

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM Program Overview

Congratulations on your decision to seek a degree as a dental hygienist! It is an excellent profession to pursue...one worth the hard work that the educational process requires. By completing this program overview, you are one step closer to reaching your career goal.

This program overview is to help you! Our goal is to:

- Provide specific program information
- Help to confirm your decision to enter the program
- Explain admission process for the program, and
- Provide you with forms necessary for completing the admission process

As part of the admission process for the program, you are required to read through the material presented in this program overview. Please be aware that you must read ALL of the material, complete the Intent to Enroll form and return it to Western in order to fulfill the requirements for admission to the program.

Let's Get Started

The dental hygienist is a member of the dental team and helps individuals maintain oral health and prevent oral diseases. Under the supervision of a dentist, the hygienist inspects the mouth, removes stains and deposits from teeth, applies preventative agents, prepares clinical and diagnostic tests, completes dental x-rays, and performs many other services related to oral care. Dental Hygienists counsel patients about preventive measures such as nutrition, oral hygiene and dental care. They administer local anesthesia and provide comprehensive non-surgical periodontal treatment.

Job Outlook



According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, “employment of dental hygienists is expected to grow faster than average for all occupations through 2014, ranking dental hygiene among the fastest growing occupations.”

As stated on the American Dental Hygienists’ Association web site “Dental hygienists can apply their professional knowledge and skills in a variety of public and private work settings as clinicians, educators, researchers, administrators, managers, health advocates, and consultants. Clinical dental hygienists may be employed in a variety of healthcare settings including private dental offices, schools, public health clinics, hospitals, managed care organizations, correctional institutions, or nursing homes.” (<http://www.adha.org>)

Dental Hygiene salaries vary by geographical location, employment setting, and based on years of experience. Wages may be paid on an hourly, daily, salary, or commission basis. Nationally median hourly earnings for Dental Hygienists were \$32.00. Locally salaries range from \$23.00 - \$30.00.

The Admission Process

Review the **Intent to Enroll** form to identify and complete the admission requirements for your program:
[Intent to Enroll Form](#)

Step I

1. **Application to the college:** Complete and submit the Wisconsin Technical College System application. If you are interested in more than one program, you must complete an application for each program. A onetime \$30.00 application fee (made payable to Western) must be submitted with the application. Applications are available at Western in Room 160 of the Welcome Center (La Crosse campus) or any Regional learning location. Applications are also available online at <http://www.westerntc.edu/admissions>.
2. Submit **official transcripts** from high school and, if applicable, college. If submitting college transcripts, it is possible that you may have taken courses that can be applied towards your chosen program. To have your transcript evaluated for transfer of credit, complete the form found at <http://www.westerntc.edu/transfer>
3. **Placement tests** (COMPASS, ASSET, ACT) You are required to take a placement test and meet the minimum scores unless the following applies:
 - If you have a bachelors or masters degree, you are not required to take placement tests.
 - If you have successfully completed (C grade or better) college level Written Communication or Beginning Composition, you are not required to take the Writing placement test.
 - If you have successfully completed (C grade or better) college level College Mathematics, you are not required to take the Math placement test.

Testing is available in La Crosse at the Western Technical College Campus Assessment Center or at the Regional Learning Centers in Independence, Black River Falls, Tomah, Mauston, or Viroqua. For more information on placement tests, visit the assessment website at <http://www.westerntc.edu/admissions/assessment.asp>. If you take a placement test at another location, you must request that your scores be sent to Western.

Program Requirement for Placement Testing

	<u>COMPASS</u>	<u>ACT</u>	<u>ASSET</u>
Writing	75+	19+	45+
Reading	84+	20+	44+
Math	58+ (pre-alg)	19+	44+ (Numeric)

Remediation courses are available if you do not meet the placement scores for the program. All remediation coursework must be completed prior to being accepted to the program. Students must test after remediation.

Step II

1. **Complete this Online Overview:** You are doing this right now and are almost done. You must complete the **Intent to Enroll** ([Intent to Enroll Form](#)) form when you are prepared to begin your program of choice. Review the form to identify and complete the admission requirements specific to your program.

Please assure that all items have been completed, attached, and/or turned in to: Enrollment Services located in the Welcome Center. **You are only allowed to submit the Intent to Enroll form at your mandatory Enrollment Services Advisor meeting.** Bring the Intent to Enroll form to your appointment

with any un-submitted documentation. At this appointment, the enrollment services advisor will finalize the admission process and provide you with an estimated start date. At this time you will sign the second page of the Intent to Enroll verifying that you have completed the requirements to enter the program and have been assigned an estimated start date.

If you are unable to begin the program on the assigned start date, you will need to re-submit the Intent to Enroll form and schedule another appointment. Students are unable to request a pass on their assigned date. They will be assigned a later start date upon resubmission of the Intent to Enroll form.

2. Meet **reading, math and writing requirement** as noted in Step I item 3.
3. Read **Essential Functions** for your program. Essential Functions are a listing of the physical, cognitive, and mental abilities that you will need in order to complete the program. You must read the Essential Functions and complete the appropriate section on page two of the Intent to Enroll form. If you have a documented disability, there may be accommodations that can be made to assist in your successful completion of the program. Please contact Disability Services at Western (608-785-9875) if you are in need of more information. The Essential Functions and is available at [Essential Function Form](#)
4. Complete **Immunization Form**: The immunization information can usually be obtained from your personal physician. The immunization form is available at [Immunization Form](#). IMPORTANT: The immunization form MUST be signed by a physician, physician assistant, nurse, or nurse practitioner.

You must have documentation of a negative TB test for the past two years. If you do not have two consecutive years of TB testing, you must have a “two-step” TB test done. TB tests are done at your local physician’s office, county health departments or (for current Western students) at the UW-L Student Health Center located at the Health Science Center in La Crosse. You are required to maintain current TB tests until you graduate from the program. (i.e., renewed annually)

It is your responsibility to submit immunization records including TB tests prior to or with the Intent to Enroll form to Enrollment Services located in the Welcome Center so the documentation can be entered into your official student health record here at Western.

Hepatitis B series: It is your choice whether or not to have the series. If you elect to do the Hepatitis B series, you need to *start* the series, but do not have to *complete* the series in order to submit the immunization form. You must submit the remaining dates when the series is complete.

It is strongly recommended that you **maintain a copy** of all forms/verifications for your own personal record.

5. Complete the **Background Information Disclosure** form. Individuals who will be working with vulnerable adults and/or children undergo a criminal background check. You must complete the form and submit the \$20 fee (made payable to Western Technical College) in order to meet this admission requirement. **Western does not accept background checks conducted by third parties (i.e. your employer).** You are required to disclose *all* past experiences with the law. Any arrests or new charges must be reported to Doreen Olson (608 -789-4757), Associate Dean of Health and Public Safety within five (5) working days. Failure to do so may result in program dismissal. In addition, if you have resided outside of Wisconsin in the past three years, you will be informed of how to obtain an out of state background check at your own expense.

Although the form itself refers to crimes, criminal convictions, and pending criminal charges, the information that comes back from the background check does include all contacts with law enforcement whether or not a criminal conviction occurred. Therefore, include contacts such as non-criminal traffic

matters, arrests, charges for which you were acquitted, and charges that were pled down to an ordinance violation or forfeiture. This form is found [Background Information Form](#). **Please note** that a significant infraction with the law (convictions of crime or pending charges) could result in the state refusing to grant a license to a dental hygiene program graduate.

6. **Attain CPR certification:** You are required to complete the American Heart Association Healthcare Provider certification and provide a copy (front and back) of your card. Note: there are many different levels of CPR; be sure to register for “Healthcare Provider”. You are required to maintain your CPR certification until you graduate. This may mean that you may have to take a renewal class during your time at Western.
7. **Chemistry and Biology:** You must successfully complete (C grade or better) high school or college biology and chemistry. If you have not previously taken biology or chemistry, you can fulfill this requirement by taking the courses at Western. These requirements must be completed prior to taking General Anatomy and Physiology.
8. **General Anatomy & Physiology:** You must successfully complete (C grade or better) college level General Anatomy & Physiology. This can be taken at Western or may be able to transfer in from another college if the course material is same.
9. Complete **Bio-Chemistry or Microbiology** with a C or better. Greater student success in the program has been noted with the completion of both of these courses prior to entry into the program. We highly recommend that you complete both of them prior to taking your program specific courses but only one is required for admission to the program.

Acceptance to a Program



Students will be admitted to this program once the student has completed the Intent to Enroll, met the program requirements and met with an Enrollment Services advisor. Program admission is based upon a first come, first served basis. Once the program is filled, students will be admitted to the next term. If an opening occurs in an earlier term, you may be contacted.

In the event that the program is not full, applications will continue to be accepted until three weeks prior to the start of the program. Applicants who meet all admission requirements will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis until the program is full.

- ❖ It is to your advantage to complete the admission requirements as soon as possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What happens if there is something on my background check?**
Although the dental hygiene program does most of their clinical work at the program’s dental clinic, students do participate in activities that require that Western provide proof of results of dental hygiene student background check. First of all, it is very important that you be honest when completing the background check form. Some facilities may automatically refuse a student who they perceived to have been less than truthful on the form. Please note that a significant infraction with the law (convictions of crime or pending charges) could result in the State refusing to grant a license to a dental hygiene program graduate. Licensure is mandatory to practice dental hygiene. If unsure of the significance of an infraction of the law, contact the State of Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing at (608) 266-2112.

2. **What about Body Art or Piercings?**

In the Health and Public Safety Division, you may display no **Body Art or Piercing** that might be considered offensive. Most employment settings have policies that are generally broad, however they do reserve the right to deny employment and student clinical/practicum/fieldwork placement if body art or piercings are found to be offensive to those in that setting. The wearing and displaying of jewelry in the health care or public safety setting is generally limited to wrist watches and wedding rings or small non-dangling earrings. The purpose of this limitation is related to infection control, safety and public perception of the employees while they are on duty.

3. **Where can I go to get certified in CPR?**

First of all, be very careful that you are signing up for the correct course. You need to complete **American Heart Association Healthcare Provider CPR** (Western catalog number 47-531419). Western offers many sections of American Heart Association Healthcare Provider. You may want to contact local hospitals/clinics for their offerings.

4. **I didn't get in for next fall; do I really have to wait a year to get in?**

Yes and no. If another student would not be able to start at their assigned time, we would contact the next applicant on the list. For this reason, it is VERY important that Western has your most current address and phone number so that we are able to contact you.

If you don't get in to the program, you are strongly encouraged to complete your general studies prior to entering the program.

5. **I didn't get in for next fall, is there anything I have to do in order to keep my application current?**

Yes, students are required to submit updated TB results, maintain CPR certification and repeat the criminal background check if there has been a change.

6. **I've been accepted for fall semester, but for whatever reason, I can't start in the fall.**

If you are unable to begin the program on the assigned start date, you will need to re-submit the Intent to Enroll form and schedule another appointment. You will be assigned a later start date upon resubmission of the Intent to Enroll form.

7. **I've changed my mind about entering the program and want to enter a different Health and Public Safety Division program. What do I do?**

If you change your mind on which program you would like to enter, complete a change of program form (available from Enrollment Services www.westerntc.edu/currentstudents/pdf/ReEntryChangeProgram.pdf). The good news is that if you are interested in another Health and Public Safety Division program many of the admission requirements (e.g. background check, immunization, etc) are applicable for other programs. However, you will be required to complete an online overview session specific for the program as well as the Intent to Enroll form.

8. **I've taken some courses at a different college. Do I have to retake them?**

Most students receive some credit for the courses that they have taken previously. Students who have previous college coursework should complete a transfer of credit form (available at <http://www.westerntc.edu/transfer>). You will be notified if the other college credits will be placed on your Western transcripts.

9. **What if I'm trying to decide between more than one program?**

Counselors and Enrollment Services Advisors at Western are also available to discuss career planning with you.

10. Who do I contact if I have questions?

Questions on your admission status:

Contact an Enrollment Services Advisor through email and include your name, ID # or birth date and your specific question:

Sandy Peterson PetersonS@westerntc.edu

Debbie Kaiser KaiserD@westerntc.edu

Questions specific to the program, Please contact program faculty:

Barb Jerue (608) 785-9843 or jerueb@westerntc.edu

Lisa Lichtie (608) 789-6286 or lichtiel@westerntc.edu

Questions related to career decisions:

Contact a counselor through the Call Center (608) 785-9553.

Last Thoughts

- You are responsible to make sure that you keep your contact information (address and phone number) current. Contact the Enrollment Services department to let the College know of any changes or update online through your MyWestern account.
- Pay close attention to the deadlines for completing admission requirements for the program. The CPR requirement takes the most time to complete (and classes fill quickly!). If you have not completed CPR, then your first order of business should be to find a CPR class and get signed up. The second most time consuming admission requirement is immunizations. Start working on completing the form immediately.
- Students in a health or public safety program are required to have a C grade or better in all General Studies and program courses. Students who have less than a C grade in General Anatomy and Physiology are required to participate in remedial work designed to assist in successful completion when they repeat the course. Please see the student handbook for more information on college and division policies. The Student Handbook is available on the college [website](#).

Best wishes as you continue your journey towards entering a Health and Public safety program at Western Technical College. We look forward to working with you as you pursue a career in Health and Public safety.

The admission requirements are subject to change without notice.

This website will be updated, at minimum on February 15 and October 15 of each year.