

# DENTAL HYGIENIST

Dental hygienists are preventative oral health professionals who provide educational, clinical, research, administrative, and therapeutic services supporting total health through the promotion of optimum oral health. A well-rounded background in the sciences, speech, nutrition and the social and behavioral sciences is recommended.

## CAREER DESCRIPTION\*

- » National average salary: \$77,090
- » National projected career growth: 11%
- » Most work in dentist offices
- » Clean teeth, examine patients for signs of oral diseases
- » Provide basic preventative care

## TYPICAL EDUCATION\*\*

- » Approximate total years of school: 4
  - Associate's Degree/Bachelor's Degree preferred
  - Typically need 3 years to complete program
  - Requires a license
- » Approximate cost: \$28,664
- » Average Admittance GPA: 3.6
- » Average Admittance ACT Score: 24
- » Certification requirements vary by state

## NEARBY SCHOOLS & DEGREE TYPE

- » University of Nebraska Medical Center: BS-DH
- » Central Community College: AAS
- » Des Moines Area Community College: AAS
- » Hawkeye Community College: AAS
- » Iowa Western Community College: AAS

## COMPETITIVE APPLICANTS ALWAYS...

- » Maintain a competitive academic record
- » Shadow professionals in the field
- » Obtain health care experience

»Following the development (or institution) of the ATDH by the ADA in 2021, UNMC will require applicants to submit ATDH scores starting in the 2021 application cycle. Pre-Dental Hygiene students should be cognizant of which programs are requiring this exam during their application cycle.

## WHAT PRACTICING PROFESSIONALS SAY

I wanted a career where I helped people. Dental hygiene allows me to do that many times over. The field of dentistry has changed so much over the past 30 years, and we know so much more than we used to about the mouth/body connection."

-Kim Kiser, RHD

Having been in the dental profession for the last 26 years, I can honestly say that I love my profession. I started my dental career as a dental assistant and decided to become a dental hygienist to expand my skills and knowledge."

-Candice Feagle, RDH

\*Data and information from Bureau of Labor Statistics.

\*\*Data and information from UNMC.

Last update: 10.2021

Click the links for requirements from the schools listed below:

	<a href="#">University of Nebraska Medical Center</a>	<a href="#">Central Community College</a>
<a href="#">Des Moines Area Community College</a>	<a href="#">Hawkeye Community College</a>	<a href="#">Iowa Western Community College</a>

UNMC's Prerequisites

Semesters: F= Fall, S=Spring, M=Summer

Biological Sciences (minimum credits: 16)			
Course	Credits	Semester	Prerequisites
BIOL 1020 – Principles of Biology OR BIOL 1450 – Biology I	5	F, S, M	High school Biology and Chemistry
BIOL 2440 – The Biology of Microorganisms	4	F, S, M	High school Biology and Chemistry
BIOL 2740 – Human Physiology & Anatomy I	4	F, M	High school Biology and Chemistry
BIOL 2840 – Human Physiology & Anatomy II	4	S, M	BIOL 2740

Chemistry (minimum credits: 8)			
CHEM 1180 & 1184 – General Chemistry I & Lab	4	F, S, M	Math 1320 or CHEM 1140 & 1144
CHEM 1190 & 1194 – General Chemistry II & Lab	4	F, S, M	CHEM 1180 & 1184

English Composition (minimum credits: 6)			
ENGL 1150 or 1154 – English Composition I	3	F, S, M	AP score of 3 or by EPPE exam
ENGL 1160 or 1164 – English Composition II	3	F, S, M	ENGL 1150 or 1154 or AP score of 4 or by EPPE exam

Oral Communication (minimum credits: 3)			
CMST 1110 – Public Speaking Fundamentals	3	F, S, M	None

Social Sciences (minimum credits: 9)			
PSYC 1010 – Introduction to Psychology	3	F, S, M	None
SOC 1010 – Introduction to Sociology	3	F, S, M	None
An additional course in psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science or human geography			

Nutrition (minimum credits: 3)			
HEKI 3090 – Applied Nutrition	3	F, S, M	none

Humanities/Arts (minimum credits: 6)			
Choose from English literature, philosophy, music history, art history, theatre arts, religion, and drawing.			

Minor			
12 credit hours in a single academic area (Gerontology, Psychology, Sociology, etc.)			
OR			
7-8 credits of Biology for a total of 24 credits of Biology (BIOL 1020, BIOL 1450, BIOL 1750, or BIOL 1330)			

Additional Information

Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 2.5, but the average GPA for entering classes has been 3.5.

No grade below "C" will be accepted Applicants wishing to receive credit for Advanced Placement (AP) and/or dual enrollment should consult with UNMC's Dental Hygiene Department Chair, Gwen Hlava at (402)472-1433 or [ghlava@unmc.edu](mailto:ghlava@unmc.edu).