

Dental Assisting

Location: Trenholm Campus

Program Information

The Dental Assisting Program is designed to prepare the student for a career in the dental assisting field of dentistry. A person trained in this field provides chairside assistance to the dentist, performs work in a dental laboratory, and performs certain functions in the dental office such as making appointments, billing patients and keeping records.

The program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association and is approved by the Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama. The Certifying Board of the American Dental Association gives special recognition to those who have achieved a high degree of competence and ability in the dental assisting field.

Occupational Choices

The dental assistant works with dentists in private offices, schools, public health agencies, hospitals, clinics, and the armed forces/veteran facilities. Pleasant surroundings, regular hours, and knowledge that they are in demand are some advantages enjoyed by dental assistants.

Average Full-Time Wage

Employment is expected to grow much faster than average, largely because students in dental schools are being taught to use dental assistants in their practice. Part-time employment opportunities also will be very favorable. The full-time wage for Dental Assistants averages between \$18,220 and \$39,940 per year*.

Additional Requirements

Dental Assisting courses begin in the fall and must be taken in sequence with each course in a given term being a co-requisite. Students beginning the spring or summer term will be enrolled in general education courses until fall semester begins.

Requirements for the program include, but are not limited to: (1) Physical and dental exams by the end of the 2nd week in October and (2) Program uniforms by the end of the 2nd week in October.

Awards Available

Associate Degree in Applied Technology in Dental Assisting Technology
 Certificate in Dental Assisting Technology
 Short Term Certificate in Dental Assisting Technology**

** This award is not accredited by the American Dental Association.

Estimated Program Length & Cost*

Award	Length	Credit Hours	Tuition Fees	Books	Tools	Supplies
Associate Degree	4 Terms	63	\$5,670	\$1,250	\$500	\$20
Certificate	3 Terms	48	\$4,320	\$800	\$500	\$20
Short Term Certificate	2 Terms	27	\$2,430	\$373	\$500	\$20

* Tax not included. Prices are subject to change without prior notice; cost of books may vary considerably among suppliers. The length of the program is based on full-time status of 12-15 credit hours per term. Enrollment in transitional level general education courses will alter the length of the program.

¹Data obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006-2007.

Requirements for Associate Degree in Applied Technology in Dental Assisting Technology

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
First Semester				
ORI-101	Orientation to College	1	0	1
*DAT-100	Introduction to Dental Assisting	2	0	2
*DAT-101	Pre-Clinical Procedures I	2	3	3
*DAT-102	Dental Materials	2	3	3
*DAT-103	Anatomy and Physiology for Dental Assisting	3	0	3
*DAT-112	Dental Radiology	2	3	3
ENG-101	English Composition I	3	0	3
	Elective	1	0	1
Second Semester				
+DAT-104	Basic Science for Dental Assisting	2	0	2
+DAT-111	Clinical Practice I	1	12	5
+DAT-113	Dental Health Education	2	0	2
+DAT-116	Pre-Clinical Procedure II	2	0	2
+DAT-124	Clinically Applied Infection Control & OSHA Standards	0	3	1
MTH-116	Mathematical Applications or MTH-103	3	0	3
	Elective	2	0	2
Third Semester				
oDAT-121	Dental Office Procedures	4	0	4
oDAT-122	Clinical Practice II	0	12	4
oDAT-123	Dental Assisting Seminar	4	0	4
Fourth Semester				
ENG-102	English Composition II	3	0	3
PSY-200	General Psychology	3	0	3
ART-100	Art Appreciation	3	0	3
CIS-130	Intro to Information Systems or CIS-146	2	2	3
	Choose 1 (BIO-103, 112, 120, 211, 212, MTH-103 or higher)	3	0	3
Total Hours: 63 Credit Hours; 1,408 Contact Hours				
* These course are co-requisites and are offered only in the fall term.				
+ These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the spring term.				
o These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the summer term.				
Electives:				
DAT-107	Dental Computer Basics	1	2	2
DAT-126	Dental Assisting Seminar	2	0	2
DAT-134	Clinical/Co-op/Practicum	0	5	1
DAT-135	Clinical/Co-op	0	10	2
DAT-136	Clinical/Co-op	0	15	3
DAT-137	Clinical/Co-op	0	20	4
DAT-138	Dental Terminology for Dental Assisting	1	0	1
DAT-139	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	1	0	1
DAT-140	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	2	0	2
DAT-141	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	3	0	3
DAT-202	Advanced Dental Assisting	2	2	3
DAT-203	Advanced Dental Assisting Clinic	0	9	3
DAT-204	Dental Assisting Symposium	2	0	2
DAT-296	Special Topics in Dentistry	1	0	1
DAT-297	Special Topics in Dentistry	2	0	2
DAT-298	Special Topics in Dentistry	3	0	3
DAT-299	Special Topics in Dentistry	4	0	4

Requirements for Certificate in Dental Assisting Technology

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
First Semester				
ORI-101	Orientation to College	1	0	1
*DAT-100	Introduction to Dental Assisting	2	0	2
*DAT-101	Pre-Clinical Procedures I	2	3	3
*DAT-102	Dental Materials	2	3	3
*DAT-103	Anatomy and Physiology for Dental Assisting	3	0	3
*DAT-112	Dental Radiology	2	3	3
COM-100	Vocational Technical English I or ENG-101	3	0	3
	Elective	1	0	1
Second Semester				
+DAT-104	Basic Science for Dental Assisting	2	0	2
+DAT-111	Clinical Practice I	1	12	5
+DAT-113	Dental Health Education	2	0	2
+DAT-116	Pre-Clinical Procedure II	2	0	2
+DAT-124	Clinically Applied Infection Control & OSHA Standards	0	3	1
MAH-101	Introductory Math I or MTH-116	3	0	3
	Elective	1	0	1
	Elective	1	0	1
Third Semester				
oDAT-121	Dental Office Procedures	4	0	4
oDAT-122	Clinical Practice II	0	12	4
oDAT-123	Dental Assisting Seminar	4	0	4
Total Hours: 48 Credit Hours; 1,152 Contact Hours				
* These course are co-requisites and are offered only in the fall term.				
+ These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the spring term.				
o These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the summer term.				
Electives:				
DAT-107	Dental Computer Basics	1	2	2
DAT-126	Dental Assisting Seminar	2	0	2
DAT-134	Clinical/Co-op/Practicum	0	5	1
DAT-138	Dental Terminology for Dental Assisting	1	0	1
DAT-139	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	1	0	1
DAT-140	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	2	0	2
DAT-141	Directed Studies in Dental Assisting	3	0	3
DAT-296	Special Topics in Dentistry	1	0	1
DAT-297	Special Topics in Dentistry	2	0	2
DAT-298	Special Topics in Dentistry	3	0	3
DAT-299	Special Topics in Dentistry	4	0	4

Requirements for Short Term Certificate in Dental Assisting Technology *

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
First Semester				
ORI-101	Orientation to College	1	0	1
*DAT-100	Introduction to Dental Assisting	2	0	2
*DAT-101	Pre-Clinical Procedures I	2	3	3
*DAT-102	Dental Materials	2	3	3
*DAT-103	Anatomy and Physiology for Dental Assisting	3	0	3
*DAT-112	Dental Radiology	2	3	3
Second Semester				
+DAT-104	Basic Science for Dental Assisting	2	0	2
+DAT-111	Clinical Practice I	1	12	5
+DAT-113	Dental Health Education	2	0	2
+DAT-116	Pre-Clinical Procedure II	2	0	2
+DAT-124	Clinically Applied Infection Control & OSHA Standards	0	3	1

Total Hours: 27 Credit Hours; 688 Contact Hours

* These course are co-requisites and are offered only in the fall term.

+ These courses are co-requisites and are offered only in the spring term.

* This Specialized Training Certificate does not meet all standards for the American Dental Association and is not accredited.

Course Descriptions for Dental Assisting Technology (DAT)

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
DAT-100	INTRODUCTION TO DENTAL ASSISTING	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor				
CO-REQUISITE: DAT -101, 102, 103, 112				
This course is designed to provide an introduction to dentistry and the history of dentistry, dental equipment, dental auxiliaries, psychology application to dentistry, personal and certification requirements, legal and ethical considerations, and work ethics and communication skills. Emphasis is placed on the Alabama Dental Practice Act and OSHA Standards. Upon completion, students should be able to discuss basic aspects of dentistry. This course is offered in the fall each year. This is a CORE course.				
DAT-101	PRE-CLINICAL PROCEDURES I	2	3	3
PREREQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor				
CO-REQUISITE: DAT -100, 102, 103, 112				
This course is designed to introduce chairside assisting including concepts of four handed dentistry, sterilization techniques, dental instruments, anesthesia, operative dentistry and dental specialties. Emphasis will be placed on preparation of the student for clinical dental assisting. Upon completion, the student should be able to perform dental assisting skills in a clinical setting. This course is offered in the fall each year.				
DAT-102	DENTAL MATERIALS	2	3	3
PREREQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor				
CO-REQUISITE: DAT -100, 101, 103, 112				
This course is designed to provide study of the characteristics, manipulation, and application of dental materials ordinarily used in the dental office. Students will be given intra and extra oral technical tasks to perform. Upon completion, students should be able to take and pour alginate impressions, trim study models, construct custom trays and temporary crowns, prepare and place restorative material, and manipulate cements and impression materials. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-103	ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY FOR DENTAL ASSTG	3	0	3
PRE REQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor				
CO-REQUISITE: DAT -100, 101, 102, 112				
This course is designed to provide study of anatomy and physiology of the head and neck with a basic understanding of body structure and function. Emphasis will be placed on tooth and root morphology, and embryological and histological correlations to provide a foundation essential to an understanding of dental health. Upon completion, students should be able to discuss and identify the basic structure and function of the human body specifically the head, neck, and dentition. This course is offered in the fall each year. This is a CORE course.				
DAT-104	BASIC SCIENCES FOR DENTAL ASSISTING	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor				
CO-REQUISITE: DAT -111, 113, 116, 124				
This course is designed to study basic microbiology, pathology, pharmacology, and medical emergencies. Emphasis is placed on the correlation of these sciences to the practice of dentistry. Upon completion, students should be able to apply basic science to the dental field. This course is offered in the spring each year.				
DAT-107	DENTAL COMPUTER BASICS	1	2	2
PREREQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor				
This course introduces the student to the use of computer technology in dentistry and in the delivery of health care. Emphasis is placed on basic computer operations and functions, dental information systems and computerized medical records, computer-assisted learning, and basic computer applications. Upon completion of this course, the student will demonstrate the basic knowledge and skills of computer applications. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-111	CLINICAL PRACTICE I	1	12	5
PREREQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor				
CO-REQUISITE: DAT -104, 113, 116, 124				
This course is designed to allow the student the opportunity for clinical observation and practical work experience in clinical settings under the supervision of a licensed dentist. Emphasis will be placed on the basic skills of chairside assisting. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate basic skills in the area of chairside assisting. This course is offered in the spring each year.				

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
DAT-112	DENTAL RADIOLOGY	2	3	3
PREREQUISITE: Admission to DAT Program and Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -100, 101, 102, 103				
This course is designed to cover the essential knowledge of radiographic technique for the practice of dentistry. Students will be taught to produce diagnostically acceptable intra and extra-oral radiographs with emphasis being placed on x-ray properties, generation of x-rays, film processing, infection control, quality assurance, intraoral radiographic technique and image characteristics. Upon completion, students should be able to expose, process, and mount radiographs for diagnostic purposes under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist. This course is offered in the fall each year. This is a CORE course.				
DAT-113	DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -104, 111, 116, 124				
This course is designed to introduce the student to the basic principles of nutrition, preventive dentistry, and dental health education. Emphasis will be placed on philosophy of preventive dentistry including: oral hygiene, patient motivation and management, and methods of oral health education. Upon completion, students should be able to apply the basic principles of nutrition and preventive dentistry. This course is offered in the spring each year. This is a CORE course.				
DAT-116	PRE-CLINICAL PROCEDURE II	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -104, 111, 113, 124				
The course is a continuation of Pre-Clinical Procedures I. Emphasis is placed on dental specialties. Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss and identify dental specialty procedures and instrumentation. This course is offered in the spring each year.				
DAT-121	DENTAL OFFICE PROCEDURES	4	0	4
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-104, 111, 113, 116, 124 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -122, 123				
This course is designed to address basic dental office procedures including appointment and recall systems, financial records, accounting procedures, insurance claims, filing systems, purchasing and inventory of supplies and equipment, and the utilization of computers to perform business office procedures. Emphasis is placed on the duties of a dental receptionist. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate efficiently in practice management. This course is offered in the summer each year.				
DAT-122	CLINICAL PRACTICE II	0	12	4
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-104, 111, 113, 116, 124 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -121, 123				
This course is designed to provide the student the opportunity to develop advanced dental assisting skills in chairside dental assisting procedures, radiology, receptionist duties, team work, and communication skills. Emphasis will be placed on clinical procedures. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate proficiency in the area of chairside assisting. This course is offered in the summer each year. This is a CORE course.				
DAT-123	DENTAL ASSISTING SEMINAR	4	0	4
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-104, 111, 113, 116, 124 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -121, 122				
This course is designed to discuss and evaluate the students' clinical experiences and the resume and interview process. Emphasis will be placed on new technology in dental practices as related to dental assisting and the certification exam review. Upon completion, students should be able to successfully complete the Dental Assisting National Board Examination to become a Certified Dental Assistant. This course is offered in the summer each year. This is a CORE course.				
DAT-124	CLINICALLY APPLIED INFECTION CONTROL AND OSHA STANDARDS	0	3	1
PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of DAT-100, 101, 102, 103, 112 and/or Permission of Instructor CO-REQUISITE: DAT -104, 111, 113, 116				
This course is designed for the integration of previously acquired knowledge of OSHA Standards and Infection Control in a clinical setting. Emphasis will be placed on clinical application of Infection Control and Compliance of OSHA Standards as it relates to dental chairside assisting. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate skills in the area of Infection Control and OSHA Guidelines. This course is offered in the spring each year. This is a CORE course.				

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
DAT-126	DENTAL ASSISTING SEMINAR	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to discuss and evaluate the students' clinical experiences and the resume and interview process. Emphasis will be placed on new technology in dental practices as related to dental assisting and the certification review. Upon completion, students should be able to successfully complete the Dental Assisting National Board Examination to become a Certified Dental Assistant. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-134	CLINICAL/CO-OP/PRACTICUM	0	5	1
PREREQUISITE: DAT-122 or Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to enable the student who has completed the Certificate program to gain hands-on experience at a work site or by performing job-related activities. Emphasis will be placed on chairside assisting skills. Successful completion of student cognitive, psychomotor or affective domain competencies are required in this course. Emphasis will be placed on chairside assisting skills. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-135	CLINICAL/CO-OP	0	10	2
PREREQUISITE: DAT-122 or Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to enable the student who has completed the Certificate program to gain hands-on-experience at a work-site or by performing job-related activities. Successful completion of student cognitive, psychomotor or affective domain competencies are required in this course. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-136	CLINICAL/CO-OP	0	15	3
PREREQUISITE: DAT-122 or Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to enable the student who has completed the Certificate program to gain hands-on-experience at a work-site or by performing job-related activities. Successful completion of student cognitive, psychomotor or affective domain competencies are required in this course. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-137	CLINICAL/CO-OP	0	20	4
PREREQUISITE: DAT-122 or Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to enable the student who has completed the Certificate program to gain hands-on-experience at a work-site or by performing job-related activities. Successful completion of student cognitive, psychomotor or affective domain competencies are required in this course. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-138	DENTAL TERMINOLOGY FOR DENTAL ASSTG	1	0	1
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to address basic dental and medical terminology as related to the field of dentistry. Emphasis will be placed on application of terms to clinical dentistry. Upon completion, students should be able to define dental and medical terms. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-139	DIRECTED STUDIES IN DENTAL ASSISTING	1	0	1
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to provide study of specific areas of dentistry as chosen by the student and faculty member. Emphasis will be placed on the research and critique of a specific dental topic. Upon completion, students should be able to deliver a written and oral presentation on the chosen topic. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-140	DIRECTED STUDIES IN DENTAL ASSISTING	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to provide study of specific areas of dentistry as chosen by the student and faculty member. Emphasis will be placed on the research and critique of specific dental topic. Upon completion, students should be able to deliver a written and oral presentation on the chosen topic. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-141	DIRECTED STUDIES IN DENTAL ASSISTING	3	0	3
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to provide study of specific areas of dentistry as chosen by the student and faculty member. Emphasis will be placed on the research and critique of a specific dental topic. Upon completion, students should be able to deliver a written and oral presentation on the chosen topic. This course is offered at least one term every year.				

Course #	Course Title	Theory Contact Hours/Wk	Lab Contact Hours/Wk	Credit Hours
DAT-202	ADVANCED DENTAL ASSISTING	2	2	3
COREQUISITE: DAT-203 PREREQUISITE: Permission of instructor.				
This course is designed to study the theory and application of advanced prosthetic chairside assisting skills. Emphasis is placed on crown and bridge procedures. Upon completion, students should be able to fabricate, temporarily cement and remove excess cement from custom temporaries, place retraction cord, manipulate stone utilizing the whip-mix, and pour working models. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-203	ADVANCED DENTAL ASSISTING CLINIC	0	9	3
COREQUISITE: DAT-202 PREREQUISITE: Permission of instructor				
This course is designed to provide the student the opportunity to chairside assist with prosthetic dentistry. Emphasis is placed on the actual treatment of crown and bridges cases. Upon completion, students should be able demonstrate proficiency in advanced prosthetic assisting skills. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-204	DENTAL ASSISTING SYMPOSIUM	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to present current concepts in general and specialty dentistry. Emphasis will be placed on advanced technology, materials and procedures. Upon completion, students should be able to discuss advances in dentistry. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-296	SPECIAL TOPICS IN DENTISTRY	1	0	1
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to address special topics in dentistry according to the criteria approved for continuing education by the code of Alabama. Emphasis is placed on chairside dental assisting, Infection Control/OSHA, treatment of special needs/medically compromised patients, oral pathology basic sciences, dental materials, medical emergencies, and ethics and jurisprudence. Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss the special topic addressed in the symposium as it relates to dentistry. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-297	SPECIAL TOPICS IN DENTISTRY	2	0	2
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to address special topics in dentistry according to the criteria approved for continuing education by the code of Alabama. Emphasis is placed on chairside dental assisting, Infection Control/OSHA, treatment of special needs/medically compromised patients, oral pathology basic sciences, dental materials, medical emergencies, and ethics and jurisprudence. Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss the special topic addressed in the symposium as it relates to dentistry. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-298	SPECIAL TOPICS IN DENTISTRY	3	0	3
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to address special topics in dentistry according to the criteria approved for continuing education by the code of Alabama. Emphasis is placed on chairside dental assisting, Infection Control/OSHA, treatment of special needs/medically compromised patients, oral pathology basic sciences, dental materials, medical emergencies, and ethics and jurisprudence. Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss the special topic addressed in the symposium as it relates to dentistry. This course is offered at least one term every year.				
DAT-299	SPECIAL TOPICS IN DENTISTRY	4	0	4
PREREQUISITE: Permission of Instructor				
This course is designed to address special topics in dentistry according to the criteria approved for continuing education by the code of Alabama. Emphasis is placed on chairside dental assisting, infection control/OSHA, treatment of special needs medically compromised patients, oral pathology basic sciences, dental materials, medical emergencies, ethics and jurisprudence, Upon completion, the student should be able to discuss the special topic addressed in the symposium as it relates to dentistry. This course is offered at least one term every year.				