

Dental Assistant

31-508-1 Technical Diploma (one-year)

Financial Aid Eligible

Campus: Rice Lake

* Students in selected health sciences programs will travel to the Shell Lake Health Education Center. Travel requirements are customized to meet individual program course competencies.



Program Overview

Dental assistants with documented skills also may carry out a variety of laboratory, clinical and office duties. Some dental assistants manage the office and are responsible for patient scheduling and bookkeeping functions. Most dental assistants work in general or specialized dental offices, either for individual dentists or for groups of dentists. Some dental assistants may choose to work for insurance companies, dental laboratories, or dental supply companies. The dental assistant also may find employment with federal agencies such as the Veterans Affairs; United States Public Health Services; the Armed Forces; or a state, county or city health facility.

The program in dental assisting is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation and has been granted the accreditation status of "approval without reporting requirements". The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (312) 440-4653 or at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611. The Commission's Web address is: <https://coda.ada.org/>

Admission Requirements

- Complete Online application form
- Have earned a high school diploma or GED certificate; current high school seniors must provide both a current high school transcript and a final (official) transcript with confer date
- Review and sign Background Check Disclosure
- Review and sign Functional Abilities Disclosure
- Complete admissions meeting with a Northwood Tech counselor (academic admission requirements apply - see page 33 for more information)

Program-Specific Requirements

- Submit Background Check fee
- Have an acceptable Wisconsin Caregiver Background Check, National Criminal Background Check, Minnesota Caregiver Background Check (if applicable), and other states, if applicable
- Pass a physical exam, have current immunizations, and demonstrate negative status for tuberculosis (Tb)
- COVID vaccination---highly recommended

NOTE: Northwood Technical College cannot guarantee clinical placement or ability to progress in the program if a student is not able to meet the clinical site requirements including but not limited to; influenza vaccine, covid vaccine, negative tb skin test/quantiferon, up to date acceptable background check, or any other clinical requirements required by the clinical site. Northwood Technical College cannot guarantee clinical placement if the clinical site must be changed due to students inability to meet the site specific requirements. Many sites require the student information 4-6 weeks prior to the clinical start date.

- Possess current certification of "BLS Basic Life Support" or equivalent
- Review and sign Health Sciences Confidentiality Statement
- Review and sign dental office visit form
- Review and sign dental assistant program permission form
- Participate in a mandatory program orientation session

Program Outcomes

Dental Assistant graduates will be able to:

- Perform a variety of advanced supportive dental procedures
- Manage infection and hazard control
- Produce diagnostic intraoral and extraoral radiographs on a variety of patients
- Perform advanced dental laboratory procedures
- Demonstrate professional behaviors, ethics, and appearance
- Perform dental office business procedures

Career Outlook

Typical positions available after graduation include:

- Dental Assistant
- Dental Receptionist
- Dental Office Manager
- Dental Practice Manager
- Dental Lab Technician
- Dental Laboratory Assistant
- Dental Insurance Claims Processor
- Dental Sales Representative
- Dental Treatment Coordinator
- Dental Specialty Assistant
- Maxillofacial Dental Assistant
- Endodontic Dental Assistant
- Prosthodontic Dental Assistant
- Orthodontic Dental Assistant
- Pediatric Dental Assistant
- Periodontic Dental Assistant

Curriculum

Number	Course Title	Credits (cr.)
Occupational Specific Courses		
10508101	Dental Health Safety*	1 cr.
10508103	Dental Radiography*	2 cr.
10508113	Dental Materials*	2 cr.
10508120	Dental Office Management*	2 cr.
10508304	Dental and General Anatomy*	2 cr.
31508302	Dental Chairside*	5 cr.
31508306	Dental Assistant Clinical*	3 cr.
31508307	Dental Assistant Professionalism*	1 cr.
31508308	Dental Chairside Advanced*	5 cr.
31508309	Dental Laboratory Procedures*	4 cr.
31508310	Dental Radiography - Advanced*	1 cr.
31508311	Dental Assistant Clinical - Adv*	2 cr.
Occupational Specific Total		30 cr.
Occupational Supportive Courses**		
10801196	Oral/Interpersonal Communication	3 cr.
Occupational Supportive Total		3 cr.
TOTAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS		33 cr.

* Requires a prerequisite and/or corequisite that must be completed with a grade point of 2.0 or better.

** See pages 38-41 for course descriptions.

You must earn a grade point of 2.0 or better in all required courses.

Course repeat policies exist that allow for only a certain number of retakes within this program; please refer to the policies for details.

NOTE: all hours are based on a 16-week calculation with the exception of Dental Assistant Clinical-Advanced (31508111) which needs to be at an 18-week hour calculation due to total hour requirements for the program.

All students must earn a minimum of 300 clinical experience hours. These hours are completed during 31508306 Dental Assistant Clinical and 31508311 Dental Assistant Clinical-Advanced.

Curriculum Pending WTCS Aligned Curriculum Approval

Course Descriptions

(See pages 38-41 for General Studies course descriptions)

10508101

Dental Health Safety - Credits: 1

Prepares dental auxiliary students to respond proactively to dental emergencies, control infection, prevent disease, adhere to OSHA Standards, and safely manage hazardous materials. Students also take patient vital signs and collect patient medical/dental histories. BLS Basic Life Support certification is a prerequisite; students will be required to show proof of certification before beginning the course. This course is a WTCS aligned course required in both the Dental Hygienist and Dental Assistant programs. PREREQUISITES: Current certification in BLS Basic Life Support and acceptance into the Dental Assistant program.

10508103

Dental Radiography - Credits: 2

Prepares dental auxiliary students to operate x-ray units and expose bitewing, periapical, extra oral, and occlusal radiographs. Emphasis is placed on protection against x-ray hazards. Students also process, mount, and evaluate radiographs for diagnostic value. In this course students demonstrate competency on a manikin. In addition, students expose bitewing radiographs on a peer, role-play patient. Students gain further experience in exposing radiographs on patients in the clinical portion of their program. This course also provides the background in radiographic theory required for students to make informed decisions and adjustments. COREQUISITES: 10508101 Dental Health Safety, 10508113 Dental Materials, 10508304 Dental and General Anatomy, 31508302 Dental Chairside, and 31508306 Dental Assistant Clinical.

10508113

Dental Materials - Credits: 2

Prepares dental auxiliary students to handle and prepare dental materials such as liners, bases, cements, amalgam, resin restorative materials, gypsum products, and impression materials. They also learn to take alginate impressions on manikins and clean removable appliances. This course is aligned to serve students in the Dental Hygienist and Dental Assistant programs. COREQUISITES: 10508101 Dental Health Safety, 10508103 Dental Radiography, 10508304 Dental and General Anatomy, 31508302 Dental Chairside, and 31508306 Dental Assistant Clinical.

10508120

Dental Office Management - Credits: 2

Prepares dental auxiliary students to manage telephones, appointments, recall systems, and inventory. Students also develop the skills needed to process accounts receivable and payable, collections, and third party reimbursements. Students use dental software programs. PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of all first term courses and COREQUISITES: 31508308 Dental Chairside Advanced, 31508309 Dental Laboratory Procedures, 31508310 Dental Radiography – Advanced, and 31508311 Dental Assistant Clinical – Adv.

10508304

Dental and General Anatomy - Credits: 2

Prepares dental assistant students to apply fundamentals of general and dental anatomy to informed decision-making and to professional communication with colleagues and patients. PREREQUISITE: Acceptance into the Dental Assistant program and COREQUISITES: 10508101 Dental Health Safety, 10508103 Dental Radiography, 10508113 Dental Materials, 31508302 Dental Chairside, and 31508306 Dental Assistant Clinical.

31508302

Dental Chairside - Credits: 5

Prepares dental assistant students to chart oral cavity structures, dental pathology, and restorations and to assist a dentist with basic dental procedures including examinations, pain control, amalgam restoration, and cosmetic restoration. Students will also develop the ability to educate patients about preventive dentistry, brushing and flossing techniques, and dental procedures, using lay terminology. Throughout the course, students will apply decoding strategies to the correct use and interpretation of dental terminology. COREQUISITES: 10508101 Dental Health Safety, 10508103 Dental Radiography, 10508113 Dental Materials, 10508304 Dental and General Anatomy, and 31508306 Dental Assistant Clinical.

31508306

Dental Assistant Clinical - Credits: 3

Students apply skills developed in Dental and General Anatomy, Dental Health Safety, Dental Chairside, Dental Materials, Dental Radiography, and Professionalism in a clinical setting with patients. Emphasizes integration of core abilities and basic occupational skills. COREQUISITES: 10508101 Dental Health Safety, 10508304 Dental and General Anatomy, 31508302 Dental Chairside, 10508113 Dental Materials, 10508103 Dental Radiography, and 31508307 Dental Assistant Professionalism.

31508307

Dental Assistant Professionalism - Credits: 1

Prepares dental assistant students for professional success in a dental practice or another dental health care environment. Students develop professional appearance and image. More importantly, they learn to work within ethical guidelines and legal frameworks. In preparation for entering the work force, dental assistants customize or develop their portfolios and lay out an on-going professional development plan. PREREQUISITE: Acceptance into the Dental Assistant program.

31508308

Dental Chairside Advanced - Credits: 5

Prepares dental assistant students to adapt chairside skills to assisting with dental specialties as they are performed in general practice. Focuses on pediatric dentistry, orthodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, endodontics, periodontics, and prosthodontics. Students will also develop the ability to assist with sealants, perform coronal polishing, and apply topical fluoride and topical anesthetics. PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of all first term courses and COREQUISITES: 10508120 Dental Office Management, 31508309 Dental Laboratory Procedures, 31508310 Dental Radiography – Advanced, and 31508311 Dental Assistant Clinical – Adv.

31508309

Dental Laboratory Procedures - Credits: 4

Prepares Dental Assistant students to produce alginate impressions and fabricate diagnostic models, oral appliances, temporary restorations, and custom trays. Students also polish oral appliances. PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of all first term courses and COREQUISITES: 10508120 Dental Office Management, 31508308 Dental Chairside Advanced, 31508310 Dental Radiography – Advanced, and 31508311 Dental Assistant Clinical – Adv.

31508310

Dental Radiography - Advanced - Credits: 1

Builds on principles and skills developed in Dental Radiography. Dental Assisting students expose full mouth series, extra-oral and specialized radiographs on adult and child patients. Emphasis is placed on protection against x-ray hazards. Students will also process, mount, and evaluate radiographs for diagnostic value. In addition, they will use radiographs to explain dental health and treatment plans to patients. PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of all first term courses and COREQUISITES: 10508120 Dental Office Management, 31508308 Dental Chairside Advanced, 31508309 Dental Laboratory Procedures, and 31508311 Dental Assistant Clinical – Adv.

31508311

Dental Assistant Clinical - Adv - Credits: 2

Dental Assisting students apply skills developed in Dental Chairside - Advanced, Dental Lab Procedures, Dental Radiography - Advanced, and Dental Office Procedures in a clinical setting with patients. Emphasizes integration of core abilities and basic and advanced occupational skills. PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of all first term courses and COREQUISITES: 10508120 Dental Office Management, 31508308 Dental Chairside Advanced, 31508309 Dental Laboratory Procedures, and 31508310 Dental Radiography - Advanced.