

Dental Hygiene

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Do you have an orientation meeting for prospective students?

Yes, an information session for interested students is conducted in a virtual format. (see Information Session tab on webpage) The **information session is mandatory** for all prospective applicants. It is recommended that interested students do not wait until the last minute to attend an information session. The sessions are intended to provide the information you need to start the application process. An application will be sent to you after viewing the information session video.

Are there prerequisite classes I must take before I can apply?

Yes, the following courses must be completed prior to application for the program: BIOL 2401, Human Anatomy and Physiology I; BIOL 2420 or 2421, Microbiology for Health Science/Science Majors; CHEM 1405 or 1411, Introduction to College Chemistry I/General Chemistry, and BIOL 2402 Human Anatomy and Physiology II. It is advisable to register early in these classes as they fill up quickly

Do I have to take the prerequisite classes at Temple College, or can I take them somewhere else?

You can take the prerequisites at any accredited college or university. However, if you are taking the prerequisites at another school, it is advisable that you **enroll early** with Temple College Admissions and Records so that they can determine if prerequisites are transferable to the program. You may be asked to submit a course description from your previous college or a copy of your syllabus so that the college can determine if the class is acceptable and will transfer to our program. All prerequisite courses must be taken within the last 5 years.

What tests must I take before I can apply?

There is a standardized test that must be taken before application: ATI TEAS (Test of Essential Academic Skills). These may be taken at Temple College Testing Center or other accredited testing site. The test may be taken two times per application cycle.

I have never heard of the ATI TEAS. What is it, exactly?

The TEAS is for students preparing to begin formal education in the health occupations. It is designed, primarily, as a diagnostic instrument to assist health science programs evaluate the academic skills of new applicants to their programs. Based upon the profile generated by this test, a program can more objectively screen applicants for admission. The TEAS carefully evaluates basic operations in mathematics that are essential for success in health science programs. The TEAS evaluates reading rate and comprehension ability for science-related material. It is highly recommended that the applicant use a ATI

TEAS review book prior to taking the exam. Review books can be obtained online or at the college bookstore.

How many students are accepted each year?

The Dental Hygiene Program admits 12 students each year. The application deadline is by noon, the 2nd Friday in February each year. The highest-ranking twelve candidates will be informed of their conditional acceptance into the Temple College Dental Hygiene Program. Additional candidates will be placed on the alternate list and will be notified of their standing.

Why do you have an alternate list?

It is not unusual for the dental hygiene program to go to an alternate list. There are many reasons that an accepted student might alter her/his plans. If a vacancy arises, individuals on the alternate list are contacted immediately. Once the summer semester begins, the program is unable to accept any further alternates.

Is there a waiting list?

No, the Dental Hygiene Program takes the 12 most qualified candidates each year. Some students are admitted the first time they apply, whereas some students apply more than once.

What is the best way to be one of those "most qualified candidates"?

Good grades in science prerequisite courses and required examinations are a key component of the initial candidate screening process. Additional points are possible by completing co-requisite courses *prior* to application submission. Dental hygiene is a profession that requires excellent communication and dexterity skills. In the final screening process, the admission committee will evaluate the top 24 candidates for proficiency in these areas.

What if I am not accepted the first time I apply?

You may reapply to the program in a subsequent year. It is advisable to contact the department administrative assistant to review your previous application with you. The admin assistant can indicate areas of weakness and discuss options for improvement. In the dental hygiene program, high academic and test scores are critical. Effective communication, dexterity, and writing skills are also necessary skills for the profession of dental hygiene.

How many times can I apply to the Dental Hygiene Program at Temple College?

Application to the Temple College Dental Hygiene program is limited to three (3) attempts.

How long is the program? And what are the hours?

After completing the prerequisites, the program is six straight semesters, including summers. Students enter in the summer and graduate in May, two years later. Most classes take place during the daytime hours. Clinic hours are in 4 hour increments. All clinic sessions take place in the Jean and Ralph Wilson Dental

Hygiene Clinic in the Health Sciences Center on the Temple College East Campus. In addition, the program provides many educational opportunities outside the classroom in community settings. Unlike the traditional collegiate course schedule, the dental hygiene program requires diverse learning experiences that may take place outside of the normal classroom time.

What are licensing examinations?

During their final semester, students will take The National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (written examination), A Clinical Board examination (clinical and written online examination), and an online state jurisprudence examination. After successfully completing these three examinations, graduates apply to a State Board of Dental Examiners for their license to practice dental hygiene.

What can I do with a degree in dental hygiene?

The Associate of Applied Science Degree in Dental Hygiene will prepare you to become a primary healthcare professional, oral health educator, and practitioner who provide educational, preventive, and therapeutic services. Dental hygienists have employment opportunities in general and specialty dental practices and clinics, pharmaceutical and dental supply companies, community health agencies, education and research institutions, and management settings. Many career opportunities in the future may require a Bachelor of Science completion degree. Temple College Dental Hygiene program currently holds an affiliation agreement with Texas Women's University and collaborates with other Texas colleges and universities in completing an advanced degree.

For more information about a career in Dental Hygiene, see our links to [ADHA](#) (American Dental Hygienists' Association) and [TDHA](#) (Texas Dental Hygienists' Association).

What is the approximate cost of the program?

The basic program expenses are approximately \$17,400 for an in-district student, \$21,250 for an out-district student, and \$25,400 for an out-of-state student. In addition to tuition/fees and textbooks, students are required to purchase their own instruments, uniforms, and disposable supplies such as gloves and masks. Also, students must pay for physical and visual examinations, inoculations and titers, CPR, and membership in the student organization. (Refer to the information packet for details on costs of the program)

Can I work while I am enrolled in the Program?

It is strongly recommended that students refrain from working while they are enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program. The academic rigors and time commitment for clinical and other school-related activities leave little time for employment. It is recommended that prospective applicants have a financial plan and savings in place to ease the stress of a decreased income.

Do I have to have a criminal background check?

Yes. Applicants that have been conditionally accepted into the program are required to complete an online background check prior to beginning the first semester. Permission to perform the criminal background history check must be given by the student prior to entry into the program. Future employment and licensing may be affected by the results of a background check. If an applicant is concerned about a violation that she/he has, it would be advisable to check with The Texas State Board of Dental Examiners prior to program entry to assure licensing would be granted upon completion of the dental hygiene program.

Do I need to have dental experience to get into the Program?

No. Although dental experience is helpful at the beginning of the program, dental hygiene is a separate entity of dentistry that requires a different subset of clinical skills. The applicant with dental experience should be open-minded to learning specific skills related to the profession. The program requires all applicants to observe a minimum of 16 hours in 2 separate dental office settings. It is recommended that the applicant take the opportunity during the observation time to learn about the duties and responsibilities of each dental team member. Those applicants with prior dental office experience must have verification from their employer of their previous employment.

Do I need to be concerned about catching a serious disease from a patient?

Bloodborne pathogens are recognized as an occupational risk for health care workers. Although the incidence of bloodborne infections is extremely low, it is possible to acquire such diseases as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV through exposure. The program requires immunizations as identified in the information packet prior to patient contact. The Temple College Dental Hygiene Program provides thorough education in infection control and prevention of infectious disease by adhering the CDC and OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standards.