

## **Essential Qualifications for the Dental Hygiene Program**

The following essential qualifications address the motor, behavioral, emotional, communication, and professional conduct guidelines essential for completion of the Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS) in Dental Hygiene, at State Fair Community College. Students must meet these essential qualifications in order to be admitted and retained in the program. Students with documented disabilities who wish to request reasonable accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act must follow State Fair Community College's procedure for requesting accommodations. State Fair Community College reserves the right to reject requests for accommodations that would fundamentally alter the nature of an educational program, lower the academic standards, cause an undue hardship on the college, or endanger the health or safety of a student with a disability, other students, or any other member of the college community.

The curriculum for the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Dental Hygiene requires students to engage in diverse, complex, and specific experiences necessary for the acquisition and practice of dental hygiene skills and functions. Unique combinations of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical, and social abilities are required to satisfactorily perform these functions. Additionally, these functions are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, fellow applicants, faculty, and other healthcare providers.

The essential abilities necessary to acquire or demonstrate competence in the dental hygiene field, as well as for completion of the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Dental Hygiene at State Fair Community College, include, but are not limited to, the following abilities:

### ***Motor Skills***

With or without reasonable accommodations, applicants should have sufficient motor function to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all health care settings. For example, applicant must be able to perform basic life support, including CPR, and function in an emergency situation. The dental hygienist must have sufficient dexterity and fine motor skills to securely operate delicate instruments and dental materials in the oral cavity.

### ***Sensory/Observation***

With or without reasonable accommodations, the applicant must be able to acquire the information presented through demonstrations and experiences. Applicant must be able to observe a patient accurately, at a distance and close at hand, as well as interpret non-verbal communications while performing assessment, intervention, instrumentation, and administration of local anesthesia. The applicant must be capable of identifying anatomy in the oral cavity, signs of disease, infection, and health through physical examination. Such information is derived from images of tooth structure, palpable changes in organs and tissues, and auditory information. Applicants should have normal, functional vision with corrective eyewear. Applicants should have auditory ability sufficient for monitoring and assessment of patient health needs.

### ***Behavioral/Emotional***

With or without reasonable accommodations, an applicant must possess the emotional health required for the full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of responsibilities. An applicant must demonstrate the emotional stability to assess situations without judgment, and apply critical thinking skills in a systematic and professional manner. In addition, he or she must be able to maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships under all circumstances, including highly stressful situations. It is necessary for applicants to be able to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways. The applicant must be able to demonstrate and communicate empathy for the situations and circumstances of others. The applicant should be aware that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others. The applicant must be able to deal effectively with stress, and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback.

### ***Communication***

With or without reasonable accommodations, the applicant must communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, patients, family, and other professionals. The applicant must be able to convey and exchange information in order to develop a health history, identify problems presented, explain alternative solutions, and give directions during treatment and post-treatment. The applicant must be able to communicate effectively in oral and written forms with individuals of all backgrounds and education levels. The applicant must be able to process and communicate information with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the health care team. The appropriate communication may also rely on the applicant's ability to make a correct judgment in seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.

### ***Cognitive***

With or without reasonable accommodations, an applicant must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize in the context of dental hygiene study. The applicant must be able to quickly read and comprehend extensive written material. He or she must also be able to evaluate, apply information, and engage in critical thinking in the classroom and clinical setting.

### ***Professional Conduct***

Applicants must possess the ability to reason morally and practice dental hygiene in an ethical manner. Applicants must be willing to learn and abide by professional standards of practice. He or she must demonstrate compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. Applicants must be able to engage in patient care delivery in all settings and to all populations. Applicants who are selected for the program must pass a criminal background check.

State Fair Community College's Associate of Applied Science Degree in Dental Hygiene certifies that graduates have been educated to enter practice as a dental hygienist, having demonstrated competency in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Professional coursework and general education requirements contribute to the development and completion of

these competencies. To be eligible to sit for the National and Regional licensure examinations, all components of the degree program must be completed.

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