



Dental Assisting

Program Information

The Dental Assisting program is designed to prepare the student for a career in the dental assisting field of dentistry. A person trained in this field provides chairside assistance to the dentist, performs work in a dental laboratory, and performs certain functions in the dental office such as making appointments, billing patients and keeping records.

The program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association and is approved by the Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama. The Certifying Board of the American Dental Association gives special recognition to those who have achieved a high degree of competence and ability in the dental assisting field. Trenholm State Community College is also accredited by the Southern Association of College and all credits are transferrable to a four year college institutions.

Occupational Choices

Employment of dental assistants is projected to grow 11 percent from 2018 to 2028, much faster than the average for all occupations. Ongoing research linking oral health and general health will continue to increase the demand for preventive dental services. Dentists will continue to hire dental assistants to complete routine tasks, allowing the dentist to work more efficiently. As dental practices grow, more dental assistants will be needed.

As the large baby-boom population ages, and as people keep more of their original teeth than did previous generations, the need to maintain and treat teeth will continue to increase the need for dental care.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Dental Assistants, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-assistants.htm>.

Average Full-Time Wage

The median annual wage for dental assistants was \$38,700 in May 2019. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$27,980, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$56,930.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Dental Assistants, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-assistants.htm>.

Additional Requirements

Dental Assisting courses begin in the fall and must be taken in sequence with each course in a given term being a co-requisite. Students beginning the spring or summer term will be enrolled in general education courses until fall semester begins.

Requirements for the program include, but are not limited to: (1) Physical and dental exams by the end of the 2nd week in October and (2) Program uniforms by the end of the 2nd week in October.

Awards Available

Associate of Applied Science
Dental Assisting

Certificate
Dental Assisting

Program Contact

Kimberly White
Program Coordinator/Instructor
334-420-4427
Location: Trenholm Campus - Bldg. J

As part of ongoing planning and evaluation, the College regularly evaluates student learning outcomes for each program.

Estimated Program Length & Cost *

Award	Length	Credit Hours	Tuition/Fees	Books	Tools	Supplies
Associate Degree	6 Terms	64	\$10,176	\$1,250	\$500	\$20
Certificate	3 Terms	49	\$ 7,791	\$ 800	\$500	\$20

* Tax not included. Prices are subject to change without prior notice; cost of books may vary considerably among suppliers. Cost of general education books is in addition to the total listed above. The length of the program is based on full-time status of 12-15 credit hours per term. Enrollment in transitional level general education courses will alter the length of the program.

Associate of Applied Science Dental Assisting

General Education Requirements (18-19 hours)

Area I - Written Composition (6 hours)

ENG-101	English Composition I	3
ENG-102	English Composition II	3
ENG-130	Technical Report Writing	3

Area II - Humanities & Fine Arts (3 hours)

(Humanities and Arts disciplines include but are not limited to: Area/Ethnic Studies, Art and Art History, Foreign Languages, Music and Music History, Philosophy, Ethics, Religious Studies, Theater and Dance.)

Note: If SPH-106, SPH-107, SPA-101 or SPA-102 has been taken an additional 3 semester hours in Humanities and Fine Arts must be taken to satisfy requirements in Area II.

Arts:

ART-100	Art Appreciation	3
MUS-101	Music Appreciation	3

Humanities:

PHL-106	Intro to Philosophy	3
PHL-206	Ethics & Society	3
REL-100	History of World Religions	3
REL-151	Survey of Old Testament	3
REL-152	Survey of New Testament	3
SPA-101	Intro Spanish I	3
SPA-102	Intro Spanish II	3
SPH-106	Fundamentals of Oral Comm	3
SPH-107	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3

Literature:

ENG-251	American Literature I	3
ENG-252	American Literature II	3
ENG-261	English Literature I	3
ENG-262	English Literature II	3
ENG-271	World Literature I	3
ENG-272	World Literature II	3

Area III - Natural Science & Mathematics (6-7 hours)

(In addition to Mathematics, disciplines in the Natural Sciences include: Astronomy, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Geology, Physical Geography, Earth Science, Physics, and Physical Science.)

Note: 3 semester hours in MTH must be completed. Additional hours can be taken in the Natural Science area.

Mathematics:

MTH-100	Intermediate Algebra	3
MTH-103	Intro to Technical Mathematics	3
MTH-104	Plane Trigonometry	3
MTH-110	Finite Mathematics	3
MTH-112	Precalculus Algebra	3
MTH-116	Mathematical Applications	3

Natural Sciences:

BIO-101	Introduction to Biology I	4
BIO-102	Introduction to Biology II	4
BIO-103	Principles of Biology I	4
BIO-104	Principles of Biology II	4
BIO-201	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4
BIO-202	Human Anatomy & Physiology II	4
PHS-111	Physical Science I	4
PHS-112	Physical Science II	4
PHY-120	Introduction to Physics	4

Area IV - History, Social & Behavioral Sciences

(3 hours):

(Social and Behavioral Sciences include, but are not limited to: Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology.)

Note: Must complete 3 semester hours.

History:

HIS-101	Western Civilization I	3
HIS-102	Western Civilization II	3
HIS-121	World History I	3
HIS-122	World History II	3
HIS-201	United States History I	3
HIS-202	United States History II	3

Social and Behavioral Sciences:

PSY-200	General Psychology	3
PSY-210	Human Growth and Development	3
SOC-200	Introduction to Sociology	3
POL-200	Introduction to Political Science	3
POL-211	American National Government	3

Area V: Pre-Professional/College Requirements:

(Courses appropriate to the degree requirements and major of the individual student and electives.)

College Requirements:

ORI-101	Orientation to College	1
CIS-149	Introduction to Computers	3
	OR CIS-146 Microcomputer Apps	

*DAT-100	Introduction to Dental Assisting	2
*DAT-101	Pre-Clinical Procedures I	3
*DAT-102	Dental Materials	3
*DAT-103	Anatomy & Physiology-Dental Asst	3
*DAT-112	Dental Radiology	3
+DAT-104	Basic Science for Dental Assisting	2
+DAT-105	Pre-Clinical Procedure & Practicum	3
+DAT-113	Dental Health Education	2
+DAT-115	Clinical Practicum I	5
+DAT-124	Clinically Applied Infection Control & OSHA Standards	1
oDAT-120	Office Admin for Dental Assisting	3
oDAT-122	Clinical Practice II	4
oDAT-123	Dental Assisting Seminar	4
oDAT-205	Dental Field Practice	1
**Elective		1
**Elective		2

**DAT-141 and DAT-298 – These courses were used to calculate contact hours which may vary, depending on elective courses selected.

* These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the fall term.

+ These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the spring term.

o These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the summer term.

Electives:

DAT-141	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	3
DAT-298	Special Topics in Dentistry	3

Area V Credit Hours: 46

Total Credit Hours: 64

Certificate Dental Assisting

General Education Requirements (9 hours)

Area I - Written Composition (3 hours)

ENG-101	English Composition I	3
ENG-102	English Composition II	3
ENG-130	Technical Report Writing	3

Area II - Humanities & Fine Arts (3 hours)

(Humanities and Arts disciplines include but are not limited to: Area/Ethnic Studies, Art and Art History, Foreign Languages, Music and Music History, Philosophy, Ethics, Religious Studies, Theater and Dance.)

Note: If SPH-106, SPH-107, SPA-101 or SPA-102 has been taken an additional 3 semester hours in Humanities and Fine Arts must be taken to satisfy requirements in Area II.

Arts:

ART-100	Art Appreciation	3
MUS-101	Music Appreciation	3

Humanities:

PHL-106	Intro to Philosophy	3
PHL-206	Ethics & Society	3
REL-100	History of World Religions	3
REL-151	Survey of Old Testament	3
REL-152	Survey of New Testament	3
SPA-101	Intro Spanish I	3
SPA-102	Intro Spanish II	3
SPH-106	Fundamentals of Oral Comm	3
SPH-107	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3

Literature:

ENG-251	American Literature I	3
ENG-252	American Literature II	3
ENG-261	English Literature I	3
ENG-262	English Literature II	3
ENG-271	World Literature I	3
ENG-272	World Literature II	3

Area III - Natural Science & Mathematics (3 hours)

(In addition to Mathematics, disciplines in the Natural Sciences include: Astronomy, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Geology, Physical Geography, Earth Science, Physics, and Physical Science.)

Note: 3 semester hours in MTH must be completed. Additional hours can be taken in the Natural Science area.

Mathematics:

MTH-100	Intermediate Algebra	3
MTH-103	Intro to Technical Mathematics	3
MTH-104	Plane Trigonometry	3
MTH-110	Finite Mathematics	3
MTH-112	Precalculus Algebra	3
MTH-116	Mathematical Applications	3

Natural Sciences:

BIO-101	Introduction to Biology I	4
BIO-102	Introduction to Biology II	4
BIO-103	Principles of Biology I	4
BIO-104	Principles of Biology II	4
BIO-201	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	4
BIO-202	Human Anatomy & Physiology II	4
PHS-111	Physical Science I	4
PHS-112	Physical Science II	4
PHY-120	Introduction to Physics	4

Area IV - History, Social & Behavioral Sciences

(0 hours):

(Social and Behavioral Sciences include, but are not limited to: Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology.)

History:

HIS-101	Western Civilization I	3
HIS-102	Western Civilization II	3
HIS-121	World History I	3
HIS-122	World History II	3
HIS-201	United States History I	3
HIS-202	United States History II	3

Social and Behavioral Sciences:

PSY-200	General Psychology	3
PSY-210	Human Growth and Development	3
SOC-200	Introduction to Sociology	3
POL-200	Introduction to Political Science	3
POL-211	American National Government	3

Area V: Pre-Professional/College Requirements:

(Courses appropriate to the degree requirements and major of the individual student and electives.)

College Requirements:

ORI-101	Orientation to College	1
*DAT-100	Introduction to Dental Assisting	2
*DAT-101	Pre-Clinical Procedures I	3
*DAT-102	Dental Materials	3
*DAT-103	Anatomy & Physiology-Dental Asst	3
*DAT-112	Dental Radiology	3
+DAT-104	Basic Science for Dental Assisting	2
+DAT-105	Pre-Clinical Procedure & Practicum	3
+DAT-113	Dental Health Education	2
+DAT-115	Clinical Practice I	5
+DAT-124	Clinically Applied Infection Control & OSHA Standards	1
oDAT-120	Office Admin for Dental Assisting	3
oDAT-122	Clinical Practice II	4
oDAT-123	Dental Assisting Seminar	4
oDAT-205	Dental Field Practice	1
**Elective		1
**Elective		2

* These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the fall term.

+ These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the spring term.

o These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the summer term.

Electives:

DAT-141	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	3
DAT-298	Special Topics in Dentistry	3

Area V Credit Hours: 43

Total Credit Hours: 49

Course Descriptions Dental Assisting

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
DAT-100	INTRODUCTION TO DENTAL ASSISTING PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT101, 102, 103, 112 This course is designed to provide an introduction to dentistry and the history of dentistry, dental equipment, dental auxiliaries, psychology application to dentistry, personal and certification requirements, legal and ethical considerations, and work ethics and communication skills. Emphasis is placed on the Alabama Dental Practice Act and OSHA Standards. Upon completion, students should be able to discuss basic aspects of dentistry. This course is offered in the fall each year. This is a CORE course.	2
DAT-101	PRE-CLINICAL PROCEDURES I PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT100, 102, 103, 112 This course is designed to introduce chairside assisting including concepts of four handed dentistry, sterilization techniques, dental instruments, anesthesia, operative dentistry and dental specialties. Emphasis will be placed on preparation of the student for clinical dental assisting. Upon completion, the student should be able to perform dental assisting skills in a clinical setting. This course is offered in the fall each year.	3
DAT-102	DENTAL MATERIALS PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT100, 101, 103, 112 This course is designed to provide study of the characteristics, manipulation, and application of dental materials ordinarily used in the dental office. Students will be given intra and extra oral technical tasks to perform. Upon completion, students should be able to take and pour alginate impressions, trim study models, construct custom trays and temporary crowns, prepare and place restorative material, and manipulate cements and impression materials. This course is offered in the fall each year.	3
DAT-103	ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY FOR DENTAL ASSTG PRE REQUISITE: Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT100, 101, 102, 112 This course is designed to provide study of anatomy and physiology of the head and neck with a basic understanding of body structure and function. Emphasis will be placed on tooth and root morphology, and embryological and histological correlations to provide a foundation essential to an understanding of dental health. Upon completion, students should be able to discuss and identify the basic structure and function of the human body specifically the head, neck, and dentition. This course is offered in the fall each year. This is a CORE course.	3
DAT-104	BASIC SCIENCES FOR DENTAL ASSISTING PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT111, 113, 116, 124 This course is designed to study basic microbiology, pathology, pharmacology, and medical emergencies. Emphasis is placed on the correlation of these sciences to the practice of dentistry. Upon completion, students should be able to apply basic science to the dental field. This course is offered in the spring each year.	2
DAT-105	PRE-CLINICAL PROCEDURE AND PRACTICUM PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT/DNT-101 or equivalent This course is a continuation of Pre-Clinical Procedures I. Emphasis is place on dental specialties. Upon completion, the student should be able to perform specific dental assisting skills pertaining to dental specialty procedures and instrumentation. This course is offered in the spring each year.	3
DAT-112	DENTAL RADIOLOGY PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT100, 101, 102, 103 This course is designed to cover the essential knowledge of radiographic technique for the practice of dentistry. Students will be taught to produce diagnostically acceptable intra and extra-oral radiographs with emphasis being placed on x-ray properties, generation of x-rays, film processing, infection control, quality assurance, intraoral radiographic technique and image characteristics. Upon completion, students should be able to expose, process, and mount radiographs for diagnostic purposes under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist. This course is offered in the fall each year. This is a CORE course.	3
DAT-113	DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT104, 111, 116, 124 This course is designed to introduce the student to the basic principles of nutrition, preventive dentistry, and dental health education. Emphasis will be placed on philosophy of preventive dentistry including: oral hygiene, patient motivation and management, and methods of oral health education. Upon completion, students should be able to apply the basic principles of nutrition and preventive dentistry. This course is offered in the spring each year. This is a CORE course.	2

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
DAT-115	CLINICAL PRACTICUM I PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT104, 113, 116, 124 This course is designed to allow the student the opportunity for practical work experience in clinical settings. Emphasis is placed on the basic skills of dental assisting. Upon completion, the student should be able to demonstrate basic skills in the area of chairside assisting. This course is offered in the spring each year.	5
DAT-120	OFFICE ADMINISTRATION FOR DENTAL ASSISTING PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT104, 111, 113, 116, 124 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT122, 123 This course is designed to address basic dental office procedures including appointment and recall systems, financial records, accounting procedures, insurance claims, filing systems, purchasing and inventory of supplies and equipment, and the utilization of computers to perform business office procedures. Emphasis is placed on the duties of a dental receptionist. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate proficiency in the area of dental office administrative procedures. This course is offered in the summer each year.	3
DAT-122	CLINICAL PRACTICE II PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT104, 111, 113, 116, 124 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT121, 123 This course is designed to provide the student the opportunity to develop advanced dental assisting skills in chairside dental assisting procedures, radiology, receptionist duties, team work, and communication skills. Emphasis will be placed on clinical procedures. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate proficiency in the area of chairside assisting. This course is offered in the summer each year. This is a CORE course.	4
DAT-123	DENTAL ASSISTING SEMINAR PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT104, 111, 113, 116, 124 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT121, 122 This course is designed to discuss and evaluate the students' clinical experiences and the resume and interview process. Emphasis will be placed on new technology in dental practices as related to dental assisting and the certification exam review. Upon completion, students should be able to successfully complete the Dental Assisting National Board Examination to become a Certified Dental Assistant. This course is offered in the summer each year. This is a CORE course.	4
DAT-124	CLINICALLY APPLIED INFECTION CONTROL AND OSHA STANDARDS PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT104, 111, 113, 116 This course is designed for the integration of previously acquired knowledge of OSHA Standards and Infection Control in a clinical setting. Emphasis will be placed on clinical application of Infection Control and Compliance of OSHA Standards as it relates to dental chairside assisting. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate skills in the area of Infection Control and OSHA Guidelines. This course is offered in the spring each year. This is a CORE course.	1
DAT-141	DIRECTED STUDIES IN DENTAL ASSISTING PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor This course is designed to provide study of specific areas of dentistry as chosen by the student and faculty member. Emphasis will be placed on the research and critique of a specific dental topic. Upon completion, students should be able to deliver a written and oral presentation on the chosen topic. This course is offered at least one term every year.	3
DAT-205	DENTAL FIELD PRACTICE PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor This course is designed to provide the student with the opportunity to deliver dental services within an under-served population. Emphasis is placed on providing basic dental care to impoverished populations. Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss the development and implementation of dental field work. This course is offered in the summer each year.	1
DAT-298	SPECIAL TOPICS IN DENTISTRY PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor This course is designed to address special topics in dentistry according to the criteria approved for continuing education by the Code of Alabama. Emphasis is placed on chairside dental assisting, Infection Control/OSHA, treatment of special needs/medically compromised patients, oral pathology basic sciences, dental materials, medical emergencies, and ethics and jurisprudence. Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss the special topic addressed in the symposium as it relates to dentistry. This course is offered at least one term every year.	3