



Dental Assistant Diploma

New Program

State Submission

Steve Buchholz, Dean of Accreditation and Advancement
July 2015



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WESTERN DAKOTA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (WDT)

Dental Assistant Diploma

New Program Proposal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Western Dakota Technical Institute requests approval to create a diploma program in Dental Assistant. This program option would prepare students for the increasing number of career opportunities in dental assisting in the western South Dakota region.

WDT requests permission to begin offering the three-semester, 11-month program in Spring 2016.

Labor market information for the state indicates that the demand for dental assistants is strong now and in the future. Through 2022, the number of dental assisting positions will grow by 12.7 percent in South Dakota and 25 percent nationally.

While the Dental Assistant program would be new to WDT's list of credit-bearing programs, it is not new to WDT. The Corporate Education Center has offered a program customized for the Black Hills Dental Society for 24 years. That program has been very successful but limited in its scope because students must be working for a dental office that is part of the Dental Society. This proposed diploma program builds on the success of the Corporate Education Center efforts and expands educational opportunities to all students while continuing to serve the needs of regional dental practices. The customized program would end pending approval of this proposal.

IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The Dental Assistant program will prepare students to begin a career in dental assisting. The advisory committee for the Corporate Education Center's customized program provided feedback about the plan for a credit-bearing program, and workforce data show that the need for a program is strong. Dental offices are in need of dental assistants who have formal, high-quality training in advanced dental functions. The proposed program would accomplish those goals.

This program has been designed to prepare students for those opportunities. Students will complete classes in dental science, dental skills, dental radiography, dental materials, oral pathology, endodontics, dental office management, and more.

Graduates of the program will be able to accomplish the typical duties of a dental assistant, including:

- Work with patients to make them comfortable in the dental chair and to prepare them for treatments and procedures
- Sterilize dental instruments
- Prepare the work area for patient treatment by setting out instruments and materials

- Help dentists by handing them instruments during procedures
- Keep patients' mouths dry by using suction hoses and other equipment
- Instruct patients in proper dental hygiene
- Process x rays and complete lab tasks, under the direction of a dentist
- Keep records of dental treatments
- Schedule patient appointments
- Work with patients on billing and payment

OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The primary objective of the Dental Assistant program option is to prepare students with the necessary skills to be successful in the dental assisting field. The program will articulate appropriate high school credits whenever possible, and there could be dual enrollment possibilities for high school students.

The Dental Assistant graduate will be able to:

- Provide basic and expanded chair side functions to facilitate completion of restorative and advanced operative procedures
- Record medical and dental clinical documentation that adheres to legal standards
- Complete radiographic/digital images for diagnostic and technique quality
- Manipulate dental materials to support chair side and laboratory procedures
- Apply legal and regulatory concepts to the provision of oral care
- Provide assistance in the management of emergency situations
- Perform basic office procedures necessary to assist in managing dental practice
- Design and implement individualized patient education strategies
- Apply self-assessment skills to prepare for lifelong learning

METHODS OF ATTAINING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

WDT will provide students with instruction in classroom and lab settings on the WDT campus. The classroom and lab instruction will be augmented with guest speakers and other experiences that will prepare students for the workforce.

As with all WDT programs, a variety of services and support will be available to Dental Assistant. This includes expanded tutoring and office hours provided by full-time program faculty and at WDT's Student Success Center. Access to current technical reference materials and resources is available via WDT library services.

The Dental Assistant program will work closely with an industry advisory committee composed of representatives who are from potential employers and others in the field. The advisory committee will approve the curriculum, discuss and recommend equipment purchases, and assist in forming partnerships to help WDT with innovative curriculum, internships, and presentations.

As indicated in the letters of support that accompany this proposal, industry is supportive of this program proposal. As has been shown with the customized program, employers value students

who have formal training provided by WDT. This program will continue to meet that need. In addition, the program's general education courses will provide students with the math, English, and communication skills employers are seeking.

POPULATION SERVED BY THE PROGRAM

The Dental Assistant program will be available to all interested individuals who successfully meet the WDT admissions criteria established for the program. The program will be open to full-time and part-time students. All applicants must be high school graduates and take an admissions test to establish reading, writing, and math abilities. No restriction will be made regarding race, creed, gender or age. The program will draw students primarily from South Dakota. The opportunities for employment in the field will be primarily in western South Dakota.

The program also will appeal to people already in the workforce who have experience in dental offices and are seeking additional training so they can increase their skill level and become prepared for the growing number of dental assistant job opportunities available.

PROJECTED THREE-YEAR BUDGET

This program will be staffed by a full-time instructor. Adjunct instructors with industry experience may be used to teach some courses. The projected budget is as follows:

Expenses	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Instructors	\$67,000	\$70,350	\$73,867
Equipment	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Supplies	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

PROGRAM COMPETENCIES AND ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS

Entry point: Fall Semester

Exit point: After completion of all coursework

Job titles: See Appendix A

STATEMENT OF NON-DUPLICATION

Western Dakota Tech is proposing this program to meet regional industry needs for dental assistants. While there is another dental assistant program in South Dakota, it is not meeting the needs of dental practices in western South Dakota.

CURRICULUM DESIGN

See Appendix B for Curriculum Sequence.

WAGE FACTOR

See Appendix A

SUGGESTED CIP CODE

51.0601 Dental Assisting/Assistant. A program that prepares individuals to provide patient care, take dental radiographs (x-ray photographs), prepare patients and equipment for dental procedures, and discharge office administrative functions under the supervision of dentists and dental hygienists. Includes instruction in medical record-keeping, general office duties, reception and patient intake, scheduling, equipment maintenance and sterilization, basic radiography, pre- and post-operative patient care and instruction, chairside assisting, taking tooth and mouth impressions, and supervised practice.

APPENDIX

- A. Wage factor and job titles
- B. Curriculum Outline
- C. Letters of Support

APPENDIX A

South Dakota Employment Projections 2012-2022 and Wage Data for Related Occupations

SOC Code	Occupational Title	2012 Workers	2022 Workers	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Average Annual Demand for Workers
31-9091	Dental Assistants	865	975	110	12.7%	29

South Dakota Wage Estimates for SD, Rapid City, and West					Percentile				
AREA	SOC CODE	Occupation	Workers	Avg. Wage	10 th	25 th	50 th	75 th	90 th
Statewide	31-9091	Dental Assistants	840	\$15.26	\$10.91	\$12.63	\$14.97	\$17.97	\$20.37
Rapid City MSA	31-9091	Dental Assistants	170	\$14.22	\$11.11	\$12.42	\$13.77	\$15.07	\$18.85
West	31-9091	Dental Assistants	80	\$15.32	\$9.98	\$12.95	\$15.69	\$17.83	\$19.80

United States Employment Projections 2012-2022 and Wage Data for Related Occupations

SOC	Occupational Title	2012 Base Number of Jobs	2022 Projected Number of Jobs	Percent Change	Average Annual Demand
31-9091	Dental Assistants	303,200	377,600	25%	7,440

Wage Estimates for United States				Percentile				
SOC CODE	Occupation	May 2013 Workers	Avg. Wage	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
31-9091	Dental Assistants	309,540	\$17.13	\$11.64	\$13.86	\$16.78	\$20.18	\$23.25

APPENDIX B

First Semester		Credits
DEN105	Dental Sciences I	3
DEN109	Clinical Dental Procedures I	3
DEN115	Dental Radiography	3
MATH100 or MATH101	Elementary Algebra or College Algebra	3
CIS105	Microcomputer Software Applications	3
TOTAL CREDITS		15
Second Semester		Credits
DEN150	Clinical Dental Procedures II	3
DEN152	Dental Materials	3
DEN154	Dental Sciences II	3
DEN156	Dental Office Management	2
ENGL101 or ENGL201	Composition or Technical Writing	3
PSYC101 or PSYC103	General Psychology or Human Relations in the Workplace	3
TOTAL CREDITS		17
Third Semester		Credits
DEN175	Dental Clinical Practice	4
TOTAL CREDITS		4

APPENDIX C



Pediatric Dentists

William J. Donhiser, DDS
Brent J. Bradley, DDS
Kelli J. Jobman, DDS
Craig R. Cooksley, DDS
Karli M. Williams, DDS

Adolescent & General Dentist

Jeffrey P. Godber, DDS

May 6, 2015

Steve Buchholz
Western Dakota Tech
800 Mickelson Drive
Rapid City, SD 57703

Re: Western Dakota Tech Dental Assisting Program

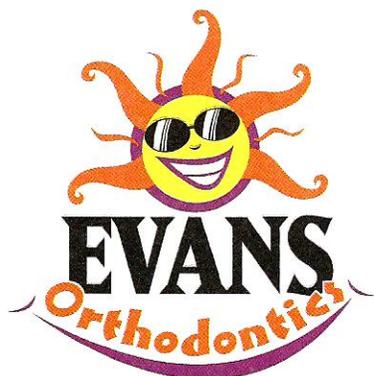
Mr. Buchholz,

I am writing to give my full support for the proposed expansion of the current Dental Assisting Program at Western Dakota Tech. Dentistry has changed significantly over the last several decades and the need for highly trained dental assistants to work in these dental offices is paramount. By expanding the current dental assisting program, dental offices across the Black Hills region will gain more confident employees with increased knowledge, skills and training. Additionally, the new program will offer the dental assistant a more comprehensive educational experience that could be used to advance their education at the university level.

In summary, I am proud to recommend the expansion of the Western Dakota Tech Dental Assisting Program. I strongly believe it will benefit the dental professionals in the Black Hills region, the dental assistants who are being trained and, most importantly, our patients.

Sincerely,

Brent J. Bradley, DDS



BRADLEY J. EVANS, M.D., D.D.S., M.S.
BRUCE A. EVANS, M.D., D.D.S., M.S.
JAMES A. EVANS, D.D.S., M.S., P.C.
SPECIALISTS IN ORTHODONTICS



June 3, 2015

To the South Dakota Board of Education,

The purpose of this letter is to give support to the idea of changing the current WDT Dental Assistant Training Program from a certificate program into a diploma program.

I can speak for the Black Hills District Dental Society because I am the Secretary/Treasurer of that organization, and have been so for the past 15 years. Our group recently had a district meeting on April 21, 2015. Sixteen of our dentist members were in attendance. The current WDT President, Mark Wilson, and his assistant Steve Buchholz (Dean of Accreditation and Advancement) gave a detailed presentation outlining their reasons to make the change. They fielded questions from the dentists present, until there were no more questions from the group. After considerable debate, discussing the pros and cons of the issue, we voted unanimously to approve the change.

I have also served on the Advisory Board for the WDT Dental Assisting Program for the past 15 years. During that time, I have worked closely with Patsy Schmidt (WDT Vice President for Corporate Education) on many issues related to the program. The problems we have faced have ranged from insufficient enrollment numbers, to finding new instructors, to equipment and supply problems. Recently, we had to try to find a new sponsor dentist for a student whose current dentist/employer terminated her employment, while she was enrolled in the program. That is one issue we would never need to deal with again, if the program were to be converted into a diploma program.

Although it has been successful, it seems like a bit of a catch-22, the way the certificate program is set up now. Prospective students must already be employed by a dentist in order to enroll in the program. Then, the dentist pays the tuition for their employee to become more highly trained. So, initially the dentist must hire a relatively untrained person, and work with them a while, providing on-the-job training, before deciding if they want to sponsor them (pay their tuition) to take the course. From the dentists perspective, it would be nice to hire people who have already demonstrated that they are serious about working as a dental assistant, and have the necessary intelligence and skills to complete the diploma program.

In summary, I am in favor of converting the WDT Dental Assisting Program from a certificate program to a diploma program. Feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Thank you,
Bruce Evans MD, DDS
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Pediatric Dentists

William J. Donhiser, DDS
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Craig R. Cooksley, DDS
Karli M. Williams, DDS

Adolescent & General Dentist

Jeffrey P. Godber, DDS

April 30, 2015

Steve Buchholz
Western Dakota Tech
800 Mickelson Drive
Rapid City, SD 57703

Re: Western Dakota Tech Dental Assisting Program

Mr. Buchholz,

I am writing in support of the expansion of the Dental Assisting Program at Western Dakota Tech. Rapid City and the Black Hills region have a great dental community and the need for trained dental assistants is present. We have many great dental offices and many patients to be treated and having educated, trained dental assistants is a crucial piece of the pie!

Dentistry continues to be an important part of both oral health and overall health. Therefore, the importance of strong dental team members is critical. By expanding the dental assisting program, dental offices will gain employees with increased knowledge, more on-the-job training, and a better education when entering into the dental workforce.

Nearly all of the dental assistants that are currently employed in our office have gone through the Western Dakota Tech program. Growing the program will provide improved qualifications in the future and, ultimately, allow us to continue providing great dental care to our communities.

I am proud to recommend the expansion of the Western Dakota Tech Dental Assisting Program. I strongly believe it will benefit the profession and our patients. I look forward to continuing a strong partnership with Western Dakota Tech moving forward!

Sincerely,

Kelli J. Jobman, DDS