

President/Program Director - Dennis A. Stover, CST, CSA

Executive Vice President/Director of Student Affairs - Larry E. Stover, AS

VP of Regulatory and Compliance Affairs – Celia White, BS

Business Manager - Kitty M. Creel, AS

Financial Aid Director - Robyn Johnson, BS

Dean of Academic Affairs - Roy G. Zacharias, Jr. CST, BS, FAST

Clinical Director - Gregory P. Salmon, CST/CFA, CSA

Externship Coordinator – Deborah K. Klaudt, CST, CSFA

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting’s **SFA ONLINE PROGRAM** is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs (**CAAHEP**) upon the recommendation of the Subcommittee on Accreditation for Surgical Assisting (SASA) of The Accreditation Review Committee for Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARCST/SA). Contact Information:

6 W. Dry Creek Circle, Suite #110
Littleton, CO 80120

CAAHEP (www.caahep.org) - 727-210-2350

ARCSTSA (www.arcst.org) - 303-694-9262

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting is institutionally accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools, (**ABHES**), a national accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. Contact Information: ABHES (www.abhes.org) – 703- 917-9503 7777 Leesburg Pike, Suite 314 N. Falls Church, VA 22043

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting is authorized by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission this authorization must be renewed each year and is based on an evaluation by minimum standards concerning quality of education, ethical business practices, health and safety, and fiscal responsibility. Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting’s **SFA ONLINE PROGRAM** awards 28 semester credit hours leading to a certificate of completion. Meridian’s staff and faculty are authorized by THEC in their respective positions.

Contact Information: THEC (www.tn.gov/thec) - 615-532-7495 404 James Robertson Parkway Nashville, Tennessee 37243

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Dear Prospective Student:

Thank you for your interest in Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting. This catalog will cover the details of the programs as well as academic progression and student policies.

Meridian was formed and began operations in December of 1999. Since then we have become the Nation’s leading provider of surgical assisting education and training. Our goal is to implement and conduct courses that set the industry standard.

The **SFA Online Program Certificate** is a CAAHEP-accredited program with didactics and externship being delivered in a distance education format. It was developed with the concept that the student must understand **why** he/she is performing a specific task, followed by the knowledge and ability **how** to complete the actual task. We call this our “why-to-how” philosophy. Our curriculum adheres to the “*Core Curriculum for Surgical Assisting, 2nd Edition*,” published by The Association of Surgical Technologists. For several reasons, we firmly believe that Meridian has developed top level training for surgical assisting that prepares a person for a career as a first assistant:

1. The academic phase utilizes an all-inclusive approach, enabling him/her to learn the particulars of each surgery while covering a wide-variety of stages of a patient. The program takes the patient from the General Practitioner's office to the post- operative stage. This allows students to understand symptoms, causes, and various treatment methods, as well as why certain surgeries may or may not be recommended. The academics then continue into the actual treatment phase, followed by post- operative considerations. Incorporated within the academic phase, students will learn the fundamentals of assisting as well as legal, ethical, and business issues.
2. The hands-on portion of the SFA Online Program Certificate is our **Applied Sciences Lab**, which is conducted in Meridian's state-of-the-art lab facility, this facility sets us apart from any other surgical assisting training program. From our inception we realized that in order for our students to gain the experience necessary to move into the clinical externship phase they must have more experience than just working on pieces of rubber in a hotel room setting. In this lab students work with live tissue, deal with real bleeding, and perform surgeries in a real-life setting. There can be no compromise on REAL training. **REAL training means REAL results.**

After successfully completing the SFA Online Program you then have a fantastic opportunity to further your education by attending Meridian’s degree completion, Associate of Applied Sciences (AAS) in Surgical Assisting. Our Associates is currently only offered to Meridian graduates allowing you to conveniently bridge your certificate to an associates.

3. Our commitment to **customer service** is a primary focus of Meridian. Every student receives individual attention and help from our staff and faculty.

As you begin your journey towards fulfilling your desire to become a first assistant we hope that you will place your trust in us the same way as students from all over the country have done to this point. We truly want to help you achieve your goals and dreams and firmly believe that you will find Meridian's course to be of the highest standards available. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me personally. It would be my pleasure to assist you and answer whatever questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Stover

Dennis A. Stover, CST CSA President

OUR MISSION:

“It is our sincere goal and desire to train and graduate the highest quality assistants in the country. Meridian achieves this goal by implementing only programs that are of the highest standards and adhere to published surgical assisting education guidelines. Meridian graduates are thoroughly trained in all surgical disciplines, thus providing the ability for comprehensive surgical interventions leading to the best care available for all patients.”

**It is the ongoing policy of our institute to afford equal educational opportunities to qualified individuals regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap, veteran status or because they disabled veterans, and to conform to all applicable laws and regulations.

Facility

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assistant's facility is located Nashville, Tennessee. The facility is comprised of approximately 12,000 square feet of administrative offices, classroom, and lab space. Meridian's state-of-the-art lab is equipped with four operating room stations, fully furnished with all equipment and supplies to conduct "real-time" surgery comparable to operating rooms across the country.

Location

Meridian's facility is located at 1507 County Hospital Road, Nashville, TN 37218.

Faculty

Program Director: Dennis A. Stover CST, CSA, F.A.S.T. Status: Full Time

Mr. Stover graduated from the Academy of Health Sciences in 1986 with a certificate in Surgical Technology and a certificate in Emergency Medicine. He became a CST in 1996 and a CSA in 1997. Mr. Stover is responsible for oversight of the SFA Program and is also an Instructor for the SFA Program.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

Clinical Director: Gregory P. Salmon CST, CSFA, CSA Status: Full Time

Mr. Salmon has an Associates Degree from Ivy Tech College in Lafayette, Indiana, having graduated in 1996. Mr. Salmon received his certificate in Surgical Technology in 1989, after which he retained his CSFA and CSA in 1996. Most recently, Mr. Salmon earned his Bachelor's Degree in Applied Science from Siena Heights University. Mr. Salmon is responsible for instruction of the Didactic portion of the program, and serves as Clinical Director for the Lab portion.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196, Ext. 17

Instructor: Trey Wiseman CST, CSA Status: Full Time

Mr. Wiseman has an Associates Degree in Applied Science from Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tennessee, having graduated in 2005, as well as an Associates Degree in Surgical Technology from Bowling Green Tech in Bowling Green, Kentucky, having graduated in 2007.

Mr. Wiseman became a CST in 2007, and a CSA in 2011.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196, Ext 15

Instructor: Tamra Roberts CST, CSFA Status: Full Time

Ms. Roberts graduated from Lonestar Tomball College in Tomball, Texas, in 2010 with a certificate in Surgical Technology. She became a CST in 2010 and a CSFA in 2014.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

Office email: Tamra.Roberts@Meridian-Institute.edu

Instructor: Roy Zacharias BS, CST Status: Part-Time Faculty

Mr. Zacharias graduated from the Community College of the Air Force in 1981 with a certificate in Surgical Technology. He later advanced his education by graduating from University of Phoenix with a Bachelor of Science in Business Information Systems Management. Mr. Zacharias is an instructor for Communication, and Psychology.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196, Ext. 14

Instructor: Robyn Johnson, BS Status: Part-Time Faculty

Ms. Johnson graduated from California State University, Northridge in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology. Ms. Johnson is the instructor for Sociology.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196, Ext. 13

Instructor: Celia White, BS Status: Part-Time Faculty

Ms. White graduated from University of Wyoming in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science in Family Consumer Sciences. Ms. White is the instructor for Computer Skills and Introduction to Business

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196, Ext. 19

Externship Coordinator: Deborah Klaudt, CST, CSFA Status: Full-Time

Ms. Klaudt is a graduate of Southeast Community College in 1992. She was awarded her CSFA credential in 1994. Ms. Klaudt is responsible for all aspects of the clinical externship, including questions about the Affiliation Agreement.

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196, Ext. 18

Hours of Operation

Meridian's hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. direct student support will be given during these hours. Email and online program issues are monitored during the evening and on the weekends. Meridian attempts to resolve all student issues within a 24-hour time period. **The office will be closed for operations during all major holidays, as listed below:**

New Years Eve, New Years Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July Fourth, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday after, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day

Academic Calendar

All students will receive an academic calendar for the online didactics (course) portion of the program as part of the online classroom instruction through, Canvas Learning Management System. All students will be required to follow this calendar and adhere to appropriate academic deadlines. Please see computer system requirement policy in this catalog.

SFA Online Program Certificate

The **SFA Online Program Certificate enrolls 12 cohorts per year.** The student may enroll at any time during the year to start with the upcoming cohort (See Cohort Start Policy).

At minimum the Applied Science Lab dates are scheduled twice monthly, on the second and last week of every month, with the exception that there are no labs offered in December. The student services office will work with the student during the enrollment process to schedule lab attendance for the student. In the event that the student becomes aware of any conflict in attending a scheduled lab, they must contact the Director of Student services. The lab schedule is subject to change; therefore, each student **must** contact Meridian to verify lab availability upon the need to reschedule.

Associates of Applied Science (AAS) in Surgical Assisting (Degree Completion) Revised 02/09/2016

The AAS Program offers three cohorts per year, winter, summer and spring. If class capacity of 25 students has not been met a student will be able to enroll for a cohort the first day of the coursework begins. A student can register for maximum of 12 credits per semester.

Textbook Requirement

The SFA Online Program Certificate and AAS are computer based programs. Each student is required to have access to a computer and an internet connection on a regular basis. Testing, Quizzing, and grading are completed online. The SFA Online Program Certificate utilizes a total of five books that will be used throughout the course. Four of the books will be sent to the student prior to their start date, three of which will be on a CD. All costs of textbooks are included in the price of tuition with the exception of Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery, 15th edition, by Jane C. Rothrock. ISBN 978-0-323-08942-5, estimated cost: \$125.00. The book charges are non-Institutional charges and will not show up on student account card. We recommend the purchase of book from amazon: http://www.amazon.com/Alexanders-Care-Patient-Surgery%2015e/dp/0323089429/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1407421245&sr=8-1&keywords=9780323089425

The book requirement for AAS in Surgical Assisting (degree completion) will be listed on each

class syllabus located in this catalog.

Cohort Start Policy (SFA Online Program Certificate Only)

****All SFA Online Program Certificate students will start the program on the first of the month following the month in which the student signs the Enrollment Agreement if openings permit. If openings are unavailable the student will start in the earliest month available, following the month in which the student signs the enrollment agreement, in which openings do exist.****

Attendance Policy

Weekly attendance in the online classroom is required for the entire 52 week enrollment period. Online participation and attendance is required according to the academic calendar for each student. This calendar is provided in the Canvas Learning Management System.

Students are required to complete weekly discussion questions and weekly quizzes on time.

Failure to comply will result in the following steps:

- Class Instructor will grade the Discussion Questions within 24 hours of due date and will check for completion of test on due date.
- The instructor will notify the Academic Dean of any student who has an unexcused absence for the class.
- The instructor will notify the student by email of their status.
- An absence equals a grade of "0" for any non-attempted course work for a full week of class.

Credential Offered at Completion

Upon completion of the SFA Online Program Certificate each student will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Upon completion of the AAS in Surgical Assisting (degree completion), each student will receive an Associates in Applied Science.

Advanced placement and credit for experiential learning:

Because the SFA Online Program Certificate is an advanced and unique program Meridian does not accept transfer credits from other institutions, credits may be given for experiential learning for phase three. Students may transfer in up to a maximum of 30 outside credits for the AAS in Surgical Assisting (degree completion); this does not include the 28 credits that will be awarded from the SFA Online Program Certificate.

Employment Assistance:

Upon completion of the program, Meridian cannot guarantee employment in the field of surgical assisting; however, we do work with various facilities across the nation and from time to time will be able to inform students of openings in the field. It is left up to each individual student to secure employment once he/she has completed the program.

Clock Hours and Credits Awarded

SFA Online Program Certificate

Phase One: 285 hours, 19 semester credits

Phase Two: 60 hours, 3 semester credits

Phase Three: 303.75 hours, 6 semester credits

AAS in Surgical Assisting (degree completion):

Transfer from SFA Online Program: 28 semester credits

GEN 101-105: 225 hours, 15 semester credits

HLTH 201-206: 255 hours, 17 semester credits

Course Objective

The SFA Online Program and AAS Degree Completion Program's goal is to train and graduate the highest quality surgical assistants in the country. The course achieves this goal by implementing a program that is of the highest standards and adheres to published surgical assisting education guidelines. As part of the course objective, the SFA Online Program and AAS Program's didactics are both delivered through a distance education format. The SFA ONLINE program prepares students for both the CSFA and the CSA national examinations. The AAS Program allows the surgical assistant to further their education and refine their knowledge while earning an Associate's Degree. Meridian graduates are thoroughly trained in all surgical disciplines, thus providing the ability for comprehensive surgical interventions leading to the best care available for all patients.

Student Services

Meridian has incorporated student career counseling by appointment, which is available through the student's instructor. During this time faculty will discuss with all students field-related issues such as employment, reimbursement, career options and navigation, etc.

Along with career support Meridian also makes reasonable accommodations for disabilities and issues of religion that might impact the student's progression through the program.

Overview

SFA Online Program Certificate

Meridian is proud to introduce you to our CAAHEP-accredited **SFA Online Program**. Each student has 12 months to complete the entire course. Because this course is completed in a distance-education format students will learn through an online classroom for a part of the didactic portion of the program. The program consists of three phases, and upon finishing all three phases the student will graduate the program and receive **a certificate of completion**.

Phase 1:

The first phase consists of a 13 online courses in the academic program. The 13 courses of study include all areas of anatomy and physiology, pharmacology, anesthesia, procedure fundamentals, legal aspects for the first assistant, and much more. Students will complete all didactics in an online classroom format utilizing the Canvas Learning Management System. Textbooks are provided for the first three modules, with the remaining text available for downloading online. Please see computer system requirement policy in this catalog.

Phase 2:

The second phase of the course is completion of the Applied Sciences Lab. This phase is 30-hours of hands-on instruction covering all different surgical specialties, in addition to the 30 hours of lectures outlined in Phase One. The lab must be completed within the first 6 months of enrollment. Since, Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting is currently the largest CAAHEP-accredited program our labs fill up very quickly. **Therefore, it is highly recommended that all new students enroll sooner rather than later so that they can secure an upcoming lab spot.**

Phase 3:

The third phase of our course is completion of a clinical externship program. Each student must complete 140 cases (20 must be in General Surgery, 20 in a specialty of the student's choice, 20 additional chosen specialty, and 80 various specialty), with a Meridian-approved surgeon or a Meridian- approved CSFA or CSA.

AAS Degree Completion Program

Meridian is excited to introduce our degree completion, Associates of Applied Science in Surgical Assisting. Each student has 18 months to complete the degree program. This program makes it convenient for busy professionals to continue their education by offering an online classroom.

Degree Requirement:

In order for the student to be awarded the AAS in Surgical Assisting they must have a total of 60 credits completed, prior to graduation and degree confirmation. **This degree program is open only to those who have graduated from Meridian’s SFA ONLINE program.**

Transfer of credits:

Each student will be given credit for the 28 semester credits earned through the SFA ONLINE program. This leaves a remaining 32 credits needed prior to earning a degree completion. Of the 32 remaining credits needed up to 30 can be transferred in from another institution. The student always has the option to complete ALL required credits from Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting. Transfer credits are not required. Any courses that the student wishes to transfer from an outside institution must match the courses that are required to be completed as part of the AAS in Surgical Assisting. Transferability will be at the discretion of the Dean of Academics.

Required Courses:

- Initial requirement of graduation from Meridian’s SFA ONLINE program is mandatory.

Computer Skills	3 semester credits
Communication	3 semester credits
Introduction to Psychology	3 semester credits
Introduction to Sociology	3 semester credits
Introduction to Business	3 semester credits
Introduction to Radiology	3 semester credits
Advanced Principles of General and Peripheral Vascular Surgery	3 semester credits
Advanced Principles of Obstetrics and Gynecological Surgery	3 semester credits
Advanced Principles of Orthopedic Surgery	3 semester credits
Advanced Principles of Cardiovascular Surgery	3 semester credits
Surgical Safety	2 semester credits

Meridian is excited to take the next step forward, as we continue to provide a rewarding and challenging education to our students.

Entrance Requirements

* High school diploma or equivalent

* CPR certified

*Students must maintain individual malpractice insurance, the cost of which is in addition to the tuition and runs approximately \$120.00.

*Surgical Technologist applicants **should** be a CST, **or** have completed a college-level Introduction to Anatomy & Physiology course.

*Nurses must hold a valid license for the state in which they are practicing, as well as have current scrub experience.

* All Students must have O.R. scrub experience attained in the United States and a working knowledge of basic O.R. fundamentals, or be enrolled in a Masters Degree program for Orthopedic Physician Assistants.

* All students must be employed at a healthcare facility or private office. In the case of OPA students, they must provide proof that they have access to clinical sites.

*All students must be able to have daily access to a computer that complies with the computer system requirement policy in this catalog.

*Admission Requirements for AAS in Surgical Assisting (Degree Completion)

To advance into the AAS in Surgical Assisting, the student **MUST** first be a graduate of Meridian Institute's SFA online program.

Computer System Requirement Policy

Meridian Institute's SFA ONLINE program didactics are delivered via distance education. Distance education means that the student will complete classroom studies utilizing a virtual classroom from their individual computer. Meridian utilizes Canvas Learning Management System. If your computer does not have the proper hardware for Canvas it may run slowly, or may not run at all. Prior to using Canvas on your computer, compare your current system configuration with the system requirements below.

Computer Specifications

Canvas and its hosting infrastructure are designed for maximum compatibility and minimal requirements.

Screen Size

Canvas is best viewed at a minimum of 1024x600, which is the average size of a notebook computer. If you want to view Canvas on a device with a smaller screen, we recommend using the Canvas mobile app.

Operating Systems

- Windows XP SP3 and newer
- Mac OSX 10.6 and newer
- Linux - chromeOS

Mobile Operating System Native App Support

- iOS 7 and newer
- Android 2.3 and newer

Computer Speed and Processor

- Use a computer 5 years old or newer when possible
- 1GB of RAM
- 2GHz processor

Internet Speed

Along with compatibility and web standards, Canvas has been carefully crafted to accommodate low bandwidth environments.

Minimum of 512kbps

Screen Readers

- Macintosh: VoiceOver (latest version for Safari)
- PC: JAWS (latest version for Internet Explorer 10 & 11)
- PC: NVDA (latest version for Firefox)

There is no screen reader support for Canvas in Chrome

Supported Browsers

Canvas supports the last two versions of every browser release. We highly recommend updating to the **newest version** of whatever browser you are using as well as the most up-to-date Flash plug-in.

As of **July 13, 2015**, we support the most recent versions of Flash and popular web browsers:

- **Internet Explorer** 10 and 11
- **Chrome** 42 and 43
- **Safari** 7 and 8

- **Firefox** 38 and 39 (Extended Releases are not supported)
- **Flash** 17 and 18 (for recording or viewing audio/video and uploading files)
- **Respondus Lockdown Browser** (supporting the latest system requirements)

Some supported browsers may still produce a banner stating *Your browser does not meet the minimum requirements for Canvas*. If you have upgraded your browser but you are still seeing the warning banner, try logging out of Canvas and deleting your browser cookies. Learn how to clear your cache on a Mac or a PC.

Required Components

Flash is required in several places in Canvas: media recording/streaming and viewing as well as uploading files to a course or an assignment. Other than these features, Flash is not required to use most areas of Canvas. Please note that some browsers, such as Firefox, may no longer support Flash.

The **Java plug-in** is required for screen sharing in Conferences. Please note that some browsers do not support Java. Otherwise, there are no other browser plug-ins used by Canvas.

Computer System Requirement Policy Term Definitions:

- Hardware: Monitor, computer, mouse, keyboard, etc.
- Network Adapter: A printed circuit board that plugs into the bus of both user machines (clients) and servers in a local area network (LAN). Also commonly called a “network interface card” (NIC) or “LAN card”. The network adapter transmits data onto the network and receives data from the network. It works at the data link protocol level.
- Lan : Local Area Network
- Wifi: wireless access network
- Operating System: The program running the function level (Windows, Google, ios, etc.)
- Web Browser: Presentation layer of World Wide Web (Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox, etc.)
- Plug in: Software or Hardware that allows the use of certain functions on the program level (Flash, Adobe Reader, Silverlight, Java, etc.)

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting Official Course Syllabus

Course Title: Phase One, Didactics
Course Number: SFA201 - SFA212
Prerequisites: None

Credits: 19
Course Clock Hour Length: 285
Revision Date: 11/01/2013

Text and Computer System Requirements:

Mastery of Medicine Series: Surgery One, Surgery Two, Microbiology
Pharmacology Made Ridiculously Simple
Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery
Online Curriculum
Please see computer system requirement policy in the institutional catalog.

Instructional Methods:

30 Hours of Synchronous on-campus instructor-led lectures conducted during attendance at Applied Sciences Lab. Online Classroom, discussion questions, assessment projects, chapter quizzes, and end- of-module exams.

Course Description:

MODULE I: SFA 201, 3 Credits

Prerequisites: None

Title: SURGERY I and II

This module covers all surgical specialties, affording the student an opportunity to understand the process which brings patients into the operating room; i.e., symptoms, clinical features, and principles of treatment. Each chapter covers various treatment options and particular surgeries for a given situation. The module includes chapter quizzes, along with two module exams.

MODULE II: SFA 202, 3 Credits

Prerequisites: SFA201

Title: PERIOPERATIVE MICROBIOLOGY

This Module consists of three main components: fundamental concepts in microbiology and infection, major clinical syndromes corresponding to the clinical specialties, and supplementary chapters on bacteriology, virology, parasitology, mycology, and entomology, with notes on laboratory tests and antibiotics. Since students learn in different ways this module has been written to accommodate different learning approaches. As a basic course in microbiology, all chapters are self-contained units.

MODULE III: SFA203, 3 Credits

Prerequisites: SFA201 and 202

Title: PHARMACOLOGY

This module (1) blends the essentials of basic pharmacology and clinical pharmacology so that the transition from classroom to hospital is less abrupt, (2) organizes related drugs in tables, and (3) allows the student to learn about prototype drugs and the important ways that related drugs differ. Text surrounding each table emphasizes key issues pertaining to therapeutic rationale, basic pharmacologic principles, and clinical use of drugs.

MODULE IV: SFA 204, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, and 203

Title: ANESTHESIA, METHODS, AND AGENTS

This module covers the basics of anesthesia, as well as the different methods and the agents used, along with their relation to surgical circumstances. It also covers the ASA classification system.

MODULE V: SFA 205, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, and 204

Title: BIOSCIENCE

This module offers instruction in surgical events related to wound healing and the integrity of the surgical wound. Also covered are different diagnostic tests and the relationship between those tests and management of the surgical patient. Also discussed in detail are issues surrounding the care and handling of surgical specimens, management of the critically ill patient, thermoregulatory devices, fluid balances and related issues and, finally, skin assessment.

MODULE VI: SFA 206, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, 204, and 205

Title: ROLE DEFINITION AND INTERACTION

This module deals mainly with factors that will result in positive team relationships, the practice of professional ethics, and the parameters of one's specific role. Understanding that teamwork and interpersonal relationships are such an integral part in the overall care of the surgical patient, this module seeks to identify certain possible crises and problem areas, then gives the student an understanding as to how he/she should deal with each given situation.

MODULE VII: SFA 207, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, and 206

Title: ETHICAL, MORAL, AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

This module enables the student to understand different legal definitions and terminology, and to understand and identify O.R. situations that could lead to ethical conflict. Students also gain an understanding of appropriate (and legal) decision making, as well as what determines negligence, basic patient and caregiver rights, O.R. incidents that could result in litigation, and problems peculiar to the surgical first assistant's role.

MODULE VIII: SFA 208, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, and 207

Title: FUNDAMENTALS

In this module the student will learn basic fundamentals and the surgical first assistant's role in regards to monitoring devices, bladder catheterization, positioning the surgical patient, applying pneumatic tourniquets, proper skin preparation, drapes and draping, operative instrumentation, visualization techniques, hemostasis, postoperative pain control, and transportation of the critically ill patient.

MODULE IX: SFA 209, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: None

Title: WOUND HEALING, KNOT TYING, AND SUTURING

This module provides the student with principles and techniques, interactive didactics, and laboratory practicums, and examines and reviews wound healing and care, with specific focus on interventional techniques such as suturing, tying, and wound closure for a variety of injuries and incisions.

MODULE X: SFA 210, 2 Credits

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, and 208

Title: SURGICAL PROCEDURES

This module will break down most major surgeries performed in the O.R. today. Each surgery listed in the text will be explained step-by-step, from skin incision through final closure.

MODULE XI: SFA 211, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, and 210

Title: COMPLICATIONS IN SURGERY

During this module the student will recognize different surgical complications (hemorrhage, perforation of viscous or cavity, contamination, exposure, retraction, compression injuries, cardiac events, sudden hypoxia, sudden shock, interruption of surgical supervision, critical equipment failure and corrective measures, and how to initiate the appropriate course of action).

MODULE XII-XIII: SFA 212, 1 Credit

Prerequisites: SFA 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 210, and 211

Title: COMPUTER AND BUSINESS ISSUES WITH THE FIRST ASSISTANT

The student will understand the basics of computer usage in a clinical setting, as well as business issues relating to the surgical first assistant such as starting and running your own assisting business, insurance reimbursement, etc.

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Percentage
A	4.0	90-100%
B	3.0	80-89%
C	2.0	70-79%
D	1.0	60-69%
F	0.0	0 – 59%

Students must achieve a C or better in all courses
--

Make-Up Policy:

Should a student receive less than a C on any course final exam he/she may retake the exam one more time. However, should the student fail the exam a second time he/she will need to repeat the course. In the event that a second re-take is necessary the student's grade will not be recorded any higher than a C.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All Meridian students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. Every academic assignment, including papers, tests, or other assignments, is to be the work of the individual student. The following are examples of unethical or unprofessional behavior:

- Plagiarism
- Unprofessional behavior in communication with faculty and staff
- Completing an assignment for another student in part or in whole

Consequences

Any student who acts in an unethical manner on a particular module will receive a failing grade for that module. Any second academic incident or unprofessional communication with staff or faculty can result in administrative termination from the Institute.

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting Official Course Syllabus

Course Title: Phase Two, Applied Science Lab **Credits:** 3
Course Number: SFA 301 **Course Clock Hour Length:** 60
Prerequisites: None **Revision Date:** 1/02/2009

Text:

Lab Handouts

Instructional Methods:

30 hours of synchronous instructor-led lab sessions.

All lab skills are performed on anesthetized pigs, affording the benefit of understanding how to handle real tissue, real bleeding, and actual surgical emergencies.

An end-of-lab, an instructor-proctored exam will be administered.

Course Description:

The second phase of the **SFA Online Program** is the Applied Science Lab, which is 60 hours in length and consists of six, 10-hour days. All labs take place in our state-of-the-art animal laboratory facility. Labs run from Monday through Saturday and are scheduled twice monthly--on the second and last week of every month--with the exception that there are no labs offered in December. The Lab must be attended within the first 6 months of the program. The lab schedule is subject to change; therefore, each student **must** contact Meridian to verify lab availability.

This lab is a very intense but extremely rewarding week. All procedures are done on anesthetized pigs, affording the benefit of understanding how to handle real tissue, real bleeding, and actual surgical emergencies.

There was a time when this type of training was reserved only for physicians. Meridian has brought top-level physician training to the surgical first assistant.

In keeping with Meridian's philosophy we believe that the only real way to become a quality assistant is to take part in real training. It is very difficult to train on rubberized pieces and parts, and then move forward to perform those same skills on surgical patients. We feel that Meridian's prime responsibility to the students (and, ultimately, to the patients) is to be certain that our students graduate with proper experience in dealing with real and living tissue.

Course Outline:

Monday:

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Microbiology/Wound Healing Lecture
9:00-12:00 Noon	Basic Knot Tying and Suturing Lecture
12:00 Noon-12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
12:30-4:00 p.m.	Advanced Anatomy Lecture
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Basic Surgical Assisting Skills and Techniques

Tuesday:

8:00-9:00 a.m.	General Surgery Lecture
9:00-12:00 Noon	General Surgery Animal Practicum
12:00 Noon-12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
12:30- 4:00 p.m.	General/Urological Surgery Animal Practicum
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Lab Skills Review

Wednesday:

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Thoracic/Plastic Surgery Lecture
9:00- 12:00 Noon	Misc. Animal Practicum
12:00 Noon-12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
12:30-4:00 p.m.	Thoracic/Plastics Animal Practicum
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Lab Skills Review

Thursday:

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Laparoscopic Surgery Lecture
9:00-12:00 Noon	Laparoscopic Animal Practicum
12:00 Noon-12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
12:30-1:00 p.m.	Vascular Surgery Lecture
1:00-4:00 p.m.	Vascular Surgery Animal Practicum
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Lab Skills Review

Friday:

8:00-9:00 a.m.	Career Counseling and Development Lecture
9:00-10:00 a.m.	Understanding Certification/Professional Organizations
10:00- 12:00 Noon	Satisfactory Academic Progress/ Externship Process
12:00 Noon-12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
12:30-4:00 p.m.	Surgical Assisting Fundamentals Lecture
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Pharmacology Lecture

Saturday:

8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	Written and Practical Exam
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Course Objectives:

Following are our skill objectives for the week:

ONE HAND GRANNY KNOT
ONE HAND SQUARE KNOT
ONE HAND SURGEON'S KNOT
ONE HAND SLIDING KNOT
ONE HAND POSTING KNOT

TWO-HAND GRANNY KNOT
TWO HAND SQUARE KNOT
TWO-HAND SURGEON'S KNOT
TWO HAND SLIDING KNOT
TWO HAND POSTING KNOT

INSTRUMENT GRANNY KNOT
INSTRUMENT SQUARE

TYING ON INSTRUMENT
TYING UNDER TENSION
FOLLOW FINGER DOWN ON KNOT
PLACE TIE APPROPRIATELY
PERFORM ALL TIES WITH SUTURE
KEEP TENSION WITH DOMINANT HAND
TIE DEEP KNOT
TIE WITH SUFFICIENT SPEED

SIMPLE STITCH
WHIP STITCH
VERTICAL MATTRESS STITCH
HORIZONTAL MATTRESS STITCH
FIGURE OF EIGHT STITCH
SUBCUTICULAR RUNNING STITCH
INTERRUPTED SUBCUTICULAR STITCH
HEANEY STITCH

STICK TIE
APPROXIMATE SKIN EDGES
TIE ON SKIN WITH SUFFICIENT TENSION
USE INSTRUMENTS CORRECTLY
GRASP NEEDLE WITH PICKUP
CUT SUTURE TO APPROPRIATE LENGTHS
BURY KNOT UNDER SKIN
USE DERMABOND CORRECTLY
SPACE SUTURES AT CORRECT INTERVALS
USE SUTURE CONSERVATIVELY
PERFORM CORRECT MIRROR IMAGE
GOOD COSMETIC EFFECT
END-TO-END ARTERIAL ANASTOMOSIS ON GORTEX

END-TO-SIDE ARTERIAL ANASTOMOSIS ON GORTEX
SIDE-TO-SIDE ARTERIAL ANASTOMOSIS ON GORTEX
END-TO-END BOWEL ANASTOMOSIS ON EXCISED BOWEL
END-TO-SIDE BOWEL ANASTOMOSIS ON EXCISED BOWEL
SIDE-TO-SIDE BOWEL ANASTOMOSIS ON EXCISED BOWEL
TWO-LAYER BOWEL CLOSURE
ONE-LAYER BOWEL CLOSURE
WATERTIGHT CLOSURE
PARACHUTE TIE
TIE WITH PLAGGET
TIE ON BOWEL
TIE ON GORTEX

TIE PROLENE
USE CORRECT AMOUNT OF KNOTS
FOLLOW CORRECTLY
POINT CORRECTLY
GIVE ADEQUATE EXPOSURE
PLACE SUTURES AT APPROPRIATE DISTANCE ON BOWEL
PLACE SUTURE APPROPRIATELY ON GORTEX

CORRECT VERES NEEDLE INSERTION
CORRECT TROCAR INSERTION
UNDERSTAND TROCAR DANGERS
UNDERSTAND VERES NEEDLE DANGERS
INSERT INSTRUMENTS INTO TROCAR CORRECTLY
MANIPULATION OF INSTRUMENTS
CONNECT CAMERA CORRECTLY
DRIVE CAMERA CORRECTLY
0 DEGREE SCOPE ANGLED SCOPE INTRACOPORAL TYING
USE LOCKING GRASPER
USE NON-LOCKING GRASPER
USE SCISSORS
HANDLE BOWEL CORRECTLY
CORRECTLY MANIPULATE TISSUE
USE ENDO-LOOP
PERFORM BLUNT DISSECTION
OPERATE SUCTION DEVICE
USE ENDO-STAPLERS
USE TEAR TECHNIQUE
USE LAP BOVIE
USE LAP BI-POLAR UNDERSTAND
INSUFFLATION PSI
USE LAP-CLIP APPLIERS
PERFORM LAP GALLBLADDER
IDENTIFY ANGLE OF KALOT
IDENTIFY CYSTIC ARTERY
IDENTIFY CYSTIC DUCT
PROVIDE ADEQUATE RETRACTION ON GALLBLADDER
CORRECTLY LIGATE ARTERY AND DUCT
CORRECTLY REMOVE GALLBLADDER FROM LIVER BED

REMOVE GALLBLADDER FROM ABDOMEN
CLOSE INCISIONS PROPERLY
UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT OPEN INCISIONS
CORRECTLY INCISE ABDOMINAL SKIN
PROVIDE HOMEOSTASIS IN SUBCUTANEOUS LAYER
PERFORM BLUNT DISSECTION
CORRECTLY INCISE PERITONEUM
UNDERSTAND DANGERS OF OPENING ABDOMINAL CAVITY
IDENTIFY ASCENDING COLON
IDENTIFY TRANSVERSE COLON
IDENTIFY DESCENDING COLON
IDENTIFY URETERS
IDENTIFY SMALL INTESTINE
IDENTIFY KIDNEYS
IDENTIFY SPLEEN
IDENTIFY VASCULAR COMPONENTS
IDENTIFY TINEA
IDENTIFY MISCELLANEOUS STRUCTURES WHEN ASKED
HANDLE TISSUE CORRECTLY
CHOOSE APPROPRIATE INSTRUMENTATION
PLACE RETRACTORS APPROPRIATELY
PROVIDE ADEQUATE EXPOSURE
PROVIDE HEMOSTASIS
KNOW WHEN TO SUTURE AND WHEN TO BOVIE BLEEDER
PERFORM BLUNT DISSECTION
PERFORM SHARP DISSECTION
DISSECT WITH BOVIE
PROVIDE APPROPRIATE COUNTER TRACTION
RECOGNIZE BLEEDERS PROMPTLY
TIE ON BOWEL
TIE ON MESENTERY
MAKE APPROPRIATE SUTURE SELECTION
PLACE CLAMP ON TISSUE
PLACE CLAMP ON VESSEL
TIE CLAMPED TISSUE OR VESSEL
STICK TIE CLAMPED TISSUE OR VESSEL
PROPERLY REMOVE CLAMPS FROM TISSUE OR VESSEL
MANIPULATE CLAMP WHILE SURGEON IS TYING
CUT BETWEEN CLAMPS
DO NOT PASS POINT WHILE CUTTING
DO NOT PASS POINT WHILE OPERATING BOVIE
PLACE BOWEL OCCLUSION CLAMPS
UNDERSTAND BOWEL AND COLON RESECTION LINES
KEEP FIELD CLEAR OF BLOOD
KEEP TISSUE MOIST TIE
WITH BOTH HANDS
TIE WITH NEEDLE ON SUTURE

DISSECT MESENTERY
PERFORM END-TO-END BOWEL ANASTOMOSIS

PERFORM END-TO-SIDE BOWEL ANASTOMOSIS
PERFORM SIDE-TO-SIDE BOWEL ANASTOMOSIS
PERFORM BILROTH II
PERFORM SPLENECTOMY
PERFORM NEPHRECTOMY
PERFORM SMALL BOWEL RESECTION
PERFORM LIVER RESECTION
ASSIST ON SMALL BOWEL RESECTION
ASSIST ON NEPHRECTOMY
ASSIST ON SPLENECTOMY
ASSIST ON BILROTH II
HAND SEW ANASTOMOSIS
PERFORM STAPLED ANASTOMOSIS TIE ON LIVER
BOVIE ON LIVER
DISSECT OUT VESSELS
PLACE VESSEL LOOPS
POTTS TIE VESSEL LOOP
TIE OFF TRIBUTARY VESSELS
PLACE VASCULAR CLAMPS
HANDLE VESSELS APPROPRIATELY
USE SUCTION TO RETRACT
PERFORM ARTERIAL BYPASS
PERFORM VESSEL TO VESSEL ANASTOMOSIS
FOIL WHILE SUTURING ON VESSEL
PLACE SUTURE WITH PICKUP
SUTURE WITH PLEGGETS
PERFORM ON-LAY ANASTOMOSIS
PLACE UMBILICAL TAPES
STOP BLEEDING BY PRESSURE
STOP BLEEDING BY SUTURING VESSEL
REPAIR ANASTOMOTIC LEAKS
CHOOSE CORRECT VASCULAR INSTRUMENTATION
HARVEST VEIN
TAKE DOWN BLADDER
UNDERSTAND THORACIC INCISIONS
OPEN CHEST
LOCATE A FISSURE
HANDLE LUNG TISSUE APPROPRIATELY
SUTURE LUNG TISSUE
TIE ON LUNG TISSUE
RETRACT LUNG TISSUE
LOCATE VASCULAR COMPONENTS OF LUNGS
PERFORM LOBECTOMY
ASSIST ON LOBECTOMY
REPAIR RESECTION LINE LEAK
TEST FOR LEAKS
SUTURE ON BRANCHES
PROVIDE APPROPRIATE EXPOSURE OF LUNGS
CHOOSE APPROPRIATE SUTURE FOR LUNGS
CHOOSE APPROPRIATE THORACIC INSTRUMENTS

UNDERSTAND REASONS FOR CHEST TUBE INSERTION
RINSE CAVITY BEFORE CLOSURE
INSPECT FOR PROPER HOMEOSTASIS
CLOSE PERITONEUM
CLOSE FASCIA
CLOSE SUBCU AND SKIN
CHOOSE APPROPRIATE CLOSING MATERIAL
CHOOSE APPROPRIATE DRESSING MATERIAL
PROPERLY APPLY DRESSING
INSERT DRAINS
UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT CASTING MATERIAL
SELECT APPROPRIATE CASTING MATERIAL
UNDERSTAND SKIN CONDITIONS FOR CASTING
UNDERSTAND VASCULAR CONDITIONS OF CASTING
KNOW WHEN TO CAST POSTOPERATIVELY
APPLY SHORT ARM CAST
APPLY LONG ARM CAST
DEMONSTRATE PROPER PRESSURE OF CAST
APPLY APPROPRIATE PADDING
CHOOSE APPROPRIATE CAST FOR SITUATION
OPERATE CAST SAW APPROPRIATELY
KNOW FRACTURE TYPES
KNOW APPROPRIATE REPAIR FOR DIFFERENT FRACTURES

DEFINE LEGAL TERMINOLOGY
DEFINE MALPRACTICE
DEFINE NEGLIGENCE
KNOW SCOPE OF PRACTICE
UNDERSTAND INSURANCE AND BILLING REGULATIONS
WRITE EMPLOYEE POLICIES
WRITE JOB DESCRIPTIONS
UNDERSTAND CONTRACT ISSUES

KNOW MEDICARE REGULATIONS
KNOW CERTIFICATION ISSUES
UNDERSTAND WHAT TO DO DURING DEPOSITION
KNOW WHAT CULPABLE MEANS
DEFINE DIRECT SUPERVISION
KNOW ACS POSITION STATEMENT
UNDERSTAND LIABILITY

WORK AS A TEAM PLAYER
KNOW ASSISTANT RESPONSIBILITIES
HAVE A TEACHABLE ATTITUDE
KNOW FUNCTION OF O.R. TEAM
WORK WELL UNDER PRESSURE
RESPOND POSITIVELY TO CRITICISM

OFFER UNPROMPTED ADVICE
TAKE INITIATIVE TO PERFORM TASKS

NOT AGGRESSIVE BUT ASSERTIVE
CONFIDENT IN ABILITIES
GOAL ORIENTED
KNOW IMPORTANCE OF "PATIENT FIRST"
UNDERSTAND ASSISTANT-TO-SURGEON RELATIONSHIP
KNOWLEDGE OF BASIC ANATOMY
UNDERSTAND CORE ASSISTING PRINCIPLES
BE WILLING TO DO ALL TASKS INSTRUCTED
PROPER RELATIONS WITH O.R. TEAM
TAKE ROLE SERIOUSLY
UNDERSTAND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JOB AND CAREER
BE WILLING TO STRIVE TO BE THE BEST

Grading Scale:

An 80% must be achieved on end-of-phase exams. All skill objectives will be graded on a pass and fail basis.

Make-Up Policy:

Should a student receive less than an 80% on the end-of-phase exam he/she may retake the exam one more time. However, should the student fail the exam a second time he/she may be expelled for poor satisfactory academic progress. In the event that a second re- take is necessary the student's grade will not be recorded any higher than an 80%.

If a student fails to show proficiency in a majority of daily skills he/she must repeat the entire Phase Two.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All Meridian students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. Every academic assignment, including papers, tests, or other assignments, is to be the work of the individual student. The following are examples of unethical or unprofessional behavior:

- Plagiarism
- Unprofessional behavior in communication with faculty and staff
- Completing an assignment for another student in part or in whole

Consequences

Any student who acts in an unethical manner will receive a failing grade. Any second academic incident or unprofessional communication with staff or faculty can result in administrative termination from the Institute.

Attendance:

All students are required to attend the six day Applied Science Lab. At the time of booking each student will be sent a confirmation letter along with a confirmation number. If the student cancels within 30 days prior to the lab or fails to show for a scheduled and confirmed lab then that student will be assessed a \$500.00 rescheduling fee. In the event that a student fails to show for a lab and has not rescheduled, then this can be interpreted as a failure to academically progress through the program and said student is subject to dismissal for poor academic progress.

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting Official Course Syllabus

Course Title: Phase Three, Clinical Externship **Credit Hours:** 6
Course Number: SFA 401 **Course Clock Hour Length:** 303.75
Prerequisites: SFA 209, 301 **Revision Date:** 7/01/2015
Malpractice Insurance
Affiliation Agreement

Location: Conducted at Facility of Students Choosing. Facility must be willing to enter into and sign an affiliation agreement with Meridian.

Instructional Methods:

140 surgeries, with synchronous instruction. All cases will be done under direct supervision of the Meridian-approved preceptor. The preceptor will be responsible for instruction and evaluation according to standards set forth by Meridian.

Course Description:

The clinical phase is intended to provide training and clinical practice in basic surgical skills applicable to the student surgical first assistant. Thus, the following are required:

1. Completion of 140 cases, as specified, in various specialties of surgery.
2. Training under direct supervision and guidance of a qualified preceptor or Surgeon.
3. Students have one year to complete the entire program. The start date will be the first of the month following the month in which the student signs the Enrollment Agreement if openings permit. If openings are unavailable the student will start in the earliest month available, following the month in which the student signs the enrollment agreement, in which openings do exist. Students do not have to complete all of the academic phase in order to attend the Applied Sciences lab; however, they must attend a lab before logging any clinicals. **NOTE: All students are responsible for securing their own clinical site and preceptors. Meridian will assist where and when possible, but ultimate responsibility is that of each individual student.**

Course Outline:

Clinical Externship is the third phase of the course, in which each student must complete 140 cases in the following areas:

- A. General Surgery: Minimum of 20 cases
- B. Minimum of 20 cases in the specialty of your choice
- C. Minimum of 20 cases in additional specialty of your choice
- D. Minimum of 80 various specialties

Suggested additional specialties:

1. Pediatric surgery
2. Neurosurgery
3. Hand surgery
4. Plastic surgery
5. Obstetric and Gynecologic surgery
6. Thoracic surgery
7. Genitourinary surgery
8. Trauma surgery
9. Transplant surgery
10. Ear, nose, and throat surgery
11. Ophthalmic surgery
12. Cardiovascular surgery
13. Oral surgery
14. Procurement surgery
15. Orthopedic surgery
16. Thoracoscopy Surgery

All cases must be done with a Meridian-approved preceptor. Students must fill out case logs on a daily basis, as well as have one signed preceptor agreement form for each preceptor and signed evaluations on each case.

MERIDIAN INSTITUTE OF SURGICAL ASSISTING STANDARDS OF CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP

The clinical phase is intended to provide training and clinical practice in basic surgical skills applicable to the student surgical first assistant. Thus, the following are required:

1. Completion of 140 cases (20 must be in General Surgery, 20 in a specialty of the student's choice, 20 additional chosen specialty, and 80 various specialty).
2. Training under direct supervision and guidance of a Meridian-approved qualified preceptor or surgeon.

PRECEPTOR GUIDELINES

1. Must be proficient in all areas of surgery.
2. Must have practiced as surgeon or surgical assistant (with Licensure/Certification M.D, D.O, DPM., CSFA, or CSA).
3. Has performed no less than 200 cases in past 12 months (must be able to produce proof, if needed).
4. Must be honest and uphold the highest level of integrity when evaluating student and filling out necessary forms. If found otherwise, all cases supervised by this preceptor will not count towards completion.
5. Must be willing to spend needed time with student to share technical skills and knowledge about case, anatomy, etc.
6. Must be willing to sign preceptor agreement and abide by requirements of that agreement.

STUDENT GUIDELINES/OBJECTIVES DURING CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP

1. Student shall abide by all hospital policies and rules while in facility.
2. Student shall use only facilities that are JACHO accredited, or another Medicare-approved agency.
3. Student must submit an institutional Affiliation Agreement to their respective facility for approval and signature. The Affiliation Agreement **must be signed and received by Meridian prior to the start of clinicals.**
4. Student shall conduct himself/herself in a professional manner at all times.
5. Student must accept constructive criticism while maintaining a positive attitude. He/she must avoid a confrontational attitude with preceptor or surrounding staff.
6. Student shall first address any concerns/complaints with preceptor concerning clinical time. If not addressed to student's satisfaction, then that student's concern may be brought to educator's attention, and the grievance process will ensue only if necessary.
7. Student shall converse and report to preceptor at the end of each day to gauge progress of preceptorship.

Time Frame Objectives for Phase Three Students:

- **Upon completion of first 10 cases**, the student will be able to tie both deep and superficially while providing basic exposure, adequately positioning patient appropriate to procedure, and maintaining sterile technique upon catheterizing patient.
- **Upon completion of 15 cases**, the student will be able to perform basic tissue handling,

advanced tying (around a hemostat, and suture ligatures), and provide appropriate exposure for surgeon.

- **Upon completion of 20 cases**, the student will be able to perform all basic skills outlined in the scope of practice found in handbook. The student should use the additional cases to refine his/her skills.

Each student must complete 90% of the tasks listed below, with proficiency, in order to document as having worked in the role of the surgical assistant.

1. Confirm placement and functionality of equipment and supplies with surgical team.
2. Confirm availability of specialty supplies with surgical team.
3. Communicate surgeon's preference to surgical team.
4. Monitor and aid in the positioning of the patient according to surgeon's preference.
5. Monitor and aid in the draping of the patient.
6. Provide visualization of the operative site during the operative procedure.
7. Assist the surgeon in providing hemostasis by using appropriate technique.
8. Use appropriate technique to assist with the closure of body planes.
9. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of normal and pathological anatomy and physiology while assisting surgeon during procedures.
10. Confirm X-rays, MRI's, CTs, results of diagnostic tests, patient chart, etc. are in the operating room and available for review.

Grading Scale: Pass/Fail

Make-Up Policy: None

Academic Integrity Policy

Meridian students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. Every academic assignment, including papers, tests, or other assignments, is to be the work of the individual student. The following are examples of unethical or unprofessional behavior:

- Plagiarism
- Unprofessional behavior in communication with faculty and staff
- Completing an assignment for another student in part or in whole

1. Student shall abide by all hospital policies and rules while in facility.
2. Student will conduct himself/herself in a professional manner at all times.
3. Student must accept constructive criticism while maintaining a positive attitude. He/she will avoid confrontational attitude with preceptor or surrounding staff.
4. Student will handle concerns/complaints with preceptor first, concerning clinical time. If not addressed to student's satisfaction, concern may be brought to program director's attention and grievance process will ensue only if necessary.

5. Student shall converse and report to preceptor at the end of each day to gauge progress of preceptorship.

Consequences:

Any student who acts in an unethical manner will receive a failing grade. Any second academic incident or unprofessional communication with staff or faculty (any consequences) can result in administrative termination from the Institute. Any act conducted by the student and subsequent consequences is at the discretion of Meridian Institute.

AAS in Surgical Assisting (Degree Completion) Courses:

GEN 101- Computer Skills

Instructor: Celia White
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute Surgical of Assisting's SFA Online Program.
Primary Text: *Introduction to Computers for Healthcare Professionals*, Jones & Bartlett Learning, 6th Edition, 2013.

Course Description: This course provides an introduction to computers and computing. Topics include the impact of computers on society, ethical issues, and hardware/software applications, including spreadsheets, databases, word processors, the internet and operating systems.

GEN 102- Communication

Instructor: Robyn Johnson
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program
Primary Text: *Real Communication: An Introduction* Jones & Bartlett Learning, O'Hair, Wiemann, Mullin, Teven, 3rd Edition.

Course Description: Examines the elements affecting speech communication at the small group, individual, and public communication levels with emphasis on practice of communication at each level.

GEN 103- Introduction to Psychology

Instructor: Roy Zacharias
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.
Primary Text: *Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior*, Coon and Mitterer, 13th Edition, 2012.

Course Description: In this course you will receive a broad introduction to the science of psychology: from the history of the field, to the latest research on topics such as perception, memory, intelligence, morality, sexuality, mental illness, religion, and creativity.

GEN 104- Introduction to Sociology

Instructor: Roy Zacharias
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.
Primary Text: *Introduction to Sociology*, Basirico, 5th Edition, 2013.

Course Description: The student will be required to use the internet to read online reading assignments pertaining to sociological issues. The student will also be required to view online videos concerning sociological issues.

GEN 105- Introduction to Business

Instructor: Celia White
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.
Primary Text: *Foundations in Business*, Pride, Hughes, Kapoor 4th Edition, 2014.

Course Description: This course presents an integrated view of business organization by studying the business process that are common to most businesses. This will include the acquisition of capital and human resources, purchasing, production and sales.

HLTH 201- Introduction to Radiology

Instructor: Greg Salmon
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.
Primary Text: *Principles of Imaging*, Cochard, Elsevier, 2012.

Course Description: This course will examine the imaging process of the human body with emphasis on application and evaluation of numerous imaging techniques.

HLTH 202- Advanced Principles of General and Peripheral Vascular Surgery

Instructor: Greg Salmon
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.

Primary Text: *Essentials of General Surgery*, Lawrence, Bell, Dayton, Herbert LWW Publishing, 6th Edition, 2012.

Course Description: This course of study will provide the student with a thorough understanding and knowledge of general surgery and peripheral vascular surgery and management of the following:

- Abdominal wall including hernia
- Esophagus
- Stomach and duodenum
- Small intestine and appendix
- Colon, rectum, and anus
- Biliary tract
- Pancreas
- Liver
- Breast
- Surgical Endocrinology
- Spleen
- Surgical oncology
- Peripheral vascular

HLTH 203- Advanced Principles of Obstetrics and Gynecological Surgery

Instructor: Tamra Roberts
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.

Primary Text: *Atlas of Pelvic Anatomy and Gynecologic Surgery*, Baggish, Karram, Learning, 3rd Edition, 2011, Elsevier.

Course Description: This course of study will provide the student with a thorough understanding and knowledge of Obstetrics and Gynecological surgery and management of the following:

- Pelvic anatomy
- Gynecologic surgery
- Abdominal surgery
- Other related surgery
- Laparoscopy
- Cesarean Section
-

HLTH 204- Advanced Principles of Orthopedic Surgery

Instructor: Greg Salmon
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.

Primary Text: *Essentials of Orthopedic Surgery*, Wiesel, Delahay, 4th Edition.

Course Description: This course will provide the student with a thorough understanding and knowledge of Orthopedic surgery techniques and management of the following surgical procedures:

- Spine
- Shoulder
- Hand and Wrist
- Hip and Femur
- Knee
- Foot and Ankle

HLTH 205- Advanced Principles of Cardiovascular Surgery

Instructor: Roy Zacharias
Credit Hours: 3
Outside Hours: 21 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.

Primary Text: *Manual of Cardiothoracic Surgery*, Yuh, Vricella, Baumgartner, McGraw Hill Medical.

Course Description: This course will provide the student with a thorough understanding and knowledge of Cardiothoracic surgery techniques and management of the following surgical procedures:

- General thoracic
- Adult cardiac
- Congenital cardiac

HLTH 206- Surgical Safety

Instructor: Roy Zacharias
Credit Hours: 2
Outside Hours: 14 per week
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Completion of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Program.
Primary Text: *Working Safely in Health Care*, Fell-Carlson, 1st Edition, Cengage Learning.

Course Description: This course presents the student with knowledge and understanding of the importance of workplace safety in the healthcare setting.

Student work policy

Meridian understands that all of our students are employed at healthcare facilities while completing the preceptorship phase. Below is the policy in regards to your work policy as a student in relation to your clinicals.

Student Substitution for Paid Personnel:

Student must not be substituted for paid personnel to conduct the work of the clinical facility. However, after demonstrating proficiency students may be permitted to undertake certain defined activities with appropriate supervision and direction. Clinical phases of instruction should be educational. The substitution of students for regular departmental staff in performing departmental services is not considered to be educationally directed and, therefore, should not be used to fulfill the clinical requirements of the program.

Tuition Information

The Faculty at Meridian believes that we have developed the most comprehensive first assistant course available. By utilizing online modules, combined with hands-on workshops and CD-ROM instruction, our course can be offered at a lower tuition than many other distance education programs.

SFA Online Program- Certificate

The program cost, which includes all online modules, Applied Sciences Lab, and clinical support as well as all associated texts and materials, is \$7495.00. **NOTE: As with everything else, program rates are subject to change periodically.** The only additional expense is your transportation, lodging, and food for the week-long Applied Sciences Lab, as well as your malpractice insurance fee of approximately \$29 to \$100.00 and book cost.

Tuition and Fees Information

Tuition (\$214.11 per credit):	\$ 5995.00
Processing Fee	\$ 500.00
<u>Applied Science Lab and Technology Fee</u>	<u>\$ 1000.00</u>
Total Program Cost	\$ 7495.00

Additional Fees:

Book: Approx. \$125.00

Malpractice Insurance: Approx. \$100.00 per year.

Certification Exam Fee: Approx. \$100.00-200.00

Several different payment options are available:

1. Full program costs paid upfront for a total current payment of \$6995.00. Student may pay their tuition utilizing a MasterCard, Visa, American Express, or Discover Card.
2. Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting offers **Federal Financial Aid** to those who qualify. This is administered through the U.S. Department of Education's Title IV program.
3. Other payment options as approved by the Director of Financial Aid. These options are available to all students.

In the event that the student is approved for a payment plan option, all monthly payments must be paid by means of either a bank check card or major credit card. Students can select either the 1st or 15th of each month for such payments to be processed. Also, no certificates or transcripts will be released to the student until payment is made in full.

***Most hospitals have excellent tuition reimbursement plans, so be sure to check into this option. Meridian would be glad to assist you in working with your hospital.

AAS in Surgical Assisting (Degree Completion)

The program cost, which includes all online modules, processing fee and technology fee is \$7601.52. **NOTE: As with everything else, program rates are subject to change periodically.**

Tuition and Fees Information

Total cost for 32 credits (\$214.11 per credit):	\$6851.52
Processing Fee:	\$500.00
Technology Fee:	\$250.00
Total Program Cost:	\$7601.52

Payment options are available (*Revised 02/09/2016*):

1. Student may pay their tuition utilizing a MasterCard, Visa, American Express, or Discover Card.
2. Other payment options as approved by the Business Office. These options are available to all students.

In the event that the student is approved for a payment plan option, all monthly payments must be paid by means of either a bank check card or major credit card. A down payment will be required and all payments after will be made on the 1st of every month. No diploma or transcripts will be released to the student until payment is made in full.

***Most hospitals have excellent tuition reimbursement plans, so be sure to check into this option. Meridian would be glad to assist you in working with your hospital.

Refund Policy

****The official start date will be first of the month following the month in which the student signs the Enrollment Agreement if openings permit. If openings are unavailable the student will start in the earliest month available, following the month in which the student signs the enrollment agreement, in which openings do exist****

You, the student, may cancel your enrollment any time prior to your start date for a full refund of all tuition and fees paid.

Once you have enrolled in the SFA Online Program and you determine that it is necessary to withdraw, you should immediately notify the Program Director, in writing, via the U.S. Postal Service, or E-mail. Part of the fees you have paid may be refundable. The tuition refund amount shall be determined as follows:

If you withdraw from the program:	Tuition Refund Amount:
Prior to start date	100% refund
Within two weeks of the start date	80% refund **
Within three weeks of the start date	60% refund **
Within four weeks of the start date	40% refund **
5 weeks or more after the start date	0% refund **

Refunds will be issued within 45 days from the date of determination.

A student's last day of attendance is the last day of academic activity and considered the official withdraw date.

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting date of determination of a student is (whichever is sooner):

- The date that the school is first notified of student's intent to withdraw
- The postmark of the withdrawal letter

Financial Aid Recipients:

Repayment calculation of unearned aid is used to determine any refund. As a result, any students who received federal funds will be required to repay any aid that is determined to be "unearned." The unearned repayment calculation is performed utilizing the federal government's repayment worksheet. The amount of assistance earned is determined on a prorated basis. For example, if the student completed 30% of the program, they earned 30% of the financial assistance that was originally awarded. Once the student has completed more than 60% of the program, the student earns all of the assistance they were scheduled to receive for the program.

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting will repay the amount on the student's behalf to the appropriate federal and institutional program(s), and will bill the student's account within 45 days of the student's date of determination. An invoice reflecting these charges will be sent to the student upon completion of the Repayment Calculation of Unearned Aid.

**Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting Grading System and Credits
Awarded**

Grading System:

Online Module Exams and Online Coursework

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Percentage
A	4	90-100%
B	3	80-89%
C	2	70-79%
D	1	60-69%
F	0	0 – 59%

All students must achieve a C or better for each course. If the student fails to achieve a C he/she will be given the opportunity to retake the lowest scored exam of that course in order to bring the grade to a C. In the event the student fails the exam a second time he/she will need to repeat the course.

Applied Sciences Lab (Pass/Fail)

- Each group of students will have facilitators to help as well as grade progress for each day.
- The final exam will be given the last day of the Applied Sciences Lab. If the student fails to achieve an 80% they will be given the opportunity to re-take the exam. In the event the exam is failed the second time the student will then have the option to retake lab. In the event of a retake the student's maximum grade available will be 80%.

140- Case Clinical Externship (Pass/Fail)

- A preceptor evaluation form must be filled out for each case. At the end of the externship phase, all evaluations must average a minimum of a "good" rating. "Good" to "Excellent" ratings are desired as overall averages.

AS NOTED ABOVE, COMPLETION OF THIS PROGRAM IS CONTINGENT UPON ACHIEVING A C OR BETTER FOR ALL COURSES. AREAS OF LAB AND CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP ARE STRICTLY PASS/FAIL. THE PROCTORED EXAM GIVEN WHILE THE STUDENT IS ON CAMPUS WILL BE GRADED SEPARATELY.

Meridian’s SFA PROGRAM awards 28 college level credits. **Transferability of these credits is left to the decision of the receiving institution.**

Clock Hours and Credits Awarded:

SFA Online Program

Phase One: 285 hours, 19 semester credits
 Phase Two: 60 hours, 3 semester credits
 Phase Three: 303.75 hours, 6 semester credits

Credits are awarded as follows:

SFA201 Surgical A&P	3
SFA202 Microbiology	3
SFA203 Pharmacology	3
SFA204 Anesthesia	1
SFA205 Fundamentals	1
SFA206 Role Definition	1
SFA207 Legal and Ethics	1
SFA208 Monitoring Devices	1
SFA209 Wound Management	1
SFA210 Operative Procedures	2
SFA211 Complications in Surgery	1
SFA212 Business Principles	1
SFA301 APPLIED SCIENCES	3
SFA401 CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP	6

AAS in Surgical Assisting (Degree Completion)

Transfer from SFA Online Program: 28 semester credits

GEN 101-105: 225 hours, 15 semester credits

HLTH 201-206: 255 hours, 17 semester credits

GEN101	Computer Skills	3
GEN102	Communication	3
GEN103	Introduction to Psychology	3
GEN104	Introduction to Sociology	3
GEN105	Introduction to Business	3
HLTH201	Introduction to Radiology	3
HLTH202	Advanced Principles of General and Peripheral Vascular Surgery	3
HLTH203	Advanced Principles of Obstetrics and Gynecological Surgery	3
HLTH204	Advanced Principles of Orthopedic Surgery	3
HLTH205	Advanced Principles of Cardiovascular Surgery	3
HLTH206	Surgical Safety	2

Requirements for Graduation

To be qualified to graduate, the student must:

SFA Online Program

- Complete and receive a passing status in all three phases of the **SFA Online Program**.
- Receive a minimum of C or better on all modules. An 80% or better must be achieved on the proctored exam during Phase Two.
- Meet all financial obligations to Meridian.
- CAAHEP standards now dictate that all students must sit for a National Certification Exam. Therefore, all students will be required to schedule a date to sit for the **CSFA** exam offered by the NBSTSA prior to graduation. In the event that the student takes the exam prior to graduation the results will be released to the student upon graduation by the respective credentialing agencies.

AAS in Surgical Assisting (Degree Completion)

- Complete and receive a passing status in all online academics associated with AAS Degree Completion program.
- Meet all financial obligations to Meridian.

Admission Policy and Process

In order for a student to be enrolled into Meridian Institute's SFA Online Program or into the AAS in Surgical Assisting, the following must take place **PRIOR** to beginning any portion of the program.

1. All prospective students must meet the entrance requirements listed in the Student Catalog.
2. The forms listed below must be received by Meridian Institute's Office of Student Affairs:
 - Completed Application Checklist
 - Completed Application with supporting attachments
 - Signed enrollment agreement
3. The Student must:
Make an initial payment **OR** have completed the Federal Financial Aid (SFA Online Program only) process as determined by the Department of Financial Aid.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

(Revised August 18, 2015)

MISA Student must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by the college. Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting has elected to apply the standards set forth below to **all students** including those students who received aid from any of the U.S. Department of Education Title IV programs.

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting is required to measure each student's satisfactory academic progress. All students must continue to meet SAP standards during their enrollment.

SAP for the SFA Certificate is measured at the end of the six-month period of enrollment. SAP for the AAS in Surgical Assisting is measured mid-semester. The student's academic progress is measured in two components:

Qualitative and Quantitative Measures of Academic Progress

Qualitative Measures of Academic Progress

The qualitative measures of academic progress is based on achieving a C or better on course/class. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA. In addition, for the SFA certificate program students must pass all lab skills and complete 140 cases of the clinical externship with an overall good rating on the Meridian established Likert scale, as well score an 80% on the Applied Science Lab final examination.

Quantitative Measures of Academic Progress

All students who attend the SFA Certificate program must make arrangements to, and attend the Applied Science Lab within the initial 26 weeks of enrollment. Students must have completed all three phases with a 52 week period of enrollment. All students enrolled in the AAS in Surgical Assisting must complete all degree requirements in 18 months.

Remedial Coursework

If a student receives a failing grade for any course, they will work with the instructor utilizing a customized remedial training program. Clear objectives will be outlined for the student to achieve success and be removed from remedial training. The following actions will take place concerning remediation.

If the student defers the remediation, they will be withdrawn from the program.

If the student successfully completes the requirements and pass the course, they will be removed from remediation.

If the student fails the course a second time they will be required to retake the course..

During the SFA certificate program, if the student fails to pass all the skills in the Applied Science Lab, they will be given one on-one remediation training during the lab. If the student does not progress to a point where they can pass all the skills requirements of the lab, they will be required to repeat the lab at another date.

If the student fails to score an 80% on the Applied Science Lab final exam, they will be provided on-site remediation on the day of the exam. The student will be required to retake the exam within two weeks after the remediation. If the student fails to pass the Applied Science Lab final retake, they will be required to attend the lab again.

Maximum Time Frame

The student may not exceed 150% of the published length of the program. Federal regulations allow financial aid recipients to receive financial aid for a maximum number of attempted credits. If at any point in time it is determined that a student cannot complete their program of study within 150% of the program length, the student will be ineligible for additional financial aid.

Effect on Student not completing the course within the specified timeframe;

The policy below will outline the procedure and general effects in the event that any student does not finish the entire program within the allotted time frame.

AAS STUDENTS ARE ALLOTTED 18 MONTHS TO COMPLETE THE AAS DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM.

ALL SFA CERTIFICATE STUDENTS ARE ALLOTTED 52 WEEKS TO COMPLETE ALL THREE PHASES OF THE SFA ONLINE PROGRAM FROM THEIR INITIAL START DATE*, IN ACCORDANCE WITH MERIDIAN'S GRADING POLICY.

* The start date is considered to be the first of the month following the month in which the student signs the Enrollment Agreement if openings permit. If openings are unavailable the student will start in the earliest month available, following the month in which the student signs the enrollment agreement, in which openings do exist. All students will be notified by the Director of Student Affairs via email when they are 60 days away from their completion date. Students will receive an additional email notification when they are 30 days out from their completion date.

Extension

In the event that a student does not complete the program in the allotted = time-frame they **may** be eligible for a one-time six-month extension**. The final approval for the extension is at the discretion of the Program Director and will involve a \$250.00 extension fee.

** Extensions will only be granted in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Program Director.

NOTE: EXTENSIONS WILL ONLY BE GRANTED ONE TIME FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS.

If the student does not apply for **or** is not granted an extension and fails to complete the program within the time-frame they will be terminated from the program.

SFA Certificate students who receive an "I", "F", "W", "WF", or "U" grades in courses attempted will become ineligible for financial aid for those particular courses, but can regain eligibility for financial aid once course is successfully completed. A student who receives, "I", "F", "W", "WF", or "U" in phase III and is on an extension will still be considered as completion of the enrollment period for financial aid purposes. All MISA students must retake and pass these courses in order to graduate

Repeat courses will be counted in attempted clock/credit hours. (Note: ALL courses attempted and earned, except audited courses, count in total clock/credit hours attempted.)

Conditions for reinstatement;

If the student does not apply for **or** is not granted an extension within the final 30 days of their allotted program completion time, fails to complete the program at the end of 12 months or at the end an extension period if given, they will be dropped from the course and must re-enroll. Credit will be given for classes already **completed**.

If the student re-enrolls they will be given credit for work already completed, but **must** finish any uncompleted classes, labs, or clinical externship requirements in 52 week period. All current tuition and fees will be applied and **must be paid by the re-enrolling student for any uncompleted portion of the program. There is a \$250.00 re-enrollment fee that maybe waived at the discretion of the school. The re-enrolled student will be considered a NEW student** and will be subject to all academic and financial policies pertaining to all new students. Any monies owed to the institution prior to re-enrollment must be paid before the re-enrollment process may begin. If the student cannot afford to pay in full at the time, there is a payment plan available for re-enrolling students with a fee of \$500.00.

Financial Aid Warning: Warning status will be assigned to a student who fails to meet progress standards at the conclusion of an evaluation period. A student assigned a Financial Aid Warning will be notified by email. This will delay all financial aid disbursement until the student regains satisfactory academic progress.

All Students who are entitled to a reimbursement of Federal Financial Aid will be given the following statement:

Dear Student,

The second disbursement of Federal Financial Aid will not be received to the school until the mid-point has been met. The mid-point has been defined as enrollment of six months into Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting Program, completion of half the credit hours which includes completion of the one week Science Lab, in which you may have to pay for any travel/lodging expenses incurred during the trip to Nashville. Half the credits may not be completed before eight months. This means Meridian will not receive a student's second disbursement no earlier than eight months.

Furthermore, understand that any Federal Aid will be received by the school in two disbursements. Any award that is over the amount of tuition will not be reimbursed to you until the entirety of the tuition is paid in full, which will not be until the second disbursement.

No award due to the student will be released by Meridian Institute until the mid-point is met.

If I have any further questions I will contact Robyn Johnson, Director of Financial Aid, Robyn.Johnson@Meridian-Institute.edu, (615) 678-8196 ext 13

A student who is placed on financial aid and academic on warning must do the following to regain satisfactory academic progress.

1. A letter with detailed explanation:

- a. Explain why the student failed to complete the academic progress requirements and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress.
- b. Describe the student's educational objectives.
- c. Provide a schedule to indicate how these objectives will be achieved.

2. Documentation: Submit third party documentation (if applicable) supporting the reason(s) why the student failed to maintain academic progress; i.e., a letter from a mental health professional or police officer, medical or legal documentation, death certificate, etc.

3. Academic Plan: Students are required to complete an *Academic Plan* with an academic advisor.

Notification of Status: The Office of Academics will notify students and the Financial Aid office when students are on *Warning, Academic Plan* status. However, it is the student's responsibility to know their academic progress status, academic plan, and how it affects financial aid eligibility.

Grievance Policy

1. Introduction

Meridian is committed to mutual respect among all constituents of the institute's community. This commitment includes students, faculty, staff, and administration alike. In all concerns about fair treatment, we seek to work together to understand and address those concerns without having to resort to formal grievance procedures. When that is not possible, we are at all levels committed to a fair and reasonable resolution of issues through a formal grievance process guided by the information and documentation provided in the process. The regulation described below guides the orderly procedure of grievance, and attempts at resolution.

2. What May Be Grieved

2.1 This procedure is to be used to resolve grievances against decisions or actions that were made by employees or agents of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting.

All grievances of an academic nature should be sent to:

Roy Zacharias Jr., Dean of Academics, 1507 County Hospital Road, Nashville, TN 37218
(615) 678-8196

All grievances for non-academic related issues should be sent to:

Larry Stover, Vice President, 1507 County Hospital Road, Nashville, TN 37218 (615) 678-8196

2.2 An action or decision is grievable only if it involves a misapplication or misinterpretation of institute policy, regulation, or rule, or a violation of state or federal law. Grievances may not be used to challenge policies or procedures of general applicability.

2.3. Claims against an employee on matters that are unrelated to the employee's job or role at the Institution may not be grieved.

3. Who May Grieve

The procedures set forth below may be used by grievants who are enrolled as students at Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting, at the time of the incident being grieved. The person filing the grievance must be the alleged victim of unfair treatment; a grievance cannot be filed on behalf of another person.

4. Other Remedies

The existence of this procedure does not bar grievants from also filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

5. Time Limits

The formal resolution process described below must be initiated within 60 days of the decision, action, or events giving rise to the grievance. This time limit may be extended by the Program Director or Administrator with jurisdiction over the grievance, if the grievant makes the request for extension within the 60 day period, for good cause shown (e.g., an active effort at informal resolution).

6. Informal Resolution, Generally

6.1 The grievant should first discuss the issue with the person(s) responsible for the action or decision being grieved, and with that person's supervisor (or higher administrative authority), if feasible. This is not required in cases where the grievant believes that efforts at informal resolution may result in retaliation or other unfair treatment.

6.2 On those occasions where contact between the Program Director and the student is inevitable or deemed potentially useful the Program Director should clarify for the student the difference between his/her role at the informal stage of resolution and what it would be at the formal stage of resolution.

7. Informal Resolution, Civil Rights Grievances

If a student believes that he or she has been discriminated or retaliated against based upon race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability he/she should notify the Director of Student Affairs. The Director may discuss the issue with all parties and attempt to facilitate an informal resolution. The Director shall make efforts to resolve the issue as soon as practical, and shall maintain a record of all communications and documents. This record shall be kept confidential to the extent required and allowed by law.

8. Grade Grievances - Formal Resolution

8.1 Students should first pursue informal resolution of grade grievances. If informal resolution is not satisfactory or the time limit for filing a formal grievance is about to expire, then the student may proceed as follows.

8.2 Otherwise, grade grievances must be presented in writing to the program director for resolution. The Program Director shall inquire into the matter and send a written decision to the student and faculty member. These procedures are laid out to guide the formal grievance of final grades only. Test grades and partial grades are not deemed appropriate for formal grievance.

8.3 In no event shall persons who review a grade grievance substitute their subjective judgment about academic quality for the judgment of the instructor. However, grievances may be substantiated if it is determined on the basis of the evidence that the grade was based on a factor other than academic merit, or if there has been a clear error in grading based on objective criteria.

10. Other Grievances - Formal Resolution

10.1 Step One:

10.1.1 If informal resolution is not successful, the student may file a grievance by sending a request for hearing along with the following information to the individual with supervisor.

The grievance must:

- a) be in written form;
- b) state how the decision or action is unfair and harmful to the grievant and list the University policies or state or federal laws that have been violated, if known;
- c) name the respondent parties (the person(s) against whom the grievance is filed);
- d) state how the respondents are responsible for the action or decision,
- e) state the requested remedy.

10.1.2 If it is clear on the face of the written grievance that the grievance has not been filed within the time limit, or pertains to a matter not grievable under this procedure, or is from a person without grievance rights under this grievance, the Director of Student Affairs shall so indicate in a letter to the grievant and the grievance shall be dismissed. If the grievance is not dismissed, the Director of Student Affairs, or a designee, shall appoint a panel of four persons to hear the grievance and shall provide them with a copy of these procedures and the written request for hearing. Panel members shall include two students and two faculty members.

10.2 Step Two:

The panel shall meet, elect a chair, and send the grievant's hearing request to the respondent(s), all within ten business days of being appointed. The chair shall offer respondent(s) an opportunity to provide a written response to the allegations within ten business days to the panel chair. The chair may also instruct the parties that they have ten business days to provide each other and the panel with (i) copies of any exhibits they wish to introduce as evidence, and (ii) a list of witnesses that each party will call. The chair may extend the deadlines for submitting a response and for exchanging proposed exhibits upon a showing of good cause.

10.3 Step Three:

10.3.1 The chair shall notify the parties of the hearing date, time, and place at least ten business days in advance of the hearing. (The panel may schedule additional days for hearing, if needed, after the hearing is underway, so long as all parties receive reasonable advance notice of the additional dates.). The response to the grievance must be distributed to the panel and all parties at least ten University business days prior to the hearing.

10.3.2 The hearing must be tape recorded so that all persons can be clearly heard.

10.3.3 Each party may choose to have one observer present who is not a witness. Observers may not provide representation or otherwise participate in the proceeding, but may speak to their respective parties off the record so long as it does not interfere with the hearing.

10.3.4 The panel may request procedural advice from an attorney.

10.3.5 The panel has the authority to rule on procedural matters. The panel may decline to consider evidence for reasons of excessive redundancy, immateriality, irrelevance, and other good cause.

10.3.6 Formal rules of evidence will not apply, and the panel may consider any evidence it believes to be relevant and reliable.

10.3.7 Each party may make an opening and closing statement (grievant first and respondent(s) second in opening; grievant first, respondent(s) second, and grievant last in closing) of a time duration to be determined by the panel. After any opening statements, the grievant shall present his/her testimony and exhibits, and present any witness testimony. The respondent(s) shall have an opportunity to ask questions of the grievant and witnesses. The next step is for the respondent(s) to present any testimony, exhibits, and witnesses, to be followed by questioning from the grievant. Rebuttal and other follow-up testimony are at the discretion of the panel. Closing statements from each party conclude this step of the hearing process. Panel members may ask questions or request additional information, documents, or witnesses at any time prior to adjournment. At the conclusion of this step of the procedure, the parties and witnesses shall be excused.

10.4 Step Four:

10.4.1 The panel shall deliberate and reach a decision on the grievance in closed session. Deliberations are not tape recorded or transcribed. The decision must be based solely on material presented in the grievance. The panel should be careful not to substitute its judgment for that of the respondent(s). Rather, the panel should decide if the decision being grieved was the result of a misapplication or misinterpretation of university policies, regulations, or rules or a violation of state or federal law. The burden is on the grievant to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the grievant has experienced an injury that would entitle the grievant to relief and that such injury is remediable.

10.4.2 The chair of the panel shall compile an official record of the proceeding that includes a copy of all correspondence with the parties, all evidence submitted to the panel (documentary evidence that the panel declined to consider must be so marked and segregated), the recording or transcript of the hearing, and anything else considered by the panel in reaching its recommendation. The chair of the panel shall be responsible for ensuring that a written report is prepared that addresses and resolves all material factual issues in dispute, that states a conclusion as to whether the student was subjected to misapplication or misinterpretation of policy or state or federal law, and if so recommends remedies as appropriate. The report and official record shall be delivered to President, with copies of the report to be sent to the parties, within sixty calendar days after the hearing. A dissenting panel member may file a minority report at the same time.

10.5 Step Five:

The President shall issue a written decision within twenty business days of receipt of the panel's report and official record. The decision may either adopt the panel report in whole, modify it in part, or reject the report and reach different findings or conclusions for reasons expressly stated to clarify the record or cure. This decision shall be sent to the parties (certified mail return receipt, or personal delivery with a signed and dated receipt, to the grievant) and may be shared with the panel members.

11. Confidentiality

Panel members, witnesses, parties, and all other persons involved in the grievance proceeding are expected to maintain strict confidentiality regarding the proceeding. State and federal laws govern the privacy rights of students and employees.

12. ex Parte Contacts

Once a hearing (formal resolution) has been requested, there should be no ex parte communication between parties and panel members concerning the merits of the case. An ex parte contact or communication is one sided; it occurs when one person shares information with a panel member without including all other parties. To prevent this from occurring, all communications that (a) occur outside the recorded hearing, and (b) are between one or more parties and one or more panel members, should be in written form and distributed simultaneously to all parties and panel members. Discussion of the merits of the case or presentation of evidence outside the hearing should be avoided. The rule against ex parte contacts also applies to communication with the final decision-maker and everyone who is responsible for deciding appeals.

13. Appeal Routes

Grievance decisions may be appealed as follows:

13.1 All grievances may be appealed to The Board of Directors for the institution.

14. Appeal Procedures

14.1 The aggrieved party may appeal by delivering written notice of appeal to the Board of Directors. Appeals received more than ten days after the decision was received (or delivery of the decision was attempted) will not be allowed.

14.2 Written notice of appeal must (i) identify the person whose decision is being appealed, (ii) provide a brief statement of the grounds for appeal, which at minimum should contain a list of alleged errors in the decision or decision-making process, (iii) to the extent possible, state which law(s), or institution policy(ies) has been violated by each of the alleged errors, (iv) indicate what remedy is requested, (v) be signed by the appellant and dated, and (vi) include a copy of the decision being appealed.

14.3 Once notice of appeal has been delivered, the Institute President whose decision is being appealed shall forward the record of the case to the Board of Directors hearing the appeal. The record shall consist of all information considered in the decision-making process, the panel's recommendation, and the decision(s) of the President. The record shall be compiled in chronological order to the extent feasible, and shall include a table of contents for ease of reference.

14.4 The Board hearing the appeal may ask the parties to submit written statements of their positions for purposes of appeal and will render a decision based on review of the record of the case and any written appeal statements submitted by the parties. The Board's decision is final. There is no right to a hearing or oral presentation in appeals.

15. Arbitration

At any point if the student wants to seek legal action, it should be noted that all proceedings must go through the entirety of the grievance policy. If the student is still unsatisfied with the results, then arbitration will be utilized prior to any litigation. It is hereby agreed that grievance shall be referred to the United States Arbitration and Mediation for arbitration prior to initiating any legal actions.

The arbitrator's decision shall be final and binding and judgment may be entered thereon. In the event the student fails to proceed with arbitration, unsuccessfully challenges the arbitrator's award, or fails to comply with arbitrator's award, the other party is entitled of costs of suit including a reasonable attorney's fee for having to compel arbitration or defend/enforce the award.

16. If the grievant is still unsatisfied with the Board of Directors final decision they may file a complaint with:

1. Tennessee Higher Education Commission: Parkway Towers, Suite 1900; James Robertson Parkway; Nashville, TN 37243-0830 (615/741-5293)
2. Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs: 1361 Park Street; Clearwater, FL 33756 (727/210-2350)
3. Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools: 7777 Leesburg Pike, Suite 314; N. Falls Church, VA 22043 (703/917-9503)

TRANSFERABILITY OF CREDITS DISCLOSURE

Credits earned at Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting may not transfer to another educational institution. Credits earned at another educational institution may not be accepted by Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting. You should obtain confirmation that Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting will accept any credits you have earned at another educational institution before you execute an enrollment contract or agreement. You should also contact any educational institutions that you may want to transfer credits earned at Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting to determine if such institutions will accept credits earned at Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting prior to executing an enrollment contract or agreement. The ability to transfer credits from Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting to another educational institution may be very limited. Your credits may not transfer and you may have to repeat courses previously taken at Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting if you enroll in another educational institution. You should never assume that credits will transfer to or from any educational institution. It is highly recommended, and you are advised to make certain, that you know the transfer of credit policy of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting and of any other educational institutions you may in the future want to transfer the credits earned at Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting before you execute an enrollment contract or agreement.