



COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

REGISTERED DENTAL HYGIENIST CAREER

The registered dental hygienist (R.D.H.) is a licensed healthcare professional, oral health educator, and clinician. Responsibilities of a hygienist employed within a dental office may vary. Most dental hygienists evaluate patients' needs, determine a dental hygiene diagnosis, and fulfill a treatment plan. Treatments include preventive services that promote and maintain oral health and clinical treatments designed to arrest or control oral disease.

The dental hygienist works closely with, and under the supervision of a licensed dentist (D.D.S). Successful dental hygienists must exhibit critical thinking skills. The field of dental hygiene is also known to promote a flexible work schedule. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected the career of a dental hygienist to remain excellent! According to their website, the 2021 dental hygienist national mean hourly wage is \$38.17, resulting in a \$83,290 mean national annual wage.

Although most dental hygienists are employed in a dental office setting, the baccalaureate R.D.H. may work in corporate health facilities, school systems, research centers, state or federal agencies, public health clinics and hospitals. Dental hygienists with baccalaureate degrees are also known to work as providers of continuing education seminars, educators, researchers, or corporate representatives.

OU DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM B.S.D.H.

The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry, Dental Hygiene Program is proud to offer the only bachelor's degree dental hygiene program in the State of Oklahoma! Prior to applying to our program, applicants must complete a minimum 60 hours of required college prerequisite courses. Prerequisite courses may be taken at The University of Oklahoma in Norman, or by completing acceptable transfer equivalent courses from other accredited universities or colleges.

During each admissions cycle, 75 qualified applicants are invited to interview. Following spring interviews, our admissions committee selects 46 students to join our program. New students begin classes during the fall semester. Based on applicant site selections, our program admits 24 students to The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry, located on The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center campus in Oklahoma City, and admits 22 students to our distance site locations:

[ADMISSIONS FOR DISTANCE SITE LOCATIONS - OU DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM](#)

[Tri County Technology Center in Bartlesville, Oklahoma – 10 Students Admitted](#)

[Southern Oklahoma Technology Center in Ardmore, Oklahoma – 6 Students Admitted](#)

[Western Technology Center in Weatherford Oklahoma – 6 Students Admitted](#)

Students accepted to the program complete two years of dental hygiene curriculum. Procedures taught in the OU Dental Hygiene Program are within the dental hygiene scope of practice in the State of Oklahoma. The College of Dentistry ensures that program expectations, learning objectives, and educational outcomes are consistent at all sites. Local and distance sites attend the same classes through distance technology and share the same clinical and didactic requirements. Program outcomes between sites are evaluated yearly by course directors. Results are reported to the program director and dean of the college. The Higher Learning Commission and the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association accredit the program.

Upon successful completion of our Dental Hygiene Program, graduates from all sites receive a Bachelor of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene (B.S.D.H) from The University of Oklahoma, and are eligible to take national board examinations for licensure to practice as registered dental hygienists.