

Dental Assistant

Associate in Applied Science in Allied Health & Life Science

Program Description:

The Dental Assistant Program is a cooperative effort between Mountwest Community & Technical College and Putnam Career & Technical Center. Dental assistants perform a range of patient care, office and laboratory duties. They are an integral part of the dental office, acting as a second pair of hands for a dentist. Ultimately, their role is to make certain that the examination of a patient is performed efficiently. Almost all jobs for dental assistants are in dental offices.

Career Description:

Dental Assistants have many important duties in the dental office. They prepare the patient for treatment and obtain their dental records. During the examination of the patient, dental assistants hand instruments and materials to the dentist and keep the patient's mouth dry by using suction of other equipment. Other duties in the office include sterilizing and disinfecting instruments, preparing the instrument trays for dental procedures, and educating patients on oral health care.

Some dental assistants take x-ray film, and prepare materials for impressions and restorations. They also may remove sutures and apply topical anesthetics to the gums. Those with laboratory duties make casts of teeth for impressions and make temporary crowns. Dental assistants with office duties schedule and confirm appointments, keep patient records, send bills, receive payments, and order supplies and materials.

Career Outlook:

Job prospects should be excellent. Employment of dental assistants is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through 2016, due to population growth and greater retention of natural teeth by middle aged people and senior citizens. Additionally, numerous job openings will arise as recent dental school graduates replace the older dentist that were less likely to hire dental assistants.

You may also contact the American Dental Assistants Association at www.dentalassistant.org

Salary Forecast:

Median hourly earnings of dental assistants were \$15.57 in May 2008. The middle 50 percent earned between \$12.97 and \$18.73. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$10.71, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$22.19.

(Information obtained from the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-2009)

Admission Requirements:

1. Students seeking admission into the Dental Assistant program must arrange an appointment with the program faculty prior to submitting the application packet. This is to ensure that students receive current information regarding the program admission requirements and the criteria for selection. Application packets are available at the Allied Health and Life Sciences Division, Cabell Hall Room 304 or call (304) 696-6270 for more information.
2. Prior to admission to the Dental Assistant program and/or clinical internships, students may be required to document that they have successfully passed a criminal background check and drug screen, or more information concerning the Allied Health criminal background check and drug screen procedure, please contact the Dean of Allied Health and Life Sciences at (304)696-6270.

Major Code – CTA2

| FIRST YEAR¹ | |
|---|---|
| First Semester ENL 111 Written Communication3 AH 151 Medical Terminology (EDGE)3 MAT 145 Applications in Algebra3 BIOL 257 Intro. To Anatomy & Physiology (EDGE).....3 IT 101 Fundamentals of Computers (EDGE)3 TOTAL CREDITS15 | Second Semester AH 220 Nutrition3 COM 112 Oral Communication3 AH 216 Pharmacology ²3 SS 201 Human Relations3 BIOL 210 Microbiology ³3 TOTAL CREDITS15 TOTAL MCTC CREDITS.....30 |
| SECOND YEAR³ | |
| Third Semester⁴ DA 241 Biomedical Science4 DA 246 Dental Science.....4 DA 248 Dental Terminology I2 DA 247 Dental Specialties I2 DA 244 Dental Assisting General Studies3 DA 243 Clinical Science.....4 TOTAL CREDITS19 | Fourth Semester DA 242 Dental Assisting Clinical Practice.....4 DA 250 Dental Specialties II2 DA 245 Dental Assisting Clinical Mentoring (internship) ...6 DA 251 Dental Terminology II2 DA 249 Supervised Dental Assisting Experience3 TOTAL CREDITS17 TOTAL PCTC CREDITS.....36 |
| HOURS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION: 66 | |

Employment Opportunities:

- Dental offices
- Dental clinics
- Dental laboratories
- Government offices
- Physicians' offices

Earn A Degree Graduate Early (EDGE):

This program provides students the opportunity to receive credit for their high school EDGE courses.

Contact Information:

Adam Swolsky • Cabell Hall, Room 303

Phone: 304-696-3750 or 1-866-N-ROLLED (1-866-676-5533) •

E-mail: swolsky@mctc.edu

1. All first year courses are offered at Mountwest.

2. AH 216 has a prerequisite of AH 151.

3. BIOL 210 has a prerequisite of MAT 145 or MAT 150

4. Dental Assistant (DA) courses are delivered at Putnam Career and Technical Center in Eleanor, W.V.

5. All third semester Dental Assistant (DA) courses must be completed with a "C" or better before student can register for fourth semester coursework.