



Student Catalog

2017—2018



National Council for
State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreements

*A voluntary, regional approach
to state oversight of distance education*

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, FAST

ADMINISTRATION:

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

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

VP of Regulatory and Compliance Affairs – Celia White, BS

Business Manager – April West, BS

Financial Aid Director - Robyn Johnson, BS

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

Program Director (Associate Degree) - Gregory Salmon, BAS, CST, CSFA

Lab Director- Trey Wiseman CST, CSA

Externship Coordinator – Deborah K. Klaudt, CST, CSFA, KCSA

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 25400 US Highway 19 N, Suite 158, Clearwater, FL 33763
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'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. In addition to THEC, Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting is authorized by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) NC-SARA.org.

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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 module 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 module, followed by post-operative considerations. Incorporated within the academic module 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 module 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 Program is currently only offered to Meridian graduates, allowing you to conveniently bridge your certificate to an associates degree.

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, FAST
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 adhering 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 are disabled veterans, and to conform to all applicable laws and regulations.

Facility

Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's facility is located in 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 (Certificate): Dennis A. Stover CST, CSA, FAST 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

Program Director (Associate Degree- SA): Gregory Salmon BAS, CST, CSFA Status: Full Time

Mr. Salmon obtained a certificate in Surgical Technology in 1989. He earned his Associates Degree from Ivy Tech College in Lafayette, Indiana, having graduated in 1996, after which he received 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 oversight of the Associates Program and is also an Instructor for the Associates Program.

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

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

Lab Director: 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. Mr. Wiseman 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 15

Lead Instructor: Tamra Roberts CST, CSFA, CDEI 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. Ms. Roberts' primary responsibility is online didactics.

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

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

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

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

Ms. Klaudt is a 1992 graduate of Southeast Community College. 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. 16

Instructor: Steven Ehrhardt, BS Status: Full-Time

Mr. Ehrhardt graduated from Middle Tennessee State University in 2012. He was awarded a Bachelors of Science with a concentration in Chemistry and Biology. Mr. Ehrhardt is an instructor for the Associates Program.

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

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

Lab Instructor: Heidi Davies, CST, CSA Status: Adjunct

Ms. Davies received her Surgical Technology training from the U.S. Army, then was awarded her CST in 1994. She attended Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting in 2011, in the same year she passed her CSA Exam. Ms. Davies' is responsible for instruction of the Health Science Lab.

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

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

Instructor: Sherry Wells CST, CSFA, KCSA Status: Adjunct

Ms. Wells received her Surgical Technology Diploma from Bowling Green State Vocational Technology School located in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1989, followed by her Associates Degree in Applied Science in 2004 from Bowling Green Technical College located in Bowling Green, Kentucky. She became credentialed as a CST in 1989 and a CSFA in 1995. Ms. Wells' area of responsibility is the online didactics.

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

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

Instructor: Shannon Smith, M.H.Sc, B.S.H.S, CST, CSFA, Status: Adjunct

Ms. Smith graduated from Athens Technical College in 1989, with a diploma in Surgical Technology. She continued her education and in 2006 graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences with a minor in management from Old Dominion University. She received her Master of Health Sciences with a concentration in Higher Education from Nova Southeastern University in 2016. Ms. Smith area of responsibility is the online didactics.

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

Office Phone: (615) 678-8196

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

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.

Admission Requirements and Procedures

For a student to be enrolled at Meridian Institute, the following must take place **PRIOR** to beginning any portion of the program. For any additional requirements review the specific Meridian program section in this catalog.

1. All prospective students must meet the entrance requirements listed under the Surgical First Assisting Program.
2. The forms listed below must be received by Meridian Institute's Office of Student Affairs:
 - Completed Application with supporting attachments
 - Signed enrollment agreement
3. The Student must:
 - Have made satisfactory payment arrangements, covered in payment options available in the student catalog.

Academic Calendar

Due to the online coursework, there are no scheduled calendar break periods, and/or holidays. For more information about the Academic Calendar, review the Academic Calendar under each program.

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.

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. However, 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 for the SFA Online Program Certificate.

Gainful Employment

GE disclosures for ALL programs can be found by visiting www.meridian-institute.edu/program-information/ under 'Gainful Employment Disclosure.'

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 the 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 Grading System

Grading System

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%

Payment Options Available

Several different payment options are available:

1. Full program costs paid upfront for a total current payment of \$6495.00. 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. Veteran Educational Benefits: Post 9/11 GI® Bill, Chapter 30, Chapter 35, Chapter 1606, Chapter 31, and Veterans Educational Assistant Program.
4. 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.

Refund Policy

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 a 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.

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

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

(Revised November 9, 2016)

MISA Students 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. Additional requirements may be listed in individual course syllabi. The student's academic progress is measured in two components:

Qualitative and Quantitative Measures of Academic Progress

Minimum Qualitative Measures of Academic Progress

The qualitative measures of academic progress are based on achieving a C or better in all core classes, while a D must be achieved in general education classes. Students must maintain an accumulative GPA of 2.0.

Quantitative Measures of Academic Progress

All students who attend the SFA Certificate program must make arrangements for, and attend the Applied Science Lab within the initial 26 weeks of enrollment. Students must complete all three modules within 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 falls below SAP, the student 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 may be withdrawn from the program.

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

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

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 MODULES 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" or "W" grades in courses attempted will become ineligible for financial aid for those particular courses, but can regain eligibility for financial aid once the course is successfully completed. A student who receives, "I" or "F" in Module III and is on an extension will still be considered as completing of the enrollment period for financial aid purposes. All MISA students must retake and pass these modules 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 of 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. 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 may be 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.

A student who is placed on financial aid and SAP 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. 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.

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 administrative termination from the Institute.

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.

9. Other Grievances - Formal Resolution

9.1 Step One:

If informal resolution is not successful, the student may file a grievance by sending a request for hearing along with the following information to a Vice President. The grievance must:

1. be in written form;
2. state how the decision or action is unfair and harmful to the grievant and list the Institute's policies or state or federal laws that have been violated, if known;
3. name the respondent parties (the person(s) against whom the grievance is filed);
4. state how the respondents are responsible for the action or decision,
5. state the requested remedy.

9.1.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 Step Three:

9.3.1 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.

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

9.3.3 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.

9.3.4 The panel may request procedural advice from an attorney.

9.3.5 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.

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

9.3.7 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.

9.4 Step Four:

9.4.1 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.

9.4.2 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 the 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.

9.5 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. Appeal Routes

Grievance decisions may be appealed as follows:

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

13. Appeal Procedures

13.1 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.

13.2 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.

13.3 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.

13.4 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.

14. 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 part is entitled to costs of suit including a reasonable attorney's fee for having compel arbitration or defend/enforce the award.

15. 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)
4. National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements: 3005 Center Green Drive, Suite 130; Boulder, CO 80301 (303/541-0275)

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.

Surgical First Assisting Program

Enrollment 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 for a year's coverage.
- Surgical Technologist applicants **should** be a CST, **or** at least 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 current O.R. scrub experience attained in the United States and a working knowledge of basic O.R. fundamentals.
- All students must be employed at a healthcare facility or private office.
- All students must be able to have daily access to a computer that complies with the computer system requirement policy in this catalog.

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.

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. 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.

Cohort Start Policy

****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 (in which openings do exist) following the month in which the student signs the enrollment agreement.****

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 online instruction, our course can be offered at a lower tuition than many other distance education programs.

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: Appox. \$125.00

Malpractice Insurance: Approx. \$100.00 per year.

Certification Exam Fee: Approx. \$100.00-\$200.00

Credential Offered at Completion

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

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.

Phase two Attendance

All students are required to attend the six day Applied Science Lab. If the student cancels lab 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. If 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.

Program 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 program 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.

Overview

Meridian is proud to introduce you to our CAAHEP-accredited **SFA Online Program**. Each student has 12 months (52 weeks) 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 modules, and upon finishing all three modules the student will graduate the program and receive a **certificate of completion**.

Phase 1:

The first module consists of 12 online courses in the academic program. The 12 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 module of the course is completion of the Applied Sciences Lab. This module is 30-hours of hands-on instruction covering all different surgical specialties, in addition to the 30 hours of lectures outlined in Module One. The lab must be completed within the first 6 months of enrollment. And, 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 module 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.

Transfer Credits

No transfer credits are accepted into this program.

Textbook Requirement

The SFA Online Program Certificate is a computer based program. 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. One book will be sent to the students, while three will be found online through Canvas. 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](http://www.amazon.com/Alexanders-Care-Patient-Surgery%2015e/dp/0323089429/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1407421245&sr=8-1&keywords=9780323089425)

Requirements for Graduation

To be qualified to graduate, the student must:

- Complete and receive a passing status in all three modules 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 Module 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 (by the respective credentialing agencies) upon graduation.

Student work policy

Meridian understands that all of our students are employed at healthcare facilities while completing the preceptorship module. 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 modules 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.

Test Retake Policy

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

Required Courses:

Phase I (Didactics)-

SFA 201- Surgery I and II

Credit Hours:	3
Clock Hours:	45
Course Length:	8 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	None
Primary Text:	Mastery of Medicine Series: Surgery I & II
Course Description:	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.

SFA 202- Perioperative Microbiology

Credit Hours:	3
Clock Hours:	45
Course Length:	8 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 201
Primary Text:	Mastery of Medicine: Microbiology and Infection Microbiology PDF (Text for weeks 1 – 8)
Course Description:	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.

SFA 203- Pharmacology

Credit Hours:	3
Clock Hours:	45
Course Length:	8 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 202
Primary Text:	Clinical Pharmacology Made Ridiculously Simple
Course Description:	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.

SFA 204- Anesthesia, Methods and Agents

Credit Hours:	1
Clock Hours:	15
Course Length:	3 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 203
Primary Text:	Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery Assigned PDF materials
Course Description:	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.

SFA 205- Bioscience

Credit Hours:	1
Clock Hours:	15
Course Length:	3 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 204
Primary Text:	Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery Assigned PDF materials
Course Description:	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.

SFA 206- Role, Definition, and Interaction

Credit Hours:	1
Clock Hours:	15
Course Length:	3 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 205
Primary Text:	Roles and Definitions PDF First Assistant and Collaborative Practice PDF
Course Description:	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 problems areas, then gives the student an understanding as to how he/she should deal with each given situation. The module includes chapter quizzes, along with two module exams.

SFA 207- Ethical, Moral, Legal Responsibilities

Credit Hours:	1
Clock Hours:	15
Course Length:	3 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 206
Primary Text:	Ethical, Moral, and legal Responsibilities PDF Institutional Credentialing PDF
Course Description:	This module enables the student to understand different legal definitions and terminology, and to understand and identify OR 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, OR incidents that could result in litigation, and problems peculiar to the surgical first assistant's role. The module includes chapter quizzes, along with two module exams.

SFA 208- Fundamentals

Credit Hours: 1
Clock Hours: 15
Course Length: 3 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: SFA 207
Primary Text: Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery
Monitoring Device PDF
Hemostasis PDF

Course Description: 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.

SFA 209- Wound Healing, Knot Tying and Suturing

Credit Hours: 1
Clock Hours: 15
Course Length: 3 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: SFA 208
Primary Text: Alexander's Care of the Patient in Surgery
Anastomosis in Surgery PDF
Minimal Access Surgery PDF
Wound Closure Manual PDF

Course Description: 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.

SFA 210- Surgical Procedures

Credit Hours: 2
Clock Hours: 30
Course Length: 4 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: SFA 209
Primary Text: Meridian Institute's Manual X PDF

Course Description: This module will break down most major surgeries performed in the OR today. Each surgery listed in the text will be explained step-by-step, from skin incision through final closure. The module includes chapter quizzes, along with two module exams.

SFA 211- Complications in Surgery

Credit Hours:	1
Clock Hours:	15
Course Length:	3 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 210
Primary Text:	Complications in Surgery PDF Tissue Handling PDF
Course Description:	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).

SFA 212- Computer and Business Issues with the First Assistant

Credit Hours:	1
Clock Hours:	15
Course Length:	3 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	SFA 211
Primary Text:	Complications in Surgery PDF Tissue Handling PDF
Course Description:	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.

Phase II (Applied Science Lab)-

SFA 301- Applied Science Lab

Credit Hours:	3
Clock Hours:	60
Course Length:	20 hours of asynchronous through LMS, 40 hours of synchronous on campus for 5 consecutive days.
Delivery Method:	Blended
Prerequisite:	None
Instructional Resources:	Lab manual and lab videos
Course Description:	The second phase of the SFA Online Program is the Applied Science Lab. The lab is delivered in a blended format. The student will have assignments in Canvas prior to attending the lab. The lab is 60 hours in length. All labs take place in our state-of-the- art animal laboratory facility. Labs run from Monday through Friday

and are scheduled several times a month-- 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.

Phase III (Externship)-

SFA 401- Clinical Externship

Credit Hours:	6
Clock Hours:	303.75
Course Length:	Student must successfully complete SFA 301 and will have until the end of SFA 212 to complete the Clinical Externship.
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Location:	Conducted at facility of students choosing.
Prerequisite:	SFA 301
Primary Text:	Clinical Externship Packet and Preceptor Evaluation Form

Course Description:

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

1. Completion of 140 cases with synchronous instruction.
2. Training under direct supervision and guidance of a Meridian-approved preceptor.
3. Online classroom will be utilized by students in enrollment extension and subsequent enrollment status.
4. Student is required to complete SFA 301 within the first six months of enrollment and will have a minimum six months to complete the externship leading to graduation.
5. Students are required to identify and secure their individual externship site and preceptors.

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. Cardiovascular surgery
12. Orthopedic surgery
13. Robotic Surgery

All cases must be supervised by 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 verified preceptor and signed evaluations on each case.

Associates of Applied Science in Surgical Assisting
(Degree Completion)

Admission Requirements

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

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.

The AAS Program offers three cohorts per year, fall, winter, 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 a maximum of 12 credits per semester unless authorized by the program director.

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 online instruction, our course can be offered at a lower tuition than many other distance education programs.

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

Credential Offered at Completion

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

Program 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.

Overview

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.

Transfer of credits

Each student will be given credit for the 28 semester credits earned through the SFA ONLINE program. This leaves a remaining 33 credits needed prior to earning a degree completion. Of the 33 remaining credits needed up to 30 can be transferred in from another institution; 18 of which can be any general education courses based on approval by the Program Director. If the student still needs general education courses, they may choose from any of the options (GEN 101-105) provided by Meridian Institute. The student always has the option to complete ALL required credits from Meridian Institute. Transferability of credits must be earned from an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and will be at the discretion of the Program Director. Credits and or clock hours earned will not be accepted from institutions located outside of the United States or its territories. Transfer credits are not required.

Method of Delivery

The AAS is a 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.

Textbook Requirement

The book requirement for AAS in Surgical Assisting (degree completion) will be listed on each class syllabus located in this catalog.

Adding/Dropping a Class

Students may drop and/or add courses via notifying the Program Director. Adding a class must be done prior to classes beginning according to the semester schedule. Drops made within two weeks of class starts will be considered a drop without penalty to academic reporting, but will result in a "W" on the transcript. Drops after this period would be considered Fail (F), and recorded on your transcript as such. Financial obligation and refunds will follow Meridian's refund policy.

Requirements for Graduation

In order for the student to be awarded the AAS in Surgical Assisting they must have a total of 61 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.**

Students must also:

- Complete and retain an accumulative GPA of a 2.0 in all online academics associated with the AAS Degree Completion program.
- Meet all financial obligations to Meridian.

Clock Hours and Credits Awarded

Transfer from SFA Online Program:	28 semester credits
GEN 101-105:	225 hours, 15 semester credits
HLTH 201-206:	255 hours, 17 semester credits
Total Length of Program:	18 Months

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

Required Courses:

GEN 101- Computer Skills

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online

Primary Text: Certificate Program
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

Credit Hours: 3
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate 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

Credit Hours: 3
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate 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

Credit Hours: 3
Course Length: 15 Weeks
Delivery Method: Full Distance Education
Prerequisite: Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate 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

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Foundations in Business</i> , Pride, Hughes, Kapoor 4 th 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

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Principles of Imaging</i> , 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

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Essentials of General Surgery</i> , Lawrence, Bell, Dayton, Herbert LWW Publishing, 6 ^{5h} Edition, 2012.
Course Description:	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Atlas of Pelvic Anatomy and Gynecologic Surgery</i> , Baggish, Karam, Learning, 3 rd 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pelvic anatomy▪ Gynecologic surgery▪ Abdominal surgery▪ Other related surgery▪ Laparoscopy▪ Cesarean Section

HLTH 204- Advanced Principles of Orthopedic Surgery

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Essentials of Orthopedic Surgery</i> , Wiesel, Delahay, 4 th 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Spine▪ Shoulder▪ Hand and Wrist▪ Hip and Femur▪ Knee▪ Foot and Ankle

HLTH 205- Advanced Principles of Cardiovascular Surgery

Credit Hours:	3
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Manual of Cardiothoracic Surgery</i> , 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ General thoracic▪ Adult cardiac▪ Congenital cardiac

HLTH 206- Surgical Safety

Credit Hours:	2
Course Length:	15 Weeks
Delivery Method:	Full Distance Education
Prerequisite:	Graduate of Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting's SFA Online Certificate Program.
Primary Text:	<i>Working Safely in Health Care</i> , Fell-Carlson, 1 st Edition, Cengage Learning.
Course Description:	This course presents the student with knowledge and understanding of the importance of workplace safety in the healthcare setting.

