

DENTAL HYGIENE - AAS DEGREE

Overview

Limited Entry Program

See Department website and program contacts here

The **Dental Hygiene (AAS) degree** is designed for students seeking careers as licensed dental hygienists. The curriculum combines classroom instruction, laboratory learning, and extensive clinical experience to prepare students for professional practice in dental and healthcare settings.

Coursework includes topics such as **dental hygiene therapy, oral anatomy, pathology, expanded functions, local anesthesia, restorative procedures, and preventive oral healthcare**. Students develop practical clinical skills through supervised patient care experiences and hands-on training in clinical environments.

The Dental Hygiene program is **completed over seven terms and is workforce-focused, emphasizing practical, applied learning that prepares students for licensure and employment in the dental hygiene field**. During the program, students prepare for and complete National and Regional Board examinations required for professional licensure.

Graduates who complete program and licensure requirements may pursue employment in dental offices, community health settings, public health programs, and related healthcare environments. Students interested in additional educational opportunities may also pursue transfer pathways toward bachelor's degree completion.

Because this is a **limited entry program**, students should review application requirements carefully and work with program advisors (<https://www.mhcc.edu/education-options/degrees-certificates/dental-hygiene/index/>) regarding eligibility, prerequisite completion, and program planning.

Refer to the tabs above for additional information about:

- **Education Plan** – provides a sample term-by-term sequence of courses
- **How to Apply** – details the steps required to apply to the program
- **Career Info** – includes information on potential occupations, employment trends, and earnings

Program Learning Objectives

At the completion of this program, students should be able to:

- Develop appropriate decision making skills and utilize professional judgment, conduct and ethics to provide optimum patient care
- Effectively assess, diagnose, plan, implement, evaluate, and document current dental hygiene services
- Promote innovative approaches to problem solving and critical thinking that stimulate independence and responsibility
- Work effectively with diverse populations as members of the health care team
- Actively participate and lead in community activities and professional associations

Education Plan

This sample Education Plan illustrates one possible course sequence. Students should consult an advisor (<https://www.mhcc.edu/student-resources/academic-advising/>) to create a personalized plan.

It is highly recommended students meet with an adviser in **general advising** when selecting program prerequisites.

Personal Aptitude

The personal requirements necessary to succeed as a dental hygienist begin with a strong belief in the importance of good oral health and include an aptitude for the biological sciences. Of prime importance are manual dexterity, critical thinking skills, high ethical standards, a genuine interest in science and an ability to work with people.

Prerequisite Courses

For the most updated information and a list of prerequisite courses, please see the Dental Hygiene - How to Get Started page (<https://mhcc.edu/education-options/degrees-certificates/dental-hygiene/get-started/>). It is the student's responsibility to verify completion of appropriate prerequisite courses.

The following courses must be completed with a "C" or higher in order to apply to the Dental Hygiene program:

- CH106 Biological Chemistry for Health Professions
- BI231Z Human Anatomy and Physiology I
- BI232Z Human Anatomy and Physiology II
- BI233Z Human Anatomy and Physiology III
- BI234 Microbiology
- WR121Z Composition I, *fulfills AAS degree written communication requirement.*
- MTH065 Beginning Algebra II or higher, *fulfills AAS degree mathematics requirement.* If math is completed before fall term eight years ago, you must demonstrate current knowledge by placing into MTH095 or higher through the College Placement Test (CPT). If the required placement is not met, you must complete the required math by the end of fall before the application deadline. If placement is met, you do not need to retake math. CPT scores are valid for five years.

Supporting Courses

The following courses may be completed before the application deadline for additional points, or completed by the end of spring term just after the application deadline:

- FN225 Nutrition or HE225 Nutrition, *fulfills AAS degree Health & PE requirement if taken summer 2021 or later.*
- One psychology course from the following:
 - PSY101 Psychology of Human Relations, *fulfills AAS degree Human Relations requirement.*
 - PSY201Z Introduction to Psychology I, *fulfills AAS degree Human Relations requirement.*
 - PSY214 Introduction to Personality 🌐, *fulfills AAS degree Human Relations requirement if taken summer 2020 or later.*
 - PSY216 Social Psychology, *fulfills AAS degree Human Relations requirement if taken summer 2020 or later.*
- One oral communication course from the following, *fulfills AAS degree Human Relations requirement if taken summer 2020 or later.*

- COMM100Z Introduction to Communication
- COMM111Z Public Speaking
- COMM115 Introduction to Intercultural Communication 🌐
- COMM218Z Interpersonal Communication
- COMM219 Small Group Communication
- One additional writing course from the following:
 - WR122Z Composition II
 - WR227Z Technical Writing
 - WR123, *no longer offered at MHCC and most other Oregon community colleges, but does not expire if previously taken.*

Additional Requirements

The following requirement(s) must be fulfilled to be awarded the AAS in Dental Hygiene.

- All courses must be completed with a grade of "C" or higher.
- All core (DH) courses must be completed within 5 years of starting the program.

Prerequisites

The following courses are required to be completed by the application deadline:

CH106	Biological Chemistry for Health Professions	5
BI231Z	Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
BI232Z	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
BI233Z	Human Anatomy and Physiology III	4
BI234	Microbiology	4
WR121Z	Composition I (Included in total program credits)	4
MTH065	Beginning Algebra II (Included in total program credits)	4

These courses may be completed by the application deadline for additional points, but must be completed by the end of spring term just after the application deadline:

FN225 or HE225	Nutrition or Nutrition	4
PSY101 or PSY201Z or PSY202Z or PSY214 or PSY216	Psychology of Human Relations or Introduction to Psychology I or Introduction to Psychology II or Introduction to Personality 🌐 or Social Psychology	3
COMM100Z or COMM111Z or COMM115 or COMM218Z or COMM219	Introduction to Communication or Public Speaking or Introduction to Intercultural Communication 🌐 or Interpersonal Communication or Small Group Communication	4
WR122Z or WR227Z	Composition II or Technical Writing	4
This course may be completed by the application deadline for additional points, but may be taken during the program.		
SOC204Z or SOC205Z or SOC206Z	Introduction to Sociology or Social Change and Institutions or Social Problems	4

Credits 8

First Quarter

Fall		Credits
DH111	Introduction to Dental Hygiene	3
DH112	Principles of Clinical Dental Hygiene ¹	3
DH113	Dental/Oral Anatomy	2
DH114	Oral Microbiology	2
DH115	Professionalism and Cultural Competency	1
DH117	Oral Histology and Embryology	2
Credits		13

Second Quarter

Winter		Credits
DH121	Dental Hygiene Clinical Theory I	3
DH122	Dental Hygiene Clinic I ²	3
DH124	Oral Radiology I	3
DH125	General Pathology ³	3
DH127	Head and Neck Anatomy I	2
Credits		14

Third Quarter

Spring		Credits
DH131	Dental Hygiene Clinical Theory II	2
DH132	Dental Hygiene Clinic II	4
DH134	Oral Radiology II	1
DH135	Oral Pathology	2
DH136	Pharmacology	3
DH137	Head and Neck Anatomy II	2
Credits		14

Fourth Quarter

Summer		Credits
DH213	Expanded Functions	1
DH215	Dental Materials	3
DH219	Nitrous Oxide-Oxygen Sedation	1
Select one of the following courses, if not already taken:		0-4
SOC204Z	Introduction to Sociology	
SOC205Z	Social Change and Institutions	
SOC206Z	Social Problems	
Health and Physical Education requirement - see degree audit to determine if needed		0-3
Credits		12

Fifth Quarter

Fall		Credits
DH211	Dental Hygiene Clinical Theory III	2
DH212	Dental Hygiene Clinic III	5
DH214	Periodontology for Dental Hygienists I	2
DH216	Community Dental Health	2
DH217	Local Anesthesia	2
DH218	Introduction to Restorative Dentistry ⁴	2
Credits		15

Sixth Quarter

Winter		Credits
DH221	Dental Hygiene Clinical Theory IV	2
DH222	Dental Hygiene Clinic IV	5
DH223	Public Health and Dental Research	2

DH224	Periodontology for Dental Hygienists II	2
DH225	Restorative Dentistry Lab ⁴	2
Credits		13
Seventh Quarter		
Spring		
DH231	Dental Hygiene Clinical Theory V	2
DH232	Dental Hygiene Clinic V	5
DH233	Ethics and Jurisprudence	1
DH234	Practice Management and Dental Hygiene Issues	2
DH235	Restorative Dentistry Clinic ⁴	3
Credits		13
Total Credits		102

¹ Students are required to submit a medical history and sign a consent form to participate in partner practice, including but not limited to: instrumentation, nitrous oxide-oxygen sedation, and local anesthesia.

² All students are required to participate in a background check and drug testing prior to attending clinical rotations.

³ The program offers DH125 General Pathology via distance learning, and reserves the right to offer other courses via distance learning.

⁴ Students may not opt out of DH218 Introduction to Restorative Dentistry, DH225 Restorative Dentistry Lab, or DH235 Restorative Dentistry Clinic.

Statement to Applicants Regarding Exposure to Bloodborne and other Infectious Diseases

Dental hygienists are professionals who practice direct patient care and are therefore potentially exposed to a number of serious infections and bloodborne disease pathogens. Among these are hepatitis viruses, influenza, and HIV infection. The program curriculum includes in-depth study of disease transmission and comprehensive preventive practices in order to ensure students, patients, faculty and supervising dentists are as safe from exposure as possible.

The program follows up-to-date CDC, OSHA, and OSAP requirements in all aspects of lab and clinical care, and has an excellent record of exposure prevention. Prior to program entry, all students must comply with health and safety guidelines which include vaccination and/or proof of immunity (positive titer) to hepatitis B, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chickenpox). Program faculty and dentists are required to maintain current immunizations as well. Should an exposure occur, the program and the college supports the student in testing and follow up care per current CDC and OSHA guidelines.

Exceptions to immunization requirements are very rare; any concerns must be discussed with the program director as early as possible.

How to Apply

The **Dental Hygiene** program is a limited-entry program. The program admits approximately 18 students each fall term through a point-based selection process. Because space is limited, students must meet specific eligibility requirements before applying.

View current admissions requirements, deadlines, and point system information

Application Steps

Step 1: Apply to MHCC

Students should apply for admission to Mt. Hood Community College and select the **Associate of General Studies in Health Professions Exploration** as their major.

Step 2: Pay the Application Fee

Submit the required non-refundable application fee.

Step 3: Submit Official Transcripts

Students must submit official transcripts for evaluation and prerequisite verification.

Step 4: Apply to the Dental Hygiene Program

Students must complete and submit the Dental Hygiene program application during the published application period.

Admission Requirements

The Dental Hygiene program uses a point-based selection system that considers both academic and non-academic criteria when determining admission decisions.

Selection criteria and point values may change between admission cycles. Students are encouraged to carefully review current requirements and work closely with an advisor regarding prerequisite completion and application planning.

Additional Information

Admission to Mt. Hood Community College does not guarantee admission to the Dental Hygiene program. MHCC reserves the right to modify admission requirements and selection processes.

Career Information

Explore potential careers related to this program, including typical job roles, employment trends, and projected growth. This information can help you better understand how your education may align with future career opportunities.