

# D A 74: DENTAL ASSISTING CLINICAL PRACTICE

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	5.5
Hours:	12 lecture, 176 laboratory per quarter (188 total per quarter) 1 hour lecture per week for 12 weeks; 16 hours clinical laboratory per week for 11 weeks.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	CSU
Grade Type:	Letter Grade Only
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Adapt their dental assisting skills to meet the specific needs of patients and the demands of various clinical environments, including general and specialty practices.
- Apply principles of compassionate, person-centered care while interacting with patients of diverse ages and socioeconomic backgrounds in clinical settings.

## Description

This course builds upon the techniques introduced in D A 51A, 51B, and 73, through a supervised clinical externship, providing students with hands-on experience in a real-world setting. Students will utilize their chairside dental assisting skills in general and specialty private practice externship sites, catering to patients of all ages and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Throughout this course, students will engage in hands-on, experiential learning under the guidance of experienced dental professionals. Students can apply the principles of compassionate, person-centered care and communication in diverse clinical settings. Intended for students in the Dental Assisting Program; enrollment is limited to students accepted in the program.

## Course Objectives

The Foothill College Dental Assisting Program is competency-based. Students taking this course will demonstrate their proficiency in the three program competency-based statements through practical application and presentation of outcomes.

- Dental Assisting Theory and Practice Competency: Dental assisting students must be competent in applying the theory and practice of dental assisting for persons across the lifespan from a wide range of socioeconomic groups.
- Infection Control and Hazardous Waste Management: Dental assisting students must possess the knowledge and abilities to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases.
- Ethical and Legal Principles: Dental assisting students must be competent in applying ethical and legal principles to dental practice.

The student will be able to:

- Dental Assisting Theory and Practice
  - Perform routine chairside dental assisting procedures under the supervision of a clinical instructor.
  - Assist in dental specialty procedures.
  - Expose dental radiographs on patients.
  - Perform coronal polishing on patients.
  - Demonstrate effective communication and collaboration with the dental faculty and clinical staff.
  - Receive constructive feedback as a goal for self-assessment and competency.
- Infection Control and Hazardous Waste Management
  - Demonstrate effective infection control practices to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases.
  - Demonstrate compliance with hazardous waste management requirements.
- Ethical and Legal Principles
  - Demonstrate professional behavior in a clinical environment.
  - Respect all aspects of patient privacy and compliance with HIPAA requirements.
  - Assist in the documentation of patient assessments.
  - Demonstrate an understanding of allowable duties for dental assistants and registered dental assistants.

## Course Content

- Dental Assisting Theory and Practice
  - Chairside dental assisting procedures
    - Four-handed instrument transfer
    - Oral evacuation
    - Placement and removal of rubber dam
    - Set up matrix band and wedge(s)
    - Place topical anesthetic agent
    - Mix impression materials, cements, liners, bases, and amalgam
    - Assisting with restorative, preventive, and surgical procedures
    - Obtaining alginate impressions and pouring study models
    - Pre- and post-operative instructions
  - Dental specialty procedures and other dental-related areas
    - Orthodontics
    - Periodontics
    - Oral surgery
    - Endodontics
    - Prosthodontics
    - Radiology
    - Emergency
  - Radiographs
    - Full-mouth surveys
    - Bite-wing surveys
    - Panoramic surveys
  - Collaboration and teamwork
    - Clinical supervisor
    - Dentist
    - Dental staff
- Infection Control

- a. Effective infection control
  - i. Personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - ii. Proper personal hygiene, including required hand hygiene practices
  - iii. Unit set-up and breakdown
  - iv. Safe handling of sharps and proper needle recapping
  - v. Instrument decontamination and sterilization
- b. Hazardous waste management
  - i. Proper disposal of sharps
  - ii. Proper disposal of hazardous waste
  - iii. Proper disposal of biological waste
- 3. Ethical and Legal Principles
  - a. Professionalism
    - i. Demonstrate standards of integrity and honesty in all professional interactions
    - ii. Maintain patient confidentiality
    - iii. Respect patient autonomy
  - b. Documentation of patient assessments and dental procedures
    - i. Medical/dental history review
    - ii. Extraoral/intraoral exam
    - iii. Periodontal exam
    - iv. Restorative exam
    - v. Patient referrals
  - c. Legal duties
    - i. Dental Practice Act
      - 1. Describe the allowable duties for dental assistants (DAs)
      - 2. Describe the allowable duties for registered dental assistants (RDAs)

Cooperative learning exercises  
Oral presentations  
Demonstration

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Bird, D.L., and D.S. Robinson. *Modern Dental Assisting*. 2023.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Documentation of treatment in treatment records.
2. Reflection paper.
3. Weekly journal.

## Discipline(s)

Dental Technology

## Lab Content

Chairside assisting and back-office externship in private practice for general dental procedures, oral surgery, periodontal surgery, endodontics, orthodontics, prosthodontics, and pedodontics.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Dental operatory demonstration and practice units, laboratory facilities with individual student work areas.
2. Dental instrumentation comparable to that present in private dental offices.
3. Clinical supplies to support demonstrations and student practice activities.
4. Clinical and office facilities.
5. When taught via Foothill Global Access, on-going access to computer with email software and hardware; email address.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Clinical performance evaluations

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture  
Discussion