

# College of Dentistry / Dental Hygiene

The university offers a baccalaureate degree program, which consists of at least two years ( $\geq 60$  hrs) of prerequisite work and two years in the dental hygiene curriculum. Prerequisite courses may be taken at the University of Oklahoma or other accredited university or college. The College of Dentistry offers the program on the Oklahoma Health Sciences Center campus in Oklahoma City and by distance at the following three sites:

- Tri-County Technology Center in Bartlesville
- Southern Oklahoma Technology Center at Ardmore
- Western Technology Center in Weatherford

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates from all sites receive a Bachelor of Science in dental hygiene and are eligible to take examinations for licensure to practice as registered dental hygienists (RDH). The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education and the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association accredit the program.

## DENTAL HYGIENE PROFESSION

The dental hygienist is a licensed primary health care professional, oral health educator and clinician. The responsibilities of the dental hygienist include preventive services that promote or maintain oral health and therapeutic services, which are clinical treatments designed to arrest or control disease. Educational activities are integral to all aspects of patient care. Quality dental hygiene care requires critical thinking to assess the patient's needs, to determine a dental hygiene diagnosis, to develop individualized patient care, to implement dental hygiene treatment and to evaluate outcomes of dental hygiene treatment. The dental hygienist works closely with and usually under the supervision of a dentist. Most dental hygienists are employed in a dental office; however, dental hygienists can be found in numerous other settings, such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities, hospitals, corporate health facilities, school systems, research centers, state and federal agencies and public health clinics. The RDH may be employed as an educator and/or researcher, as a provider of continuing education seminars, as a researcher conducting or helping to conduct clinical studies and collecting and analyzing scientific data. As volunteers, dental hygienists can be found providing care in dental clinics for those who might not otherwise be able to find or afford care, participating in mission trips or providing educational and preventive services to school children as allowed by the laws of the state.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected that employment prospects in dental hygiene are expected to remain excellent. In fact, the dental hygienist profession is expected to be one of the fastest growing occupations through the year 2014. The national median hourly wage in 2010 was \$32.81 and in Oklahoma for 2010 the median hourly wage was \$30.03. There is considerable freedom for hygienists to select work days and hours. Annual salaries for part-time practitioners vary.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission to the Dental Hygiene Program is competitive. Selection is based on the applicant's post-secondary academic record, life experiences and potential for success in a baccalaureate program in dental hygiene. New students are admitted for the fall semester only. All application materials must be submitted by Jan. 15 of the year in which admission is sought. Applicants must:

- be in good standing with the last college or university attended
- take the ACT or SAT and provide individual component scores and composite score
- have a minimum grade-point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale with a grade of C or better on all required courses
- have a minimum of 60 semester hours of coursework from an accredited college or university
- ideally applicants should have completed foundational coursework (see prerequisite courses) before the Jan. 15 application deadline. Acceptance is based upon completion of foundational coursework by the end of the spring semester prior to admission. All prerequisite courses, excluding foundational, must be completed by the time the fall semester begins
- applicants must investigate dental hygiene as a career prior to application by spending a minimum of 40 hours observing a dental hygienist. Observation of a dentist does not meet this requirement
- complete a written career statement



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## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS (Continued)

- two letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with applicant's success or potential for successful completion of the program
- official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended
- submit a completed University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center online application that includes the prioritized site(s) for which the applicant wishes to be considered: <https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=uok-hs>
- if English is the student's second language, a minimum score of 250 is required on the national standardized TOEFL examination.
- if you receive an offer of acceptance into the program, it is contingent upon meeting the required grade of C in all remaining prerequisite coursework and a cumulative GPA of 2.5.

## REQUIRED PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK

The following courses completed are required (with a minimum of a C grade) and must be included within the minimum 60 semester hours of study. The course names and numbers are those of the University of Oklahoma. Any exception or substitutions must be approved by the program director or college dean or be listed in the Official Course Substitution Guide of the University of Oklahoma.

### Symbolic and Oral Communications

ENGL 1113 / Principles of English Comp I  
 ENGL 1213 / Principles of English Comp II  
 COMM 2613 / Public Speaking  
 COMM 1113 / Principles of Communication

### Natural Sciences

CHEM 1315/ General Chemistry plus Lab  
 ZOO 2124 / Human Physiology  
 ZOO 2234 or ZOO 2255 / Human Anatomy  
 MBIO 2815 / Introduction to Microbiology plus Lab  
 HES 2823 / Introduction to Nutrition

### Math: ONE of the following:

COMM 2513 / Introduction to Statistics  
 PSY 2003 / Understanding Statistics  
 ECON 2843 / Elements of Statistics

### Social Sciences

PSC 1113 / Government of the U.S.  
 PSY 1113 / Elements of Psychology  
 SOC 1113 / Introduction to Sociology

### Humanities: one of the following:

HIST 1483 / U. S. 1492 to 1865  
 HIST 1493 / U. S. 1865 to Present

### Electives

As needed to equal 60 total prerequisite hours.

## GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- Understanding Art Forms / 3 (hours)\*
- Western Civilization / 3\*
- Non-Western Culture / 3\*
- ONE 3 hour upper division (3000 or 4000 level) approved general education course\*
- Foreign Language (2 college semesters or 2 high school years the same foreign language)\*

\* Indicates additional general education courses required for students beginning their college education in fall of 1990 or after and those who have not earned an Oklahoma bachelor's or associate's (excludes applied science) degrees.

A Foundational Grade-Point Average (FGPA) is computed and used in the selection process. The FGPA uses the average grade for the following eight required courses listed below:

- |              |                    |                     |                |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| • English II | • Human Physiology | • Human Anatomy     | • Microbiology |
| • Statistics | • Psychology       | • Nutrition General | • Chemistry    |

## CONTACT

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