

School of Dentistry

Degrees Offered

- Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene

Nature of the Program

The establishment of the integrated baccalaureate degree program in dental hygiene 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 Department 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 133-34 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 125 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 operates dental clinics in the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry. Through the West Virginia University Institute for Community and Rural Health (WVUICRH), 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 WVU 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. Please visit Dental Hygiene Excellence and Distinction (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/students/bachelor-of-science/excellence-and-distinction/>) for more information.

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; long-term care facilities/rehabilitation centers; dental hygiene education; 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 (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/students/bachelor-of-science/career-possibilities/>). For an overview of the profession, please visit the undergraduate Dental Hygiene website (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/students/bachelor-of-science/>).

Academic and Professional Standards

Students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program are held to high Academic and Professional Standards throughout their time in the Program. Please visit the Dental Hygiene Student Resources page (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/students/bachelor-of-science/dental-hygiene-student-resources/>) for the Dental Hygiene Academic and Professional Standards, Student Rights and Responsibilities, additional policies, and guidelines.

FACULTY

CHAIR AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR

- Amy D. Funk, Professor - MSDH
(West Virginia University)

PROFESSORS

- M. Suann Gaydos - MSDH, NCTTP
(West Virginia University)
- Alcinda K. T. Shockey - DHSc, MA, BSDH, RDH, CHS-IV, CTTS, CNTA
(NOVA Southeastern University)

- Ashlee B. Sowards - BSDH, MSDH, TTS
(West Virginia University)

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Dawn Ann Dean - MSDH, RDH
(West Virginia University)
- Kaitlyn McQuain - BSDH, MSDH
(West Virginia University)
- Elizabeth Southern Puette - RDH, MSDH, CTTS
(Old Dominion University)

Admissions for 2025-2026

Major Code: 8014

APPLICATION DEADLINES FOR 2024 - 2025

- First Time Freshman (fall 2025 admission) = **August 1, 2024 - February 1, 2025**
- Spring Admit Freshman* (spring 2026 admission) = **August 1, 2024 - October 1st, 2024**
- Advanced Standing Sophomore* (fall 2025 admission) = **August 1, 2024 - February 1, 2025**

**Must be granted departmental approval; more information provided below.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Students are admitted into the Dental Hygiene Program through a competitive process in which all applications are reviewed by the Dental Hygiene Admissions Committee. **All applicants must apply to the Dental Hygiene Program and submit test scores (ACT, SAT, or ALEKS), transcripts, and all required Program documents.** There are two types of admission into the Dental Hygiene Program - Freshman entry (Direct Admission and via Healthcare Pathways with Dental Hygiene Interest) and Advanced Standing admission (spring semester freshman admission and fall semester sophomore admission).

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Current college students cannot transfer directly into the program; they must make application and complete the admissions process as described below.

To be considered for an interview for admission into the Dental Hygiene Program as a freshman student, regardless of admission type, applicants must:

- Apply to the Dental Hygiene Program by the deadlines listed above
- Submit all current transcripts
- Submit scores of one of the following:
 - ACT minimum math score of 20 **OR**
 - SAT minimum math score of 520 **OR**
 - ALEKS math placement test score 40 or higher *Please routinely check your MIX email account for more information on ALEKS (<https://www.access.wvu.edu/courses/aleks/>)
- Submit the following to the Dental Hygiene Office (lgroover@hsc.wvu.edu):
 - Shadowing forms (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/media/1673/dental-hygiene-applicant-shadowing-form.pdf>) - a minimum of eight hours of direct observation of a registered dental hygienist are required, although more are recommended
 - Shadowing essay – describe the shadowing experience (procedures, patients, communication, infection control, personal protective equipment, etc.)
 - Personal essay – one page essay outlining "Why do you want to be a dental hygienist?"

The Dental Hygiene Admissions committee reviews all applications and emphasis is placed on scholastic achievement in science courses as well as overall grade point average and involvement in community service activities. Physical strength with the ability to sit and stand is required, fine precision bilateral manipulative hand/motor skills, adequate visual acuity, eye/hand/foot coordination, and emotional stability are essential characteristics for individuals who wish to enter and continue in the dental hygiene program. Applicants must meet other medical qualifications as required. Reasonable accommodations will be considered for students in conjunction with the WVU Office of Accessibility Services (<https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>).

FRESHMAN ADMISSION

Applicants that do not meet minimum requirements for admission (see above) will be placed in Healthcare Pathways in the Center for Learning, Advising, and Student Success (CLASS) (<https://advisingcenter.wvu.edu/>). Current college students and/or graduates may be considered for admission into the freshman class based on the availability of openings in the class.

FIRST TIME FRESHMAN (FTF) ENTRY

As an integrated four-year program, there are no prerequisite college courses required for first time freshman entry, but additional science courses on the high school level are recommended. There are two opportunities for freshman admission to the WVU Dental Hygiene Program - Direct Admission and Healthcare Pathways with Dental Hygiene Interest.

All applicants must meet all of the University admission requirements (<https://admissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/first-time-freshmen/admission-requirements/>) and minimum Program requirements listed above.

Direct Admission

Applicants that meet the direct admission requirements listed below are provisionally accepted and will be guaranteed an interview with the Dental Hygiene Admissions committee. The direct admit applicant must completed a successful interview with the admissions committee and has submit all required information by the deadline (test scores, transcripts, departmental documents, etc.) to have a dedicated position in the upcoming class. **No applicants will be interviewed or considered for direct admission until the testing requirements are completed.**

To be provisionally accepted via direct admission, applicants must:

- Complete all departmental admission criteria (see How to Apply below) **AND**
- Minimum high school grade point average of 3.7 **AND**
- Meet at least one of the following:
 - ACT Composite score 24 with a minimum math score of 20 **OR**
 - SAT EBRW and Math 1180 with a minimum math score of 520

Healthcare Pathways with Dental Hygiene Interest

Applicants that do not meet the requirements for direct admission will be placed in Healthcare Pathways with Dental Hygiene interest in CLASS. Applicants in Healthcare Pathways with Dental Hygiene Interest who meet the minimum Program requirements may be considered for admission into the Dental Hygiene Program (first time freshman entry) provided there are remaining openings in the class.

ADVANCED STANDING ADMISSION

Applicants may be eligible to enter the program as a spring semester freshman or an advanced standing sophomore. **This does not require a separate application;** students must follow the dental hygiene application process (see 'How to Apply' below). Interested students **must contact the Department** directly to request consideration and be granted approval to apply for either spring or advanced standing sophomore admission.

Admission is limited by class size and successful completion of college courses does not guarantee advanced standing admission. Current college students and/or graduates may be considered for admission as an advanced standing student based on the availability of openings in the class.

ADVANCED STANDING SPRING SEMESTER FRESHMAN ADMISSION

To be considered for Spring admission, applications are **due by October 1st of the preceding fall semester**. Admission is based on a minimum cumulative and science grade point average of 3.0 and successful completion (with a grade of C or better) of Chemistry 111 and Chemistry 111L or a higher-level Chemistry course (didactic and laboratory) and additional courses as prescribed in the first semester of the Dental Hygiene Curriculum Plan.

ADVANCED STANDING FALL SEMESTER SOPHOMORE ADMISSION

To be considered as an advanced standing sophomore, applications are **due by February 1st** of the preceding spring semester. Admission is based on a minimum cumulative and science grade point average of 3.0 and successful completion (with a grade of C or better) of all science courses prescribed in the first year of the Dental Hygiene Curriculum Plan.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply to the program, please visit the Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene Apply Now (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/apply-now/bachelor-of-science-in-dental-hygiene/>) page and follow the directions provided. **Applications for the 2025 fall semester are available from August 1, 2024 to February 1, 2025.** To be considered for the Dental Hygiene Program, applicants must choose Dental Hygiene in the WVU on-line application.

Additionally, all applicants, regardless of admission type, must complete all of the Departmental Admission requirements before your application will be reviewed by the Dental Hygiene Admissions Committee.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please send these documents electronically to the Dental Hygiene Administrative Assistant (lgroover@hsc.wvu.edu).

1. Shadowing forms (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/media/1673/dental-hygiene-applicant-shadowing-form.pdf>) - a minimum of eight hours of direct observation of a registered dental hygienist are required, although more are recommended
2. Shadowing essay – describe the shadowing experience (procedures, patients, communication, infection control, personal protective equipment, etc.)
3. Personal essay – one page essay outlining "Why do you want to be a dental hygienist?"
4. Submission of all current transcript(s)

The most qualified applicants will be invited to interview with the Dental Hygiene Admissions Committee. This personal interview will be conducted in a question/answer format. After the interview, if for any reason the Committee does not feel that the applicant is an acceptable candidate for the Program, they will not be offered admission to the Program. This also applies to those applicants that have been offered provisional admission through the direct admit process. Prior to the interview, applicants must confirm via email (lgroover@hsc.wvu.edu), receipt of the email message from the Department of Dental Hygiene that they will be attending the scheduled interview session. Failure to respond within 10 working days from the aforementioned email will forfeit further review of your application.

Following the interview with the Dental Hygiene Admissions Committee, successful applicants will be offered conditional acceptance and will receive an email via their MIX account from the Dental Hygiene Admissions Committee outlining the New Student Requirements (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/students/bachelor-of-science/new-student-requirements/>). Final acceptance to the Department of Dental Hygiene at West Virginia University is contingent on successful completion of new student requirements and of the following:

1. Successful completion and submission of all courses currently enrolled and submit all final transcripts.
2. Complete the Criminal Background document. Scan and email this document to Dental Hygiene Administrative Assistant (lgroover@hsc.wvu.edu) as soon as possible to reserve the offered position in the Program.
3. Complete required health evaluation forms by August 1st prior to the first semester of the program or an alternative date provided by the Program.
4. Attend WVU New Student Orientation on one of the dates provided by the Dental Hygiene program.
5. Attend the Dental Hygiene Welcome Back/Academic Session event.

If you are not offered a position in the Dental Hygiene Program, you may still be accepted into WVU.

DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

Registered dental hygienists may be admitted to the Department of Dental Hygiene as a full-time student. Interested dental hygienists **must contact the Department** directly to request consideration and be granted approval to apply for the degree completion program. **Admission is limited by class size** and successful completion of a certificate or associate degree from an accredited dental hygiene program in the United States or Canada does not guarantee entrance into the Program. Lower-level credits may be transferred (see "Suggested Dental Hygiene Curriculum") based on their equivalency to current WVU coursework. Applicants are required to submit official transcripts, a copy of their dental hygiene license and/or proof of successful completion of both national and clinical board exams, minimum of 3.0 overall and science grade point averages, and a personal essay on why you want to complete your baccalaureate degree in Dental Hygiene. Additionally, please submit the previous/current program of study with catalog descriptions of the courses completed. Applicants are responsible for the submission of a complete record package. Applications can be obtained after August 1st of the year preceding application to the program. Please contact the Dental Hygiene office (lgroover@hsc.wvu.edu) for more information about this program.

Accreditation

The Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene program within the School of Dentistry has specialized accreditation through the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association. Since the beginning of the program, it has held full accreditation status.

Click here to view the Suggested Plan of Study (p. 6)

Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. (<http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/>)

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6

ENGL 101 & ENGL 102 or ENGL 103	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
University Requirements		13
Dental Hygiene Major Requirements		120
Total Hours		133

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations (GEF) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (31-37 Credits)		
Outstanding GEF 1, 6, and 7		12
DTHY 191	First-Year Seminar	1
Total Hours		13

Dental Hygiene Major Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum grade of C- is required in BIOL, CHEM, HN&F, MICB, PALM, PCOL, and DTHY courses.		
BIOL 102	General Biology 2	3
BIOL 102L	General Biology 2 Laboratory	1
CHEM 111 & 111L	Survey of General, Organic, and Biological Chemistry 1 and Survey of Chemistry 1 Laboratory (GEF 2B)	4
CHEM 112 & 112L	Survey of General Organic Biological Chemistry 2 and Survey of Chemistry 2 Laboratory	4
COMM 104	Fundamentals of Public Communication (GEF 5)	3
HN&F 171	Introduction to Human Nutrition (GEF 8)	3
MATH 124	Algebra with Applications (GEF 3)	3
MICB 200	Medical Microbiology	3
PALM 107	Introduction to Human Anatomy and Physiology	4
PALM 207	Human Anatomy and Physiology 2	4
PALM 309	Oral Histology	2
PALM 300	Introduction to Pathology	3
PALM 302	Oral Pathology	3
PCOL 260	Pharmacology	3
PSYC 101	Introduction to Psychology (GEF 4)	3
PSYC 241	Introduction to Human Development (GEF 8)	3
SOC 101	Introduction to Sociology (GEF 8)	3
DTHY 101	Introduction to Dental Hygiene	2
DTHY 185	Oral Anatomy	2

DTHY 186	Dental Anatomy	2
DTHY 205	Theory and Practice of Prevention	2
DTHY 210	Dental Radiology	2
DTHY 211	Dental Radiology	1
DTHY 220	Dental Nursing Techniques	2
DTHY 225	Dental Hygiene Techniques	4
DTHY 226	Clinical Dental Hygiene	1
DTHY 300	Anesthesia for Dental Hygiene	1
DTHY 350	Public Health	2
DTHY 351	Dental Health Education (Fulfills Writing and Communication Skills Requirement)	3
DTHY 360	Dental Materials	3
DTHY 361	Expanded Functions	2
DTHY 363	Periodontics 1	1
DTHY 364	Periodontics 2	2
DTHY 366	Technical Expression and Dental Literature	1
DTHY 370	Dental Hygiene Clinical Methods	2
DTHY 372	Clinical Dental Hygiene 1	2
DTHY 374	Clinical Dental Hygiene 2	3
DTHY 378	Dental Hygiene Teaching Methods	2
DTHY 402	Dental Hygiene Ethics and Practice	1
DTHY 405	Advanced Clinical Dental Hygiene 1	4
DTHY 406	Advanced Clinical Dental Hygiene 2	3
DTHY 407	Advanced Dental Hygiene Methods 2	2
DTHY 440	Senior Integration Seminar	1
DTHY 445	Applied Pharmacology	1
DTHY 450	Dental Health Education 2	2
DTHY 451	Dental Health Education 3	2
DTHY 478	Clinical Evaluation	1
DTHY 490	Teaching Practicum	2
DTHY 491	Professional Field Experience	4
DTHY 492	Directed Study	1
DTHY 495	Independent Study	1
DTHY 497	Research	1
Community Service Requirement (Please see advisor)		
Total Hours		120

Suggested Plan of Study

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	
CHEM 111 & 111L (GEF 2B)		4 BIOL 102		3
COMM 104 (GEF 5)		3 BIOL 102L		1
DTHY 191		1 CHEM 112 & 112L		4
HN&F 171 (GEF 8)		3 DTHY 101		2
MATH 124 (GEF 3)		3 ENGL 101 (GEF 1)		3
PSYC 101 (GEF 4)		3 PALM 107		4
		17		17

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
DTHY 185		2 DTHY 186		2 DTHY 226	1
DTHY 205		2 DTHY 211		1 PCOL 260 (Web)	3

DTHY 210		2 DTHY 220		2	
PALM 207		4 DTHY 225		4	
MICB 200		3 ENGL 102 (GEF 1)		3	
PSYC 241 (GEF 8)		3 SOC 101 (GEF 8)		3	
		PALM 309		2	
		16			17
4					
Third Year					
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
DTHY 350		2 DTHY 300		1 DTHY 491	
DTHY 360		3 DTHY 351		3	
DTHY 363		1 DTHY 361		2	
DTHY 366		1 DTHY 364		2	
DTHY 370		2 DTHY 374		3	
DTHY 372		2 DTHY 378		2	
PALM 300		3 DTHY 492		1	
GEF		3 PALM 302		3	
		17			17
4					
Fourth Year					
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours		
DTHY 402		1 DTHY 406		3	
DTHY 405		4 DTHY 407		2	
DTHY 440		1 DTHY 451		2	
DTHY 445		1 DTHY 490		2	
DTHY 450		2 or Advisor Approved Elective			
DTHY 478		1 GEF		3	
DTHY 495		1			
DTHY 497		1			
		12			12

Total credit hours: 133

Major Learning Outcomes

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN DENTAL HYGIENE (BSDH)

Program Goals:

Goal 1 Provide a high-quality program that prepares dental hygienists to:

- Model professional, ethical, and inclusive behavior in all aspects of patient care, community engagement, and personal conduct.
- Foster a humanistic culture, open communication, and respect for diversity for all students, faculty, staff, and students.
- Apply critical thinking to integrate current scientific principles and technology with the provision of evidence-based, comprehensive oral health care.
- Perform to the level of clinical competency those legally approved oral health care services as defined by the West Virginia State Board of Dental Examiners and laboratory competency for oral health care services legally permitted in other states.
- Coordinate and administer oral health services for all patients including disabled, medically compromised, marginalized population groups, etc. in a variety of practice settings.
- Engage in intra- and interprofessional collaboration with community leaders and health care professionals to promote oral health awareness and manage the oral health needs of West Virginia and beyond through participation in professional organizations and service activities.
- Provide didactic and clinical instruction in allied dental education programs.
- Pursue professional development through self-study, continuing education, research, additional health care programs/degrees, and/or advanced/graduate education at the masters or doctoral levels.

Goal 2 Recruit, admit, and retain highly qualified students with diverse experiences and perspectives.

Goal 3 Create an environment conducive to faculty promotion, retention, and personal and professional growth.

Program Competencies:

Professional, Respectful Conduct for a Diverse and Ethical Practice

1. PRDE1 Demonstrate the concepts of professionalism, ethics, law, and practice regulations to the provision of oral health care services and personal conduct.
2. PRDE2 Utilize mindfulness to explore inequities surrounding social justice, diversity, and inclusion to embrace respectful behavior in interpersonal communications, conduct, and patient care.
3. PRDE3 Integrate awareness of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health pertaining to self and others' overall well-being.
4. PRDE4 Investigate career path opportunities within the scope of the dental hygiene profession.
5. PRDE5 Appreciate lifelong learning and personal growth within career development.

Interprofessional Educational Opportunities

6. IPEO1 Engage in intra- and interprofessional educational opportunities that foster a collaborative learning environment to appropriately address patient/client's health care needs.

Dental Hygiene Patient Care

7. DHPC1 Integrate general education, biomedical, dental hygiene, and dental sciences concepts to the provision of oral health care services.
8. DHPC2 Employ the dental hygiene process of care which includes assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation components that are both evidence-based and patient/client-centered.
9. DHPC3 Utilize critical thinking skills to personalize dental hygiene care with appropriate modification of delivery services to children, adolescents, adults, geriatrics, and patients/clients with special needs.
10. DHPC4 Accurately identify, develop, and implement individualized dental hygiene treatment plans based on clients' periodontal classification which may include moderate to severe periodontal disease.
11. DHPC5 Perform evidence-based and patient/client-centered dental hygiene supportive treatment and expanded function procedures as permissible in West Virginia and other states' dental hygiene scope of practice.
12. DHPC6 Recognize medical and dental emergencies that may be encountered in dental hygiene practice and provide appropriate interventions, including basic life support.
13. DHPC7 Enhance social awareness, knowledge, and skills through enriching clinical experiences involving dental specialties, hospital dentistry, underserved populations, innovation center for education and technology, and other learning opportunities.

Tobacco Treatment Specialist Certification

14. TOBC1 Obtain tobacco treatment specialist certification utilizing curricular content and the 5 A's (Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, & Arrange) to execute evidence-based tobacco/vaping cessation strategies for all tobacco users.

Community Dental Health Coordinator Certification

15. CDHC1 Obtain Community Dental Health Coordinator certification utilizing curricular content, interprofessional communication, and participation/organization of community health service projects.

Community Health Promotion

16. CMHP1 Assess, plan, implement, and evaluate community-based oral health programs to promote health and prevent disease among diverse population groups.
17. CMHP2 Encourage a culture of action through outreach, community service, and experiential learning experiences.

Critical Thinking and Research

18. CTRS1 Utilize critical thinking skills to evaluate scientific literature and new innovations for implementation into dental hygiene profession.
19. CTRS2 Design, execute, analyze, and present a research project utilizing the scientific method.

Dental Hygiene Educational Methods

20. DHED1 Develop didactic, clinical, and laboratory course materials through integration of educational methodologies for application within allied dental education programs.