

Dental Hygiene Admissions Packet



Overview of the Profession

- A **dental hygienist** is a licensed preventive oral health care professional who provides educational, clinical and therapeutic services supporting health through the promotion of optimal oral health. He or she is the member of the dental team who is responsible for providing treatment that helps to prevent oral disease such as dental caries (cavities) and periodontal disease (gum disease) and for educating the patient to maintain optimal oral health. Reference: ADHA Council on Dental Hygiene Practice. "FACTS...About Dental Hygienists"
- **Comprehensive dental hygiene care** in the State of North Carolina that may also be experienced here at the College clinic include:
 - Complete oral prophylaxis including preventive homecare instructions.
 - Application of preventive agents to oral structures.
 - Exposure and processing of radiographs.
 - Administration of medicaments prescribed by a licensed dentist.
 - Preparation of diagnostic aids.
 - Written records of oral conditions for interpretation by the dentist.
- **Additional functions** that may be delegated to a dental hygienist in the State of North Carolina include:
 - All Dental Assisting II functions
 - Performing periodontal screening, probing, subgingival exploration for or removal of hard or soft deposits and sulcular irrigation, applying resorbable sulcular antimicrobial or antibiotic agents, using ultrasonic scalers for prophylaxis, scaling and root planing, applying oral cancer screening products and laser fluorescence prior to the dentist's exam, applying resin infiltration treatment for incipient smooth surface lesions, and applying silver diamine fluoride.
 - NC allows dental hygienists to administer local anesthetics and monitor nitrous oxide/oxygen analgesia. Please be aware that you will learn to give injections and need to be ready to work with needles in the mouth.
- **Employment opportunities** include private dental offices and clinics; federal, state and local health departments; hospitals; nursing homes; school districts or departments of education; educational programs for dental, dental hygiene, and dental assisting students; private business/industry; correctional facilities; health maintenance organizations or other dental insurance companies; and private and public centers for pediatric, geriatric and other individuals/groups with special needs.
- **Salary:** dependent on responsibilities and geographic location – see the following URL for more information: <https://waketech.emsicc.com/careers/dental-hygienist?radius=5%20miles®ion=Wake%20Technical%20College>

Overview of Wake Tech Dental Hygiene Program

Degree: AAS (Associate in Applied Science)

Program Code: A45260

CIP Code: 51.0602

Program Length: 2 academic years (5 semesters)

Type of Program: Daytime, Seated - Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Program Start Date: August of each year; 1 class entry per academic year

Number Admitted Annually: 24

Curriculum Description – North Carolina Community College System Standard: The Dental Hygiene curriculum provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate dental hygiene care for the individual and the community.

Students will learn to prepare the operatory, take patient histories, note abnormalities, plan care, teach oral hygiene, clean teeth, take x-rays, apply preventive agents, complete necessary chart entries, and perform other procedures related to dental hygiene care.

Graduates of this program may be eligible to take national and state/regional examinations for licensure which are required to practice dental hygiene. Employment opportunities include dental offices, clinics, schools, public health agencies, industry, and professional education.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Dental Hygiene Department is to promote total wellness by advancing oral health in the state of North Carolina through quality education and service. This mission is consistent with the missions of the Health Sciences Division and Wake Technical Community College.

Philosophy: The Dental Hygiene program is founded on humanistic teaching, service, scholarly endeavors, and patient care. The learning environment stimulates the discovery of new knowledge through effective communication. Mutual respect among faculty, staff, and students must be demonstrated in all endeavors. The primary responsibility of the faculty is to provide a comprehensive approach to student development that includes and encourages professionalism and critical, independent thinking – while encouraging students to accept responsibility for their own learning. Ultimately, the department is committed to providing collaborative educational programs for a culturally-diverse student population, with the goal of optimizing each student’s growth, achievement, and maturation as a professional.

Program Competencies: Upon completion of the Dental Hygiene program, graduates should be able to:

- Practice ethically and professionally dental hygiene services that are legally delegated in the state of North Carolina, to include possessing employability skills.
- Assess, plan, implement and evaluate comprehensive dental hygiene care for individuals at a variety of levels of periodontal health.
- Initiate and assume responsibility for health promotion and disease prevention activities for diverse community-based populations through assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Examinations & Licensure: Upon successful completion of the program, dental hygiene graduates may be eligible to take national, regional, and state board examinations leading to licensure. In most states, licensure results in the credentials RDH –Registered Dental Hygienist. Students interested in practicing outside North Carolina should investigate the licensure requirements for the state in which they wish to reside.

The American Dental Association (ADA) administers the *National Dental Hygiene Board Examination* each year. The exam is presented in an electronic format and consists of multiple-choice and case-based multiple-choice questions. For more information, visit the American Dental Association (ADA) website at <https://jcnde.ada.org/nbdhe>.

The State of North Carolina uses a regional exam, sponsored by the *Council of Interstate Testing Agencies (CITA)*, as the clinical exam. More information is available at <https://adextesting.org/>.

In addition to the national and clinical exams, applicants for *licensure in NC* must also successfully pass written exams on jurisprudence and on sterilization and infection control.

Moral Character:

Applicants for licensure in North Carolina should note the state dental laws and the State Board of Dental Examiners' rules, specifically 90-229, which notes that the "North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners shall have the power and authority to refuse to issue a license to practice dental hygiene." Reasons for denial may include fraud, deceit, misrepresentation; conviction of or entering a guilty plea to any felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; chronic or persistent user of intoxicants, drugs, or narcotics that impair the ability to practice dental hygiene; and mental, emotional or physical unfitness to practice dental hygiene. Applicants should review the full rules for more information; applicants with questions about their eligibility for licensure should contact the State Board.

Citizenship Status: The program follows guidelines for admission related to residency status. You may graduate from the program and not be a U.S. citizen but may not be eligible for a dental hygiene license.

In the state of NC, to obtain a DH license you need to be a U.S. citizen or hold a green card. If you are on a student Visa (F-1 Visa) or a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) individual, at this time you are not eligible for licensure after graduation. For more information contact the NC State Board of Dental Examiners.

Accreditation: The program(s) in Dental Hygiene is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation and has been granted the accreditation status of Accredited 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 60611-2678. The Commission's web address is <https://coda.ada.org/>.

Blood Borne Pathogens Notification: Students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program may be exposed to blood borne pathogens via blood and body fluids. Although there are no documented cases of occupational spread of HIV to dental workers, students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program must recognize that the potential does exist for transmission of blood borne and other infectious diseases during patient care activities. The risk of HIV disease transmission from dental patients to members of the dental team is extremely low, however, there is a small potential. The Americans with Disabilities Act forbids discrimination against patients with HIV; therefore, students are required to treat all patients assigned, regardless of the disease state of the patient. Refusal to treat any patient may affect the student's academic success.

No student will be allowed to render care to patients in any setting until he/she has been instructed in infection control following OSHA guidelines. Students must demonstrate competence using universal precautions in a laboratory setting, prior to any patient care. Faculty supervision will be provided throughout the laboratory and clinical phases of education to continually monitor the safety of students and use of universal precautions.



**DENTAL HYGIENE
A.A.S. DEGREE**

PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE

CURRICULUM BY SEMESTER

<u>Course Number and Title</u>	<u>HOURS PER WEEK</u>			<u>Credit</u>
	<u>Class</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>Clinical</u>	
First Semester				
BIO 163 Basic Anatomy and Physiology I	4	2	0	5
DEN 110 Orofacial Anatomy	2	2	0	3
DEN 111 Infection/Hazard Control	2	0	0	2
DEN 112 Dental Radiography	2	3	0	3
DEN 120 Dental Hygiene Preclinic Lecture	2	0	0	2
DEN 121 Dental Hygiene Preclinic Lab	0	6	0	2
	12	13	0	17
Second Semester				
BIO 175 General Microbiology	2	2	0	3
ENG 111 Writing and Inquiry	3	0	0	3
DEN 124 Periodontology	2	0	0	2
DEN 130 Dental Hygiene Theory I	2	0	0	2
DEN 131 Dental Hygiene Clinic I	0	0	9	3
DEN 223 Dental Pharmacology	2	0	0	2
DEN 224 Materials and Procedures	1	3	0	2
	12	5	9	17
Summer Term				
CHM 130 General Organic & Biochemistry	3	0	0	3
COM 120 Interpersonal Communication	3	0	0	3
DEN 140 Dental Hygiene Theory II	1	2	0	2
DEN 141 Dental Hygiene Clinic II	0	0	6	2
	7	0	6	10
Third Semester				
PSY 150 General Psychology	3	0	0	3
DEN 123 Nutrition/Dental Health	2	0	0	2
DEN 125 Dental Office Emergencies	0	2	0	1
DEN 220 Dental Hygiene Theory III	2	0	0	2
DEN 221 Dental Hygiene Clinic III	0	0	12	4
DEN 222 General and Oral Pathology	2	0	0	2
	9	2	12	14
Fourth Semester				
DEN 230 Dental Hygiene Theory IV	1	0	0	1
DEN 231 Dental Hygiene Clinic IV	0	0	12	4
DEN 232 Community Dental Health	2	3	0	3
DEN 233 Professional Development	2	0	0	2
SOC 210 Introduction to Sociology	3	0	0	3
Humanities/Fine Arts Elective*	3	0	0	3
	11	3	12	16

TOTAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT: 74 SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS

- *Humanities/Fine Arts Elective, choose one of the following:
 ART 111 Art Appreciation; ART 114 Art History Survey I; ART 115 Art History Survey II
 HUM 110 Technology and Society; HUM 115 Critical Thinking; HUM 160 Introduction to Film
 MUS 110 Music Appreciation; MUS 112 Introduction to Jazz
 PHI 215 Philosophical Issues; PHI 240 Intro to Ethics

**A grade of "C" or better is required for all curriculum courses in the Dental Hygiene Degree.

This program planning guide is for advising purposes and is subject to change. Only the Registrar can clear students for graduation.

Dental Hygiene Program (A45260) Technical Standards

The technical standards as stated here reflect performance abilities that are necessary for a student to successfully complete the requirements of the Dental Hygiene curriculum. It should be noted that under the Americans with Disabilities Act “A qualified person with a disability is one who can perform the essential function of a job with or without reasonable accommodation.” Please read the standards carefully and seek clarification if necessary. According to the nature of the work required in Dental Hygiene, the student must be able to meet the following standards:

TECHNICAL STANDARD	EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES/BEHAVIORS (NOT ALL INCLUSIVE)
Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.	Establish rapport and professionally communicate with patients, families, faculty, staff and fellow classmates. Allow mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, faculty, staff and classmates.
Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form.	Listen attentively. Collect assessment data. Explain treatment procedures. Initiate health teaching. Document and interpret dental hygiene actions and client and family responses. Document assessment findings and treatment rendered. Utilize appropriate telephone etiquette. Perceive non-verbal communication.
Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	Identify cause and effect relationship in clinical situations. Integrate, analyze and synthesize data. Develop dental hygiene treatment plans. Assimilate knowledge from lecture, laboratory and clinical arenas. Utilize basic mathematical skills. Draw sound conclusions.
Physical abilities and endurance sufficient to move around rooms in the dental environment, maneuver in small spaces, work in enclosed spaces, sit and work chairside for long periods, and reach needed equipment.	Move around clinical operatories, dark room (enclosed), sterilization room, and other treatment areas. Position chairside in close proximity to patient. Administer CPR and BLS procedures. Reach and move radiographic equipment which is approximately 5-6' off floor. Transfer patients from wheelchairs to dental chairs and back if needed. Utilize repetitive motions with hands, wrists, neck, shoulders and back using gross and fine motor skills for at least eight hours per day.
Gross and fine motor abilities , to include spatial relations, sufficient to provide safe and effective dental hygiene care.	Move, calibrate, use equipment and supplies. Use ancillary aids chairside – mannequins, small equipment, etc. Utilize sharp hand instruments requiring fine motor skills and manual dexterity. Use spatial relations to correctly instrument in clinic with use of indirect vision when required.
Tactile ability sufficient for assessment and performance of dental hygiene procedures.	Perform palpation techniques (EO/IO exam, pulse, etc.), functions of a dental hygiene exam and/or those related to therapeutic intervention, e.g., exploring, scaling and root planning.
Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.	Hears patients and sounds of emergencies, sound of instruments being properly utilized, sound of slow speed hand piece and ultrasonic scaler, hears sound of radiography unit monitors and autoclave monitors, monitor vital signs.
Visual ability sufficient for physical assessment, performance of dental hygiene procedures and maintenance of environmental safety.	Observes client responses such as skin color and facial expression. Notes oral conditions and gingival description to include color changes and pocket depths in mm increments. Evaluates radiographs for technical quality including density, contrast and distortion. Select correct end of small instruments. Able to read small print to include anesthesia vials and medication labels.
Olfactory Ability sufficient for maintaining a safe work environment and patient safety as well as recognizing oral diseases.	Distinguish smells that affect the safety of the work environment (fire), safety for the patient (tissue burns), and the smell of oral diseases (ANUG).
Professional Appearance, Attitude and Demeanor needed for utilization of intellectual abilities and good judgment in performing the roles of a dental hygienist.	Present a professional appearance. Maintain own physical and mental health as well as emotional stability. Maintain a calm and efficient manner within time constraints, medical emergencies and high stress / pressure situations. Exposure to communicable diseases and contaminated body fluids. Demonstrate teamwork and flexibility. Demonstrate empathy. Maintain ethics and sound decision making. Respect cultural diversity. Able to focus in an environment with multiple interruptions, noises, distractions, and unexpected patient needs. Demonstrate organizational skills.

**If a Dental Hygiene student believes that he or she cannot meet one or more of the standards without accommodation or modifications, the college must determine, on an individual basis, whether or not the necessary accommodations or modifications can be made reasonably.

Admissions Requirements for Dental Hygiene

Admission to the Dental Hygiene program consists of two phases. Phase One is applying to Wake Tech to become a Pre-Dental Hygiene student (A45260H), working toward entering the Dental Hygiene Program. Phase Two is to be accepted into the major (A45260) to then enroll in the DEN classes.

Phase I: Apply to Wake Tech and be classified as a Pre-Dental Hygiene student

1. Complete a mandatory **Dental Hygiene Information Session**. (*NOTE: If you are not enrolled at Wake Tech as a Pre-Dental Hygiene student within 1 year of completing the Dental Information Session you must view another session prior to the application deadline.*) This session is available online at <https://www.waketech.edu/admissions-aid/credit/health-sciences/information-sessions/dental>.
2. Complete the Wake Tech application process (NC Residency and college application) at apply.waketech.edu and meet requirements for Reading/English and Math proficiencies.
3. Request official transcripts from high school or GED scores and college transcripts, if applicable. Transcripts may be sent electronically to transcripts@waketech.edu. Once received, your file will be reviewed for admissions and course placement.

Please note that once the above-listed steps have been completed, you can be considered a **pre-Dental Hygiene student**. You may want to meet with a Health Science advisor at the Perry Health Science campus to verify that you have been accepted as a pre-Dental Hygiene student, to review your next steps, or if you have any questions about the admissions process. You may also email hsadvising@waketech.edu for assistance.

Phase II: Apply to the Dental Hygiene Program – Applications accepted August 1 through January 31 for the subsequent August start date.

- The following are requirements as determined by the Dental Hygiene department and do not affect your status as a pre-Dental Hygiene student.
- Note that entry into the DEN classes is a competitive process; submitting a DEN program application does not guarantee acceptance.
- **The following steps must be completed by the application deadline to apply for admission to the Dental Hygiene Program. No Dental Hygiene (DEN) courses may be taken prior to acceptance into the program, with the exception of DEN 111.** Beginning Spring 2026, pre-Dental Hygiene students will be permitted to enroll in DEN 111. However, completion of this course will not earn points toward the admissions ranking process.

Part 1: Minimum Admission Requirements

1. Be in good academic standing.
2. Meet science proficiencies as required by the College to be eligible to register for BIO 163 & 175.

3. Complete Job Shadowing.

Job Shadowing: applicants are required to observe in a dental office of their choosing for the purpose of “job shadowing” a clinical dental hygienist to help the applicant make an informed career decision.

A total of **20 (twenty) hours of unpaid observation** of a clinical dental hygienist, at a location of the applicants choosing, are required and must be completed **within the program application year** (ex. January 1, 2024-January 31, 2025 for fall 2025 admission.) Observation of a dentist and/or dental assistant will not be accepted. Documentation of these visits must be submitted with the application packet using the “Shadowing a Clinical Hygienist” Form.

Tips for Job Shadowing

Contact the Office to set up a time for the observation.

- Introduce yourself clearly.
- Indicate you are calling to schedule a job shadowing as a prospective Wake Tech student.
- Ask for a specific amount of time (required hours per program) to complete the job shadowing.
- Call the day before to reconfirm your appointment.

Dress Appropriately

- Clean, neat clothing. Casual slacks, closed toe shoes, nice shirt/blouse.
- Simple jewelry and no perfume.
- Refrain from wearing jeans, shorts, sandals, crop tops, and hats.
- No chewing gum.

Arrival at Office

- Be on time or slightly early
- Be confident and friendly
- Be engaged – make eye contact, ask good questions to learn more about the profession
- Comply with all worksite safety rules and confidentiality guidelines. Do not discuss anything observed in the office, especially anything that would identify a patient.

Follow-up after observation

- Verbally thank them for the opportunity to observe before you leave.
- Have the job shadow form signed.
- Send a written thank you note after the observation, mentioning something of specific value you learned.

4. **Complete and submit a Dental Hygiene Program Application:** Submit a **separate** application for the Dental Hygiene Program (clinical). All of the above minimum requirements must have been met or the application will not be reviewed. **The Dental Hygiene application period is open August 1 through January 31.**

Part 2: Competitive Admissions Requirements

In order to select applicants for programs with limited clinical seats, a competitive admissions procedure will be used which utilizes a point system. This procedure will be used when there are more applicants who have met the minimum admission requirements than available clinical seats. **Only those applicants who have completed the minimum admissions requirements and returned all required forms by the deadline will be considered eligible to be ranked for the clinical seats.** The applicants with the highest number of points (as of the application deadline) will be selected for the available clinical seats.

Applicants with *equal point totals* will be selected by choosing the applicant with the highest score on the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) Perceptual Ability Score. If a tie still exists, the number of times the applicant has applied to the Wake Tech Dental Hygiene Program will be utilized to break the tie.

Applicants who wish to *transfer* to Wake Tech from another CODA accredited Dental Hygiene program or who wish to *Restart* the Wake Tech program must follow the criteria noted on the **Restart/Transfer Student Policy** document. Points may be deducted in the competitive process based on the reason for the restart/transfer.

Point System:

Points will be totaled for course completion and scores on the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH). Additional Bonus Points will be added as applicable.

Formula: Points earned for Courses + ATDH Perceptual Ability Points + Bonus Points = Overall Score.

The maximum points possible for admission is: Courses 44 + ATDH 10 + Bonus 10 = 64

Course Completion:

Applicants will be assigned points for non-clinical (non-DEN) courses that are part of the Associate Degree Dental Hygiene curriculum that they have already completed, with a maximum of 44 points possible. The number of points assigned will be based on the applicant’s grade as follows:

Technical Core Courses
*Must be taken within 5 years of the program application window.
(Ex. 2020-2024 if applying for August 2025)

COM 120	ENG 111	HUM elect.	PSY 150	SOC 210	CHM 130	BIO 163	BIO 175
A – 4	A – 4	A – 4	A – 4	A – 4	A – 8	A – 8	A – 8
B – 3	B – 3	B – 3	B – 3	B – 3	B – 6	B – 6	B – 6
C - 2	C - 2	C - 2	C - 2	C - 2	C - 4	C - 4	C - 4

**Note: If you take BIO 165/166 or 168/169, the grades for the two courses will be averaged and counted toward the BIO163 requirements. Since letter grades are not given to students who pass a challenge examination, points will be awarded for challenged courses by assigning a grade of “B”.*

Points will be awarded for courses taken at Wake Technical Community College or any U.S. regionally accredited institution and that meet the established transfer criteria developed by the academic department. A grade of “C” or better must be earned to receive transfer credit. Transfer credit will be noted from the submitted college transcripts. Courses that are repeated will have the highest grade accepted toward points. Please understand that once accepted into the program, DEN courses must be passed on a first attempt or risk dismissal from the program.

Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH):

Applicants earn competitive points based on scores earned on the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene, administered through the American Dental Association. This is a nationally administered standardized admission test for applicants of dental hygiene programs designed to assess skill levels and assist with admissions decisions. Information about the exam is located at <https://www.ada.org/education/testing/exams/admission-test-for-dental-hygiene-atdh>. A guide, Quick Facts and practice test are available on the website. You may contact ADA staff for questions at DTS 1.800.232.1694. You may also contact the American Dental Association, Department of Testing Services staff via the email address atdhexam@ada.org.

Exams are offered year-round at local testing centers and have a fee associated with taking the exam. Partial fee waivers are available in the case of severe hardships, beginning January 1 each year. See the ATDH Candidate Guide for more information.

The ATDH Retesting Policy will be followed which allows three attempts. Candidates are required to wait 60 days between testing attempts on the ATDH. Candidates who have had three or more attempts must apply to the ATDH Program for permission to test again. After a candidate’s third attempt, only one test is allowed in a 12-month period.

Official scores must be available to Wake Tech through the ADA Department of Testing Services. When applying for the ATDH, be sure to release your scores to Wake Tech. Copies of student score reports will not be accepted. Points will be awarded based on the score earned on the Perceptual Ability section of the exam. Applicants need to possess perceptual ability for the profession which is evaluated within the ATDH. The maximum points for this section is 10 points.

Description	Documentation	Points
The American Dental Association’s (ADA) Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptual Ability Score 	ATDH Test results	0-249 = 0 pts 250-299 = 2 pts 300-349 = 4 pts 350-399 = 6 pts 400-449 = 8 pts 450-500 = 10 pts

Bonus Points:

Additional Points may be earned as noted in the table below. A maximum of 10 points may be earned in bonus points.

Description	Documentation	Points
American Dental Association (ADA), Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Accredited Dental Assisting Program Graduates AND/OR Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) (If both are possessed, maximum of 4 points)	Copy of diploma/certificate from an ADA, CODA accredited Dental Assisting Program AND/OR Copy of current Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) certificate	4points
Prior *Health Employable Care Certification/License in a Healthcare field listed below (non-dental) *Health Care that qualifies as experience: registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, nurse practitioner, nurse aide, medical assistant, occupational therapist, physical therapist, respiratory therapist, surgical technologist, electro neurodiagnostic technologist, radiographer, sonographer, MRI technician, mammography technician, pharmacy technician, speech and language therapist, audiologist, phlebotomist, laboratory technician, massage therapist, EMT/Paramedic, dietician, nutritionist, perfusionist, chiropractic assistant, recreational therapist, physician/optometrist/chiropractor/pharmacist.	Copy of transcript or current certification/license	3 points
Successful completion of the HRD-3004F3 Boot Camp: Prepare for a Dental Hygiene or Dental Assisting Career (formerly HRD3004WC2 Boot Camp for Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene) within 3 years of program application (points to attend one time only)	Copy of Certificate of Attendance	1 point
Successful completion of the HRD-3004CR2 Career Exploration in Dental Hygiene course within 3 years of program application (points to attend one time only)	Copy of Certificate of Completion	2 points