

DENTAL ASSISTING

pcc.edu/programs/dental-assisting

CAREER AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Dental assistants play a critical role on the dental healthcare team, working closely with dentists and dental hygienists to provide efficient, high-quality patient care during clinical procedures. Their core responsibilities include:

- Exposing and processing dental radiographs
- Mixing and handling dental materials
- Preparing and organizing treatment rooms
- Assisting the dentist by passing instruments and materials during procedures
- Taking dental impressions
- Placing, preparing, and removing rubber dams
- Applying topical anesthetics, fluoride treatments, and desensitizing agents
- Sterilizing instruments and disinfecting clinical areas
- Providing support and comfort to patients
- Educating patients on dental procedures and oral health maintenance

Expanded Functions Training

Graduates are also qualified to perform a variety of expanded functions under the supervision of a licensed dentist. These include:

- Polishing teeth and dental restorations
- Fabricating and cementing temporary crowns
- Removing excess dental cement
- Placing and removing temporary restorations and matrix retainers
- Applying dental sealants
- Performing temporary denture relines
- Placing retraction cord
- Assisting with various orthodontic procedures

Technology in Dentistry

In today's technology-driven dental practices, computer literacy is essential. Students are expected to enter the program with basic keyboarding skills. Dental-specific software applications are introduced and practiced through the program's office procedures courses.

Program Admission

The Dental Assisting program is a limited-entry program with selective enrollment. For detailed information on application requirements and deadlines, please visit [Apply to Dental Assisting](#).

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OFFERED

ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Dental Assisting

Accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA).

Academic Prerequisites

- High school diploma or college transcripts showing a minimum 2.0 GPA, or GED.

- Completion of the following courses or their equivalents, with a "C" or better, is required to be considered for application to the Dental Assisting Program.
 - WR 115 or IRW 115 or higher level writing course (Placement into WR 121Z can substitute for the WR 115 and IRW 115 course).
 - MP 111 must be completed prior to enrolling in any Dental Assisting courses.
 - A College Success Course of 2 or more credits or completion of any other college course with 2 or more credits (in addition to MP 111) with a grade of "C" or better.
- Pass/No Pass grades are not acceptable in prerequisites.
- The Dental Assisting program is a limited entry program with restricted enrollment. For details, please see [Apply to Dental Assisting](#).

Academic Requirements

- None

Non-Academic Prerequisites

Upon Acceptance into the Dental Assisting program, students must complete the following requirements:

- Immunization Requirements
 - Hepatitis B Vaccine (HepB)
 - Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
 - Tetanus Toxoid-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap)
 - Tuberculin (TB) Skin Test (PPD) or Quantiferon Gold test or Chest X-ray
 - Varicella Zoster (Chicken Pox)
 - Annual Flu Shot
 - COVID-19 Vaccination
- CPR Certification

The CPR certification must come from an American Heart Association certified instructor (card will say American Heart Association or AHA). The class that is specific for healthcare providers or Basic Life Support (BLS) providers is required. The training must include CPR for adults, children and infants, as well as AED. The certification must be valid from the student's first term in the program through graduation.

- Criminal Background Check

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) requires all health profession students to complete a state and nationwide background check prior to being placed at their clinical site. It is the student's responsibility to check with any applicable state and national licensing boards to ensure their criminal background history will not impact their ability to be placed in a clinical/field setting and get licensed upon completion of the PCC program. Students should review the certification exam requirements for their program of study prior to program application. If for some reason a student's criminal history prevents them from being placed into one of our clinical partner sites, program admission may be rescinded or denied.

- Drug Screen

CastleBranch provides industry-standardized drug screening service through Quest Diagnostics and LabCorp laboratories to perform a 10-panel test.

The Dental Assisting Certificate prepares the student for job entry with State and National certification in dental radiology, basic dental assisting and expanded function dental assisting.

Students enrolled in the Dental Assisting Program perform exposure prone procedures and are required to wear safety glasses, gloves, face masks and protective clothing during all laboratory and clinic activities that produce airborne particulate matter, or expose students to patients during dental procedures. An exposure prone procedure is one in which there is an increased opportunity for the exchange of blood borne pathogens between the patient and the dental health care provider because of the kind of procedure being performed.

Safety policies, procedures and protocols are taught and followed according to OSHA regulations and CDC Standards to provide a safe learning and patient care environment. The program policies on blood borne pathogens and infectious disease are available to applicants upon request. Upon acceptance to the program, extensive training in this area will occur.

Applicants who have an infectious disease or who are carriers of an infectious disease should seek counsel from their physician and the program director prior to application. The college follows CDC suggested work restrictions for health-care personnel infected with or exposed to major infectious diseases in health care settings, from the CDC's Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Healthcare Settings—2003 available at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5217a1.htm, Table 1, attached to and incorporated by this reference to this policy.

All aspects of the Dental Assisting Program are continually assessed to provide on-going excellence and continuing improvement, and are subject to change.

DENTAL ASSISTING ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Minimum 45 credits. Students must meet all certificate requirements.

DENTAL ASSISTING CERTIFICATE COURSES

Code	Title	Credits
DA 109	Public Health and Community-Based Learning	1
DA 110	Introductory Concepts in Dental Procedures §	2.5
DA 111	Introductory Concepts in Dental Procedures (Lab) §	2
DA 112	Dental Specialties	1
DA 113	Intermediate Concepts in Dental Procedures (Lab) §	1.5
DA 114	Public Health and Community-Based Learning II	1
DA 117	Infection Control	1
DA 120	Dental Radiology I §	3
DA 121	Dental Radiology I (Lab) §	2
DA 122	Dental Radiology II	1
DA 123	Dental Radiology II (Lab) §	1.5
DA 130	Dental Materials I	1
DA 131	Dental Materials I (Lab) §	2
DA 132	Dental Materials II §	1
DA 133	Dental Materials II (Lab) §	1.5
DA 140A	Dental Sciences I	1.5
DA 142	Dental Sciences II	1.5
DA 150	Dental Practice Management §	1
DA 152	Career Preparedness Capstone §	1
DA 161	Patient Management: Pharmacology and Medical Emergencies	1
DA 162	Legal and Ethical Aspects of Dentistry	1
DA 170	Dental Assisting Practicum I §	2
DA 171	Practicum Seminar I	1
DA 172	Dental Assisting Practicum II §	8

DA 173	Practicum Seminar II	2
DA 181	Expanded Functions §	1
DA 182	Expanded Functions (Lab) §	1
Total Credits		45

§ Course cannot be substituted for another course.