



## **Dental Hygiene Program**

Higher Education Center at National City

880 National City Blvd., National City, CA 91950 (619) 216-6665 Extension 4862

[www.swccd.edu/dentalhygiene](http://www.swccd.edu/dentalhygiene)

## **Dental Hygiene Program Information Packet**

### **Introduction**

The Dental Hygiene Program provides basic education and entry-level experience, to prepare graduates for licensure as dental hygienists. Approximately 36 students are accepted and begin each fall semester for a two-year program. Dental hygiene didactic and clinical courses are conducted at the Higher Education Center at National City. Classes are held five (5) days per week. The program is full time (see page 7 for semester unit load).

### **General Career Description**

A dental hygienist is a licensed, preventive oral health professional providing education, clinical, and therapeutic services to the public in a variety of settings. As the preventive specialist of the dental healthcare team, the dental hygienist promotes and maintains oral wellness through services such as oral health assessments, education, removal of soft and hard deposits from teeth, and use of adjunct services such as sealants, fluorides, and chemotherapeutic agents.

As a healthcare professional, the dental hygienist is responsible for protecting and maintaining the confidentiality of information pertaining to the health status of individuals.

### **Career Options**

Dental hygienists can provide preventive and therapeutic services in a dental office or clinic setting. They may also work in public health settings, schools, skilled nursing facilities and mobile clinics. Clinical practice requires a minimum of an associate degree education.

The dental hygienist may also serve as an administrator/manager for community or state dental health programs; may provide sales and education for dental product companies; may be an educator in a dental hygiene or dental school program; or a researcher in a university or corporate setting. Many of these roles require a baccalaureate or graduate level degree.

### **Admissions & Application Process**

The dental hygiene education curriculum is a post-secondary scientifically oriented program, which is rigorous and intensive. Because enrollment is limited by facility capacity, special program admission criteria and procedures are necessary. Applicants for the Dental Hygiene program must be proficient in several subject areas. Prerequisites include courses in Life Sciences, Oral and Written Communication, Psychology, Sociology, Nutrition and Math. All the required prerequisites are mandated by the Dental Hygiene Board of California (DHBC) and the Commission of Dental Accreditation (CODA).

## Southwestern College Dental Hygiene (DH) Program Prerequisites

All DH prerequisites must be completed by the time of application (January). *All the required prerequisites and admission requirements are mandated by the Dental Hygiene Board of California (DHBC) and the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA).*

**It is the policy of our accrediting institutions to require all prerequisite course work be completed and recency requirements met prior to applying for program admission. No “In Progress” coursework can be accepted.**

### Prerequisites

- BIOL 260                      HUMAN ANATOMY                      4 UNITS  
(Prerequisite: BIOL 100 & 101 or equivalent)
- BIOL 261                      PRINCIPLES OF  
   HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY                      4 UNITS  
(Prerequisite: CHEM 100 or 170 or equivalent; BIOL 260 or equivalent)
- BIOL 265                      GENERAL MICROBIOLOGY 4 UNITS  
(Prerequisite: BIOL 100 & 101, or equivalent; CHEM 100 or 170 or equivalent)
- CHEM 100                      INTRODUCTION TO  
   GENERAL CHEMISTRY                      4 UNITS  
(Prerequisite: Elementary Algebra, as determined through the Southwestern College)  
  
   or  
• CHEM 170                      PREPARATION FOR  
   GENERAL CHEMISTRY                      4 UNITS  
(Prerequisite: Intermediate Algebra as determined through the Southwestern College)
- CHEM 102                      GENERAL, ORGANIC, AND  
   BIOLOGICAL CHEMISTRY                      5 UNITS  
  
   or  
• CHEM 110                      ELEMENTARY ORGANIC &  
   BIOLOGICAL CHEMISTRY                      4 UNITS  
(Prerequisite: CHEM 100 or 170 or 200 or equivalent)
- HLTH 204                      FUNDAMENTALS OF NUTRITION
- COMM 103 or                      ORAL COMMUNICATION (Recommended)  
  COMM 104                      PUBLIC SPEAKING
- PSYC 101                      GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY
- SOC 101                      INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY  
  or SOC 110                      CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS
- ENGL 115                      COLLEGE COMPOSITION: READING & WRITING ANALYTICALLY
- MATH 119                      ELEMENTARY STATISTICS  
  or PSYC/SOC                      STATISTICS FOR BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE  
  270 \* (or higher)

#### *For each of the 5 science courses*

- *Must be at least 4 semester units with an in-class lab component (quarter and semester units are not equivalent; 6 quarter units = 4 semester units)*
- *Must be taken for a letter grade, “C” or better. Pass/No Pass and Credit/No Credit grades are not accepted.*
- *Exam scores of any kind will not be accepted for substitution.*
- *Must meet a **seven**-year recency requirement at the time of application to the program*
- *Together they must have a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.00*

*Southwestern College limits the number of times a student can repeat courses for credit and/or to improve GPA*

\*See additional details on page 3 to satisfy Math prerequisite requirement.

\*All General Education courses must be completed before entering into the program.

\*Catalog year Fall 2025-2026 tentative General Education updates will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**Please Note:** Starting Fall 2025 new course number and title will be implemented for the following courses:

| Current Course Number and Title<br>(Prior to Fall 2025)          | New Course Number and Title<br>(Effective Fall 2025) |
|--|--|
| COMM 104 - Public Speaking                                       | COMM C1000 - Introduction to Public Speaking         |
| ENGL 115 - College Composition: Reading and Writing Analytically | ENGL C1000 - Academic Reading and Writing            |
| MATH 119 - Elementary Statistics                                 | STAT C1000 - Introduction to Statistics              |
| PSYC 101 - General Psychology                                    | PSYC C1000 - Introduction to Psychology              |

### Additional Details on Satisfying Prerequisites

1. Students must demonstrate requisite **math proficiency** by means of one of the following:
  - a) earn a “C” or better in MATH 119 or PSYC/SOC 270 or more advanced course with equivalent content, no support courses.
  - b) a transcript indicating an earned associate or higher degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college/university and completion of a Math course with equivalent or more advanced content, indicating a grade of “C” or better.

### For DH Prerequisites taken at another college/university:

The Dental Hygiene Program only does an informal evaluation of your transcript if/when you apply to the program and cannot make any pre-determination via email or phone.

DH prerequisites taken at another college/university NOT LISTED on the DH prerequisite equivalency grid (page 8 of this packet), can be reviewed in advance to confirm that the course will be accepted by the DH program. Courses listed on the grid do not require a petition, as they have already been determined as equivalent.

Submit a Petition for Major Substitution for each course along with supporting documentation (course descriptions from the catalog year in which the course was taken, or course syllabus and copy of transcript). A Petition for Major Substitution will only be reviewed after the course has been completed, not before.

Petitions **must** be submitted by the summer prior to applying (or sooner) in case a course is not approved, allowing the student to take a course during the fall semester. Any petitions submitted by Fall semester before application period is considered late.

**[Petition for Substitution of Major Requirement Form](#)**

## General Education and Graduation Requirements

Please note that general education and Southwestern College graduation and proficiency requirements need to be met **before applying to the dental hygiene program**. Students must consult with a counselor to assist in developing a Student Educational Plan (SEP) to ensure requirements are met on schedule.

The Dental Hygiene Program counselor is Antoinette Nagai. To schedule an appointment, contact the Higher Education Center in National City at (619) 216-6665 Ext. 4851, 4852, 4853 or [hecnc@swccd.edu](mailto:hecnc@swccd.edu).

**IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TO MEET WITH A COUNSELOR TO REVIEW ALL PREREQUISITES AND TO COMPLETE A STUDENT EDUCATION PLAN (SEP), PREFERABLY BY THE EARLY SUMMER, PRIOR TO APPLYING.**

## Admissions Process

A separate application is required for this program and is available online during the application filing period. It is important to review the Dental Hygiene Program website for detailed information about [filing period dates and the application process](#).

The dental hygiene program accepts 36 students who begin the program in the fall (August). To be considered a qualified candidate the applicant must:

- 1) *Complete all dental hygiene prerequisite and general education coursework. No “In Progress” work is accepted.( catalog year Fall 2025-2026 tentative general education updates will be reviewed on a case by case basis).*
- 2) *Obtain an SWC student identification number.*
- 3) *Completion of Aptitude Test ([www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)).*
- 4) *Complete the Dental Hygiene Rubric. (Rubric will be posted by 07/2025)*
- 5) *Copy of High School Diploma or GED certificate. (If you completed High School outside of the U.S., your diploma must be evaluated prior to applying. Applicants may use Southwestern College approved services listed as NACES member ([www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org)).*
- 6) *Official transcripts that confirm completion of prerequisites must be received at SWC Admissions by the application deadline. (We recommend for you to contact our evaluations office after sending your Official Transcripts for them to be evaluated).*
- 7) *Submit a complete dental hygiene online application with supporting documents, if applicable, prior to the deadline.*

***Applications missing supporting documentation and/or transcripts deems application as incomplete.***

## Selection Process

Dental Hygiene Program candidates are chosen to fill 36 available positions per cohort (cohort begins in the Fall of the same year in which you apply). 10 alternate candidates will also be selected in the event a candidate (from the 36) declines acceptance.

Students will be admitted to the Dental Hygiene Program based on the Admissions Criteria outlined in the Point System Form. (form can be found on our official website)

Applicants not accepted as candidates or alternates must re-apply the following year.

**The program has no waiting list.**

### ***ALTERNATES***

Candidates placed on the alternate list are not guaranteed a position in the incoming class. Alternates who are not offered a permanent position in the class are required to complete a NEW application in the next application period (January).

## Selection Process (continued)

The number of candidates accepted each year is subject to change at the discretion of the program director. This can be based on but not limited to state and local orders/mandates or student cohort obligations.

## Additional Requirements

**Once admitted** to the Dental Hygiene Program, students must provide verification of the following:

- 1) Student Education Plan (SEP). Meet with an SWC counselor to develop SEP.
- 2) Current CPR Certification: must be Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers. Must include training with the AED. *Certification course must include hands on (in person) training.*
- 3) Physical Health Examination
- 4) Proof of Current Immunizations
  - a) Rubeola and Rubella Immunity Verification
  - b) Hepatitis B Immunity Verification

Important: Hepatitis B vaccine is done in a three-part series approximately two months apart (for each vaccination). **It is recommended that applicants visit their medical provider early to start the series if you don't already have it completed.**
  - c) Varicella Immunity Verification
  - d) Tuberculosis Screening/TB Blood test is accepted (IGRA)

More information on above list and related forms will be disseminated at mandatory new student orientation for accepted candidates only.

## Notice of Occupational Hazards

Applicants should be aware that occupational hazards for the field of dental hygiene may include and are not limited to exposure to infectious diseases such as COVID-19, AIDS or hepatitis, hazardous chemicals or substances, accidental injury, neuromuscular problems, blood borne pathogens, radiation and allergic reactions to latex, anesthetic agents, or other chemical agents.

## Estimated Program Cost

The cost of the two-year Dental Hygiene Program (for students who meet the California residency requirement) is currently estimated to range between \$ 13,000 – 15,000. **The greatest direct expense occurs in the first semester.** Instruments, instructional supplies, textbooks, and uniforms are the major cost items. **An estimated cost of \$9000 will be needed prior to the start of classes.** Living expenses and transportation costs are not included nor is the cost to complete prerequisite/general education courses for the degree. Visit the Dental Hygiene Program website to view a more detailed sheet of [estimated cost](#).

## Financial Aid

Financial Aid may be available to those who qualify. The federal government and the state of California provides funds in the form of loans, grants, on-campus jobs, and scholarships. Find out more at [SWC Financial Aid](#).

**Due to the commitment of class and study time, it is recommended that students limit outside employment to no more than 20 hours per week.**

## Persons with Disabilities

Learn more or request assistance in requesting accommodations at [Disability Support Services](#) or call (619) 482-6512.

## Dental Hygiene Program Course Sequence

Each course in the Dental Hygiene program builds upon the previous course in the previous semester. To successfully progress through the two-year program, students are required to pass dental hygiene courses at 75% or better. Each Dental Hygiene course is offered only once during the academic year. Please meet with a counselor for correct and current information on policy.



# Southwestern College

## Dental Hygiene Program

### Course Sequence

#### First Semester

| Course             | Course Title                          | Units |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| DH 101             | Introduction to Clinical Concepts     | 2     |
| DH 108             | Introduction to Clinical Principles   | 2.5   |
| DH 109             | Dental Radiography and Interpretation | 3     |
| DH 114             | Head and Neck Anatomy                 | 3     |
| DH 123             | Oral Anatomy and Physiology           | 2     |
| DH 125             | Oral Health                           | 2     |
| Total Course Units |                                       | 14.5  |

#### Second Semester

| Course             | Course Title        | Units |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------|
| DH 112             | Clinic I            | 4     |
| DH 113A            | Clinical Concepts   | 1     |
| DH 115             | Periodontics        | 2     |
| DH 121             | Pain Control        | 2     |
| DH 203             | Pathology           | 2     |
| DH 206             | Dental Pharmacology | 2     |
| Total Course Units |                     | 13    |

#### Summer Session

| Course | Course Title        | Units |
|--------|---------------------|-------|
| DH 118 | Transitional Clinic | 1.5   |

#### Third Semester

| Course             | Course Title              | Units |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| DH 106             | Special Need Patient Care | 2     |
| DH 113B            | Clinical Concepts         | 1     |
| DH 116             | Dental Materials          | 2     |
| DH 122             | Clinic II                 |       |
| DH 200A            | Community Dental Health I | 2     |
| DH 205             | Advanced Periodontics     | 2     |
| Total Course Units |                           | 13    |

#### Fourth Semester

| Course             | Course Title               | Units |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| DH 113C            | Clinical Concepts          | 1     |
| DH 200B            | Community Dental Health II | 2     |
| DH 202             | Clinic III                 | 4     |
| DH 211             | Ethics and Jurisprudence   | 2     |
| DH 214             | Seminar                    | 2     |
| Total Course Units |                            | 11    |

#### Total Program Units: 53

Students receiving financial aid will be required to take one additional unit in their fourth semester (to be considered fulltime students). See the academic counselor for recommendations.



# Dental Hygiene Prerequisite Course Equivalency Grid for SDSU and Region 10 Community Colleges 2024-2026 (June 7, 2024)

THIS GRID IS AN ADVISEMENT TOOL **TO BE USED WITH A COUNSELOR**, NOT A GUARANTEE OF COURSE EQUIVALENCY FOR PRIOR COURSEWORK.

| College                | BIOL 260<br>Course<br>Equivalency     | BIOL 261<br>Course<br>Equivalency     | BIOL 265<br>Course<br>Equivalency | CHEM 100 OR<br>170 Course<br>Equivalency              | CHEM 102 OR<br>110 Course<br>Equivalency | COMM 103 OR<br>104 Course<br>Equivalency + | ENGL 115 OR<br>115H, ESL<br>115A Course<br>Equivalency | HLTH 204<br>or HLTH 201<br>Course<br>Equivalency | PSYC 101<br>Course<br>Equivalency | SOC 101 OR<br>110 Course<br>Equivalency | MATH 119 or<br>PSYC/SOC 270<br>Course Equivalency                    |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Southwestern</b>    | BIOL 260^                             | BIOL 261^                             | BIOL 265^                         | CHEM 100^ or<br>CHEM 170^                             | CHEM 102^ or<br>CHEM 110^                | COMM 103 or<br>COMM 104                    | ENGL 115 or<br>ENGL 115H or<br>ESL 115A                | HLTH 204 or<br>HLTH 201                          | PSYC 101                          | SOC 101 or<br>SOC 110                   | MATH 119 or<br>PSYC/SOC 270<br>or BIOL 215                           |
| <b>SDSU</b>            | BIOL 212                              | BIOL 261                              | BIOL 211 &<br>BIOL 211L           | CHEM 100  | CHEM 102                                 | COMM 103                                   | ECL 100 or<br>RWS 100                                  | NUTR 201   | PSY 101                           | SOC 101 or<br>SOC 102                   | SOC 201 or<br>STAT 250 or<br>PSY 280 or<br>BIOL 215                  |
| <b>*GCCCD</b>          | BIO 140                               | BIO 141 &<br>BIO 141L                 | BIO 152                           | CHEM 115 or<br>CHEM 120                               | CHEM 102 or<br>CHEM 116                  | COMM 122                                   | ENGL 120 or<br>ESL 122                                 | NUTR 155   | PSY 120                           | SOC 120 or<br>SOC 130                   | MATH 160 or<br>BIO 215 or<br>ANTH/PSY/SOC 215                        |
| <b>Imperial Valley</b> | BIOL 200 &<br>BIOL 202 or<br>BIOL 204 | BIOL 200 &<br>BIOL 202 or<br>BIOL 206 | BIOL 220                          | CHEM 100  | None                                     | COMM 100                                   | ENGL 110 or<br>ESL 108                                 | HE 106   | PSY 101                           | SOC 101 or<br>SOC 102                   | MATH 119 or PSY 214  |
| <b>MiraCosta</b>       | BIO 210/210H                          | BIO 220                               | BIO 230                           | CHEM<br>115/115H                                      | CHEM 112 or<br>CHEM 116                  | COMM 101                                   | ENGL<br>100/100H                                       | NUTR<br>100/100H                                 | PSYC<br>101/101H                  | SOC 101/101H<br>or SOC 102              | MATH 103 or<br>BUS 204 or 204H or<br>PSYC 104 or 104H or<br>BTEC 180 |
| <b>Palomar</b>         | BIOL 210                              | BIOL 211                              | BIOL 212                          | CHEM 100  | CHEM 104                                 | SPCH 100                                   | ENG 100 or<br>ENG 100E<br>ESL 110                      | NUTR 165 or<br>NUTR 185                          | PSYC 100                          | SOC 100 or<br>SOC 110                   | MATH 120 or<br>PSYC/SOC 205 or<br>BUS 204 or<br>SOC 180              |
| <b>**SDCCD</b>         | BIOL 230                              | BIOL 235                              | BIOL 205                          | CHEM 100 &<br>CHEM 100L or<br>CHEM 152 &<br>CHEM 152L | CHEM 103 or<br>CHEM 130 &<br>CHEM 130L   | COMS 103                                   | ENGL 101 or<br>ENGL 105                                | NUTR 150   | PSYC 101                          | SOCO 101 or<br>SOCO 110                 | MATH 119 or BUSE 115<br>or PSYC 258 or<br>BIOL 200                   |

Additional Math prerequisites accepted: College Algebra, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Biostatistics

**\*GCCCD:** Grossmont Cuyamaca Community College District includes Cuyamaca and Grossmont. Southwestern College will accept Grossmont College's BIO 144 & 145 to satisfy the Anatomy and Physiology requirement; **both** courses must be completed to satisfy the requirement. GCCCD Math 120 or 125 not accepted.

**\*\*SDCCD:** San Diego Community College District includes City College, Mesa College, and Miramar College.

^ All science prerequisites must include an in-person lab component, meet 2.75 GPA, minimum of 4 semester units each, "C" grade or better, and seven-year recency. General/non-science prerequisites must also meet minimum 2.75 GPA, which will be calculated separately from the science prerequisites.

+ COMM: Per Dental Hygiene Board of CA, Interpersonal and Intercultural Communication courses not accepted. Substitutions will not be accepted.

Check the [SWC DH Program website](#) for External Exam limitations or email [swcdentalhygiene@swccd.edu](mailto:swcdentalhygiene@swccd.edu).