

Dental Assisting

School of Allied Health

Allied Health Sciences Building (AHS), Room 148, (907) 786-6933

The dental assisting program, as part of the Allied Health Sciences Department, prepares students to become skilled members of the dental health care team. Assistants greatly increase the efficiency of the dentist in the delivery of oral health care and are valuable members of the dental care team.

The duties of the dental assistant are among the most comprehensive and varied in the dental office. The dental assistant performs a wide range of tasks requiring both interpersonal and technical skills. Some specific tasks dental assistants may perform include assisting the dentist during a variety of procedures, providing oral health care, exposing and processing radiographs (X-rays), recording the patient's medical history and vital signs, preparing and sterilizing the proper instruments and equipment for the dentist's use, providing the patient with post-operative instructions, taking impressions for study casts, performing office management tasks, and performing basic dental laboratory tasks.

Many types of practice settings are available to dental assistants. An assistant may choose to work in a private practice or a group practice. In addition, an assistant can work in a general dentistry or specialty practice, such as oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, endodontics, periodontics, prosthodontics or pediatric dentistry. Job opportunities also exist in public health facilities, federal government facilities, hospitals, dental school clinics, insurance companies, and vocational schools or community colleges and universities teaching others to become dental assistants.

The dental assisting program offers an undergraduate certificate and an Associate of Applied Science (AAS).

The program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and by the United States Department of Education. As a result of this, graduates are eligible to take the Dental Assisting National Board examination and upon successful completion will become certified dental assistants.

Programs of Study

Undergraduate Certificate

- Certificate in Dental Assisting (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/undergraduateprograms/coh/dentalassisting/certificate-dentalassisting>)

Associate of Applied Science

- AAS in Dental Assisting (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/undergraduateprograms/coh/dentalassisting/aas-dentalassisting>)

Faculty

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