



SAVANNAH TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Dental Assisting Program



Fact Booklet

**Savannah Technical College
5717 White Bluff Road
Savannah, GA 31405**

Dear Prospective Dental Assisting Student,

Welcome and thank you for choosing Savannah Technical College to assist you in the pursuit of your career in dental assisting. The dental assisting profession requires theoretical and clinical skills and the ability to learn and apply new knowledge quickly. There is an enormous commitment that is necessary to succeed. Therefore, the Dental Assisting Department at Savannah Technical College has a competitive admissions process. The process is designed to ensure maximum opportunity for student success in the program and on the Dental Assisting National Board. The program is accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation.

The Dental Assisting program provides academic and occupational preparation and uses a variety of methods, technologies, and materials to enable the graduate to provide competent care. Clinical experience is planned so that theory and practice are integrated to provide optimum learning through "hands on" experience. Clinical experiences are supervised by a qualified clinical instructor.

The Dental Assisting Program sequence begins once a year at the beginning of spring quarter. The preliminary program process must be completed by the end of winter quarter. The Personal Data Form (application for the program) may be obtained from the Dental Assisting Department in the Fall Quarter, but only after regular admission status to the school has been accomplished and documented. Students should contact Student Services for orientation dates. Entrance in the program is competitive. Students who are not selected to advance into the program on the initial attempt may reapply during subsequent admission intake periods. There is no waiting list between intake periods; students must complete the application process for each attempt for advancement into the Dental Assisting program.

It is highly recommended for students to spend some time in the dental field observing the duties a dental assistant performs on a daily basis prior to applying for admission to the Dental Assisting Program. This may help to ensure your satisfaction with your career choice and will give you a better understanding of what is expected from professional dental assistants.

Thank you for your interest in the Dental Assisting Program and for choosing Savannah Technical College to pursue your career goals.

Stephanie Derfus BS, CDA, EFDA
Department Head – Dental Assisting
Savannah Technical College

Career Information

The multi service profession of dentistry provides diversified employment opportunities for dental assistants. These employment opportunities include: general dentistry, group practice, specific dental specialties, i.e., oral surgery, endodontics, orthodontics, prosthetics, periodontics, pedodontics, public health dentistry, hospital dentistry, dental school clinics, and federal, state, and community clinics.

Program Advancement Requirements

Before being considered for acceptance in the Dental Assisting program, the prospective student must:

1. Attend a New Student Orientation. Please contact Student Services for orientation dates.
2. Obtain regular admission status to Savannah Technical College.
3. Have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED).
4. Submit transcripts of postsecondary courses for consideration (if applicable).
5. Complete a financial aid application.
6. Have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.
7. Complete the Personal Data Form and turn in by the end of Fall Quarter.
8. Have completed, with a grade of "C" or better, the following courses prior to the start of the program: Foundations of Mathematics (MAT1012), English (ENG1010), General Psychology (PSY1010), Basic Human Biology (DEN1010) **or** Anatomy and Physiology (AHS1011), Introduction to Microcomputers (SCT100), and Introduction into Healthcare (AHS104).
9. Points are awarded for successful completion and will be included as part of the personal data score for the courses mentioned in #8.
10. Be at least 18 years old when DEN1390 Dental Radiology is taken.
11. Attend a mandatory Dental Assisting Program orientation upon acceptance to the program. The date at time will be listed in your acceptance letter.

Prior to clinical experience the following must be obtained at the students' expense and copies submitted to the Department Head (the proper forms will be distributed during orientation to the program):

1. Physical Examination including lab tests and necessary vaccinations (within 1 year of attending clinical)
2. Dental Examination (within 1 year of attending clinical)
3. Tuberculosis skin test PPD (within 6 months of attending clinical)
4. Current CPR certification
5. Immunization record
6. Malpractice Insurance

Estimated Program Costs

Note: costs are subject to change:

Tuition & School Fees	See current catalog
Uniforms and Equipment	500.00
Liability Insurance	16.00
Immunizations	varies
Physical and Dental Exam	varies
Text books	500.00
Miscellaneous (school pin, graduation, etc.)	50.00
Expanded Functions Certification	70.00
Dental Assisting National Board	350.00

Total

\$1,486.00

Plus tuition

Academic Standards

Any Allied Health Diploma/Degree student who fails an AHS or program specific course (MAS, SUR, DEN, NSG, or NPT) course may repeat the course **ONCE**. The student may repeat the failed course, when the course is offered again. However, if a second failure occurs in that course or any other AHS or program specific course, the student will be dropped from the program.

Passing a course must be a "C" or better (as outlined in student handbook and course catalog). Course failure consists of a "D", "F", or any withdrawal.

Dental Assisting students must receive a "C" or better in all curriculum courses in order to proceed to the next sequence of classes. If a student receives a "D", "F", or any withdrawal, they will be dismissed from the program. If this is the first failure or withdrawal in the program, the student will be able to repeat the class one time, the next time it is offered. If the repeated class or any other course in the Dental Assisting Program curriculum is not completed with a "C" or better, the student will be dismissed from the program and will not be readmitted.

Dental Assisting Curriculum Sequence

	Course		Credit Hours
Prior to Program Admission	*ENG 1010	English	5
	*PSY 1010	General Psychology	5
	*MAT 1012	Foundations of Mathematics	5
	*AHS 101	Anatomy and Physiology	5
		OR	
	*DEN 1010	Basic Human Biology	2
	*SCT 100	Introduction to Microcomputers	3
	*AHS 104	Introduction into Health Care	3
		Total	26 or 23
Spring Quarter	**DEN1030	Preventive Dentistry	3
	**DEN1050	Microbiology and Infection Control	3
	**DEN 1060	Oral Anatomy	5
	**DEN 1340	Dental Assisting I	6
		Total	17
Summer Quarter	**DEN 1020	Head and Neck Anatomy	2
	**DEN 1390	Dental Radiology	5
	**DEN 1350	Dental Assisting II	6
	**DEN 1460	Dental Practicum I	2
		Total	15
Fall Quarter	**DEN 1070	Oral Pathology and Therapeutics	3
	**DEN 1370	Dental Assisting –Expanded Functions	4
	**DEN1360	Dental Assisting III	4
	**DEN 1470	Dental Practicum II	2
		Total	13
Winter Quarter	**DEN 1380	Scopes of Professional Practice	1
	**DEN 1090	Dental Assisting National Board Examination Preparation	2
	**DEN 1400	Dental Practice Management	4
	**DEN 1480	Dental Practicum III	8
		Total	15
Total Program Hours			86 or 83

*Courses must be completed prior to entering the program

**Courses are program specific and cannot be taken out of sequence

A Personal Data Form must be submitted to the Department Head in the Fall Quarter to be considered for the Spring class.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for determining if they are able to meet the attendance requirements of the program. Students must provide their own transportation to and from clinical sites and their own medical insurance. Responsibilities for individual courses will be outlined by the instructor.

Services

Detailed information concerning the program, progression in the program, financial aid, childcare and other services is available in the catalog and on the WEB at www.savannahtech.edu.

Nondiscriminatory Policy and Institutional Status

Savannah Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, religion, color, creed, marital status, disability, national origin, or academic or economic disadvantages in educational programs, services, activities or in employment practices. Savannah Technical College is a division of the Technical College System of Georgia. Savannah Technical College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of Southern Association and Schools to award associated degrees and diplomas.

Disability Statement

Savannah Technical College is committed to working with students who have disabilities to assist with program accessibility and academic accommodations that may be necessary due to a disability. Students who have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities are eligible for services. If you think you may have a qualifying disability, please visit the disability services coordinator to establish your eligibility and to arrange accommodations.

Harriette Brown

Disability Services Coordinator
Savannah Technical College
5717 White Bluff Road
912.443.5717

Program Contact Information

Please contact the department head with any questions you may have regarding the Dental Assisting or Dental Office Management Programs.

Stephanie Derfus BS, CDA, EFDA
Department Head – Dental Assisting
Savannah Technical College
5717 White Bluff Rd.
Savannah GA 31405
912.443.5812
sderfus@savannahtech.edu

**SAVANNAH TECHNICAL COLLEGE
DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

1. What is the future in the Dental Assisting profession?

As the “baby boomer” population ages, all health care fields are projected for tremendous growth. As population centers grow, health care needs will rise. There will be a strong need for dental assistants no matter where you live. Because many dental assistants are younger females, the turnover rate is relatively high as assistants marry, have children, and/or follow their spouses’ career moves.

2. Where will I be able to find a job with this type of training?

The multi-service profession of dentistry provides diversified employment opportunities for dental assistants. These employment opportunities include, but are not limited to: general dentistry, group practice, specific dental specialties, i.e., oral surgery, endodontics, orthodontics, prosthetics, periodontics, pedodontics, public health dentistry, dental school clinics, and federal, state, and community clinics. With experience, dental assistants may find careers in sales, consulting, insurance, and education fields.

3. What will I earn?

Starting Salaries in the local area range from \$10.00 to approximately \$14.00 an hour, depending on the location and type of work and any relevant professional certifications you may have. When considering positions remember to look at the complete package of benefits combined with the base salary. For example, a slightly lower salary may be more beneficial if the health insurance and retirement benefits are generous.

4. What will I learn to do in this program?

As a graduate you will possess the skills to perform diagnostic, operative, surgical, periodontal, preventive, removable and fixed prosthodontic, endodontic, and pedodontic procedures which are part of general dentistry, while applying current concepts of chairside assisting. You will be able to expose radiographs, take and record medical and dental histories, record vital signs, make preliminary impressions for study casts, prepare and dismiss patients, perform infection control procedures, perform basic laboratory procedures, and perform basic business office procedures.

5. How long will it take me to get the training?

If you pass each course on time you can finish in six quarters – the first two quarters completing required courses prior to admission into the Dental Assisting Program, and four quarters to complete the dental courses. This is based on the assumption that you follow the recommended outline of courses.

6. When should I apply for the program?

Personal Data Forms are available beginning the first day of the Fall Quarter and the deadline to turn them in is the last day of the Fall Quarter.

7. Can I start the program at anytime I desire?

No. The program begins once a year in April. However, you may take: Math 1012, English 1010, Psychology 1010, AHS 104, and Introduction to Microcomputers (SCT 100), after you have received regular admission to the school and while you are waiting admission to the program.

8. Is there an admission test?

No. However, unless you are a transfer student with acceptable credits for Savannah Tech, or your SAT scores are high enough for regular admission, you must sit for the Asset or COMPASS test and meet school admission requirements.

9. As a good dental assistant, what personal traits should I possess?

Good assistants are able to work with people, assume responsibility, have initiative, maintain a professional appearance, take pride in their work, care for others, show dependability, punctuality, and accept instruction and correction from superiors.

10. What courses will I have to take?

Please see the curriculum outlined in the Dental Assisting Fact Booklet.

11. What is the cost of this program?

Please see the cost of the program as outlined in the Dental Assisting Fact Booklet.

12. Is financial aid available?

Yes. Contact Student Services for more information.

13. What hours do I need to commit to complete the program?

Classroom hours range from 8:00am to 4:50pm Monday through Thursday with an occasional Friday morning class. You may occasionally have a late afternoon lab class. Clinical hours vary from quarter to quarter; you may have to be in a clinical facility as early as 7:00am or until 6:00pm or 7:00pm one to three afternoons a week.

14. When will I start clinical experience?

Clinical experience begins the second quarter (Summer) and continues until graduation. Training sites include area dental offices, Hunter and Fort Stewart dental clinics, Chatham County Health Department, and others.

15. What is the attendance policy?

Attending class and clinical is mandatory. Clinical absences must be made up hour for hour. **School policy requires that those students who miss fifteen percent (15%) of the total class hours be dropped from the class.**

16. Can I hold down a part time job while attending school?

Working while in the program is not recommended; it has been done, but with difficulty.

17. How much homework is required?

There is a great deal of out of class study required. The average student spends from two to four hours after class/clinical each day studying. The program is very challenging.

18. How are students evaluated?

Academic grades for classes are determined by performance on written tests, performance tests, homework, written reports, journals, and doctor evaluations. Academic grades will be either "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F." A grade of "C" or better must be achieved in order to progress in the program. Clinical grades are based on daily observation of your procedures at the clinical facility. Contact your instructor for details on computing work ethic grades.

19. Do I have to take a special test to get my certification?

Yes. You must pass the Dental Assisting National Board and the State Certification for Expanded Functions. Like other professional designations, the CDA and EFDA is evidence of competence in a demanding field.

20. Does it cost anything to take the certification exam?

Yes; currently, the cost for the DANB exam is \$350: \$50 application fee and \$300 for the exam. The three components of the CDA exam may be taken separately at an additional cost. The Georgia Expanded Functions Dental Assistant course is currently \$70.

21. Do I have to purchase uniforms?

Yes. Students must purchase the standard student uniform. You will have the opportunity to order uniforms when you first enter the program.

22. Is Dental Assisting offered at night?

No. Class hours range from 8:00am to 4:50pm. However, some of the courses mentioned in #7 are offered in the evening or online.

23. Is there any social life at Savannah Tech?

Yes. While technical colleges are "commuter campuses," and do not offer the range of activities that a four year college or university would offer its resident students there are student activities to enjoy. Among them are Student Council, various clubs, picnics, competitions, parade participation and other enjoyable events. There is also the Dental Assisting Club.