

DENTAL HYGIENE

1902 N. Loop 499
Harlingen, Texas 78550

Program Director: 956-364-4702
Dental Hygiene Clinic: 956-364-4696
Fax: 956-364-5162

Dear Dental Hygiene Candidate,

Welcome, we are very proud of the excellent dental hygiene program offered here at TSTC, and we are glad you wish to be a part of it! The enclosed packet of information has been prepared to help guide you through the application process. Because admission to the dental hygiene program is extremely competitive, candidates must attend an informational session to clarify admission requirements. The informational session schedule can be found on the TSTC Portal Website at tstc.edu/dental-info. Please call Kristen De Leon at (956) 364-4636 if you have any questions on the informational session schedule. Please note that informational sessions will be held in Building U, Rm. 108 every first Wednesday of the month at 3:00 p.m. Students must take the **Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) examination**, to be considered eligible candidates for the Dental Hygiene Program. Please review the psychomotor and cognitive requirements listed on page 6 under Candidate Pool when considering dental hygiene as your professional career path. The program is a two-year program and after completion of the program, you will receive an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Dental Hygiene. We are looking forward to helping you!

Sincerely,

Raquel Rico, RDH, M.Ed
Dental Hygiene Program Director
(956) 364-4702.
raquel.rico@tstc.edu

DENTAL HYGIENE DEGREE PLAN 2027-2029

Effective Fall 2026

COURSE	TITLE	LEC	LAB	EXT	CONTACT HOURS	CREDIT HOURS
Pre-requisites						
BIOL 2401	A & P I (Lect & Lab)	3	3	0	96	4
or BIOL 2301	A & P I Lect.	3	0	0	48	3
and BIOL 2101	A & P I Lab	0	3	0	48	1
CHEM 1405	Intro to Chemistry (Lect & Lab)	3	3	0	96	4
or CHEM 1305	Intro to Chemistry Lect.	3	0	0	48	3
and CHEM 1105	Intro to Chemistry Lab	0	3	0	48	1
ENGL 1301	Composition I	3	0	0	48	3
SPCH (1311, 1315, or 1318)	Speech Elective	3	0	0	48	3
TOTAL HOURS		12	6	0	288	14

FALL SEMESTER (First Year)

DHYG 1227	Preventive Dental Hygiene Care	2	1	0	48	2
DHYG 1301	Orofacial Anatomy, Histology, and Embryology	3	1	0	64	3
DHYG 1331	Preclinical Dental Hygiene	1	7	0	128	3
DHYG 1304	Dental Radiology	2	4	0	96	3
BIOL 2402	A & P II (Lect & Lab)	3	3	0	96	4
or BIOL 2302	A & P II Lect.	3	0	0	48	3
and BIOL 2102	A & P II Lab	0	3	0	48	1
TOTAL HOURS		11	16	0	432	15

SPRING SEMESTER (First Year)

DHYG 1211	Periodontology	2	1	0	48	2
DHYG 1235	Pharmacology	2	1	0	48	2
DHYG 1360	Clinical-Dental Hygiene/Hygienist	0	0	12	192	3
DHYG 2201	Dental Hygiene Care I	2	1	0	48	2
BIOL 2420	Microbiology Non-Science Majors (Lect & Lab)	3	3	0	96	4
or BIOL 2320	Microbiology Non-Science Majors Lect.	3	0	0	48	3
and BIOL 2120	Microbiology Non-Science Majors Lab	0	3	0	48	1
TOTAL HOURS		9	6	12	432	13

FALL SEMESTER (Second Year)

DHYG 1215	Community Dentistry	1	4	0	80	2
DHYG 1219	Dental Materials	1	4	0	80	2
DHYG 1239	General and Oral Path	2	1	0	48	2
DHYG 2360	Clinic Dental Hygienist III	0	0	14	224	3
BIOL 1322	Nutrition and Diet Therapy	3	0	0	48	3
TOTAL HOURS		7	9	14	480	12

SPRING SEMESTER (Second Year)

DHYG 2153	Dental Hygiene Practice	1	0	0	16	1
DHYG 2461	Clinic Dental Hygienist IV	0	0	16	256	3
PSYC 2301	General Psychology	3	0	0	48	3
SOCI 1301	Intro to Sociology	3	0	0	48	3
ACGM Gen Ed Humanities/Fine Arts Elective		3	0	0	48	3
TOTAL HOURS		10	0	16	416	14
GRAND TOTAL		49	37	42	2048	68

TSTC Dental Hygiene Program Fee Estimate 2027-2029

Estimated Program Cost Breakdown

I. Tuition and Institutional Fees

Semester	Texas Resident	Non-Texas Resident
Semester 1 – Prerequisites	\$2,716.00	\$4,872.00
Semester 2 – 1st Fall*	\$4,153.00	\$6,463.00
Semester 3 – 1st Spring	\$3,539.00	\$5,541.00
Semester 4 – 2nd Fall	\$3,345.00	\$5,193.00
Semester 5 – 2nd Spring	<u>\$3,281.00</u>	<u>\$5,437.00</u>

Total Texas Resident: \$17,034.00 / Non-Texas Resident: \$27,506.00

II. Additional Program Expenses (*This is only an estimate*)

Expense	Estimated Cost
Vaccinations and TB testing	\$300.00
Background screening	\$60.00
Drug testing	\$50.00
Dental Hygiene Instrument Kit #1	\$3,500.00
Dental Hygiene Instrument Kit #2	\$1,200.00
Surgical loupes	\$1,500.00
Trajecsys clinical tracking system	\$150.00
Scrubs and clinic shoes	\$405.00
CPR certification	\$50.00
ADHA membership dues	\$130.00
Books	\$2,550.00
National Dental Hygiene Exam review	\$350.00
National Board review travel expenses	\$500.00
CDCA-WREB Clinical Board Exam	\$1,300.00
National Board Exam	<u>\$650.00</u>

Total Estimated Additional Program Expenses: \$12,695.00

III. Total Estimated Program Cost

Texas Resident: **\$29,718.00**

Non-Texas Resident: **\$40,190.00**

IV. Important Information

- All costs listed are estimates and are subject to change.
- Expenses may vary based on vendor pricing, board examination fees, and other program requirements.

- Certain items, such as instrument kits, loupes, and uniforms, are one-time purchases.
- Board examination fees are typically incurred during the final semesters of the program.

V. Disclaimer

The fees provided are estimates only and do not guarantee the total cost of the program. Additional expenses may be incurred after admission. **GENERAL INFORMATION AND COMMON QUESTIONS REGARDING**

2027 ADMISSION INTO THE TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

- **DISCLAIMER:** The Dental Hygiene Program reserves the right to make changes to the admissions criteria at any time deemed necessary

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

The program is fully accredited through the American Dental Association Joint Commission on Dental Accreditation. For more information call Ms. Raquel Rico at 956.364.4702 (e-mail; raquel.rico@tstc.edu) and/or Lori Renteria at 956.364.4696.

COMPLIANCE WITH BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS STANDARDS AND OTHER REGULATORY POLICIES

Dental Hygiene students come in contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials during the clinical portion of their studies. The Dental Hygiene Program follows all CDC, OSHA, EPA, and other protective policies to protect themselves and their patients from occupational exposures to these potential hazards. Additionally in order to meet our clinical site requirements, students are required to provide verification of vaccination before being allowed to participate in mandatory clinical time. Prospective dental hygiene students are encouraged to start the Hepatitis B vaccination series as early as possible, to be complete by the start of the program along with the other required vaccinations, such as Tetanus-Diphtheria (Tdap), Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR), Influenza and the COVID-19 vaccinations. TSTC Dental Hygiene Program complies with all institutional, local, state, and federal regulations on bloodborne pathogens and infectious diseases, ionizing radiation, and hazardous materials. Strict adherence with Privacy Protection (HIPAA) is required of all students, faculty, and staff.

CANDIDATE POOL

The program is highly competitive, with the number of candidates varying each year from 60-75. We can accept up to 15 candidates per class, if appropriate. Acceptance is strictly based on the objective selection criteria outlined on page ten of this packet, with only qualified candidates being accepted. Qualified candidate requirements also include cognitive, psychomotor, physical, and sensory abilities as outlined in the dental hygiene program policies. These policies include, but are not limited to

1. **Arm-Hand Steadiness:** The ability to keep your hand and arm steady while moving your arm or while holding your arm and hand in one position.
2. **Control Precision:** The ability to quickly and repeatedly adjust the controls of a machine or a vehicle to exact positions.
3. **Finger Dexterity:** The ability to make precisely coordinated movements of the fingers of one or both hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble very small objects.
4. **Manual Dexterity:** The ability to quickly move your hand, your hand together with your arm, or your two hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble objects.

5. Deductive Reasoning: The ability to apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
6. Inductive Reasoning: The ability to combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding relationships among seemingly unrelated events).
7. Oral Comprehension: The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
8. Selective Attention: The ability to concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted.

WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF GETTING ACCEPTED?

A minimum grade point average of 3.0 is required for acceptance. Admission to the Dental Hygiene Program is highly competitive. Success in your academic courses will help prepare you for the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) examination. Prerequisite science course GPAs assist in the selection process, as well as performance on a manual dexterity test adds to the candidate's total selection score.

COSTS

The cost of the entire dental hygiene program for Texas residents is approximately **\$29,718.00** for Texas Residents, **\$40,190.00** for Non-Texas Residents. This figure includes tuition and fees, instruments, and clinical/laboratory supplies, Hepatitis B, meningitis, and COVID-19 vaccinations, CPR certification, membership in the Student American Dental Hygiene Association, liability and health and accident insurance, and licensure examinations.

CURRICULUM SCHEDULE

You should expect to be in class from 8:00-5:00 Monday through Friday, with some evening clinicals. If you transfer courses into the program, you have a lighter schedule, however the two-year program is not shorter. While you may not be scheduled in class or clinic from 8:00-5:00, most students spend the "off" hours studying, using learning resources in the library, etc.

CAN I WORK DURING THE PROGRAM?

We strongly recommend that you **do not** work while in the program. The program requires much classroom (laboratory time) and study time. Some students work part-time, however, securing financial aid in the form of loans, grants or scholarships is strongly recommended.

PREVIOUS DENTAL EXPERIENCE

Prior work experience in any health-related field is not necessary to be considered for admissions. Graduation from an **ADA/CODA accredited** dental assisting program, former TSTC Dental Assistant Program, **or** two-year experience as a dental assistant adds to the candidate's total selection score.

FINANCIAL AID

Many students obtain some form of financial aid, usually as loans or grants. You should understand that Financial Aid grants will not cover all of the program costs, and it may be necessary to take out student loans. You may call the Financial Aid office at 956.364.4332 for information on application for financial aid.

WHAT SALARY CAN I EXPECT AS A DENTAL HYGIENIST?

Depending on the geographic location in Texas, you may expect to earn from \$200-250 per day as a **new** graduate in a private general dentistry practice. Surveys have shown there is high demand for dental hygienists in the Rio Grande Valley, and an extremely high demand for dental hygienists outside the immediate area.

WILL CLASSES FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL TRANSFER?

Transfer credit in general education and general science courses (within the past 5 years) are evaluated by the Dental Hygiene Director and the Program Chair of the Department for which the Director of Admissions requests the transfer credit, with final approval. Only grades of “C” or above may be used for transfer credit. Proper forms, available at the Admissions Office, must be completed in order for transfer credit to be awarded.

Specific dental hygiene courses and dental-related courses **cannot** be transferred. At the present time, there is no credit by examination for courses, nor is “advanced standing” status granted for the dental hygiene program. General education and general science course credit obtained while attending a foreign college or university must follow the same process for U.S. college credit. **No credit** will be transferred for dental hygiene or dental school courses obtained while attending a foreign college or university. **Note:** This is the ruling of the American Dental Association Council on Dental Accreditation.

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL PREREQUISITE CLASSES NOT LISTED IN THE CURRICULUM? HIRE 1100

If you are paying for classes out of pocket and would like to take advantage of TSTC's Money-Back Guarantee (MBG) initiative, you must enroll in and successfully complete **HIRE 1100** during the final semester of the program to qualify.

If you have any questions regarding the Money-Back Guarantee program or eligibility requirements, please speak with one of our Enrollment Coaches for additional information and guidance.

WHERE DO I REGISTER FOR THE INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS?

Please visit tstc.edu/dental-info or scan the QR below to register for an information session.



Register for a Dental Hygiene Info Session
Every First Wednesday of the Month

TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE HARLINGEN DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM ACCEPTANCE POLICY FOR THE CLASS OF 2027-2029

Notice: Admission to TSTC as a general student with a Dental Hygiene (DHY) major code does **not** guarantee acceptance into the Dental Hygiene Program.

To be considered for admission into the DHY Program, students must submit a formal application to the Dental Hygiene Program by **March 1, 2027**, and meet all additional admission requirements outlined below. The DHY application can be completed at: <https://tstc-25968.app451.sites.451.io/>

Due to limited enrollment, approximately **15 students** will be selected for admission into the Dental Hygiene Program each year. Only students who are officially accepted into the program will be eligible to enroll in courses with the **DHYG** prefix and continue toward completion of the Dental Hygiene degree.

***DISCLAIMER: The DHY program reserves the right to make changes to the admissions criteria at any time deemed necessary.**

The following steps are involved in acceptance/continuance in the DHY program:

STEP 1 Apply for general acceptance to TSTC by submission of Admission Application. Applications to the college may be done on-line by contacting <https://www.tstc.edu/>

***NOTE: This is in addition to the Dental Hygiene Application.**

STEP 2 Communicate with a TSTC advisor, 956-364-4775 to discuss eligibility to become TSI complete. TSI measures Reading, Writing, and Math skills.

STEP 3 Take the **Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) Examination**. The ATDH is an admission test designed to provide a means to assess a candidate's readiness and potential for success in dental hygiene programs. The exam is composed of multiple-choice test questions (items) presented in the English language and assesses critical thinking. The exam focuses on candidate skills in the following areas: Reading Comprehension, Language Usage, Quantitative Reasoning, Perceptual Ability, Biology, and General Chemistry. ATDH is administered at Prometric Testing Centers during fixed time periods referred to as "administration windows." In the Rio Grande Valley, the Prometric Testing Center is located in the Fountain View Plaza 801 W. Nolana Ave., McAllen, TX, 78504.

Prior to scheduling the ATDH exam, you must first register for a [DENTPIN](#). Candidates can then [submit an application](#) **60 to 90 days prior to taking the ATDH** for a fee of \$150.00. Once a candidate's application is processed, testing appointments can be scheduled at <https://www.prometric.com/exams/ada/>.

Candidates wanting to apply for the 2027 cohort must complete the ATDH exam during the allotted window. **The TSTC Dental Hygiene Program will only accept exams taken during September 1 through December 20, 2026, no exceptions.** TSTC Dental Hygiene Program application candidates are allowed one (1) exam retake, however keep in mind there is a 60-day waiting period in between attempts. **Retake exams need to be taken on or before the December 20, 2026 deadline.** Test dates and times are through appointments only and no walk-ins are accepted.

For further questions regarding acquiring a DENTPIN and for the ATDH, including preparing for the exam, please refer to the [ATDH website](#).

STEP 4 A completed TSTC Dental Hygiene Program application must be filed by **March 1, 2027** using the form available in this packet. This application packet can be found at <https://www.tstc.edu/program-requirements/dental-hygiene-requirements/>. Candidates must attach TSI verification to the application. Candidates will receive notification of their acceptance into the program by the middle of April, 2027.

If accepted, you will be asked to have a background check done through [GroupOne Background Screening](#) immediately and submit the results along with your Letter of Intent to the Dental Hygiene Program, by the date specified on the letter, (specific details about the background check will be noted on the Letter of Intent). **NOTE:** Prospective candidates must attend an informational session to ensure understanding of the application process as well as participate in a manual dexterity test and complete the Commitment Entrance Assessment questionnaire. (Remember, information sessions are offered every first Wednesday of the month in building U-108)

STEP 5 Upon acceptance into the DHY Program, the following basic program courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or better, and a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 must be maintained. **NOTE:** Because dental hygiene treatment is a very important part of the overall health of a patient, dental hygiene students are challenged to maintain very high standards in the training that they receive in our program. Therefore, the students must maintain at least a 78% in **all** dental hygiene classes, didactic and lab, to be able to advance through the Dental Hygiene Program each semester. Anything less than 78 **is not** a passing grade.

Note: The following courses must be completed prior to beginning the Dental Hygiene (DHY) Program in August 2027. Acceptance into the DHY Program is provisional and contingent upon successful completion of these courses before the start of the Fall 2027 semester, as well as fulfillment of all other admission requirements.

- BIOL 2401, or BIOL 2301 and BIOL 2101 – Anatomy and Physiology I
- CHEM 1405, or CHEM 1305 and CHEM 1105 – Introduction to Chemistry
- ENGL 1301 – Composition I
- SPCH Elective – Choose one of the following: SPCH 1311, SPCH 1315, or SPCH 1318

NOTE: Candidates must successfully complete all required prerequisite courses with a minimum GPA of 3.0 prior to the start of the Fall 2027 semester. Failure to meet this requirement will result in forfeiture of the candidate's acceptance into the Dental Hygiene Program, and the position may be offered to an alternate candidate who has met all admission requirements.

NOTE: To promote academic success in the rigorous Dental Hygiene curriculum, candidates are strongly encouraged to complete all non-Dental Hygiene coursework prior to the August program start date.

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES:

- VI. The DHY Program Admissions Committee applies an **objective** program acceptance formula to each candidate's file in making **all** program acceptance/continuance decisions. **The committee will review only those candidates who have completed both TSTC and the Dental Hygiene Program applications; have taken the ATDH examination; have satisfied TSI requirements; and have**

participated in a manual dexterity test, attended an informational session, and completed the **Commitment Entrance Assessment questionnaire**. The following formula will result in a composite score used to determine qualified candidates.

II.

Selection Criteria	Possible Points
1. Accepted as Student to TSTC	•
2. Completed Dental Hygiene Application	•
3. Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) examination	500
4. Graduate from TSTC Dental Assisting Program or an American Dental Association accredited Dental Assisting Program or 2 years or more working as a clinical Dental Assistant (3pts)	5
5. Each of the completed required science courses: Intro to Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology I, Anatomy and Physiology II, and Microbiology A = 2 points B = 1 point	8
6. Manual dexterity coordination test	15
7. Commitment Entrance Assessment Questionnaire	5
8. DH Patient for a current student (Attach patient referral for proof)	2
9. Early submission of online application	3

III The candidates with the **highest selection scores** are offered acceptance into the DHY Program. The Program Director will notify candidates who are accepted in writing. Only those candidates receiving this official letter of acceptance/continuance are allowed to register for the DHYG prefix courses and continue the program degree plan. In the case of a tie, the candidate with the highest GPA based on general college courses will receive admission into the program.

IV All other DHY majors and candidates **not** accepted for acceptance/continuance in the program must re-apply to the DHY Program for the next annual DHY class to be evaluated and selected. No preference will be given to candidates from one year to the next.

V. **Alternate List**

Candidates who meet the qualifications for the DHY Program but are **not** among the top 15 may be placed on the alternate list in rank order based on the formula score. In the event that a candidate who is accepted declines the position in the class, the first available candidate on the alternate list will be offered this position.

Candidates on the alternate list who are not ultimately offered a position in the current year's class, and who wish to re-apply for the next year's class will be expected to complete a new application with the DHY Program. Those students placed on the alternate list will **not** receive any preferential selection due to their prior status on the alternate list.

VI. Non-Acceptance

Candidates who are not selected for acceptance/continuance by the DHY Selection Committee are sent official letters to that effect by the Dental Hygiene Department Chair and the Selection Committee. All candidates not accepted will be offered the opportunity for academic counseling with a member of the DHY faculty to discuss ways to improve future application scores. However, this counseling does not provide any guarantees that the candidate will be accepted in the future.

VII. Summary of Selection Process for DHY Program Acceptance/Continuance

Step 1 Admissions Office receives completed TSTC application form and transcripts.

Step 2 All 3 (Reading, Writing, Math) sections of TSI, or College Placement Test, must be passed or, TSI complete before submitting application to the Dental Hygiene Program in March.

Step 3 Candidate takes **Admissions Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) Examination** during the **September 1 through December 20, 2026 window.**

Step 4 Candidate completes DHY application by **March 1, 2027**. This is the main website to start working on the [Dental Hygiene Application Packet](https://tstc-25968.app451.sites.451.io/) or <https://tstc-25968.app451.sites.451.io/>

****NOTE: The Dental Hygiene Application is separate from the TSTC admission application. Applying at this link does not replace the admissions application for TSTC. You must apply to both to be considered.***

Step 5 DHY Selection Committee identifies the top candidates based on the program acceptance formula.

Step 6 Candidates with the highest rankings will be invited to participate in an interview with the Program Director and members of the DHY Acceptance Committee. Successful completion of the interview is required before final acceptance into the Dental Hygiene Program.

Step 7 Letters of Acceptance, Denial, or Alternate List status are mailed or emailed to candidates by the middle of April 2027.

Step 8 Accepted candidates must complete Anatomy and Physiology I, Intro to Chemistry, English Composition I, and a Speech elective, and provide documentation of all required immunizations before the start of Fall 2027 courses.

Step 9 Candidates on the Alternate List will be offered positions in the current class as they become available.

Step 10 Candidates not selected for the current year must reapply to the DHY Program the following year if they wish to be considered for admission.

Important Note: Selection for an interview does not guarantee admission into the Dental Hygiene Program. Final acceptance decisions are based on both the program acceptance formula and the candidate's interview evaluation.

Dental Hygiene Program

Requirement Checklist

SHOT RECORD NEEDED BY DENTAL HYGIENE ORIENTATION:

- _____ Tetanus-Diphtheria or Tdap within past 10 years
- _____ Measles, Mumps & Rubella —2 on or after the first birthday
- _____ TB test within past 3 months
- _____ HEP B injection 2-series OR 3-series
- _____ Meningitis
- _____ COVID-19

NEEDED BY FIRST DAY OF CLASS EVERY FALL SEMESTER: (Invoice from TSTC Business Office)

- _____ Malpractice (only once a year)
- _____ Health and Accident (only once a year)
- _____ Needlestick (only once a year)

Other:

- _____ Valid Texas driver's license or Texas identification

IV. CURRENT COURSEWORK

Please check the following courses that you have completed. You will need to support this with transcript documentation.

Please Check	Course Title	Grade received	Year taken	Name of School
	SOCI 1301 INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY			
	CHEM 1405 or 1305 & 1105-INTRO TO CHEM			
	ENGL 1301-COMPOSITION I			
	PSYC 2301- GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY			
	BIOL 2401(2301&2101) ANATOMY & PHYS I			
	BIOL 2402 (2302&2102) ANATOMY & PHYS II			
	BIOL 2420 (2320 & 2120) MICROBIOLOGY			
	SPCH ELECTIVES (1311, 1315, 1318)			
	HUMANITIES (ARTS 1301, MUSI 1306)			