

# DENTAL HYGIENE, BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.)

The Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene requires two years of liberal arts study, with a minimum of 60 semester hours, followed by two years of study focusing on basic and dental sciences, dental hygiene science and theory, community health and pre-clinical and clinical experiences. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are eligible for national, regional and state board licensing examinations. Classes enter once each year in the fall semester.

## Student learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know and know how to do the following:

## Allied Dental Core Competencies Professional Knowledge

### 1. Professionalism

- 1.1 Apply professional values and ethics in all endeavors.
- 1.2 Adhere to accreditation standards and federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- 1.3 Promote quality assurance practices based on accepted standards of care.
- 1.4 Demonstrate interpersonal skills to effectively communicate and collaborate with professionals and patients across socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

### 2. Safety

- 2.1 Comply with local, state and federal regulations concerning infection control protocols for blood-borne and respiratory pathogens, other infectious diseases and hazardous materials.
- 2.2 Follow manufacturers' recommendations related to materials and equipment used in practice.
- 2.3 Establish and enforce mechanisms to ensure the management of emergencies.
- 2.4 Use security guidelines and compliance training to create and maintain a safe, eco friendly and sustainable practice compatible with emerging trends.
- 2.5 Ensure a humanistic approach to care.
- 2.6 Uphold a respectful and emotionally safe environment for patients and practitioners.

### 3. Critical Thinking

- 3.1 Demonstrate critical and analytical reasoning to identify and develop comprehensive oral health care solutions and protocols.
- 3.2 Apply individual and population risk factors, social determinants of health and

scientific research to promote improved health and enhanced quality of life.

### 4. Scientific Inquiry and Research

- 4.1 Support research activities and develop research skills.
- 4.2 Use evidence-based decision-making to evaluate and implement health care strategies aligned with emerging trends to achieve high-quality, cost-effective and humanistic care.
- 4.3 Integrate accepted scientific theories and research into educational, preventive and therapeutic oral health services.

## Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

### 5. Health Education and Community Connection

- 5.1 Endorse health literacy and disease prevention.
- 5.2 Communicate and provide health education and oral self-care to diverse populations.
- 5.3 Facilitate learning platforms for communities of interest by providing health education through collaboration with dental and other professionals.
- 5.4 Promote the values of the dental profession through service-based activities.
- 5.5 Evaluate outcomes for future activities supporting health and wellness of individuals and communities.

### 6. Advocacy

- 6.1 Promote an ethical and equitable patient care and practice environment by demonstrating inclusion of diverse beliefs and values.
- 6.2 Uphold civic and social engagement through active involvement in professional affiliations to advance oral health.

## Professional Development and Practice

### 7. Professional Growth

- 7.1 Commit to lifelong learning for professional and career opportunities in a variety of roles and settings.
- 7.2 Engage in research, education, industry involvement, technological and professional developments and/or advanced degrees.
- 7.3 Demonstrate self-awareness through reflective assessment for continued improvement.

### 8. Business Practices

- 8.1 Facilitate referrals to and consultations with relevant health care providers and other professionals to promote equitable and optimal patient care.
- 8.2 Promote economic growth and sustainability by meeting practice goals.
- 8.3 Create and maintain comprehensive, timely and accurate records.

8.4 Protect privacy, confidentiality and security of the patients and the practice by complying with legislation, practice standards, ethics and organizational policies.

## 9. Leadership

- 9.1 Develop and use effective strategies to facilitate change.
- 9.2 Inspire and network with others to nurture collegial affiliations.
- 9.3 Solicit and provide constructive feedback to promote professional growth of self.

# Discipline-specific Competencies--Dental Hygiene

## DH. 1 Essential Knowledge

DH. 1.1 Apply the knowledge of the following sciences during the dental hygiene process of care:

- Microbiology
- Human anatomy and physiology
- Human cellular biology
- Chemistry
- Biochemistry
- Immunology and pathology
- Nutrition
- Pharmacokinetics

DH. 1.2 Apply the knowledge of the following behavioral sciences during the dental hygiene process of care:

- Sociology
- Psychology
- Interpersonal communication

## DH. 2 Person-centered Care

### 2.1 Assessment

DH. 2.1.1 Accurately collect and document a comprehensive medical, dental, social health history and diagnostic data.

DH. 2.1.2 Critically analyze all collected data.

DH. 2.1.3 Identify predisposing, etiologic, environmental and social risk factors for person centered care.

### 2.2 Dental Hygiene Diagnosis

DH. 2.2.1 Analyze comprehensive medical, dental and social health history.

DH. 2.2.2 Integrate observational and diagnostic data as part of the dental hygiene diagnosis.

### 2.3 Planning

DH. 2.3.1 Use the patient's assessment to establish an optimal and realistic, person-centered dental hygiene care plan through mutual communication.

DH. 2.3.2 Use all aspects of the dental hygiene diagnosis in combination with the person's values, beliefs and preferences to develop a dental hygiene care plan through shared decision making.

### 2.4 Implementation

DH. 2.4.1 Obtain informed consent based on the agreed-upon treatment plan.

DH. 2.4.2 Execute individualized treatment based on the patient's dental hygiene diagnosis.

DH. 2.4.3 Integrate educational, preventive and therapeutic services to provide comprehensive person-centered care.

DH. 2.4.4 Use specialized skills and evidenced-based technology to promote dental and periodontal health.

DH. 2.4.5 Continuously re-evaluate for modifications to achieve desired outcomes.

### 2.5 Evaluation and Documentation

DH. 2.5.1 Evaluate the effectiveness of completed services.

DH. 2.5.2 Analyze treatment outcomes of the dental hygiene process of care to determine improved health and modifications.

DH. 2.5.3 Modify dental hygiene care plans as necessary to meet goals of patient and clinician.

DH. 2.5.4 Identify necessary referrals for success of the treatment outcomes, including intraprofessional and interprofessional health care providers, supporting professions and patient advocates.

DH. 2.5.5 Accurately document assessment findings and data, dental hygiene diagnosis and care plan, implementation, outcome evaluation and any communication between professionals and patient and anyone else in the circle of care.

## Special requirements

Admission requirements include two years of liberal arts study with a minimum of 60 semester hours of transferable quality academic course credits. By completing these 60 semester hours, students will complete the general education requirements of the degree. More information concerning the admission requirements for VCU students is located in the undergraduate study section of this Bulletin that describes the pre-health major in dental hygiene (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/college-humanities-sciences/prehealth-majors/dental-hygiene/>).

- **GPA** – A minimum GPA of 3.0 based on a 4.0 scale in the cumulative courses and a minimum GPA of 3.0 in math/sciences is required.
- **English proficiency** – To successfully complete the dental hygiene curriculum, students are required to communicate clearly (in English) with faculty, students, staff and patients. To assure such competence, the Dental Hygiene Program requires any applicant

whose native language is not English and who has been educated primarily outside of the United States to submit official Test of English as a Foreign Language or International English Language Testing System scores. Applicants are required to submit an official score with the application packet. The test must have been taken within the past two years. The Dental Hygiene Program does not conditionally admit applicants who have not met the requirement for proof of English proficiency.

You may be exempt from this requirement if:

- You have successfully completed 26 or more transferable semester credits at a two- or four-year postsecondary institution in the U.S. and have completed the full freshman English (non-ESL) requirement at that school with a minimum grade of C.
- or
- You have successfully completed 60 or more transferable semester credits at a two- or four-year postsecondary institution in the U.S.

No student will be considered for admission until proof of English proficiency is determined.

TOEFL: VCU's Dental Hygiene Program minimum TOEFL score requirements are 550 (paper), 213 (computer) or 80 (internet-based). For more information about TOEFL testing, go to [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org) (<http://www.ets.org>).

IELTS: VCU's Dental Hygiene Program minimum IELTS score requirement is 6.0.

## Degree requirements for Dental Hygiene, Bachelor of Science (B.S.)

Course	Title	Hours
<b>General education</b> ( <a href="https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/">https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/</a> )		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser. <sup>1</sup>		30
<b>Major requirements</b>		
• Major core requirements		
DENH 301	Dental Hygiene Theory I	5.5
DENH 302	Dental Hygiene Theory II	2
DENH 312	Community Oral Health Education and Promotion	2
DENH 327	Clinical Dental Hygiene I	4
DENH 342	Nutrition	3
DENH 347	Clinical Dental Hygiene Summer Clinic	2
DENH 401	Dental Hygiene Theory III	2
DENH 402	Dental Hygiene Theory IV	2
DENH 407	Evidence-Based Dental Hygiene Practice	2
DENH 411	Dental Public Health I	2
DENH 412	Dental Public Health II	2
DENH 422	Current Issues, the Law and Ethics	2
DENH 437	Clinical Dental Hygiene II	5
DENH 447	Clinical Dental Hygiene III	5
DENH 457	Clinical Service-learning	2
DHBS 301	Head and Neck Anatomy for Dental Hygienists	3

DHBS 302	Microscopic Anatomy	2
DHBS 341	Pharmacology and Pain Control for Dental Hygiene	4
DHBS 365	Infection and Immunity	2
GENP 302	Dental Materials	2
GENP 311	Oral Anatomy	2
IPEC 501	Foundations of Interprofessional Practice	1
ORPT 301	Dental Radiology	1.5
ORPT 324	Oral Pathology	3
ORSG 431	Management of the Medically Compromised Dental Patient and Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office	2
PERI 326	Periodontics I	1
PERI 329	Periodontics II	2

### Ancillary requirements

Additional subjects and credits required for admission <sup>1</sup>	39
English (6-9 credits)	
General biology with laboratory (3-5 credits)	
College chemistry with laboratory (3-5 credits)	
Anatomy with laboratory (3-5 credits)	
Physiology with laboratory (3-5 credits)	
Microbiology with laboratory (3-5 credits)	
Humanities (3 credits)	
Introductory sociology (3 credits)	
Introductory psychology (3 credits)	
Speech (3 credits)	
Statistics (3 credits)	
Visual or performing arts (3 credits)	
Electives	
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>128</b>

<sup>1</sup>

Some course work completed toward admission will also fulfill general education requirements. Admission to the program requires 60 credits.

**The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 128.**

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

**Credits required for admission to program: 60**

**Freshman year**

Fall semester	Hours
Courses taken toward admission to program	15
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>15</b>
Spring semester	Hours
Courses taken toward admission to program	15
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>15</b>

**Sophomore year**

**Fall semester**

Courses taken toward admission to program	15
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Spring semester</b>	
Courses taken toward admission to program	15
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Junior year</b>	
<b>Fall semester</b>	
DENH 301 Dental Hygiene Theory I	5.5
DHBS 301 Head and Neck Anatomy for Dental Hygienists	3
DHBS 302 Microscopic Anatomy	2
DHBS 365 Infection and Immunity	2
GENP 311 Oral Anatomy	2
IPEC 501 Foundations of Interprofessional Practice	1
ORPT 301 Dental Radiology	1.5
PERI 326 Periodontics I	1
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Spring semester</b>	
DENH 302 Dental Hygiene Theory II	2
DENH 327 Clinical Dental Hygiene I	4
DENH 342 Nutrition	3
DHBS 341 Pharmacology and Pain Control for Dental Hygiene	4
ORPT 324 Oral Pathology	3
PERI 329 Periodontics II	2
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Summer semester</b>	
DENH 312 Community Oral Health Education and Promotion	2
DENH 347 Clinical Dental Hygiene Summer Clinic	2
GENP 302 Dental Materials	2
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Senior year</b>	
<b>Fall semester</b>	
DENH 401 Dental Hygiene Theory III	2
DENH 407 Evidence-Based Dental Hygiene Practice	2
DENH 411 Dental Public Health I	2
DENH 437 Clinical Dental Hygiene II (capstone)	5
DENH 457 Clinical Service-learning <sup>1</sup>	-
ORSG 431 Management of the Medically Compromised Dental Patient and Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office	2
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Spring semester</b>	
DENH 402 Dental Hygiene Theory IV	2
DENH 412 Dental Public Health II	2
DENH 422 Current Issues, the Law and Ethics	2
DENH 447 Clinical Dental Hygiene III (capstone)	5
DENH 457 Clinical Service-learning <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>Term Hours:</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Total Hours:</b>	<b>128</b>

<sup>1</sup>

DENH 457 is a yearlong course with grade and credit assigned after completion of second semester.

**The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 128.**