

Dental Hygiene Program

**Northampton Community College
Dental Hygiene Program
Essential Functions for Student Continuance and Graduation**

The Dental Hygiene curriculum requires students to have adequate communication, motor, sensory, cognitive, behavioral and ethical abilities in order to ensure the health and safety of clients/peers and to successfully complete the program of study. The Essential Functions reflect the required abilities that are compatible with effective performance as an entry-level dental hygienist.

Abilities	Standard	Some Examples of Necessary Activities (not all inclusive)
Motor Skills/Sensory	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective care and documentation. Tactile ability sufficient for client assessment and treatment. Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches, manipulates and operates equipment & instruments • Performs CPR • Performs palpation • Detects intraoral deposits and dental caries • Observes client responses • Discriminates color changes and shades of gray, i.e., lesion description, x-ray interpretation • Accurately reads measurements on instruments, i.e., probe
Communication	Communication abilities in English sufficient for appropriate interaction with others in verbal and written form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reads, understands, writes and speaks English competently • Establishes rapport with clients and colleagues • Explains treatment procedures • Implements dental health education, diet & tobacco dependence counseling • Documents client responses, clinical findings and services rendered • Validates responses/messages with others
Behavioral/Emotional	The ability to perceive events realistically, to think clearly and rationally and to function appropriately in routine and stressful situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies changes in client health status • Handles multiple priorities in stressful situations • Adapts quickly to change • Uses good judgment • Empathizes with clients
Cognitive/Critical Thinking	Critical thinking/problem solving ability sufficient for sound clinical judgment. Comprehend, analyze, apply, synthesize and evaluate information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies cause-effect relationships in clinical situations • Develops care plans • Evaluates treatment outcomes • Seeks consultation in a timely manner • Uses critical thinking skills in both the classroom and in the clinical setting
Professional Conduct	The ability to practice dental hygiene ethically and to abide by the professional standards of practice.	<p>Some Examples of Necessary Attributes (not all inclusive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts personal responsibility for actions - accountable • Courteous; appropriately open and candid • Honest; presents own work • Does not erase or modify data from any record or file, or remove any record from where it is maintained • Does not share confidential information with any individual(s) who does not need to know • Manages conflict constructively • Functions interdependently with other healthcare providers • Meets deadlines; attends class/clinic on time • Tolerant, has respect for all human beings • Accepts criticism maturely • Maintains decorum in front of clients/peers • Complies with the clinical dress code; good personal hygiene • Complies with classroom rules and program policies

Penalty

If a student does not meet the essential functions in a pre-clinical, clinical or lab course the faculty member will issue an “F” grade for the course. The student will be referred to the program director and depending on the essential function deficiency the student may be dismissed from the dental hygiene program.

The student has the right to appeal the “F” grade or dismissal from the program by following the procedural steps listed in the College’s Student Handbook under: Appeal Procedure - Charges of Academic Dishonesty.



Northampton Community College