



NSG 488 section 1 Syllabus

Registered Nurse First Assistant Theory, Practice, and Clinical Practicum

Course Information

Credit Hours:

3 Didactic credits
3 Clinical credits

Course Information:

Registered Nurse First Assistant Theory, Practice, and Clinical Practicum
NSG 488 1 (6.0 Credits)

Description

This course is designed to provide the learner with a comprehensive understanding of the perioperative process, building upon knowledge of anatomical structures and physiology, indications for surgical intervention, assisting considerations, intraoperative performance of surgical first-assisting techniques, and evaluation of postoperative patient outcomes. The didactic portion of this course will emphasize the expanded functions unique to the RN First Assistant including the legal, regulatory, and professional issues as well as the specific role of the RNFA in management of patients across the preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative phases incorporating the three dimensions of Socialization Theory: professional socialization, organizational socialization, and role socialization. The clinical portion of this course will focus on the learner's application of knowledge to safely perform the skills required during the perioperative process. Emphasis will be placed on the development of advanced surgical assisting skills, such as providing surgical site exposure, tissue handling, cutting tissue, suturing, providing hemostasis, using surgical instruments, and wound management. Students will collaborate and communicate with other healthcare providers to develop a plan of care to achieve optimal patient outcomes. In collaboration with a board-certified surgeon preceptor, as well as a RNFA or CRNFA mentor (optional), students will develop personalized learning objectives and identify learning resources to enhance the knowledge and skills necessary for competent RNFA practice and role development. Open to nonmatriculated students. Special application required.

Prerequisite(s): None

Delivery Mode

Hybrid

Department: SON Center for Lifelong Learning

College: School of Nursing

Meeting Days, Times and Locations,:

See Course Schedule

1. **This course runs for one full year from September 15, 2025 to October 25, 2026**
2. **Please check your e-mail regularly. The email on file is the email you used to register for the course.**
3. Once you begin the clinical portion of the course, E-mail is the only way we have to contact you.
4. If your email changes during the year you are completing the course please let us know right away. Email is the only way we have to contact you while you are completing the clinical component of this course.
5. When e-mailing the professors please e-mail both professors and put the course, semester and year in the subject line. Both e-mails are on the front page of your syllabus and below. We have also given you an example of what should go in the subject line
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6. If you are having difficulty completing the course by the course end date (incomplete contract end date) it is the students responsibility to contact the instructor to ask for more time.
7. Only one extension will be provided if the student has reasonable need (as determined by course faculty), unless there are extenuating circumstances
8. This course must be finished within a 2 year time period from the day the course starts. No extensions will be given after that time.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO):

1. Analyze factors influencing the role and scope of the role of the RNFA.
2. Integrate the independent and collaborative aspects of patient care, utilizing the nursing process as a framework.
3. Apply principles of asepsis, infection control, and epidemiology in best practices of nursing care of the perioperative patient.
4. Differentiate between abnormal anatomy and physiology as they pertain to the indications for surgical intervention, assisting considerations, and evaluation of postoperative patient outcomes.
5. Demonstrate communication skills necessary for collaboration and best practices for the RNFA.
6. Recognize the indication(s) for hemostasis, handling tissue, retraction/exposure, using surgical instruments and suturing.
7. Demonstrate competent intraoperative RNFA behaviors including (clinical): a. Preparation, positioning, draping b. Retraction, tissue handling, cutting tissue c. Suctioning techniques, providing surgical site exposure, hemostasis d. Suturing, use of surgical instruments e. Wound management.
8. Prepare appropriate preventive and corrective action for recognized surgical hazards. (clinical)
9. Provide postoperative care of patients in collaboration with other health care providers in the immediate postoperative period and beyond. (clinical)

Assignments & Assessments

Teaching Methods/Activities:

This course consists of both a didactic and a clinical component. The didactic portion of the course includes assigned readings in the course text(s) and assigned journal articles, online lectures, interactive online learning activities, a quiz and a final exam (~16 hours) for a total of 48 hours of content. Teaching methods include lectures using a variety of media, PowerPoint slides, videos, critical thinking exercises, demonstrations, discussions, return demonstrations (skill practice), audio-visual teaching, independent study, online interactive learning activities, and competency evaluation of technical and manual dexterity skills. During the didactic, students are expected to complete required reading of selected textbooks/articles and scholarly/professional participation in discussions.

This course also consists of a clinical practicum with a requirement of 200 clinical specific hours. Of the total 200 hours, 150 hours must be "hands-on" first assisting directly in the OR with a board-certified surgeon preceptor. The remaining 50 hours may be any phase of perioperative nursing in the expanding RNFA role (pre/intra/post op). Clinical internship may

begin after successful completion of all didactic requirements AND once the University of Rochester School of Nursing receives all mandatory paperwork from the student, along with a memorandum of agreement between the University of Rochester and the clinical site, and the clinical site insurance forms.

Evaluation Measures/Learning Outcomes:

The Center for Lifelong Learning wants to make sure you have the time you need to do your best work in this course. It is your responsibility to reach out to course faculty to ask for more time if you need it, and to sign the contract that is sent to you and return it before the end of the semester. Failure to do so will result in zero points posted for any outstanding work and a final grade being calculated and posted.

Didactic

Course Requirement	Percent of Total Grade	Alignment with Course Learning Outcome(s)	Due Date
Discussion Board - Role	2.5 %	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	09/20/2025
RNFA Role Quiz	5 %	CLO 1, 2	09/27/2025
Self-Assessment Worksheets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role Surgical Hazards Tissue Retraction Suture & Ligature 	5%	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	09/20/2025 09/27/2025 10/04/2025 10/04/2025
Discussion Board - Perioperative Complications	2.5 %	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,	10/18/2025
Reviewed & signed Learning Contract Worksheet	P/F	CLO 7, 8, 9	10/18/2025
Final Examination	35%	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	10/18/2025 - 10/24/2025
Attendance/participation in person, multi-day, hands on skills/simulation lab. Skills Competency (Lab skill demonstration)	P/F	CLO 3, 5, 7	10/24/2025 & 10/25/2025

In order to pass the didactic portion of the course and start the clinical portion of the course,,you must receive ≥ 80% on each of the above course requirements.

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Remediation

APRN's without experience in perioperative patient care must undergo an assessment by the program instructor. The assessment will include competency in preoperative and postoperative care, aseptic technique, scrubbing, gowning, gloving, creating and maintaining a sterile field, and positioning the patient. If it is determined that the APRN's knowledge or skills are still deficient despite additional opportunities for practice, course faculty will discuss a remediation plan during the on-site intensive on a case-by-case basis.

This course is entirely online with the exception of one in-person clinical simulation day, so the only way course faculty have to contact you is through the email you used to sign up for this course. You should be checking that email at least 3-4 times per week in case course faculty are trying to contact you. This is extremely important. Please feel free to contact course faculty with any questions.

Grading System:

Graduate Grading:

Grades will be rounded up so that 0.5 (and above) rounds to the next full number (for example, a grade of 79.5 will round up to 80; rounding is only to the tenths; for example, 79.47 does not round up to 80).

The following grading scale is used for the graduate programs:

Numeric Grade (Blackboard)	Letter Grade (UR Student/Transcript)	Grade Points (UR Student/Transcript)
93-100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
83-86	B	3.0
80-82	B-	2.7
70-79	C	2.0
Below 70	E	0.0

Grades that carry no grade points and are not used to compute the cumulative point hour ratio are:

S	Satisfactory
P	Pass
WP	Withdraw passing
WE	Withdraw failing
I	Incomplete
N	No grade reported
AU	Audit

For graduate programs: Grades will be rounded up so that 0.5 (and above) rounds to the next whole number (e.g., a grade of 72.5 will round up to a 73; rounding is only to the tenths; for example, 72.47 does not round up to a 72.5).

The Center for Lifelong Learning wants to make sure you have the time you need to do your best work in this course. It is your responsibility to reach out to course faculty to ask for more time if you need it, and to sign the contract that is sent to you and return it before the end of the semester. Failure to do so will result in zero points posted for any outstanding work and a final grade being calculated and posted.

Clinical Evaluation:

The student will be evaluated by the board-certified surgeon preceptor at the end of their 200 clinic hour internship utilizing the "Preceptor Evaluation" form in SONNET. When the student meets with their evaluating surgeon preceptor they should discuss and review performance measures, establish competencies and areas of improvement.

Clinical

Course Requirement	Percent of Total Grade	Alignment with Course Learning Outcome(s)	Due Date
Clinical Logs	P/F	CLO 7, 8, 9	01/01/2026, 04/01/2026, 07/01/2026, 10/01/2026
Self-Evaluative Blogs	20%	CLO 7, 8, 9	01/01/2026, 04/01/2026, 07/01/2026, 10/01/2026
Surgical Hazard Activity	5%	CLO 6, 7	01/01/2026
Tissue Retraction Activity	5%	CLO 7	04/01/2026
Suture/Ligature Activity	5%	CLO 8	07/01/2026
Case Study Paper	15%	CLO 7, 8, 9	10/01/2026
Completed Learning Contract Worksheet	P/F	SLO 7, 8, 9	10/01/2026
200-Hour Preceptor Evaluation	P/F	CLO 7, 8, 9	10/01/2026

To successfully pass NSG 488, students must achieve all of the following:

- A minimum score of $\geq 80\%$ on each of the course requirements
- A satisfactory rating from preceptor
- Submission of proof of certification as a CNOR or proof of recognition as a certified APRN

Required Textbook(s):

Hung-Fu, L. (Ed.) (2025). *Core curriculum for the RN First Assistant* (6th ed.). AORN.

Phillips, N., & Hornack, A. (2025). *Berry and Kohn's operating room technique* (15th ed.). Elsevier, Inc.

Whalen, C. (2006). *Assisting at surgical operations: A practical guide*. Cambridge University Press

A physical assessment text of choice

An anatomy and physiology text of choice

Required Materials:

Required Suture Kit

Suture kit of your choice – for practice

1. Complete Suture Practice Kit for Suture Training, Including Large Silicone Suture Pad with pre-Cut Wounds and Suture Tool kit (25 Pieces). 2nd Generation Model. (Demonstration and Education Use Only) by [ARTAGIA](#)
OR
2. Suture Practice Kit w Suturing Guide E-Book,[Large Case Large Pad & Variety of Sutures w Slots] 4th Gen Pad, Tools Suture Needles by Medical Professionals for Residents Med Dental Vet School Students by [Suture Practice Kit](#)
3. Complete Suture Practice Kit for Medical Students w/ How-To Suture HD Video Course, Suture Training Manual & Carryall Case. All-in-One A Plus Medics kit incl. suture practice pad. (Education Use Only) by [A Plus Medics](#)

Recommended Textbook(s):

AORN (2023). Perioperative standards and recommended practices. Denver, CO: AORN. (Your institution will often have a copy of this, either electronically or in book form, check with your OR library)

Harken, A. H., & Moore, E. E. (2018). *Abernathy's surgical secrets*. (7th ed.). Elsevier, Inc.

A nursing process/diagnosis text of choice

Course Outline:

- Historical perspectives and the changing role of the RN First Assistant
- Scope of practice- expanded professional nursing role of RNFA including practice credibility, reimbursement and education/certification
- Diagnostic evaluation/work-up
- Anesthesia considerations
- Surgical hazards and other patient complications
- Surgical intervention and assisting techniques
- Infection control with the surgical patient
- Drains and wound care
- Collaborative relationship and communication skills stressed throughout
- Clinical internship- goal setting/clinical log/public policy-RNFA benefits
- Scholarly writing (APA format) including a case study that synthesizes all didactic and clinical components utilizing AORN recommended Registered Nurse First Assistant components including core curriculum, education and practice standards

Academic Policies

Academic Policies:



Disability Statement

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an academic accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the access coordinator for your school to establish eligibility for academic accommodations.



Academic Honesty Statement

Students are responsible for their own work. Students are expected to have read and to practice principles of academic honesty. See [Student Handbook](#).

Student attestation is completed on Blackboard for each course.



Professional Behavior / Civility Statement

The University of Rochester, School of Nursing (SON) seeks to provide an environment for learning and teaching that is respectful of diverse persons and points of view in all classroom, electronic, and clinical settings. Consistent with this goal, it is expected that diverse perspectives and opinions will be expressed and received in a respectful and professional manner. Incivility, intolerance, hate speech, and abusive behaviors are considered professional misconduct and will be acted upon in accordance with the statement in the Student Handbook.

(<https://www.son.rochester.edu/assets/pdf/studenthandbook.pdf>)



Title IX/Sexual Harassment Policy

All members of the University community have the right to learn and work in a safe environment free from all forms of harassment, including harassment on the basis of sex or gender. Students who have been subjected to sexual harassment, including sexual assault, dating/domestic violence or stalking, have the right to receive academic, housing, transportation or other accommodations, to receive counseling and health services and to make a report about such behavior to the University and to law enforcement. For more information please visit www.rochester.edu/sexualmisconduct.



HIPAA Compliance

Students are to abide by the University of Rochester HIPAA Compliance Guidelines which can be found on the SON website (<http://son.rochester.edu/r/HIPAA-Video>).



ADA Statement

The University of Rochester welcomes students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities to our campus. We strive to meet the needs of all qualified participants in our programs and services by providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and connection to resources within the University. Students seeking accommodations on the basis of a disability should follow the steps outlined on the [University's Disability Services website](#). The School of Nursing has designated an access coordinator to assist with implementing approved academic accommodations through an interactive process. Contact information for access coordinators can be found on the [Disability Services website](#).

See Student Handbook (<https://www.son.rochester.edu/assets/pdf/studenthandbook.pdf>)



Holidays

See the [University of Rochester School of Nursing Handbook](#).



Refund Policy for Dropping a Course

All full-semester courses start the first day of the semester, regardless of when the first actual class session/meeting/zoom is held. After **7 calendar days** from the semester start date, the refund schedule takes effect and students will owe money if they are dropping the course. This policy pertains to all students, regardless of any tuition benefit or scholarship. For additional details about dropping or withdrawing from courses, please see the [UR SON Student Handbook](#)



Guidelines for the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students at the School of Nursing must comply with faculty directions about using artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-generated text (such as ChatGPT, Duolingo, etc in student assessments, which may include encouragement to use AI, a prohibition from using AI, and various considerations between these two ends. If AI is allowed, students must cite its use (see <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>). In addition, students are responsible for verifying any citations provided by AI due to the known possibility of AI generating fictitious references. In all cases, students are encouraged to speak with course faculty about their intended use of AI. The risk of not adhering to these guidelines raises the risk of breaching academic and professional integrity guidelines as described in the [SON Student Handbook](#).



Safe Assign Disclosure

SafeAssign is a plagiarism prevention tool for students and instructors that may be used in your course. This tool is designed to compare your writing with other assignment submissions and published works and report any phrases or passages identical or similar to those in other assignment submissions and published works. If applicable, students are encouraged to submit their papers to a Draft SafeAssign assignment link in the course. If you have questions or are concerned about your report results, please reach out to the course faculty to discuss. Papers submitted to the Draft SafeAssign link will not count towards your grade, and students will not be penalized for any plagiarism detected in a draft. However, students are responsible for handing in final assignments that adhere to the School of Nursing Academic Honesty Policy.

Students are responsible for avoiding plagiarism and need to be attentive to writing in their voice and always cite and/or quote the ideas of others. SafeAssign will not detect all plagiarized content. Students are responsible for any plagiarized materials even if SafeAssign does not detect them.

Please see this guide (<https://help.blackboard.com/SafeAssign/Student>) and view [Assignments: Referencing, Plagiarism and Draft SafeAssign](#) for information on how to use SafeAssign and interpret the results.