

What is a Dental Assistant?

Dental Assistants are essential team members in the dental office. Working closely with the dentist, hygienist, and administrative staff, dental assistants use their skills to deliver quality oral care to diverse patient populations and to increase efficiency in the office.

Dental assistants work chairside with the dentist, in the business office, and in the dental laboratory. Duties may include:

- Instrument and operator infection control
- Preparation of instrument trays
- Instructing patients on proper oral hygiene and post-treatment care
- Maintenance of dental practice records and supplies
- Exposing and processing of dental radiographs if the assistant is certified to do so, and
- Scheduling appointments

Students will have the opportunity to obtain the following certificates by passing the following and meeting required Radiological Proficiency (RHS), and Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA) exams: Radiological Proficiency (RHS), Infection Control Exam (ICE), and Oregon Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA).

Clackamas Community College provides a 53-54-credit Dental Assistant Certificate Program.

### Program Structure and Delivery

The Dental Assistant Program uses a cohort model of delivering quality instruction and support. This means students start the program together, learn together, and graduate together. The Dental Assisting Program starts in the Fall with students completing a 1-Year Certificate in Spring (total of 53-54 credits). The program consists of three terms of full-time study.

Our dental lab is fully equipped to offer a valuable hands-on experience that prepares our students for real-world dental office technology, such as digital dental radiology.

The Dental Assistant (DA) program is designed to prepare students for entry level positions in the dental care setting. The goal of the program is to graduate students that have demonstrated competences in the clinical and administrative practices as well as demonstrated work ethic and professional values consistent with that of the [American Dental Association](#) (ADA).

## Oregon Health Authority Rules for Students in Clinical Training

The Dental Assisting Program follows the guidelines and requirements set forth by the Oregon Health Authority ([OAR 409-030-0100 to 409-030-025](#)). In order to obtain a clinical practicum or clinical experience, students must meet the following standards and requirements set forth by the State.

Note: If you have been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, please contact the program director for additional information. Deadlines and due dates for completing OHA requirements may vary by program.

### Criminal Background Check

- Criminal background check must be completed prior to clinical placement and no more than three months before entering the program

### Drug Screen

- Drug Screen must be completed prior to clinical placement and no more than three months before entering the program

### TB Skin Test (2 Step) or Chest X-Ray

 There must be documentation of **one** of the following:

- 2 step TB skin test **or**
- Quantiferon Gold blood test **or**
- If the results are positive a clear Chest X-Ray (with lab report) is required

### Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap)

 There must be documentation the following:

- Tdap/Td booster within the past 10 years

### Varicella (Chicken Pox)

 There must be documentation of **one** of the following:

- 2 vaccinations **or**
- Positive antibody titer (lab report required) **or**
- Medically documented history of disease

### Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR)

 There must be documentation of **one** of the following:

- 2 vaccinations **or**
- Positive antibody titers for all 3 components (lab reports required)

### Hepatitis B

 There must be documentation of **one** of the following:

- 3 vaccinations **or**
- Positive antibody titer (lab report required)

### COVID-19 ([OAR 333-019-010](#))

- 2 vaccinations Pfizer **or**
- 2 vaccinations Moderna **or**
- 1 vaccinations Johnson & Johnson

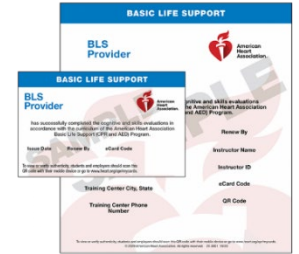
### Flu Vaccine

 (Recommended by OHA and required by some employers)

- Seasonal flu vaccine

**BLS/CPR Certification (Must be provider level and valid through the end date of the course)**

- Certification must be through the American Heart Association



## Employment Opportunities



### Dental Assistant

Dental Assistants work in managed care facilities, private dental practices, state and county clinics, dental schools, and the insurance industry.

Clackamas Community College has strong partnerships large dental clinics including Willamette Dental and Kaiser Permanente and smaller private practices.

- ✓ Potential salary for Dental Assistants in Oregon: \$50,000 (median) Oregon Employment Department)

## Estimated Program Cost (In-State)



**Don't let cost become a barrier!** Clackamas Community College offers numerous scholarships and grants.

- Clackamas Community College [Scholarships](#)
- Clackamas Community College [Grants](#)
- Clackamas Community College [Financial Aid](#)
- Clackamas Community College [Workforce Development](#)

The estimated cost of the Dental Assistant Program includes tuition, books, and additional fees associated with credentialing.

PROGRAM COSTS	
Tuition & Fees (3 terms, 53 to 54 credits)	\$10,522.00
Textbooks	\$577

ADDITIONAL ITEMS	
Materials	\$650
ESTIMATED TOTAL PROGRAM COST:	

Upon successful completion of the Dental Assisting Program, students will be eligible to for the Dental Certification by the Oregon Board of Dentistry.

The cost of these exams is **not** included in the program tuition and fees:

CERTIFICATION	COST
Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA) Certification by the Oregon Board of Dentistry	<p><b>Second Term: Winter</b></p> <p>\$270 Infection Control Exam (ICE)            \$270 Radiology Exam (RHS)            \$50 Radiology Proficiency Exam and Certificate</p> <p><b>Third Term: Spring</b></p> <p>\$300 EFDA Exam and Certificate</p>

**Advising Information**



It is recommended to meet with a Health Science Advisor prior to applying to the program. Our advisors will help answer pre-requisite program requirements.

Tracy Pantano-Rumsey, Academic Advisor  
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## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The Dental Assisting Program (DA) requires students complete the following academic pre-requisite requirements.

Prerequisite or Clackamas Community College (PASS) placement tests:

- ✓ WR-121 English Composition or WR 101 Occupational Writing
- ✓ MTH 50 Technical Mathematics or MTH 65 Algebra II or higher

Submit your unofficial transcripts or Clackamas Community College (PASS) placement test scores to: [Allied Health Admissions@clackamas.edu](mailto:Allied_Health_Admissions@clackamas.edu) (please indicate which program you are applying for in the email subject line).

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

To be successful in the Dental Assistant program and become employable, the student must be able to perform essential functions expected of the DA (see list below). Please contact the DA program regarding questions or concerns about these requirements.

Students must have the physical, intellectual and emotional abilities to provide safe patient care; visual acuity, hearing, speech, manual dexterity, physical strength and endurance must be maintained as well. The practice of dental assisting requires the following functional abilities with or without reasonable accommodations:

Essential Function	Example
<b>Visual acuity</b> (clearness of vision)	With or without corrective lenses sufficient to assess patients and their own environments.  Detect changes in skin color or condition; collect data from recording equipment and measurement devices used in patient care; detect a fire in a patient area and initiate emergency action; reading and following instructions pertaining to dental materials; ability to perform oral procedures involving fine detail, including the use of indirect field of vision.
<b>Hearing ability</b>	With or without hearing aids to hear a patient's call for help, to auscultate a patient's vital signs, and their own environment.  Detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope; detect audible alarms within the frequency and volume ranges of sounds generated by mechanical systems that monitor bodily functions; gear clearly during

	telephone conversations; effectively hear to communicate with patients and other healthcare team members.
<b>Olfactory ability</b> (smells)	Detect smoke from burning materials; detect odors from hazardous material spills.
<b>Tactile ability</b> (sense of touch)	Read and record patient vital signs; detect unsafe temperature levels in heat-producing devices used in patient care; perform intra-oral patient care procedures; detect anatomical abnormalities.
<b>Strength and Mobility</b>	Ability to lift 25lbs; prolonged time sitting and/or standing on feet (8-12 hours); repetitive bending and twisting.
<b>Ability to speak, comprehend, read, and write in English</b>	Able to questions the patient about his/her condition; accurately relay information about the patient both verbally and in written communication to others.
<b>Fine motor skills</b> (ability to make movements using the small muscles in your hands or wrists)	Demonstrate eye/hand coordination; safely dispose of needles in sharps containers; manipulate small equipment and small dental instruments; manipulation of dental materials; handling and passing of dental instruments; placement and movement of instruments in oral cavity.
<b>Emotional stability</b> to function effectively under stress	Ability to adapt to changing situations, and to follow through on assigned patient care responsibilities.
<b>Cognitive ability</b> (reasoning and/or thinking)	Ability to collect, analyze, apply information.  Ability to make clinical judgments and manage decisions that promote positive patient outcomes.

ADA Accommodations: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (ADA) mandates that reasonable accommodations must be made for individuals with disabilities. Any student who may need an accommodation for a disability should make an appointment with the Program Director and the [Disability Resource Center](#).

## Application Information

Please be sure to complete each of the steps below:

**Step 1:** Review all information provided on the website before completing this form.

Website information link: [Dental Assisting Program](#)

**Step2:** Submit your unofficial transcripts or Clackamas Community College (PASS) placement test scores for the below pre-requisites to: [Allied\\_Health\\_Admissions@clackamas.edu](mailto:Allied_Health_Admissions@clackamas.edu)

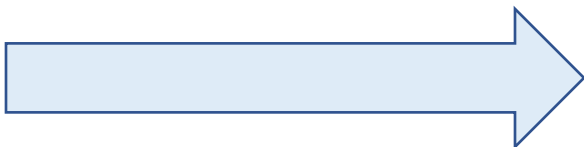
- ✓ WR-121 English Composition or WR 101 Occupational Writing
- ✓ MTH 50 Technical Mathematics or MTH 65 Algebra II or higher

**Step 3:** Complete the online application by going to the Dental Assisting Program website or use the QR code below. *You will type your responses for the two essay questions directly into the application.*



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See next page for essay questions and rubrics.



## APPLICATION ESSAY QUESTIONS and SCORING RUBRICS

The Dental Assisting application requires prospective students to answer two essay questions. The applications are “de-identified” prior to reviewing and scoring the essays to reduce bias. It is recommended students meet with one of the Health Sciences Academic Advisor prior to completing your application. A dental assistant job shadow is recommended, but not required.

**Essay 1: (250 words or less)** What are your goals for completing the Dental Assistant (DA) Program?

*Note: We are asking this question because we want to train students who are motivated to become dental assistants and ready to invest the time and effort required to be successful in the DA program.*

	Criterion	Response Exceeds Expectations (5 points)	Response Meets Expectations (4 points)	Response Indicates and Opportunity for Growth and Reflection (3 points)
Essay 1 Content	Candidate expresses job and/or professional goals for completing the DA program	Response provides a clear, strong, and detailed statement about the candidate’s goals for completing the DA program	Response provides a clear statement of the candidate’s goals for completing the DA program	Response shows an opportunity for the candidate to think deeply about their future job and professional goals



**Essay 2: (250 words or less)** Describe in detail a work or training experience in which you used problem solving or critical thinking skills. What did you learn?

*Note: We are asking this question because students in the DA program need to use critical thinking skills to be successful.*

<b>Essay 2 Content</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Response Exceeds Expectations (5 points)</b>	<b>Response Meets Expectations (4 points)</b>	<b>Response Indicates an Opportunity for Growth and Reflection (3 points)</b>
	The candidate describes an experience where problem solving/critical thinking skills were used in a work or training experience.	Response provides a clear, strong and detailed statement about a situation when problem solving or critical thinking skills were used in a work or training experience.	Response provides a clear statement about a situation when problem solving or critical thinking skills were used in a work or training experience.	Response shows an opportunity for the candidate to reflect about a time when they used problem solving or critical thinking skills in a work or training experience.
	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Response Exceeds Expectations (5 points)</b>	<b>Response Meets Expectations (4 points)</b>	<b>Response Indicates an Opportunity for Growth and Reflection (3 points)</b>
	The candidate is able to recall and write about what they learned from the experience	Response provides a clear, strong and detailed statement about what they learned from the work or training experience.	Response provides a clear statement about what they learned from the work or training experience.	Response shows and opportunity for the candidate to reflect about what they learned from the work or training experience.

## Program Contacts

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Allied Health Admissions – please send unofficial transcripts to:  
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