

# Dental Hygiene Information

Because a dental hygiene certification does not require a bachelors degree prior to applying the Pre-Professional Advisement Center doesn't advise students regarding this degree. This handout is offered as a service to provide information.

## CAREER DESCRIPTION

Dental hygienists are licensed health care professionals who promote oral health and wellness. Dental hygienists educate patients regarding oral hygiene and preventive oral care, remove soft and hard deposits from teeth, and provide other preventive dental care. Hygienists examine patients' oral cavity—head, neck, lips, cheeks, tongue, teeth and gums recording the presence of diseases or abnormalities. After assessing a patient's conditions, they develop a dental hygiene diagnosis.

Hygienists remove plaque, calculus, and stains from teeth, expose and develop dental X-rays, and apply cavity-preventive agents, such as fluorides and pit and fissure sealants. In some states, they also administer local anesthetics and nitrous oxide; place and carve filling materials, temporary fillings, and periodontal dressings; remove sutures; perform root planning as a periodontal therapy; and smooth and polish restorations.

Hygienists may not diagnose diseases, but they can prepare clinical and laboratory diagnostic tests for the dentist to interpret. Hygienists may also work chair-side with the dentist during treatment.

## ACADEMIC FACTORS FOR DENTAL HYGIENE SCHOOL ADMISSION

There are various levels of certification for dental hygiene. Commonly, students pursue a bachelor's degree. As such, many students desiring to pursue a degree in dental hygiene will choose an undergraduate institution that has such a program, or transfer to one after completing some classes at another university. Students may choose any major, as long as they also complete the prerequisite courses for admittance to a dental hygiene program (either as a transfer student or as a post-Baccalaureate).

Some dental hygiene programs may require completion of the Health Occupations Aptitude Test. This is not always a requirement however, and should be investigated thoroughly before being pursued.

## SAMPLE PREREQUISITES

\*Remember, this list is a sample and may not be adequate for every school. Consult with your selected schools for actual requirements and better accuracy. Pay close attention to lab requirements and specific credit hours required.

ENGLISH  
WRTG 150- Freshman Writing

PSYCHOLOGY  
PSYCH 111- General Psychology

STATISTICS  
STATS 121- Principles of Statistics

MICROBIOLOGY  
MMBIO 221/222- General Microbiology with Lab

SOCIAL SCIENCES  
SOC111- Introductory Sociology

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY  
CELL 220- Human Anatomy with Lab  
CELL 305- Human Physiology  
CELL 363- Adv. Physiology Lab

CHEMISTRY  
CHEM 101- Intro General Chemistry

NUTRITION AND FOOD SCIENCE  
NDFS 100- Essentials of Human Nutrition

PUBLIC SPEAKING  
TMA 150- Public Speaking

## APPLICATION PROCESS

There is no standardized application process for dental hygiene programs. Each program must be applied to individually. Most programs have a website with downloadable applications or instructions on how to apply. Be sure to include all elements of each application, as they may vary slightly from school to school.

## OTHER RESOURCES

- American Dental Hygienists' Association – [www.adha.org/](http://www.adha.org/)
- American Dental Association – [www.ada.org/](http://www.ada.org/)
- Explore Health Careers – [www.explorehealthcareers.org](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org)

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## **WHERE DO I LIST AP CREDITS?**

Designate AP courses as AP under the first semester of your freshman year.

## **WHERE DO I LIST LANGUAGE TEST CREDITS?**

Designate language exams as departmental exams under the first semester of your freshman year, or your first semester at BYU if you are a transfer student.

## **FROM WHOM CAN I GET SCIENCE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FROM?**

Professors teaching any biology, chemistry, or physics course count as science professors. Exercise science, public health, and nutritional science professors do not count. However, professors of EXSC 362, 400, 463, or 464 can write a science letter of recommendation, but grades from these courses will not go towards the BCP science GPA.

## **WHAT SHOULD I LIST FOR MY WORK AND ACTIVITIES SECTION?**

Include significant experiences, awards, honors, research, service, hobbies, leadership, and extracurricular activities. To your best discretion choose the category in which to place each experience. There is limited space to describe the experience, so be concise.

## **WILL THE PREPROFESSIONAL ADVISEMENT CENTER SEND MY TRANSCRIPTS TO AADSAS/TMSAS?**

No. Transcripts must be electronically requested from BYU's enrollment services. Send in your transcripts even before you submit your electronic application. If you want your spring term grades to be considered as part of your application, then you will need to wait until after spring grades are posted to submit your application and request your official transcripts. Once your transcripts are received and your online application is submitted they will process your application. Processing your application may take up to 4 weeks. You will need to submit an official transcript for universities or colleges you have received college credit.

## **HOW DO I REPORT MY DAT SCORES?**

Official scores will be transmitted to the dental schools you have selected on the DAT application. Both AADSAS and TMSAS dental schools are included. The scores will be available directly to the schools through the application services. To send scores to additional schools than initially selected on the DAT application you will need to submit a Request Score Report and \$25. For more information on additional reports see [www.ada.org/dat.aspx](http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx) Step 5.

## **CAN I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION BEFORE I RECEIVE ALL MY LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION?**

Yes! And we suggest that you do so the 30 day verification process of your application can begin. Note the application is not considered complete until these letters are received, and waiting later than 30 days after you submit your application to turn in letters will likely slow down your application.

## **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?**

After you have submitted your application, some schools will send you secondary applications asking for pictures, essays, fees, etc. AADSAS lists each of the school's requirements for secondaries when you are filling out the application. Some dental schools do not send a request for a secondary application, but will expect you to go to their website and download the secondary application form.