

Dental Assisting, Diploma

School of Health Professions

Program Description

The Dental Assisting program offers the academic preparation and clinical training necessary to secure employment as a dental assistant. Dental assistants are employed by dentists in general and specialty practices as well as hospital dental clinics. The program includes clinical experience in all phases of dentistry while rotating through departments at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine and private dental offices.

Upon successful completion of DAS 105, students are eligible to apply to take the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) Exam. Upon successful completion of the Dental Assisting Program, national DANB certification may be earned as a Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) upon successful completion of the DANB Infection Control (ICE) Exam and General Chairside (GC) Exam.

The program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association. The commission is a special accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at 312-440-2719 or at 211 East Chicago Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Special Admission and Selection Criteria

Admission to the Dental Assisting program is highly competitive and enrollment is limited. Specific criteria for admission and selection are as follows:

- Applicants must be a graduate of accredited secondary school programs or hold GED equivalency certificates prior to selection.
- Students must attend a placement assessment and educational planning session and complete any developmental courses that may be required based on the placement assessment prior to program admission.
- Students may take the Dental Assisting program's general education courses before acceptance into the program. All courses must be completed with a "C" or better to count for the program.
- Applicants who have completed 12 or more college-level credits towards a GPA at WCCC must attain a minimum 2.0 GPA:
 - Students with less than 12 college-level credits at WCCC will be evaluated based on:
 - a minimum 2.0 GPA overall if the applicant has completed 12 or more college-level credits at other post-secondary institutions OR
 - a minimum 3.0 High School GPA OR
 - a minimum 165 on the GED (minimum 15 on HiSET subtests)

- If GPA is less than 2.0, one or more of these courses may be repeated to meet the requirements before testing.
- Transfer courses are not calculated into the GPA
- Preference may be given to applicants who exceed the minimums.
- Applicants may repeat any of the program-required general education courses one time in an attempt to raise course grade and/or GPA.
- If there are more qualified applicants than available seats, the Dental Assisting program will use a selective admission process based on GPA.

Application Process for Health Profession Programs

- Complete and submit an Application for Admission to Westmoreland County Community College.
- Complete and submit an application for the specific Health Profession Program (Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Expanded Functions Dental Assisting, Medical Assisting, Nursing*, Phlebotomy/Specimen Processing*, Surgical Technology or Radiology).
- Submit all required documents to the Admissions Office by the deadline.
- Submit official transcript from all secondary schools attended, graduate equivalency degree (GED) programs and any other formal educational program beyond high school.

For Fall Start:

Application Deadline – January 12 prior to Fall start
Acceptance Notification – Mid-March.

Final Admission Criteria

Students accepted into the School of Health Professions including Nursing, Dental Programs, Radiology, Sonography, Medical Assisting, Phlebotomy, Surgical Technology and Specimen Processing are required to have a health clearance, criminal background check, child abuse history and drug screening at the student's expense.

The Program Director of each Health Profession Program gives the accepted student directions for setting up a password-secure Castle Branch Account.

Castle Branch is the background screening and compliance tracking company, which provides Westmoreland County Community College Health Profession Programs with student background screening services.

Castle Branch background screening and compliance management includes:

- Background Checks (FBI Fingerprint Check, Criminal Background Check and Child Abuse Clearances)

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- Urine Drug Screen
- Immunization and Record Tracking
- Houses Tuberculosis screening results
- CPR Training Documentation
- Liability Insurance (if applicable for program)
- Houses the results of the Required Health Physical.

Final admission is conditional pending:

- Receipt of Urine Drug Screen to determine if there are any substances that will prevent the applicant from participating in clinical experiences or bar entry into Health Profession Programs.
- Receipt and evaluation of Criminal Background Check to determine if there is any conviction that may bar the applicant from entering the Health Profession Programs.
- Receipt of proof of vaccinations including, but not limited to, MMR, Varicella, Tdap, HepB, Flu, and COVID-19 that are necessary to participate in clinical experiences.
- Receipt of Child Abuse History to determine if there is any conviction that may bar the applicant from entering the Health Profession Programs.

Essential Cognitive, Physical and Behavioral Functions

The Westmoreland County Community College Health Profession Programs including Nursing, Dental Programs, Radiology, Sonography, Medical Assisting, Surgical Technology, Phlebotomy and Specimen Processing require that students meet certain functional abilities essential to each program. A detailed list is available in each program's handbook.

Please be aware that based on ongoing changes occurring in the dental profession, it may be necessary to modify courses listed in this catalog to meet changing practice competencies.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Perform clinical dental assisting procedures with competence.
- Manage asepsis, infection and hazard control protocol consistent with published professional guidelines.
- Perform procedures specific to the work of the dental assistant, e.g., taking preliminary impressions, charting and data collection.
- Obtain and record accurate medical/dental histories and vital signs.
- Assist in the management of medical and dental emergencies.
- Provide oral health instruction and communicate effectively with patients and dental health team members.
- Expose, process and evaluate all types of oral radiography.
- Perform laboratory procedures associated with chairside assisting.
- Operate all dental equipment safely, effectively and efficiently.
- Perform basic office business procedures accurately.
- Successfully complete the dental assisting national board exam and applicable state credentialing.
- Assume responsibility for their own actions within the legal and ethical framework of dental assisting.
- Develop an attitude of responsibility for continued professional development, through encouragement to participate in professional organizations and continuing education opportunities.

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| Sugg. Term | Seq # | Course ID | Course Title | Cr. | Term Offered | Prereq(s) | Options Available |
|------------|-------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Fall | 1 | PDV 101 | First Year Seminar | 1 | F, Sp, Su | | |
| | 2 | DAS 100 | Intro to Dental Assisting | 4 | F | | |
| | 3 | DAS 101 | Oral Anatomy | 2 | F | | |
| | 4 | DAS 102 | Dental Material for Dental Assisting | 2 | F | | |
| | 5 | DAS 103 | Dental Assisting Lab | 4 | F | | |
| | 6 | DAS 105 | Dental Rad for Dental Assisting | 3 | F | | |
| | 7 | BIO 107 | Human Biology | 3 | F, Sp, Su | | BIO 171 & 172 |
| Spring | 8 | DAS 104 | Dental Science | 4 | Sp | DAS 100, 101,102, 103, 105 | |
| | 9 | DAS 106 | CLN Dental Assisting I | 5 | Sp | DAS 100, 101,102, 103, 105 | |
| | 10 | ENG 161 | College Writing | 3 | F, Sp, Su | ENG 085 or Placement | |
| | 11 | PSY 160 | General Psychology | 3 | F, Sp, Su | | |
| Summer | 12 | DAS 108 | CLN Dental Assisting II | 4 | Su | DAS 104, 106 | |
| | 13 | DAS 109 | Practice Management | 2 | Su | DAS 104, 106 | |
| | 14 | SPC 156 | Interpersonal Communication | 3 | F, Sp, Su | | |

Total Program Credits

42

Students must pass all program courses with a C or better.