

DENTAL ASSISTANT

Diploma Program

33 weeks – 760 hours, 48 credit units

The goal of the Dental Assistant program is to provide graduates with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to qualify for entry-level positions as dental assistants. Since they are trained in clinical and radiographic procedures, their services are also sought by general dentists, and dental offices and facilities specializing in pediatrics, orthodontics, endodontics and other specialties, dental schools, dental supply manufacturers, hospital dental departments, dental laboratories and insurance companies.

The objective of the Dental Assistant program is to provide the student with the appropriate didactic theory and hands-on skills required and necessary, to prepare them for entry level positions as dental assistants in today's modern health and dental care offices, dental clinics, and facilities. Students will study diagnostic and procedural terminology as it relates to the accurate completion of dental examinations, procedures, and daily tasks.

The combination of introduced skills taught in this program, will prepare students for the ever-changing field of dentistry and orthodontics. Students study dental radiography, dental sciences, operator dentistry, laboratory procedures, dental anatomy and orthodontics, and dental health.

Completion of the Dental Assistant program, including the classroom training and externship, is acknowledged by the awarding of a diploma.

Module ID, Title, Total Hours, Total Credits

MODULE A Dental Office Emergencies and Compliance 80 hours 6 credits

MODULE B Dental Radiography 80 hours 6 credits

MODULE C Dental Specialties 80 hours 6 credits

MODULE D Operator Dentistry 80 hours 6 credits

MODULE E Laboratory Procedures 80 hours 6credits

MODULE F Dental Anatomy and Orthodontics 80 hours 6 credits

MODULE G Dental Health 80 hours 6 credits

MODULE X Dental Assistant Externship 200 hours 6 credits

Total 760 hours 48 credits

Major Equipment

Amalgamators, DXTRR and Typodont Manikins, Model Vibrators, PersonalComputers, Autoclave, Handpieces, Oral Evacuation Equipment, Ultrasonic Units, Automatic and Manual Processing Equipment, Model Trimmers, X-Ray Units, Dental Unit and Chairs

Module A – Dental Office Emergencies and Compliance 6 Quarter Credits

In this module, students are introduced to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards for infection control and hazard communication. Topics include microbiology, contagious diseases concerning the dental team, universal precautions, barrier techniques and handling hazardous chemicals. Students practice step-by-step instrument decontamination using approved sterilization agents and methods. Students learn operator disinfection using approved agents and methods. Methods for taking and recording vital signs and blood pressure are introduced. Students also learn about CPR for the Healthcare Provider and how to manage emergencies that may occur in the dental office. Related dental terminology is studied. Basic concepts of psychology and communication are discussed with emphasis on helping dental patients overcome anxieties related to dental treatment. Special considerations for the medically and physically compromised patients are presented. Career development skills are also taught. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module B – Dental Radiography 6 Quarter Credits

Module B introduces students to the basic anatomy of the head and teeth in order to familiarize students with the anatomical structures involved in dental radiographs. Radiation protection and the hazards of X radiation are studied. Emphasis is placed on maintaining radiation safety while obtaining the best possible diagnostic quality dental radiographs. Students are also introduced to digital radiography. Theory, laboratory skills and clinical practice meet state guidelines for a Radiation Safety Certificate and comply with federal regulations for certifying radiographic operators. Students practice techniques of film exposure and mounting in equipped dental operatories with industry-approved structural and monitoring devices. Exposure techniques include bitewing, bisecting and paralleling techniques and are performed on a patient simulator manikin. Upon successful completion of practice, students produce radiographs on site for clinical patients as prescribed by a licensed dentist. Students process film using a fully equipped darkroom or automatic processor. Students are also required to mount processed radiographs and to evaluate the diagnostic quality according to established criteria. Students retake non-diagnostic films. Professional responsibilities regarding the state radiation safety certificate are introduced as well as quality assurance and infection control. Related dental terminology is also

taught. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module C – Dental Specialties 6 Quarter Credits

In this module, student study cranial anatomy as it relates to anesthesia administration and pain control. Methods for taking and recording vital signs and blood pressure are introduced. Skills performed by the dental assistant in the specialty areas of Oral Surgery and Endodontics (root canals) are presented, including procedures for the administration of topical and local anesthetics. Students practice acquired skills on training manikins (Typodonts), placing instruments and materials. Children's dentistry (Pediatric Dentistry) as a specialty is presented. Related dental terminology is studied. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module D – Operatory Dentistry 6 Quarter Credits

This module introduces students to chair-side assisting duties and techniques practiced in general dentistry with emphasis on sit-down, four-handed dentistry. Students learn how to handle and transfer dental instruments and place materials on models. Properties and manipulation of common dental materials, including amalgam, composites, glass ionomers and sealants, are presented. Students practice required RDA procedures such as placement, wedging and removal of matrices, placement of cement bases and liners, and placement of temporary sedative dressing on Typodont manikins. Basic concepts of psychology and communication are discussed with emphasis on helping dental patients overcome anxieties related to dental treatment. Students also study related dental terminology. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module E – Laboratory Procedures 6 Quarter Credits

In this module, students receive hands-on training in taking impressions and constructing study and master casts. Students are exposed to a variety of impression and gypsum materials and procedures for their use. The casts are then used to practice dental procedures such as the fabrication of custom trays and temporary crowns. Prosthodontics as a specialty is presented with instruction in crown and bridge procedures and full and partial dentures. Students are introduced to dental implants and the various types of mouth guards such as night-guards, sports guards and bleaching trays. Laboratory safety and infection control are presented. Related dental terminology is studied. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module F – Dental Anatomy and Orthodontics 6 Quarter Credits

This module focuses on orthodontics as a specialty. Students receive hands-on training in practicing orthodontic measurements, placement of separators, sizing bands and placement and ligation of arch wires. Theory on orthodontic assistant duties, office routine and malocclusion classifications are presented. In addition, students learn to chart the oral conditions of patients in compliance with state guidelines for mouth mirror inspection. Introduction of tooth morphology, oral structures, and oral pathology are presented. Related spelling and terminology is studied throughout the module. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module G – Dental Health 6 Quarter Credits

Specialty areas of oral pathology and periodontics are studied. Placement of periodontal surgical dressings is demonstrated and practiced on manikins according to RDA criteria. Preventive dentistry is emphasized. Related areas of nutrition and fluorides are presented. Students also study related dental terminology. Coronal polish theory and procedures are taught and practiced on manikins and then on clinical patients under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist. Out-of-class activities will be assigned and assessed as part of this module. *Prerequisites: None.* Lecture Hours: 40 Lab Hours: 40

Module X – Dental Assistant Externship 6 Quarter Credits

This module is 200 hours of unpaid, supervised, practical in-service in a dental office or clinic in which the student practices direct application of all administrative and clinical functions of dental assisting. *Prerequisites: Completion of Modules A-G.* Lecture Hours: 0 Lab Hours: 0 Other Hours: 200