

Program Locator Questionnaire

Your Name _____ Medical Title _____

Print and complete by hand or type in your answers from your computer. More than one answer may be correct for you but select the one that most accurately reflects your feelings. No score is bad. The sole purpose of your score is to indicate the kind of assisting program you'd be happiest with.

1 Not important; 2 Somewhat important; 3 Important; 4 Very important	1	2	3	4
1) How important is it to you the program be nationally accredited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) How important is true web-based distance-learning where you have your own student webpage with assignments delivered automatically (versus waiting for assignments by email or snail mail)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) If you could take a national surgical assistant certifying exam <i>without</i> being formally trained, then how important would proper training be to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) How important is national surgical assistant certification to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Imagine you were sitting in front of a lawyer having been named in a malpractice suit. How important would it be to say, "I've been formally trained to first assist" instead of being forced to say, "I've only been on-the-job trained to assist?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) How important is personal attention from the school staff and faculty to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7) If you decided to start your own first assisting business once you graduate, how important would it be you get expert help from someone who has already succeed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8) How important is it you learn advanced surgical skills <i>beyond</i> wound closure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9) How important is it you learn surgical skills <i>before</i> your clinical internship?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10) How important is it you avoid learning skills on living animals and instead use realistic surgical simulators?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11) How important is it your instructor has a lot of successful experience as a Surgical Assistant?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Scoring

Step #1: Record the **number of answers** you had in each column: _____

The value of each answer in the column (**column value**):

1	2	3	4
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Step #2: Multiply the number of answers by the column value (Example: if you had 5 answers in the c) column, then multiply 5 times 3 to get a 15 column total). Enter the column totals for all four columns: _____

Step #3: Add the 4 column totals together to get your questionnaire score: _____

Analysis #1: You scored between 11 to 22

Congratulations! Your score on this questionnaire definitely points to the program offered by the *National Institute of First Assisting, Inc. (NIFA)*. Their Surgical Assistant Program is CAAHEP accredited which gives it national recognition as well as protects you from enrolling in a diploma mill. Graduates qualify to sit for the CFA and AS-C exams. Suturing and tying techniques are all learned by video. After that, 3 days of advanced surgical skills training is available, but it is optional. So you get to choose if you need the hands-on or not. Hands-on training is conducted around the country. The distance-learning is presented by email or snail mail.

NIFA also has a separate AORN accepted RN First Assistant Program with the same benefits as those listed above with the exception that it isn't CAAHEP accredited. The 3 days of hands-on training is required with 3 more days optional. Graduates qualify to sit for the CRNFA exam once they get their CNOR, Bachelor's degree, and record 2,000 hours of first assisting experience.

Visit www.nifa.com to learn more. (If you disagree with your analysis, retake the questionnaire. Or call 1-888-221-5992 to discuss your concerns and get a more detailed analysis based on your personal input.)

Analysis #2 for a score of 23 to 33

Congratulations! Your score on the questionnaire indicates the program offered by the *Meridian Institute of Surgical Assisting* would be a great choice for you. Their Surgical First Assistant Program is CAAHEP accredited which gives it national recognition as well as protects you from enrolling in a diploma mill. Graduates qualify to sit for the CFA and CSA exams. You get 4 days devoted to hands-on training on live, anesthetized pigs, one day of lecture on professional issues and a casting lab, and a half day of testing. Before starting the pig lab on the first day, you get 3 hours of suturing and tying instruction. The pig lab is presented in Tennessee. The distance-learning is presented by email.

RNs taking this program will be eligible for the CFA and CSA exams but not for the CRNFA exam. If the CRNFA title is really important to you and you have a Bachelor's degree or are willing to get it, you might want to consider the NIFA RN First Assistant Program listed in Analysis #1 above.

Visit www.meridian-institute.com to learn more. (If you disagree with your analysis, retake the questionnaire. Or call 1-888-221-5992 to discuss your concerns and get a more detailed analysis based on your personal input.)

Analysis #3 for a score of 34 to 44

Congratulations! Your score on the questionnaire makes your best choice of program the one offered by the *American Center for Excellence in Surgical Assisting, Inc. (ACESA)*. Their Surgical Assistant Program is CAAHEP accredited which gives it national recognition as well as protects you from enrolling in a diploma mill. Graduates qualify to sit for the CFA, SA-C exams.

You scored high in the 'importance for hands-on training' category. This could be because you feel like you need a lot of hands-on training to be good or, even though you feel you are already very good you could benefit greatly from learning more skills from an expert in the field. ACESA requires 6 full days of hands-on training. 2 complete days are basic and advanced suturing and tying techniques with one-on-one coaching from an instructor nationally recognized as an expert in the industry. This same expert coaches you through 4 days of simulated surgeries where each day you perform one full surgery as the surgeon and then another full surgery as the assistant. You learn how to make incisions, perform surgical technique, and how to close wounds. ACESA's surgical lab is mobile so they present it at strategic locations around the country. If the interest is high enough, they can bring it right to your hospital. The distance-learning is web-based and give you a lot of flexibility and eliminates waiting for assignments.

On-the-job trained surgical techs can also qualify for the ACESA Surgical Assistant Program. But first they may need to take some basic Operating Room science courses. Those courses could be taken at most community colleges and ACESA makes them available also through distance-learning.

RNs taking this program will be eligible for the CFA and SA-C exams but not for the CRNFA exam. If the CRNFA title is really important to you and you have a Bachelor's degree or are willing to get it, you might want to consider the NIFA RN First Assistant Program listed in Analysis #1 above. Or you could really take any RNFA program on the AORN's accepted program list. You may just choose based on expense or the time needed to finish the program. At the same time, to satisfy your need and/or desire for extensive hands-on training, you should enroll in ACESA's Surgical SkillLab, 6 Days to Expertise. Make sure you complete this skills training *before* you start the clinical internship phase of whatever RN First Assistant Program you choose.

Visit www.acesatraining.com to learn more. (If you disagree with your analysis, retake the questionnaire. Or call 1-888-221-5992 to discuss your concerns and get a more detailed analysis based on your personal input.)