



DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

I. Introductory Information

A. A registered dental hygienist is a preventive oral health professional licensed in dental hygiene who provides preventive, educational, and therapeutic services supporting total health through the promotion of optimal oral health.

B. Once accepted into the program, the Dental Hygiene Program is a two-year program which includes summer sessions (June, July). Upon completion of the program, graduating students will receive a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene Degree and will qualify to take the National Dental Hygiene Board Examination and a Regional Clinical Dental Hygiene Examination (see below).

In Jan 2024, the passage of legislative bill AB 1257 made the Regional Clinical Dental Hygiene Examination an optional examination. If a graduate elects not to take the Regional Clinical Examination, they will only be able to practice dental hygiene in California. Successful passage of the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination qualifies the graduate to take the California Law and Ethics exam and apply for licensure to practice in the state of California.

For additional information regarding the current Regional Clinical Dental Hygiene Examinations, and what states accept the exams, please visit the following websites:

- Central Regional Dental Testing Service (CRDTS) <https://www.crdts.org/>
- Commission on Dental Competency Assessments (CDCA)/Western Regional Examination Board (WREB)/Council of Interstate Testing Agencies (CITA) <https://adextesting.org/>

C. A career in Dental Hygiene offers multiple opportunities in a variety of settings. A registered dental hygienist may work in such practice settings as: private dental offices and dental clinics; federal, state and local health departments or associated institutions; hospitals and nursing homes; school districts or departments of education; educational programs for dental, dental hygiene and dental assisting students; private business/industry; correctional facilities; private and public centers for pediatric, geriatric and other individuals/groups with special needs; or health maintenance organizations.

D. During the training program, all clinical courses are held at outside facilities. These facilities can range from 10 to 25 miles, one way, from Cerritos College. The students must provide their own transportation. Carpooling is encouraged whenever possible.

E. The Dental Hygiene Program begins in the fall semester (August) of each year. Most courses will be scheduled during the day; however, some of the required courses may extend into the evening hours. All Dental Hygiene courses must be taken in sequence. If a student fails any class, they may not be able to continue in the program.

F. See Cerritos College catalog for current tuition and enrollment fees. In addition, the student may expect to spend approximately \$15,000 for books, instruments, equipment, uniforms and miscellaneous fees and immunizations. Students are required to join the Student American Dental Hygienists' Association (SADHA) (\$85 annually) and the student membership of The California Dental Hygiene Association (\$50.00 for two years). Fees are subject to change. Consult [Admissions and Records](#) regarding changes in tuition, enrollment and lab fees. See the [College Financial Aid office](#) and the [College Foundation](#) for information regarding the many student scholarships/loans available. Once in the dental hygiene program, opportunities for additional student funds may be available from various scholarships. See the "Program Cost" sheet located on our menu for a detailed cost list.

G. The application packet for the Dental Hygiene Program can be obtained online at <https://www.cerritos.edu/dental-hygiene/application-information.htm>

H. To be considered for admission to the Dental Hygiene Program in August, the application with all the supplementary documentation (DH application, unofficial transcripts, verification of related work or volunteer experience, General Education Form, Pre-requisite form, signed form stating review of the DH Abilities or Skills and Technical Standards, copy of RDA or RDAEF license (if applicable), and ALL college transcripts are to be submitted electronically no later than April 1 (of the year of application). Questions regarding coursework equivalency should be directed to the [Counseling Department](#).

All-other questions should be directed to the Dental Hygiene Department. All applications are electronically submitted. Faxed, providing a link to documents or mailed in application material will not be accepted.

I. Physical examinations, immunizations, TB testing and background checks are required. Health and immunization forms will be issued to those applicants who are accepted into the program. The dental health professional may be exposed to contagious diseases, therefore strict compliance with CDC and OSHA standards is maintained. [Policies on bloodborne and infectious diseases](#) can be found on the Dental Hygiene website.

J. Dental hygienists are required to have good vision and the ability to communicate verbally. In addition, dental hygienists must have the capacity to comprehend, analyze, evaluate and document correctly and in a timely manner in patients' charts and have the dexterity to use small dental instruments to provide dental hygiene care. Please refer to [Technical Standards/Essential Functions](#) found on the dental hygiene website.

II. Requirements to be considered as a qualified applicant for the Dental Hygiene Program:

REQUIRED LOWER DIVISION COURSEWORK

1. The bachelor's degree requires completion of one of the following general education patterns prior to applying for the program. If an insufficient number of qualified applicants have completed one of the specified patterns, other qualified applicants may be considered.

- Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)
- CSU General Education Breadth Requirement
- CalGETC- California General Education Transfer Curriculum
- CGEC- Cerritos General Education Curriculum

Prerequisite courses must be completed with a minimum grade of "C" or better in each course. All prerequisite science courses with applicable wet labs (CHEM 100 or Chem 110, Biochemistry or Organic Chemistry with Biochemistry, A&P 200/150, A&P 201/151, MICRO 200, and HO 152) must be completed BEFORE THE APRIL 1 APPLICATION DEADLINE.

Lower Division Required Courses (45 units)	UNITS
CHEM 100 Introductory Chemistry w/wet Lab or CHEM 110 Elementary Chemistry w/wet lab	4 <u>4</u>
Biochemistry or Organic Chemistry with Biochemistry w/Wet Lab • <u>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.</u>	<u>4-5 units</u>
ENGL C1000 Academic Reading and Writing	4
ENGL C1000E Academic Reading and Writing	4.5
STAT C1000 Introduction to Statistics	4
STAT C1000E Introduction to Statistics	4.5
OR PSYC 210 Elementary Statistics	4
OR ECON 210 Applied Introductory Statistics for Economics	4
A&P 200 Human Anatomy w/wet lab	5
OR A&P 150 Introduction to Human Anatomy w/wet lab	5

Lower Division Required Courses (45 units)	UNITS
READ 103 Critical Thinking and Academic Literacy	3
OR ENGL C1001 Critical Thinking and Writing	4
OR ENGL C1003 Critical Thinking and Writing Through Literature	4
OR COMM 103 Argumentation, Persuasion, and Critical Thinking	4
OR PHIL 103 Philosophical Reasoning: Critical Thinking in Philosophy	3
OR PSYC 103 Critical Thinking in Psychology	3
COMM 100 Introduction to Communication Studies	3
OR COMM C1004 Interpersonal Communication	3
OR COMM C1000 Introduction to Public Speaking	3
OR COMM 132 Small Group Communication	3
A&P 201 Human Physiology w/wet lab	5
OR A&P 151 Introduction to Human Physiology w/wet lab	4
PSYC C1000 Introduction to Psychology	3
SOCI C1000 Introduction to Sociology	3
MICR 200 Principles and Applications of Microbiology w/wet lab	5
HO 152 Normal and Therapeutic Nutrition	3
American History <i>or</i> American Government (only if using CSU GE Breadth Plan)	3
Ethic Studies	3
Arts and Humanities	9
Total Units for LOWER Division	54-57

2. Completion of the following science prerequisite courses with a 5-year recency and an overall GPA of 3.0. Applicants must have a minimal overall GPA of 2.5.

Note: 5-year recency is an academic year. Example: if you took Anatomy in Fall 2025 it is accepted until Fall 2030. Pass/No Pass or Credit classes are not considered.

- Human Anatomy - A&P 200 w/ wet lab 5 units
OR A&P 150 Introduction to Human Anatomy w/wet lab 4 units
- Human Physiology - A&P 201 w/wet lab 5 units
OR A&P 151 Introduction to Human Physiology w/wet lab 4 units
- Inorganic Chemistry- CHEM 100 Introductory Chemistry w/wet lab 4 units or
CHEM 110 Elementary Chemistry w/wet lab 4 units
- Biochemistry or Organic Chemistry with Biochemistry w/ wet lab 4-5 units
- Nutrition - HO 152 Normal and Therapeutic Nutrition 3 units
- Microbiology - MICR 200 w/wet lab 5 units

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. Five years is the maximum elapsed time for the required science courses.

It is the student's responsibility to verify equivalent prerequisites, and other courses required in the program. If not presently enrolled in courses at Cerritos College, individuals may apply for admission to the college at the Admissions and Records Office in the Administration building or online at www.cerritos.edu. Applicants will be assigned a student number which will be needed to make an appointment with a counselor, attend a "Drop In" session with a counselor or make an appointment with a Health Sciences & Wellness Learning & Career Pathway (LCP) counselor.

3. Applicability of transfer equivalent course work must be verified by Cerritos College. The transfer applicant should contact a Cerritos College Counselor or a Health Sciences & Wellness Counselor prior to taking prerequisite courses to ensure that appropriate equivalent courses are selected.

4. Factors such as elapsed time since a course was completed and grades will be used in determining whether previously completed science course(s) can be accepted towards fulfillment of a prerequisite. Five years is the recency time for the science pre-requisites.

5. Graduates of foreign dental and dental hygiene programs will not be given priority. All criteria listed above still applies.

6. To increase eligibility by repeating a prerequisite course to obtain a higher grade, the Dental Hygiene department will allow all prerequisite courses to be repeated a maximum of ONE time and will accept the higher of the two grades earned.

7. A Medical Terminology and a Spanish for Health/Medical (Cerritos College course SPAN 223) course is strongly suggested, and one point will be given for completion of each course

III. Admission Procedure and Requirements

A. Cerritos College Admissions: If not presently enrolled in courses at Cerritos College, apply for admission to the college at the Admissions and Records Office in the Administration Building, or online at www.cerritos.edu, you will be assigned a student number. Questions regarding coursework equivalency should be directed to the [Counseling Department](#). All-other questions should be directed to the Dental Hygiene Department.

B. Transcript Evaluation: To apply to the dental hygiene program, the applicant **MUST** view the application video located on the dental hygiene website. The video reviews the application process. After watching the video if there are further questions you can attend a “Drop-In session” with the counseling department. The sessions are on a first come first serve basis. Check the dental hygiene website for the drop-in session dates or you can contact the counseling department for dates.

C. If you are admitted into the Dental Hygiene program, you must submit official transcripts to Admissions and Records and the Dental Hygiene Program.

D. Work Experience: For every related work experience or volunteer experience listed on the application, a Verification of Dental Employment form must be included in the application materials. Letters of recommendation are not considered. ([link to work verification](#))

E. Dental Hygiene Application and Supporting Documentation:

The applicant is responsible for making sure the Dental Hygiene Application, Unofficial Transcripts, Verification of Related Work Experience, General Education Form, Pre-requisite Evaluation Form, signed form stating review of the DH Abilities or Skills and Technical Standards, copy of RDA or RDAEF license (if applicable), ALL unofficial college transcripts and verification of work-in-progress have been electronically submitted by **March 1** (of the application year).

IV. Selection Procedures

A. **No application** will be considered after the specified deadline date of March 1 (of the application year). It is the **candidate's responsibility** to make sure all required information is electronically submitted **no later than** March 1 (of the application year) **before 11:59 PM**.

B. Points will be given for the following criteria:

1. Grade Point Average in prerequisite courses
2. Number of units completed up to 60 semester units
3. Overall Grade Point Average for all college courses
4. Additional science courses with a grade of "B" or above
5. Medical Terminology and/or Spanish for Health/Medical (Cerritos College course SPAN 223)
6. Related dental work experience
7. Additional consideration will be given to Veterans and Cerritos College Dental Assisting graduates, given the application scores are competitive and qualify.
8. The top 12 scores will receive offers of acceptance, while the remaining applicants with a minimum score of 25 points will be entered into a lottery for random selection.
9. 24 applicants and 15 alternates will be selected.

- C. Candidates will be notified of their application status at the end of May.
- D. There is no yearly waiting list. Candidates not selected must reapply each year and resubmit all application materials.
- E. Please ensure your transcripts clearly display all courses, points, units, and grades. Missing or unreadable information will affect your application score.

The information below is for those students who are selected for the program.

V. Scholarship, Attendance, Promotion, Graduation.

- A. Attendance: All students must observe the college's attendance requirements. Due to the nature of the Dental Hygiene program, it is expected that students will attend all classes.
- B. Scholarship and Promotion: Students must maintain a "C" or better in each dental hygiene course to progress in the program. (Courses are designed to prepare the student to successfully complete program competencies) ([link to competencies VII](#))
Grade requirements of the college are to be met for all other courses.
- C. Graduation: Petition for graduation will be permitted if the student meets the College and Dental Hygiene Program requirements. Upon program completion, the graduate will be qualified to take the Dental Hygiene National Board Examination and Regional Clinical Examinations.

III. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS/AGENCY BADGING REQUIREMENTS

- A. Clinical placements are a mandatory component of the curriculum and will require clearance of a criminal background check and the following clinical agency requirements:
 - 1. Student is a legal resident of the United States. Although citizenship is not a requirement for Cerritos College, it is a requirement for our outside clinical facilities and badging privileges may be denied without US citizenship and/or a social security number. In this case the student will not be able to complete their clinical experiences and will need to discontinue the program.
 - 2. Student must compete the following:
 - a. Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) booster
 - b. Covid 19 complete vaccine regime (declination available)
 - c. Proof of Immunity via titer for:
 - 1. Hepatitis B
 - 2. Rubeola
 - 3. Mumps
 - 4. Rubella
 - 5. Varicella
 - d. Yearly flu immunization is recommended but not mandatory.These required vaccinations may not be all inclusive. (The mandated vaccinations may change with CDC recommendations)

Students who do not clear agency requirements and criminal background checks are not eligible for clinical placement and will, consequently, be ineligible to continue in the program.

- B. Applicants for examination of licensure in the state of California must be fingerprinted and

report information related to illegal use of controlled substances, and any convictions or pleas of nolo contendere even if charges are dismissed. In addition, the application requires specific information related to convictions, misdemeanor or felony, associated with state or federal action. If there is any concern that may prevent licensure after graduation, direct inquiries to the Dental Hygiene Board of California, 2005 Evergreen Street, Suite 1350, Sacramento, CA 95815, prior to applying to the program. (dhbcinfo@dca.ca.gov or 916-263-1978).

** The Program has made every reasonable effort to determine that everything stated in the information sheet is accurate. Matters contained herein, are subject to change without notice by the administration of the department for reasons related to student enrollment, level of financial support or for any reason, at the discretion of the program. The program further reserves the right to add, amend, or repeal any of the rules, regulations, policies and procedures consistent with applicable laws.

All career technical education (CTE) opportunities will be offered regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. Compliance with related laws, including Section 504/Title II, are the responsibility of Cerritos College's Director, Diversity, Compliance, & Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Human Resources | (562) 860-2451, ext. 2284 | Email: dtix@cerritos.edu