



Department of Dental Hygiene Sciences

PREREQUISITE INFORMATION 2025-2026

General Program Information

The Department of Dental Hygiene Sciences awards a Bachelor of Science degree. Admissions criteria and the selection process vary from year to year. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Department of Dental Hygiene Sciences or access the department website after October 15 to obtain admissions information for the application year. Applications must be submitted on or before January 15 to be considered for admission to the dental hygiene program beginning each fall semester. Students must be accepted into the dental hygiene program to enroll in upper division (3000 and 4000 level) DENT courses. Applicants will be notified of their admission status by April 3, 2026.

Advising

All students MUST meet with an Idaho State University dental hygiene faculty or staff advisor at least once prior to applying to the program. Advising can be accomplished by telephone, via zoom or in person. Advising appointments are scheduled by calling the Department at (208) 282-3796. Advising early in the academic career aids in completion of all required core and general education courses. Transfer students should be advised in order to facilitate the transfer of courses to ISU and assure fulfillment of core and general education courses. Other topics discussed during the advising appointment might include admission information, program expenses, immunizations and testing related to infectious diseases, students as patients, potential disabilities, and available scholarships.

Prerequisite Core and General Education Courses

All core courses (46 credits) and general education courses (12 credits) must be completed by the end of the summer semester of the year of application. Please see criteria #3 (Completion of Core and General Education Objectives) on page 3 of the Admissions packet for more specific information.

Core Courses:

DENT 2201 Principles of Dental Hygiene*	2 credits
ENGL 1101 Writing and Rhetoric I	3 credits
ENGL 1102 Writing and Rhetoric II	3 credits
COMM 1101 Principles of Oral Communication	3 credits
MATH 1153 Statistical Reasoning	3 credits
PSYC 1101 Introduction of Psychology	3 credits
SOC 1101 Introduction to Sociology	3 credits
NTD 2239 or 3340 Nutrition	3 credits
BIOL 2227 & 2227L or 3301 Human Anat & Phys I	4 credits
BIOL 2228 & 2228L or 3302 Human Anat & Phys 2	4 credits
BIOL 2233 & 2233L Principles of Microbiology	4 credits
CHEM 1101 or 1111 Introduction to Chemistry	3 credits
CHEM 1102 & 1103L Introduction to Organic and Biochemistry	4 credits

General Education Objectives

Objective 4 - Six (6) credits selected from two different categories: Humanities, Fine Arts or Foreign Language

Objective 7 - (Critical Thinking) or Objective 8 - (Information Literacy): Three (3) credits

Objective 9 - (Cultural Diversity): Three (3) Credits

2025-2026 General Education Objective Courses: <https://coursecat.isu.edu/undergraduate/academicinformation/generaleducation/>

Electives (not required for admission)

ACAD 1101 College Learning Strategies
BIOL 2229 Introduction to Pathobiology
INFO 1101 Digital Information Literacy
DHS 1110 Introduction to Health Professions
PHIL 1103 Introduction to Ethics
PHIL 2230 Medical Ethics



*Applicants must complete DENT 2201 by the end of the summer semester (Aug) of the year of application. This is an on-line course offered each Fall (August-December), and Spring (January-May) semester, with a summer session also offered for students who have been accepted into the dental hygiene program. Non-ISU students who wish to take this course during the Fall or Spring semester can do so by applying to Idaho State University as a non-degree seeking student at <https://www.isu.edu/apply/undergraduate/>

Minimum criteria for an application to qualify for consideration

- 4 Core Science Courses completed before January 15
- 6 or fewer Core and General Education Courses to complete after January 15
- Completion of DENT 2201 (can count as one of the 6 or less courses to be completed after January 15)
- Minimum Core GPA of 2.8
- Minimum Science GPA of 2.8

Transfer Students

Students transferring from a regionally accredited junior college or community college may use a maximum of 70 credits for an Idaho State University bachelor's degree. Credits are transferred to Idaho State University at the level earned at the institution of origin.

https://tes.collegesource.com/publicview/TES_publicview01.aspx?rid=a79097de-6ae2-4656-9c42-9c471135ce4c&aid=8cb04eba-1a8d-41fc-a49f-ee264f6c5cb5

Existing Degree or Idaho Core Certification

Individuals, who have earned a Bachelor's degree an AA, AS, or AA&S degree (not AAS) from a U.S. regionally accredited institution, in 1995 or later, have met the ISU General Education requirements. Students who have completed the Idaho general education core courses and do not have a degree, but have transcripts noted "Idaho core certified," have met the ISU general education requirements. However, all required dental hygiene prerequisite courses including prerequisites to courses that may be on the Idaho State University General Education course list, will need to be completed.



Important Factors to Consider Before Applying to the Dental Hygiene Program

Dental Office Observation/Experience

Currently there is no formal requirement for dental office experience prior to being admitted to the Dental Hygiene program; however, it is beneficial for the applicant to be familiar with the work environment in which most hygienists are employed. Students are encouraged to observe in a dental office that employs a dental hygienist to become familiar with the dental team and the practice environment.

Disabilities

Idaho State University will make every effort to comply with “reasonable accommodations,” according to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans With Disabilities Act. Idaho State University will not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, or treatment of students or employees with disabilities. Our program is committed to all students achieving their potential. If you have a disability or think you have a disability (physical, learning disability, hearing, vision, psychiatric) which may need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the ADA Disabilities & Resource Center as early as possible at the following address: ADA and Disabilities Resource Center, Campus Box 8121, Pocatello, ID 83209 (208) 282-3599.

Students as Patients

Throughout the two-year Dental Hygiene Curriculum students are required to serve as a “patient” for a student partner. Student partners practice dental hygiene procedures and pain control methods (injections) on each other.

Patient Recruitment

Students have specific patient cases that are required throughout the curriculum to meet both department and accreditation requirements. The department recruits patients through advertisements, the clinic recall system, and other mechanisms. It is ultimately the student’s responsibility to recruit patients to fulfill required cases.



Professionalism and Dress Code

Professional appearance and behaviors are important to the dental hygiene profession and department image. Therefore, students enrolled in the dental hygiene program are expected to display professional behavior and wear appropriate attire while in the classroom, the clinical setting and during campus activities. Idaho State University dental hygiene students will adhere to an appropriately modest and professional dress code suitable for the activity in which they are engaged.

Health professionals should consider the impact of their personal appearance in the clinical environment. To ensure proper infection control and the safety of the students, a clinical dress code is required. As a reminder of the professional responsibility required of students, guidelines have been created to apply codes of cleanliness, appropriate dress and behavior for all students enrolled in the program.

Latex or Chemical Allergy or Sensitivity, and Cumulative Trauma Disorders

Individuals who have a latex or chemical allergy/sensitivity to agents found in examination gloves or a cumulative trauma disorder (such as carpal tunnel syndrome, thoracic outlet syndrome, tendonitis, lateral epicondylitis, etc.) should discuss the implications of these conditions with a physician and a dental hygiene faculty member. The severity of these conditions may adversely impact the individual's performance in the program and upon graduation, the practice of dental hygiene. Careful consideration of these conditions is imperative to a career in dental hygiene. The department works very closely with students who have any of these existing conditions or develop these conditions once in the program and their physician to determine the best course of action to assist with improving the condition.



Infectious Diseases

When a prospective student contracts an infectious disease, he/she should consider how that status would affect his/her future in healthcare. Information to help make decisions about one's future as a student or healthcare worker is available through a district health department or personal physician. In cases when a prospective student discloses that he/she has an infectious disease, the case will be reported to the State Epidemiologist who will assess if the student performs invasive procedures. When the assessment determines that exposure-prone procedures are performed, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare will assess, through an expert review panel, the risk of the worker-to-client exposure. When the panel determines that the risk of client exposure is high, the individual will be referred to the Idaho State Board of Dentistry for evaluation of the procedures performed, fitness to practice, and future practice restrictions. All evaluations and assessments remain confidential. The determination of whether an individual poses a significant risk to clients will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It may be necessary to modify educational methods, employment responsibilities, and/or treatment protocols based on the results of the expert review panel and the licensing board review.

Immunization and Testing Policy

Policies and procedures for vaccinations, testing and post-exposure incidents have been developed to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), American Dental Association (ADA), American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) and extramural site recommendations or policies. Idaho State University dental hygiene students, in the course of their clinical/academic duties have significant exposure to blood, blood products, tissue, secretions or body fluids of patients potentially containing hepatitis B (HBV) and are at risk for HBV as well as other infectious diseases. Unintentional punctures of the skin with contaminated instruments or needles sometimes occur despite careful technique. These factors increase student risk for contracting diseases. There are additional protocols for COVID-19, please see the department for more details on this.



The Department of Dental Hygiene Sciences requires the following immunizations and CPR certification:

Documentation of required immunizations is required to begin the dental hygiene program. If HBV has not been completed or initiated at the time of application the vaccination series must be started by January 2026 to assure completion prior to the program start date in August 2026:

- CPR course with Basic Life Support (BLS) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) certification is required prior to beginning the junior year and must be maintained throughout the curriculum.
- The CDC recommends all health care providers receive an annual influenza vaccination. The Department of Dental Hygiene requires that all students, faculty and staff follow these guidelines.
- Hepatitis B vaccination verification and proof of immunity through a blood test. The student must receive antibody testing that shows him/her to have sufficient immunity after the three-injection series has been received.
- Tuberculosis (TB) testing by the PPD test and verification of the results (positive or negative). Results of a TB test must be submitted each year. In the event that the test is positive, the student will follow the physician's recommendations for treatment and submit verification that these recommendations are being followed.
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination verification or proof of immunity to Measles (Rubella) and Rubella (German Measles) through a blood test.
- It is also recommended that students are immunized with the Influenza; Diphtheria and Tetanus (DT); Polio; and Chicken Pox (Varicella) vaccinations for additional protection.

If these vaccinations or TB testing are contraindicated or refused for medical, personal or age considerations, the student must sign the Vaccination Declination Form.

TB testing results and the MMR vaccination (or proof of immunity) are required by the policies of extramural sites. The Department cannot guarantee participation in extramural rotations should the student choose not to comply with these requirements.

Vaccinations and testing can be received at any District Health Department, Idaho State University Health Center, or through the student's personal physician. Costs associated with the vaccinations and testing are the responsibility of the student.

Health Insurance Coverage

Health insurance coverage is required for students throughout the dental hygiene program. It should include but is not limited to, payment for treatment and follow-up procedures, including exposure to blood-borne pathogens as well as other potentially infectious materials.

Essential Requirements for Dental Hygiene Students and Dental Hygienists

- Utilize dental magnification (loupes) to distinguish among fine structural and color differences of intraoral tissues including oral pathologies (i.e. red vs. pink, blue, black vs. brown).
- Move freely and safely within a dental operator and laboratory setting and reach counters and shelves using proper ergonomic principles.
- Perform moderately strenuous and continuous physical work requiring prolonged sitting for several hours.
- Maneuver dental, radiology, and nitrous oxide portable equipment.
- Control dental and dental hygiene instruments using precision fine motor skills while providing dental hygiene therapy.
- Use a computer/keyboard to calculate, record, and transmit clinical information.
- Read and comprehend technical and professional materials.
- Follow verbal and written instructions to correctly and independently perform a self-assessment of laboratory activities and clinical procedures on patients.
- Converse with patients in a confidential, sensitive, and effective manner regarding their medical and oral conditions.
- Communicate effectively with faculty, staff, peers, and other healthcare professionals verbally and in written/typed format.
- Utilize effective time management to complete professional and technical tasks within realistic constraints.
- Prepare papers and reports, clinical notes, and take written, computer, and clinical practical examinations.
- Possess the emotional wellness necessary to effectively employ intellectual and appropriate judgment and mindfulness in potentially stressful situations.
(https://wellness.ucr.edu/emotional_wellness.html)
- Provide professional and technical patient services within the constraints in the various educational settings.
- Be flexible and creative to adapt to professional and technological changes.
- Recognize potential hazardous materials, equipment, and situations to minimize risk of injury to self, patients, and other individuals.



All states require Dental Hygienists to be licensed. In addition to successfully graduating from an accredited dental hygiene program, graduates must pass a didactic National Dental Hygiene Board Examination and Regional or state written and clinical examinations to obtain a dental hygiene license. The Idaho State Board of Dentistry practice act requires candidates for licensure to be of good moral character and lawfully live and work in the United States. Prospective students should be aware if they have felony or misdemeanor convictions or a history of substance abuse this may preclude licensure as a dental hygienist in some states.

Idaho State University Department of Dental Hygiene Sciences is a fully accredited program by the American Dental Association, Commission on Dental Accreditation, 2018.

CODA

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