

DENTAL HYGIENE (B.S.)

Bachelor of Science

A registered dental hygienist is a preventive oral health professional licensed in dental hygiene who provides educational, clinical, and therapeutic services supporting total health through the promotion of optimal oral health. They often work in collaboration with other health care providers combining knowledge of social, biomedical, and dental sciences to assist in this endeavor.

The Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene program is designed to graduate an individual competent in providing preventive, educational and therapeutic dental health services, encourage the development of ethical and moral values aligning with laws of the community, stimulate behavior founded in evidence-based decision-making, and foster a desire for life-long learning. Graduates earn a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene and are eligible to take the National Board Examination, the California Law and Ethics Exam, and an optional Clinical Board Exam for licensure portability. Those not taking the Clinical Board qualify for licensure to practice in California only. A Bachelor of Science degree in dental hygiene offers multiple career pathways in a variety of settings including but not limited to clinical dental hygiene practice, teaching, public health, administration, research, industrial organizations, as well as entry into graduate degree programs in multiple disciplines including a Master's in Dental Hygiene, Public Health, etc.

Program Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the dental hygiene program, graduates will:

1. Display competency in providing preventive, educational, and therapeutic dental health services to diverse populations.
2. Demonstrate a philosophical appreciation and practice of ethical and moral values suited to the laws of the community as outlined by governing bodies and professional associations.
3. Exhibit professional behavior that is founded in evidence-based decision making, self-directed learning and self-assessment to enhance professional competence.
4. Create and deliver health education programs to the community supporting total health through the promotion of optimal oral health.
5. Defend the value of systemic health through oral health and the patient's role as a co-therapist.

Bachelor's Degree Program Requirements:

The Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene Program is a two-part program; two years of required prerequisite courses, then, following acceptance into the program, two years of upper division dental hygiene major and upper division general education courses which includes one summer session. The bachelor's degree requires completion of one of the following general education patterns prior to admission into the program: the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), the CSU General Education Breadth Requirements, California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) or the Cerritos General Education Curriculum (CGEC).

General Education requirements (except those required as prerequisites or as major requirements) will be waived for applicants with an earned bachelor's degree.

The acceptance of college work previously completed is at the discretion of Cerritos College and the Dental Hygiene Department. Factors such as

elapsed time since the course was completed and grades will be used in determining whether a previously completed course can be accepted towards fulfillment of the graduation requirement.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the equivalency of prerequisites and other courses required for the program. The student must watch the application video found on the dental hygiene website for instructions regarding the dental hygiene application process.

A valid CPR certification in Basic Life Support (BLS) is required prior to enrolling in the Dental Hygiene Program and must be kept current. The requirement for CPR certification in Basic Life Support can be met by completion of either: an American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC) course in Basic Life Support or a Basic Life Support course taught by a provider approved by the American Dental Association's Continuing Education Recognition program (CERP) or the Academy of General Dentistry's Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE).

Once enrolled into the Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene Program, dental hygiene major curriculum is planned sequentially, and students are required to maintain a grade of "C" or higher in each dental hygiene and dental education course to progress in the program. Courses are designed to prepare the student to successfully complete program competencies. The program requires the student to take as many as seven courses during any one semester. Consequently, commitment to a rigorous study schedule is imperative. Grade requirements of the college must be met for all courses.

Program Goals:

The philosophy of the Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene Degree Program was developed to reflect the philosophy of Cerritos College.

The Dental Hygiene Department believes the program should provide opportunities for the student to reach her/his greatest potential in the profession of dental hygiene so she/he may achieve a sense of dignity, value, and personal worth in the community and in the world of work regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity.

The goals of the dental hygiene program are as follows:

1. To graduate an individual who is competent in providing preventive, educational, and therapeutic dental health services to diverse populations.
 - a. Graduates must be competent in providing dental hygiene care for the child, adolescent, adult, geriatric, and medically compromised patient.
 - b. Graduates must be competent in providing the dental hygiene process of care which includes assessment, dental hygiene diagnosis, planning, implementation, evaluation, and documentation.
 - c. Graduates must be competent in providing dental hygiene care for all types of periodontal disease including patients who exhibit moderate to severe periodontal disease.
 - d. Graduates must be competent in providing appropriate life support measures for medical emergencies that may be encountered in dental hygiene practice.
 - e. Graduates will incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of patient care services.
2. To instill within the student a philosophical appreciation of ethical and moral values suited to the laws of the community as outlined by governing bodies and professional associations.

- a. Graduates must be competent in applying ethical, legal, and regulatory concepts to the provision and/or support of oral health care services.
3. To encourage the student to develop professional behavior that is founded in evidence-based decision making, self-directed learning, and self-assessment to enhance professional competence.
 - a. Graduates must be competent in the application of self-assessment skills to prepare them for life-long learning.
 - b. Graduates must be competent in the evaluation of current scientific literature.
 - c. Graduates must be competent in problem solving strategies related to comprehensive patient care and management of patients.
4. To defend the value of systemic health through oral health and the patient's role as a co-therapist.

Program Requirements

The bachelor's degree requires completion of one of the following general education patterns prior to applying for the program:

- Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)
- CSU General Education Breadth Requirements (CSUGE)
- California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)
- Cerritos General Education Curriculum (CGEC)

Part I: Lower Division Coursework

Completion of the following science prerequisite courses with a 5-year recency and GPA of 3.0. A cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better is also required.

- Science prerequisite courses listed below are mandated by the Dental Hygiene Board to incorporate a wet lab component. Science labs taken as of January 2025 are required to be in-person courses:

NOTE: Wet Laboratories are required for the prerequisite biomedical coursework to gain entrance into the dental hygiene educational program. Science prerequisite courses must include a wet lab component, which must be completed face-to-face unless the labs were taken during the waived pandemic period (Spring 2020 to Spring 2022). Online or hybrid lab formats will be accepted through Fall 2025; however, beginning Spring 2026, all prerequisite science courses with lab components must be completed in a face-to-face wet laboratory setting. This requirement applies whether courses are offered in person or online. If you completed your labs during the waived period, you may still be required to provide documentation at the time of application, documentation such as a course syllabus or a letter from the course instructor. California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 1105(f)(1)

Code Number	Course Title	Units
Human Anatomy Requirement		
A&P 200	Human Anatomy	5.0
or A&P 150	Introduction to Human Anatomy	
Human Physiology Requirement		
A&P 201	Human Physiology	5.0
or A&P 151	Introduction to Human Physiology	
Inorganic Chemistry Requirement		
CHEM 100	Introductory Chemistry	4.0
or CHEM 110	Elementary Chemistry	
*Biochemistry or Organic Chemistry with Biochemistry ¹		4.0-5.0
Nutrition Requirement		

HO 152	Normal and Therapeutic Nutrition	3.0
Microbiology Requirement		
MICR 200	Principles and Applications of Microbiology	5.0
Total Units for Lower Division Coursework		26-27

¹ Our institution does not offer a one-semester Biochemistry or combined Organic Chemistry with Biochemistry course. Students will need to take this course at another accredited institution.

NOTE: During the pandemic (Spring 2020 to Spring 2022), a waiver for the wet laboratory requirement was permitted. All applications where the pandemic waiver applies will be accepted. California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 1105(f)(1)

Additional Required Coursework

All additional required courses must be passed with a "C" or better. A minimum science GPA of 3.0 and an overall GPA of 2.5 is required.

Code Number	Course Title	Units
COMM 100	Introduction to Communications Studies	3.0
or COMM C1000	Introduction to Public Speaking	
or COMM 120	Interpersonal Communication	
or COMM 125	Organizational Communication	
or COMM 132	Small Group Communication	
SOC 101	Introductory Sociology Principles	3.0
PSYC C1000	Introduction to Psychology	3.0
PSYC 210	Elementary Statistics	4.0-4.5
or STAT C1000	Introduction to Statistics	
or MATH 112S	Enhanced Elementary Statistics	
or ECON 210	Applied Introductory Statistics for Economics	
Total Units for Additional Coursework		13-13.5

PART II: Upper Division Coursework

After applying AND being accepted to the Dental Hygiene program, there will be two years of *upper division* dental hygiene major coursework and general education courses, which includes one summer session.

Code Number	Course Title	Units
Semester One		
DH 310	Preventive Dentistry I	2.0
DH 311	Infection Control and Dental Office Emergencies	2.0
DH 312	Dental Hygiene Radiology	2.0
DH 315	Dental Hygiene Clinical Science I	2.0
DH 315C	Pre-Clinical Dental Hygiene I	2.0
DH 316	Head and Neck Anatomy	2.0
DH 319	Dental Embryology, Histology & Anatomy	2.0
Semester Two		
DH 320	Preventive Dentistry II	2.0
DH 325	Dental Hygiene Clinical Science II	2.0
DH 325C	Clinical Dental Hygiene II	3.0
DH 326	General and Oral Pathology	3.0
DH 328	Management of Pain	2.0
DH 329	Applied Periodontics	2.0
PHAR 327	Principles of Pharmacology	3.0
Summer Semester		

DH 350C	Clinical Dental Hygiene IA	1.0
COMM 320	Intercultural Communication: Contexts and Dialogue	3.0
Semester Three		
DH 432L	Dental Materials and Expanded Function Laboratory	3.0
DH 434	Dental Care for Patients with Special Needs	2.0
DH 435	Dental Hygiene Clinical Science III	2.0
DH 435C	Clinical Dental Hygiene III	4.0
DH 438L	Community Outreach I	2.0
DH 439	Biostatistics and Research Methodology	2.0
Semester Four		
DH 444	Ethics, Law and Practice Management	2.0
DH 445	Dental Hygiene Clinical Science IV	2.0
DH 445C	Clinical Dental Hygiene IV	4.0
DH 448L	Community Outreach II	2.0
DH 449	Principles of Community Oral Health	2.0
PSYC 410	Advanced Statistics	4.0
Total Units for Upper Division Coursework		66
Total Units for Lower Division Coursework		26.0-27.5
Total Units for Additional Coursework		13.0-13.5
Additional elective units to meet the minimum of 120 units		15.0
Total Units		120-122