

REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTING

Diploma, 41 Credit Hours, 11-Month Program

The Registered Dental Assistant is a vital and respected member of the dental healthcare team. Graduates of this diploma program will be highly trained professionals equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide quality dental care, support efficient practice operations, and pursue registration as a Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) in the state of South Dakota.

Additionally, graduates will be eligible to sit for the Dental Assisting National Board-Certified Dental Assistant examination, further enhancing their professional credentials.

Registered Dental Assistants perform a wide range of clinical and administrative duties. They provide direct patient care and chairside assistance during dental procedures, obtain medical and dental histories, record vital signs, and take dental radiographs. They also take impressions for dental models, educate patients on oral hygiene strategies, apply preventive agents, and place pit and fissure sealants. Additionally, they develop and coordinate infection control protocols as infection control officers and perform administrative and office management tasks.

Career opportunities for Registered Dental Assistants include working in private or group dental practices specializing in general dentistry, oral surgery, orthodontics, endodontics, periodontics, prosthodontics, or pediatric dentistry. Additional career paths may include roles in dental sales, marketing, and education. Successful registered dental assistants possess strong communication skills, attention to detail, and a passion for hands-on work in a fast-paced, patient-centered environment. This rewarding career plays a crucial role in enhancing the efficiency and quality of oral healthcare delivery.

Course	No.	Course Title	Credits
General Education Requirements			
ENGL	101	COMPOSITION I* <i>or</i>	3
ENGL	106	WORKPLACE COMMUNICATIONS I*	
MATH	105	MATHEMATICAL REASONING** <i>or higher</i>	3
PSYC	101	GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY <i>or</i>	3
PSYC	103	HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE	
Total			9
Technical Requirements			
DEN	105	DENTAL SCIENCES AND ORAL HEALTH	3
DEN	108	CHAIRSIDE DENTAL ASSISTING LAB I	5
DEN	112	DENTAL PRACTICE MANAGEMENT	2
DEN	113	PHARMACOLOGY AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES	3
DEN	122	DENTAL MATERIALS	3
DEN	134	DENTAL RADIOLOGY	3
DEN	148	CHAIRSIDE DENTAL ASSISTING LAB II	5
DEN	175	DENTAL CLINICAL PRACTICES	8
Total			32

*Prerequisite: Acceptable ACCUPLACER score or Basic Writing.

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Clinicals, practicums, and internships may include, but are not limited to, differential shifts (evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays) to meet industry expectations. This may require travel outside the Rapid City area.

Professional licensure and certification requirements often vary from state to state. Educational requirements by state for this program can be found <https://www.wdt.edu/degree-programs/dental-assistant/>.

[Required steps to obtain the credential for the Registered Dental Assisting Program. \(PDF\)](#)

Semester breakdown on next page

Semester Breakdown Diploma

First Semester			Second Semester		
		CR			CR
DEN 105	Dental Sciences and Oral Health	3	DEN 112	Dental Practice Management	2
DEN 108	Chairside Dental Assisting Lab I	5	DEN 134	Dental Radiology	3
DEN 113	Pharmacology and Medical Emergencies	3	DEN 148	Chairside Dental Assisting Lab II	5
DEN 122	Dental Materials	3	ENGL 101	Composition I <i>or</i>	3
MATH 105	Mathematical Reasoning <i>or higher</i>	3	ENGL 106	Workplace Communications I	
			PSYC 101	General Psychology <i>or</i>	3
			PSYC 103	Human Relations in the Workplace	
Total Credit Hours		17	Total Credit Hours		16
Third Semester (Summer)					
		CR			
DEN 175	Dental Clinical Practices	8			
Total Credit Hours		8			

If you are or have been convicted, pleaded guilty or no contest to, or received a suspended imposition of sentence for a felony or certain misdemeanors, you are advised that you may not be able to complete all course requirements for your chosen program, you may be prevented from taking required certification/licensure examinations in your chosen program field, and you may be prevented from gaining employment in your program field.