Dental Hygiene

Degree Offered

• Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene
• Master of Science in Dental Hygiene

The Profession

Dental hygiene is an exciting profession with many rewarding and challenging career opportunities which include clinical/patient care, administration, education, research, and sales/marketing. Dental hygienists are employed in diverse settings such as private dental practices; clinics; hospitals; geriatric dental educational programs; national, state, and local government agencies; and private/business industry. As a licensed health professional and oral health educator, the dental hygienist has an important role in the overall health and welfare of the public. The dental hygienist is an integral part of the dental team, providing direct patient care based on the prevention of disease. The duties and responsibilities of dental hygienists vary from state to state but may include oral prophylaxis (removing stains and deposits from teeth); root debridement; exposing radiographs; application of preventive and therapeutic agents; local delivery of antimicrobial agents; nutritional counseling; oral, head, and neck cancer screenings; monitoring nitrous oxide sedation; and administration of local anesthesia. The educational background of a dental hygienist provides the knowledge, attitudes, and skill necessary to be successful in a wide variety of careers. From providing clinical care to research to public administration, dental hygiene opens the door to many successful career options.

Nature of the Program

The establishment of the integrated baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene program at West Virginia University in September 1961 was a milestone in dental hygiene education. The program stands out as one of the top dental hygiene programs nationally as shown by the students’ commitment to excellence. With the addition of the degree completion program in 1987 and the master of science program in 1989, the Division of Dental Hygiene provides graduates the opportunity to further their education. The integrated curriculum in dental hygiene combines the advantages of both liberal arts and the professional aspects of education. Graduates from the program are awarded a bachelor of science degree in dental hygiene, with the option to obtain a master of science degree with the completion of a minimum of one additional year.

The dental hygiene curriculum is rigorous and provides excellent preparation for the practice of dental hygiene in numerous practice settings. The curriculum requires successful completion of a total of 136 hours and was constructed in accordance with the standards specified for a school of dental hygiene by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation. The program has been fully accredited by this organization since 1965.

The dental hygiene program has a strong commitment to providing care and educational programs to residents of West Virginia, which is demonstrated by the required 100 hours of service learning and clinical care courses. To provide students in dental hygiene program with the necessary clinical experience that is required, the School of Dentistry maintains and operated dental clinics in the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry. Through the West Virginia Rural Health Education Program (WVRHEP), students are required to provide direct patient care for the citizens of West Virginia at a rural site during the summer session between their junior and senior year.

The dental hygiene program has an excellent reputation for producing outstanding clinicians and many faculty members as well as graduates are recognized as leaders in dental education and organized dentistry.

Academic and Professional Standards

Dental Hygiene -Student Rights and Responsibilities

(Effective for all undergraduate students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program)

I. Preamble

By enrolling in the Dental Hygiene program of West Virginia University, the student accepts the academic and professional standards/requirements outlined herein as requisite for continued enrollment in this curriculum and graduation. Knowledge of and conformity to these standards/requirements are the students’ responsibility.

Students enjoy the rights specified in the West Virginia University Board of Governors Policy #10 which include freedom of expression and assembly, freedom of association, and privacy.

Students are expected to abide by federal, state, and local statutes and ordinances, both on and off campus, refrain from behavior incompatible with the responsibilities of the dental profession, and follow the specific rules of conduct established in West Virginia University Board of Governors Policy #10.

In all disciplinary proceedings, students are considered innocent until allegations with regard to violations of this policy have been established by clear and convincing evidence.
II. Professional Performance Standards

A. Personal Appearance:

Students are required at all times to be in compliance with the requirements of dress and appearance contained in the document entitled *WVU School of Dentistry Policy on Professional Appearance* (Appendix A).

B. Personal Behavior/Conduct:

Students are required at all times to be in compliance with the *Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior* (Appendix B).

III. Dental Hygiene Academic Policies

At mid-term and the conclusion of every semester, the Dental Hygiene Committee on Academic and Professional Standards reviews the status of every student in the program. The committee may also convene more frequently as any Professional/Academic situations arise. The Committee recommends promotion, probation, suspension, or dismissal to the dean of the School of Dentistry.

If students fulfill all course requirements, meet all professional standards, and have the necessary grade point averages, promotion is unconditional.

A. All students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program must maintain full-time status and meet with the Director prior to making any changes to their prescribed schedule. Alterations in your schedule could adversely affect your ability to meet Program expectations and could result in sanctions up to and including dismissal.

B. Students must maintain cumulative and dental hygiene/science grade point averages of 2.25 (2.5 for the incoming freshman class, effective fall 2011) or higher. The dental hygiene/science grade point average is based upon the average of grades earned in all attempts of the following courses, or their equivalent:

C. A grade of F in a dental hygiene/science course or failure to attain a 2.25 (2.5 for the incoming freshman class, fall 2011) cumulative or dental hygiene/science grade point average in any semester will result in placing a student on probation.

D. Students on probation who do not raise their cumulative or dental hygiene/science grade point average to 2.25 (2.5 for the incoming freshman class, fall 2011) or better the following semester may be dismissed from the Dental Hygiene program.

E. A student who receives a grade of D, F, W, or WU in a required dental hygiene/science course must repeat that course. These courses may only be repeated ONCE. Failure to earn a grade of C or better on the student’s second attempt will result in dismissal from the Dental Hygiene program.

F. A student may repeat only TWO dental hygiene/science courses throughout the Dental Hygiene curriculum. A third D or F in a dental hygiene/science course may require the student to repeat the year as a full-time student as determined by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Four or more grades of D or F will result in dismissal from the Dental Hygiene program, and the student will be ineligible for readmission to the Program.

G. The Dental Hygiene Program will acknowledge West Virginia University’s D/F repeat policy in relationship to determining the overall grade point average, hours attempted and hours earned. The Program will utilize both grades (attempts) to determine the dental hygiene/science grade point average. Rectifying one or more grades of D, F, W, or WU through the D/F repeat policy does not negate recognizing the original grade (1st attempt) by the Program in determining the sanctions associated with the number of courses.

H. Students repeating the year are required to repeat any dental hygiene courses in which they were enrolled that year and earned a grade of C or below. The Academic and Professional Standards Committee may also prescribe any additional course to enhance the student’s academic progress and psycho-motor skills.

I. Prior to entrance into the fall semester of the sophomore (2nd) year, a student must have successfully completed Chemistry 111/112.

J. Prior to entrance into the major, a student must pass all Basic Science courses required in the first two years of the curriculum.

K. Dental hygiene/science pre-requisite courses in which students earn a grade of D, F, W, or WU must be repeated prior to the student’s progression to the next course in that sequence and at the discretion of the Academic and Professional Standards Committee, which may result in repeating the year.

L. The Division of Dental Hygiene reserves the right to recommend imposition or academic sanctions, to require remedial work, or to withhold the opportunity to take one or more licensing exams. This policy would affect any student who may have met formal curriculum requirements but who lacks the professional skills and/or behavior and conduct considered necessary for the baccalaureate degree in Dental Hygiene.

M. Students recommended for dismissal have the opportunity for due process by writing to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee within five working days of receipt of the written notice and may be asked to meet in person with the recommending Committee. (See Academic
Sanctions: Procedures and Appeals in the WVU Student Handbook.) The dean may accept, modify, or reject the Academic and Professional Standards Committee’s recommendation. The dean’s decision is final.

N. Successful completion of the National Dental Hygiene Board Examination is a requirement for graduation. Failure to produce evidence of taking this examination before the first day of the spring semester of the senior year will result in academic sanctions up to and including repeating the year or dismissal.

O. All students are also required to take a clinical board for licensure prior to graduation.

P. The School of Dentistry Division of Dental Hygiene reserves the right to declare a student ineligible for any licensure examination (national, regional, or state boards).

Faculty

Director

- Amy D. Funk - M.S.D.H.

Professors

- Michael D. Bagby - D.D.S. (Loyola University)  
  Biomaterials, Restorative Dentistry
- Richard J. Crout - D.M.D. (University of Pittsburgh)  
  Periodontics, Drug Therapy and Pharmacology
- Christina B. DeBiase - Ed.D. (West Virginia University)  
  Curriculum and Instruction, Special Patient Care
- Mohssen Ghalichebaf - D.D.S. (University of Istanbul)  
  Maxillofacial Prosthetics
- Elizabeth C. Kao - D.M.D. (University of Pennsylvania)  
  Restorative Dentistry
- Peter W. Ngan - D.M.D. (Harvard University)  
  Orthodontics, Craniofacial Growth and Development, Appliance Therapy
- Shelia S. Price - D.D.S. (West Virginia University)  
  Diagnostic Sciences, Health Awareness, Education Leadership
- Thomas F. Razmus - D.D.S. (University of Michigan)  
  Radiology/Imaging, Oral Medicine, Treatment Planning
- Robert N. Stuchell - D.M.D. (University of Pittsburgh)  
  Preventive Dentistry, Treatment Therapy
- John G. Thomas - Ph.D. (Syracuse University)  
  Periodontology
- Bryan D. Weaver - D.D.S. (West Virginia University)  
  Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Associate Professor

- Cathryn L. Frere - M.S.Ed. (University of Southern California)  
  Dental Hygiene
- C. Russell Jackson - D.D.S. (West Virginia University)  
  Endodontics, Pulpal Trauma
- Chris A. Martin - D.D.S. (West Virginia University)  
  Orthodontics
- Harold H. Reed - D.D.S. (West Virginia University)  
  Prosthodontics
- Mark W. Richards - D.D.S (University of Washington)  
  Prosthodontics, Implantology
- Louise Tupta-Veselicky - D.D.S. (West Virginia University)  
  Periodontics, Treatment Therapy
Admission Requirements

The program’s admission requirements are as follows:

- Meet WVU requirements for admission to graduate study. Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission must gain provisional acceptance into the program. All provisions of admission must be met no later than completion of the eighteenth credit hour to be reclassified as a regular student. A student who fails to meet the provisions of admission or who fails to meet the required GPA will be suspended.
- Possess a baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene from an accredited dental hygiene program or a baccalaureate degree in another field of study from an approved institution of higher education while holding a certificate or associate’s degree in dental hygiene from a program fully accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation.
- Demonstrate evidence of scholastic and clinical achievement to indicate the applicant’s ability to progress in a program of this nature. Generally, a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale on all college work attempted is required.
- Complete the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) with an acceptable score within the last five years.
- Submit all information requested in the graduate application to the Office of Academic and Postdoctoral Affairs.
- Consent to and pass a criminal background investigation prior to final acceptance.

Degree Offered

- Master of Science

The School of Dentistry and its Division of Dental Hygiene offer a program of advanced study leading to the degree of master of science. This program requires a minimum of thirty-eight semester hours through full-time or part-time enrollment in the School of Dentistry. It is designed to qualify dental hygienists for careers in teaching, administration, research, and management.

Inquiries concerning this program should be directed to the Office of Academic and Postdoctoral Affairs, School of Dentistry. Applications should be filed by July 1 for fall admission and by October 15 for spring enrollment.

Degree Requirements — Master of Science Degree

- Complete a minimum of thirty-eight semester credit hours: twenty-six required credit hours and twelve credit hours in an elective area(s) of dental hygiene specialization. Two elective areas of specialization are offered. These areas are teaching/administration and special patient care. The student chooses one area of study. Courses within these specializations are taught by a number of schools or colleges within the University. An individualized program will be devised for each student.
- Complete a maximum of six hours in research (part of the twenty-eight hours required by the program) leading to an acceptable thesis.
- Oral defense of the thesis is required.
- Student teaching in the undergraduate clinic a minimum of one semester.

GPA

In order to earn a master’s degree in dental hygiene students must also meet the following:

- Achieve of a 3.0 GPA or an overall academic average of at least a B in all work attempted in the master’s program. A grade of C or below in one course will require a faculty review of the student’s progress. A second C or below will result in dismissal from the program. A student may repeat only one course one time to bring the GPA up to the 3.0 requirement.
- Remove all conditions, deficiencies, and incomplete grades from the student’s transcript. Credit hours for courses with a grade lower than C do not count toward degree requirements.

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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;I 689</td>
<td>Cultural Diversity -Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTHY 678</td>
<td>Dental Hygiene Teaching Method</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>DENT 687</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
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<td>PUBH 601</td>
<td>Intro Community/Public Health</td>
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<td>DTHY 680</td>
<td>Dental Hygiene Sem/Practice 1</td>
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<td>DTHY 697</td>
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Elective area(s) of dental hygiene specialization - choose from the following: 17

- DTHY 691 Advanced Topics Course

Business & Economics courses
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<th>Course Category</th>
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* Total Hours 38