

# V T 58L: SURGICAL ASSISTING FOR THE VETERINARY NURSE

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	1
Hours:	3 laboratory per week (36 total per quarter)
Prerequisite:	V T 57L.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	CSU
Grade Type:	Letter Grade Only
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will identify the parts, and explain the use of common anesthetic equipment and circuits
- Student will understand and demonstrate proper principles of aseptic technique and the universal precautions.
- Students will demonstrate proper techniques for the preparation of surgical packs, operation of an autoclave and gas sterilizer.
- Students will memorize names, identify, properly handle, and maintain common surgical instruments.
- Students will suture non-living tissues

## Description

Provides students with the foundational skills needed to prepare them for anesthesiology lab. Includes introduction to anesthetic equipment, principles of aseptic technique, sanitation, disinfection and sterilization, introduction to principles of surgical nursing, basic operating room skills, and instrumentation. Appropriate care, management, and husbandry of program livestock, companion animals, and laboratory animals. Intended for students in the Veterinary Technology Program; enrollment is limited to students accepted in the program.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate aseptic techniques and universal precautions pertaining to surgical procedures
2. Identify, properly handle, and maintain common surgical instruments
3. Demonstrate proper techniques for the preparation of surgical packs, and operation of an autoclave and gas sterilizer
4. Identify the parts and explain the use of common anesthetic equipment and circuits
5. Demonstrate suturing of non-living tissues
6. Demonstrate placement of intravenous catheters
7. Use and troubleshoot common anesthetic monitoring devices
8. Perform routine preventive care duties for all program animals

## Course Content

1. Principles of aseptic technique and the universal precautions
  - a. Surgical preparation of personnel
    - i. Surgical hand scrub
    - ii. Drying hands
    - iii. Donning sterile gown
    - iv. Gloving techniques
  - b. Surgical preparation of the patient
    - i. Aseptic preparation of surgical sites
    - ii. Draping techniques
    - iii. Transport of patient
    - iv. Final prep in surgical suite
  - c. Preparation of sterile surgical packs
    - i. Instrument
    - ii. Gown
    - iii. Towel
    - iv. Special purpose
  - d. Record keeping
2. Surgical instruments
  - a. Identification of common surgical instruments
  - b. Handling and use of instruments
  - c. Care and maintenance of instruments
3. Surgical packs
  - a. Selecting instruments
  - b. Preparing packs
  - c. Operation and maintenance of the autoclave
  - d. Principles and method of gas sterilization
4. Anesthetic equipment and circuits
  - a. Gas anesthetic machine
  - b. Breathing circuits
    - i. Re-breathing
    - ii. Non-rebreathing
5. Suturing
  - a. Suture patterns
    - i. Simple interrupted
    - ii. Simple continuous
    - iii. Cruciate
    - iv. Mattress sutures
    - v. Ford interlocking
  - b. Proper tissue handling
6. Intravenous catheters
  - a. Saphenous
  - b. Cephalic
7. Anesthetic monitoring devices
  - a. Electrocardiogram
  - b. Pulse oximetry
  - c. Doppler/oscillometric blood pressure monitors
  - d. Capnography
8. Care of all program animals
  - a. Physical examination
  - b. Medical record keeping
  - c. Vaccination (as needed)
  - d. Deworming and fecal examination (as needed)
  - e. Heartworm testing and prevention (as needed)

- f. Environmental enrichment program
- g. Review of daily SOPs

## Lab Content

1. Basic principles of facilities management and maintenance care of resident animals. Responsibilities will expand to include performing diagnostic and therapeutic procedures on resident animals.
2. Practical skills involving surgical assisting.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Live animals of companion, large, and laboratory animal species; housing and restraint facilities.
2. Laboratory equipped with anesthesia machines, surgical supplies, intravenous catheters, monitoring devices.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Evaluation of care of program animals  
Assessments

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Discussion  
Field work  
Demonstration  
Skills practice

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Bassett, Joanna M., and Dennis M. McCurnin. [Clinical Textbook For Veterinary Technicians, 10th ed.](#) 2023.

Tear, Marianne. [Small Animal Surgical Nursing: Skills and Concepts, 3rd ed.](#) 2016.

Although the Tear text is older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, it remains a seminal text in this area of study.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Weekly reading assignments from text, class handouts, and outside sources.
2. Medical record keeping for program teaching animals.
3. Daily care of program animals.
4. Skills practice with instructor and classmates.

## Discipline(s)

Registered Veterinary Technician