CENTRAL CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Health Sciences

# Pre-Dental Assisting Program, A55280DA

The pre-dental assisting program builds the academic and professional foundation students need to succeed in a Dental Assisting diploma program and in their future roles as dental assistants. The program focuses on developing the core knowledge, skills, and professional habits required in modern dental practices, including an understanding of basic anatomy, physiology, and microbiology, and their relevance to oral health and infection control. Through foundational science coursework, students gain the background needed to support safe clinical practice, effective chairside assistance, and compliance with industry standards.

In addition to scientific preparation, the program emphasizes communication, critical thinking, and career readiness. Coursework in writing, communication, social psychology, and college success strengthens students' ability to interact effectively with patients and dental teams, understand patient behavior, and function professionally in clinical environments. This academic foundation supports success in dental assisting education and prepares students for credentialing exams such as the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) examinations, positioning them to enter the dental assisting program with confidence and a clear professional focus.

The pre-Dental Assisting program is designed as a preparation track and does not lead to a degree. Students who decide not to pursue Dental Assisting will need to work with their Education Navigator to transition into a different degree pathway.

## Pre-Dental Assisting Program General Education Classes:

| **Required Program Courses** | | **Class** | **Lab** | **Credits** | **Notes:** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACA 122 | Transfer & Career Success | 0 | 2 | 1 | Seated or online |
| BIO 106 | Intro to Anat/Phys/Micro | 2 | 2 | 3 | Online |
| ENG 111 | Writing & Inquiry | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| SOC 240 | Social Psychology | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |

A minimum grade of B must be earned in all science classes (BIO 106 or higher). A minimum grade of C must be earned in all other pre-program classes.

**Approved Biology Substitution:** Can substitute BIO 163, BIO 165/166, or BIO 168/169 for BIO 106 (BIO 163 is required for the AAS)

**Approved Psychology Substitution:** Can substitute PSY 150 and SOC 210 for PSY 240

## Planning for Your Future as a Dental Assistant:

Earning an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Dental Hygiene builds on the foundational knowledge and clinical exposure gained through dental assisting and prepares students for expanded responsibility within the oral healthcare team. Dental Hygiene programs emphasize advanced concepts in oral health science, patient assessment, preventive care, and evidence-based clinical practice. Coursework and clinical training deepen students' understanding of oral-systemic health, infection control, pharmacology, radiography, and patient-centered care, while strengthening scientific reasoning and clinical judgment essential for safe, effective practice.

At the associate degree level, Dental Hygiene students develop the technical proficiency, critical thinking, and professional communication skills required for independent clinical practice. Graduates are prepared for direct patient care roles that include preventive services, patient education, and collaboration with dentists and other healthcare professionals. An AAS in Dental Hygiene provides access to a stable, in-demand healthcare career with strong earning potential and opportunities to make a measurable impact on patient health. Most importantly, it equips former dental assisting students to transition confidently into a higher level of clinical responsibility and adapt to the evolving demands of the oral healthcare workforce.

If you intend to pursue an Associate in Applied Science in Dental Hygiene degree and are interested in taking additional classes while you are waiting to enter the Dental Assisting program, these are the required courses for CCCC's program:

| **Recommended Courses** **(Take one class from each row)** | | **Class** | **Lab** | **Credits** | **Notes:** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BIO 163 | Basic Anat. & Physiology | 4 | 2 | 5 | Seated |
| BIO 175 | General Microbiology | 2 | 2 | 3 | Seated |
| CHM 130/130A | Gen, Org. & Biochemistry with lab | 3 | 2 | 4 | Seated |
| Elective | Communication Elective | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| Elective | Humanities/Fine Arts Elective | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| SPA 111 | Elementary Spanish I (see note below) | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| SPA 112 | Elementary Spanish II | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| SPA 211 | Intermediate Spanish I | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| SPA 212 | Intermediate Spanish II | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |
| PSY 150 | General Psychology | 3 | 0 | 3 | Seated or online |

Please see the college catalog for course descriptions.

A minimum grade of B must be earned in all science classes (BIO 163, BIO 175, and CHM 130/130A). A minimum grade of C must be earned in all other classes for the dental hygiene program.

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**Communication Elective Options:** Select One: COM 110, **COM 120***, COM 231, ENG 111, ENG 112, ENG 114

**Humanities/Fine Arts Elective Options:** Select One: ART 111, ART 114, ART 115, DRA 111, ENG 231, ENG 241, ENG 242, HUM 110, HUM 115, HUM 120, HUM 122, HUM 150, HUM 160, MUS 110, MUS 112, **PHI 240***, REL 211, REL 212

**Approved Biology Substitutions:** Can substitute BIO 165/166 or BIO 168/169 for BIO 163; Can substitute BIO 275 for BIO 175

**Approved Chemistry Substitutions:** Can substitute CHM 130 for CHM 130/130A

*Recommended for DH students

**Students who have questions about the pre-Dental Assisting program should contact their Education Navigator**