

Archived: September 9, 2021

Health Programs

Dental Hygiene

Location Offered:

Nanaimo

Credential:

Diploma

Program Length:

2 Years

The Program

The Dental Hygiene Diploma program at Vancouver Island University is a Commission on Dental Accreditation Canada (CDAC) accredited program. The program provides education in the application of preventative and therapeutic methods of oral disease control and oral health promotion.

The concepts of health education, professionalism, critical thinking, life-long learning, and community service are strongly encouraged in the program curriculum. Students have the opportunity to apply knowledge and gain practical experience in public dental clinics and dental health activities in the community. Strong computer literacy is highly recommended prior to admission to the program.

Upon successful completion of the program, students will be granted a diploma which makes them eligible to apply for registration and licensure with the College of Dental Hygienists of BC (as per their criteria) as a Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH).

Program Outline

| YEAR 1 | |
|--|----------------|
| Semester 1 | Credits |
| DHYG 210 - (Dental Hygiene Foundations I) | 3 |
| DHYG 211 - (Dental Hygiene Preclinic) | 3 |
| DHYG 212 - (Head and Neck Anatomy) | 3 |
| DHYG 213 - (Elements of Dental Hygiene) | 3 |
| DHYG 214 - (Pathology I: Introduction to Periodontal Diseases) | 3 |
| DHYG 218 - (Dental Histology and Embryology) | 1.5 |
| DHYG 219 - (Radiography I) | 1.5 |
| Semester 2 | |
| DHYG 220 - (Dental Hygiene Foundations II) | 3 |
| DHYG 221 - (Dental Hygiene Clinic I) | 3 |
| DHYG 222 - (Pharmacology I: Local Anesthetic) | 3 |
| DHYG 224 - (Pathology II: Oral Diseases) | 3 |
| DHYG 225 - (Dental Materials) | 3 |
| DHYG 227 - (Health Promotion I: Oral Health for Individuals) | 3 |
| DHYG 229 - (Radiography II) | 3 |
| Total Credits | 39 |

| YEAR 2 | |
|---|----------------|
| Semester 1 | |
| | Credits |
| DHYG 310 - (Dental Hygiene Foundations III) | 3 |
| DHYG 311 - (Dental Hygiene Clinic II) | 4 |
| DHYG 312 - (Pharmacology II) | 4 |
| DHYG 314 - (Pathology III: DH Care for Complex Clients) | 3 |
| DHYG 317 - (Health Promotion II: Concepts in Dental Public Health) | 1.5 |
| Choose <i>one</i> of the following: | |
| HHS 263 - (Elder Teachings Across Disciplines) | 3 |
| HSD 201 - (First Nations Wellness I: Models and Strategies) | |
| HSD 202 - (First Nations Wellness II: Models and Strategies) | |
| HHS 430 - (International Perspectives on the Social Determinants of Health) | |
| Semester 2 | |
| DHYG 320 - (Dental Hygiene Foundations IV) | 3 |
| DHYG 321 - (Dental Hygiene Clinic III) | 4 |
| DHYG 323 - (Professional Issues in Dental Hygiene) | 3 |
| DHYG 324 - (Pathology IV: DH Care for Medically Compromised Clients) | 3 |
| DHYG 326 - (Research Methodology) | 3 |
| DHYG 327 - (Health Promotion III: Community Oral Health Interventions) | 3 |
| Total Credits | 37.5 |

Completion Requirements

To be eligible for a Diploma in Dental Hygiene, students must have met all of the learning outcomes and completed all program courses with a minimum "B-" in each course.

Admission Requirements

Prerequisites

| Course | Credits | Course Options |
|------------------------|---------|---|
| English | 6 | Degree English Requirement |
| Anatomy and Physiology | 8* | BIOL 151/152/153/154 or BIOL 156/157 |
| Chemistry | 8* | CHEM 140/141 or CHEM 140/142 |
| Psychology | 6 | PSYC 111/112 or PSYC 121/122 or PSYC 131/132 |
| Statistics | 3 | MATH 211 or MATH 161 |
| Elective | 3 | Any 100 or 200 level course (courses without a T or G suffix) |

**Or an approved equivalent course with lower credit value. For example: 6 credits may be approved for Anatomy and Physiology and Chemistry prerequisites if courses are deemed equivalent.*

Note: Students laddering into a Bachelor of Dental Science (Dental Hygiene) degree after completion of the Dental Hygiene Diploma need to check with the receiving institution for transferability of prerequisites.

- General admission requirements apply.
- Students must have completed the minimum requirements listed in the prerequisite list (above), or equivalent.
- Submission of a Personal Profile.

Notes on Admission

Acceptance into the Dental Hygiene Diploma program is competitive and will be determined by a combination of GPA and Personal Profile scores. Once accepted into the program, students will be required to submit the following information by early August:

- A completed Immunization Requirements Form is required. The Health Immunization form must be signed by the public health nurse.
- Evidence of successfully completing a nationally recognized WHMIS course.
- Evidence of current CPR Level "C" certification or Level HCP (healthcare provider).
- Criminal Record Check. Fieldwork, practicums, or clinical practice will require a satisfactory criminal record check prior to placement. Criminal Record Checks are requested through VIU. The Registration Centre at VIU will contact prospective students by mail regarding the requirements for a Criminal Record Check. Criminal Record Checks are processed through the Ministry according to the Criminal Records Review Act. A check completed through the RCMP is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the Act.

Progression within the Program:

A student may be discontinued in their program for a variety of reasons: course failure; withdrawal for personal, medical, fitness to practice concerns, etc. Since each semester is a pre-requisite for the subsequent semester, a student who does not successfully complete a semester will be discontinued in the program. If the student becomes eligible for re-entry, the student may request re-entry for when that course/semester is next offered. Re-entry is subject to seat availability; a seat will not be set aside for a returning student.

1. Course Failure:

- A student who is unsuccessful/fails a program course, cannot proceed into the next semester and will be required to discontinue from the program. The student may request re-entry for the semester when that course is next offered.
- A student who is unsuccessful/fails a practice course, will be required to retake that practice course when it is next offered and may also be required to retake the theory and/or lab/learning centre course(s) that inform that practice course, upon the discretion of the program chair.
- A student who is unsuccessful/fails a single program course, re-enters and retakes the same course and subsequently fails that course (e.g., fails the same course twice), will be required to leave the program. If the student wants to re-enter the program, they must wait a minimum of two years and must apply to semester 1/year 1 of the program with no credit for previously completed program courses.
- A student who is unsuccessful/fails any two program courses (any combination of practice, lab, and/or theory), will be required to leave the program. If the student wants to re-enter the program, they must wait a minimum of two years and must apply as a new student to a semester 1/year 1 of the program with no credit for previously completed program courses.

**'Program courses' are those courses that are core to the program (e.g., electives are excluded).*

Re-Entry After Withdrawal from Program

See also section below regarding re-entry to program.

A student who withdraws from the program (e.g., due to personal, financial, health, fitness to practice reasons) may request re-entry for when that semester is next

offered.

2. Notice of Discontinuation:

A student who is required to be discontinued from the program will first meet with the Program Chair. The re-entry process will be discussed, including any conditions for re-entry and any support services designed to help the student achieve greater success in their future studies. A 'Student Discontinuation Form' will be completed; the student will receive a copy of this form.

Re-entry into the Program:

1. Notice of Re-Entry:

A student seeking re-entry after withdrawing or being required to discontinue, must make their intent to return known to the Program Chair, in writing (formal letter or email), as soon as possible and no later than four months prior to the desired start date. The approval of a request for re-entry will take into consideration the date which the written notification was received by the Chair of the program.

2. Seat Availability

Re-entry into the program is subject to seat availability.

3. Corrective Learning Plan for Re-entry

In order to facilitate a successful re-entry, prior to offering a re-entry student a program seat, the student will meet with the Program Chair and/or Program Advisor. Each student will be assessed individually and the 'Student Discontinuation Form' notes will be reviewed including recommendations for program re-entry. The student will complete a *Corrective Learning Plan* of how they have/will ensure competency/currency in their knowledge, skills, and practice; any gaps identified; specific strategies to close those gaps; and a specific timeline of what must be completed prior to re-entry. At the discretion of the Program Chair and/or Program Advisor, the Corrective Learning Plan may include the requirement for the student to complete:

1. A Directed Studies Course that focuses on integration of program knowledge, skills, and practice including decision-making and critical thinking. (Level/expectation will be consistent with what would be expected of a student at the level the student is returning to). The course will be structured around that student's specific learning needs.
2. OR one or more of the following:
 - Med Math (Drug Calculations for Health Care) Exam
 - Skills assessment on previously learning skills
 - Simulation Scenario and/or comprehensive lab scenario
 - Comprehensive Care Plan
 - Audit of lab/learning centre and/or theory courses. A student cannot audit a practice course.
 - Repeat of lab/learning centre, practice, and/or theory courses.

If the student does not successfully complete the requirements of the Corrective Learning Plan, then the Program Chair may:

- Permit the student to re-enter but at an earlier semester and repeat certain courses.
- Not permit the student to re-enter or re-apply to that program for a minimum of

two years.

4. Number of Times for Re-entry

A student who has been discontinued from the program due to course failure, may re-enter the program at the point where they exited the program once only. If the student is requesting a second re-entry into the program, they must first meet with the Dean and Program Chair who will determine the eligibility for re-entry.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The maximum time for a student to complete all program requirements is 3 years, with no period of absence exceeding 12 months.

Under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Dean and Program Chair, a student may be granted an extension.

Notes on Registration and Licensure

Authorization for a criminal record check is required to register and license as a dental hygienist in British Columbia. A criminal conviction may interfere with eligibility for registration.

Career Opportunities

Registered dental hygienists are key members of the oral health team. The RDH provides high quality dental care, helps prevent oral disease, and promotes oral health. Graduates apply to the provincial authorities (or equivalent) for registration. Opportunities exist for licensure and registration in over 50 countries where dental hygienists are an integral component of health care.

Graduates can work in a number of settings including: general and specialty dental offices, self-owned independent dental hygiene practices, residential care facilities, hospitals, educational institutions, and community health agencies. RDHs may also work as self-employed contractors, researchers, or sales representatives to dental companies.

More information can be found on the British Columbia Dental Hygienists' Association (BCDHA) website.

Start Date and Application Deadline

The program starts in September and applications will be accepted between the first business day in October and March 31.

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