



DENTAL ASSISTING | COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CERTIFICATE IN DENTAL ASSISTING

The dental assistant is a significant member of the dental healthcare team. Assistants greatly increase the efficiency of the dentist in the delivery of quality oral healthcare. Dental assistants must possess strong communication skills and enjoy working with their hands.

A career as a dental assistant offers many challenges. In addition to assisting the dentist during a variety of procedures, dental assistants often provide instructions for oral care following treatment; perform office management tasks; expose dental radiographs (x-rays); sterilize instruments and equipment; and take impressions of patients' teeth.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The dental assisting program is a one-year, 37-credit-hour program, commencing in August and completing the following June. All students must earn a grade of C or better in each of the courses to be eligible for graduation.

Candidates for admission to the program must be high school graduates with a 2.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 grading scale) or an HSED (High School Equivalency Diploma). High school courses in biology and chemistry are strongly recommended.

Interested students must **first** apply to IU Northwest before applying to the dental assisting program. Each candidate must submit the required materials to the Dental Education Department prior to July 1 for consideration of entry into the class beginning in the fall semester of that year. Applications submitted beyond the July 1 deadline will be considered depending on class availability.

Students are notified of acceptance in the program by July 15. Accepted students must attend an orientation the week before classes begin. Class size is limited for the dental assisting program.

COURSEWORK

Select dental assisting courses:

- Oral Anatomy
- Dental Therapeutics and Medical Emergencies
- Microbiology and Asepsis Technique
- Clinical Science I & II
- Dental Materials I & II
- Oral Pathology, Physiology & Anatomy I & II
- Preventive Dentistry & Nutrition
- Introduction to Dentistry
- Behavioral Science
- Radiology
- Oral Histology and Embryology
- Written and Oral Communication
- Practice Management, Ethics, and Jurisprudence

ACCREDITATION

The dental assisting program is fully accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (a specialized accreditation body recognized by the Council of Post-Secondary Education and by the U.S. Department of Education).

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A CERTIFICATE IN DENTAL ASSISTING?

A graduate of the program is eligible to take the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) Examination for credentialing. Upon successful completion of the examination, the graduate earns the title of Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) and is eligible for licensure to expose x-rays in the state of Indiana.

Graduates will also be certified to polish teeth and apply topical fluoride treatments.

Employment opportunities are available in private dental offices and clinics; hospitals; local, state, and federal public health facilities; educational institutions; and dental companies.

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

The students are members of the American Dental Assistants Association and are required to attend association meetings.

HANDS-ON LEARNING

The student's education is enhanced by experiences in externship rotations in private dental offices and clinics; local, state and federal public health facilities throughout Northwest Indiana; and also in the IU Northwest on-site Dental Education Clinic. This provides opportunities for our students to gain experience with dental healthcare teams within and outside of the university. The campus offers a fully equipped dental clinic with 16 dental units, six radiology rooms with digital imaging and a spacious dental laboratory.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Graduates of the program will be able to:

- understand the knowledge, skills, and professional behavior necessary to perform as a competent entry-level dental assistant in a variety of settings
- perform clinical skills, diagnostic procedures, and appropriate functions as defined by state regulations
- expose and evaluate diagnostic radiographs
- understand bloodborne pathogens as they relate to infection control and dentistry

RELATED DEGREE OPTIONS

Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene

Bachelor of General Studies

Bachelor of Science in Applied Health Science

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Students should schedule an appointment with an advisor in the Dental Education Department.

Indiana University Northwest
Department of Dental Education
Dunes Medical/Professional Building, Rm. 1180
3400 Broadway
Gary, Indiana 46408
(219) 980-6770

Email: dmarcini@iun.edu

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