

Savannah Technical College  
DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

**Introduction**

The fundamental mission of the dental hygiene program is to prepare competent oral health care professionals. The education of a dental hygienist requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of skills and development of judgment through patient care experience in preparation for appropriate decisions required in practice.

**Technical Standards and Essential Functions**

These technical standards and essential functions encompass the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective requirements necessary for the performance of duties of a dental hygiene student. They reflect dental hygiene performance abilities and characteristics that are necessary to successfully complete the requirements of the dental hygiene program at this College. These standards and essential functions are conditions of admission and completion of the program. Persons applying for admission to the program should review these standards to develop a better understanding of the physical abilities and behavioral characteristics necessary to successfully enter and complete the program and assess your ability to complete these essential functions.

**Technical Standards**

- Must be able to reach up to a height of 5 feet in order to position equipment
- Must be able to assist and move patients in and out of dental chair.
- Must be able to work in a confined space including but not limited to a dental operatory
- *Must possess the ability to reach, manipulate and operate mechanisms such as: dental equipment, dental chair, x-ray machines, dark room equipment, sterilization and disinfection of equipment.*
- *Must possess the ability to function with both hands and arms and have adequate manual dexterity to perform dental hygiene procedures.*
- *Must possess the ability to clearly see the patient's teeth from a 20 inch distance and the visual and mental ability to interpret radiographs.*
- Must be able to visibly differentiate the color spectrum for tissue discrimination and discern normal from abnormal structures.
- *Possess adequate hand-eye coordination and ability to distinguish right from left in order to perform dental hygiene procedures.*
- *Possess adequate sensory perception in hands and fingers to detect and remove tooth deposits.*
- *Possess the ability to handle clinical and laboratory instruments and syringes with sufficient fine motor control and in a safe manner to avoid patient injury.*

*\*The College complies with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Therefore, the College will make reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities who are otherwise qualified.*

**Essential Functions**

Visual and Observational Requirements for Dental Hygiene

- Visually interpret radiographs.
- Observe clinical and/or laboratory demonstrations.
- Read and comprehend information displayed in print and on a monitor.

Motor and Mobility Requirements for Dental Hygiene

- Work in a confined space including but not limited to a dental operatory.

- Use dental hygiene clinical/laboratory equipment and instruments to perform procedures according to established guidelines
- Perform reasonably demanding continuous physical work, often requiring prolonged sitting and/or standing for an extended period of time.
- Travel to assigned extramural clinical sites
- Use computer keyboard to operate clinical/laboratory equipment.
- Troubleshoot and correct basic equipment malfunctions when necessary.

Communication Requirements for Dental Hygiene

- Read and understand technical and professional materials (i.e. textbooks, journal articles, handbooks, and instruction manuals).
- Follow oral and written instructions independently.
- Demonstrate sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect when speaking with patients, peers, faculty and staff.
- Communicate clearly, accurately and tactfully with faculty members, peers, staff, and other health care professionals when speaking or when writing, typing, or telecommunicating.
- Demonstrate effective written and verbal communication skills

Essential Intellectual Requirements for Dental Hygiene

- Distinguish normal from abnormal.
- Comprehend, reason, integrate, analyze, evaluate, problem-solve.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills when appropriate.
- Work independently.
- To cognitively interpret radiographs.

Behavioral Requirements for Dental Hygiene

- *The Dental Hygiene student must be able to:*
- Organize work and multi-task within given time limits.
- Manage clinical time for the completion of necessary tasks.
- Possess emotional and mental health necessary to effectively apply knowledge and exercise appropriate judgment.
- Work under stress in order to provide professional community and patient services due to task-related uncertainty, program demands, or distracting environment.
- Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability to professional, technical and/or course work changes.
- Demonstrate honesty, ethical behavior, and accountability. The student must be able to critically evaluate his/her performance, accept and take action on the constructive criticism in an effort of improvement.
- Demonstrate respect for individuals of diverse ethnic backgrounds, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

*\*I have read and understand the Technical Standards of the Dental Hygiene Program and possess the ability to successfully enter and complete the program, with or without reasonable accommodations.*

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*Print Name*

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*Signature*

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*Date*