AORN’S PERIOP 101 BLENDED LEARNING TIPS
How Blended Learning Can Benefit You & Your Students

In the standard educational model, blended learning often refers to the use of laboratory equipment or computers to complement the class sessions and strengthen the teaching process through practice and the application of theories learned in class. Periop 101 is best taught and learned using the blended learning method. Below are some valuable tips for implementing Periop 101 effectively.

1. Refer to the Periop 101 Administrator Implementation Guide Often
It will help you implement the course successfully in an integrated manner, and it was created to make your job easier. Visit the new online Periop 101 Administrator and Student Resource Centers for over 150 supporting resources including two sample course schedules and preceptor guidelines.

2. Recruit the Right Periop 101 Students
AORN does not require that novice perioperative nurses have a minimum amount of nursing experience. However, asking the right interview questions initially can help determine how successful your candidates will be. Here are the top three criteria we recommend focusing on:
   • Knowledge of the overall nursing process
   • Skills - for new grads, the extent and variety of clinical experiences; for experienced nurses, you can build on their previous knowledge, and
   • Motivation or attitude - Do they have a genuine interest in perioperative nursing? Are they eager to learn? Are they a team player? We suggest requiring candidates to spend a day in your OR, shadowing a staff member to help them determine if the OR is a good fit or not.

3. Put Your Periop 101 Modules in an Order that Works Best for Your Facility
By default, the modules are listed in alphabetical order which will most likely not be the most effective order for the best student learning experience. Since you cannot reorder the modules within the LMS, provide students a list of the modules in the order you would like them completed.

4. Assign Only a Few Modules Each Week, Depending on Module Length
Students can complete these modules either in a classroom at your facility or at home. Confirm your facility’s employee policy regarding where nurses’ work can be compensated.
5. Get Yourself and Your Entire Staff Engaged
As the administrator, participate in classroom discussions, post-tests, and required readings to ensure that students fully understand the concepts. Also, engage other staff members to present to students as a supplement to the online modules (e.g., have an anesthesia provider talk about your facility processes when the students are assigned the anesthesia module.)

6. It’s OK if You Don’t Have a Formal Simulation Lab
Students must participate in skills labs to practice and refine their skills. However, even if you don’t have a formal simulation lab, most of the skills labs can be done in the classroom or in an empty OR.

7. Use Videos as Teaching Tools
Another important aspect of the blended course is viewing the recommended videos. They provide invaluable visual learning opportunities and offer an important visual depiction of the implementation of AORN’s Guidelines for Perioperative Practice.

8. OR Observations & Practice Makes Perfect
Observation is another important aspect of blended learning. Make sure students are observing in the OR, starting with the first week of the program. As your students complete each module and the related skills labs, they should begin applying the skills in the practice setting under the supervision of competent preceptors.

9. Continually Connect the Dots
As the student moves into each new module, make sure they understand the content, know your facility policies, view related videos, have the opportunity to practice and refine the skills covered in each module, and then they can start using these skills in actual practice with their preceptors. Students must successfully complete all modules and take the final exam during the six (6) month Periop 101 course access period. They do not have to complete their entire clinical practicum before taking the final exam, but we recommend they focus on patient assessment, care implementation, decision making, and critical thinking skills in order to increase their chances of passing the exam.

10. There is No One Right Way
Periop 101 Administrators have used a variety of blended learning strategies over the years. Keep in mind that it’s a gradual learning process with a variety of activities that can and should be intermingled and integrated for the best results. Best practices suggest that optimal results are achieved with a 12-15 week program. A clinical orientation rotation plan is recommended to follow the program. This will allow the student opportunity to acquire the competency skills required for each of your clinical specialties.