

Essential Functions of the Dental Hygiene Student

Tyler Junior College recognizes the unique cognitive, technical, and attitudinal aspects of the dental hygiene curriculum. Students must possess the skills and abilities that will allow them to successfully complete the course of study and receive the full benefit of the educational program. **The student be able to meet or perform the following essential functions with or without accommodation.**

Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- Ability to perceive events realistically, to think clearly and rationally, and to function appropriately in routine and stressful situations.
- Ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information in a timely fashion. For example, the student must be able to synthesize knowledge and integrate the relevant aspects of a patient's history and examination findings to develop an effective treatment plan.
- Ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand spatial relationships of anatomical structures.
- Ability to think critically to determine the cause-effect relationships in clinical situations; evaluate patient or disease responses; synthesize data; and draw sound conclusions.

Visual Acuity

- Ability to read small numbers on instruments.
- Ability to determine detail in small areas of the mouth varying from less than 5mm to several cm.
- Ability to read and comprehend text, numbers, and graphs displayed in print or on a monitor.
- Ability to apply depth perception to evaluate size, shape, and texture in small areas with minimal contrast.
- Ability to determine very slight color variations.
- Ability to perform safe dental care.

Speaking Ability

- Ability to express verbally in a clear and distinct enough manner to enunciate dental terminology while wearing a face mask.

- Ability to express thoughts clearly.

Motor Skills

- Ability to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and treatment to patients.
- Ability to directly operate foot controls and hand and mechanical dental hygiene instruments around the teeth and structures in the oral cavity using fine movements.
- Ability to perform palpation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers and procedures.
- Ability to transfer and position disabled patients and to physically restrain patients who lack motor control.
- Ability to position and reposition self around patient and chair in a sitting or standing position.
- Ability to coordinate both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and integrated use of the senses of touch and vision to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and treatment to patients as detailed above.
- Ability to safely and effectively perform procedures requiring manual dexterity.
- Ability to control clinical equipment and adjust instruments to safely perform clinical procedures.
- Ability to use dental hygiene instruments with light tactile sense and strong grasp for extended periods in a variety of motions.

Adaptive Ability

- Ability to complete required tasks/functions under stressful conditions.
- Ability to perform with minimal supervision.
- Ability to interact appropriately with all members of the dental team, patients, and patient representatives (e.g. parents, guardians, family members, interpreters, etc.).

English Proficiency

- Ability to read, write, speak, record, and report in English.
- Ability to comprehend written and oral directions given in English and the ability to carry them out.
- Ability to have conversations in English on the telephone and in person.

Observation

- Ability to observe, which requires the functional use of vision, hearing, and somatic sensations.

Communication

- Ability to communicate concisely, effectively, and sensitively with patients, and patient representatives (e.g. parents, guardians, family members, interpreters, etc.), as well as perceive nonverbal communications.
- Ability to communicate effectively and efficiently with other members of the dental team and health care community to convey information essential for safe and effective care.
- Ability to communicate effectively, including speech, language, reading, writing, and computer literacy.
- Ability to use auditory acuity to hear normal conversation and/or assess health needs.
- Ability to maintain clear, concise, and accurate clinical records and reports.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

- Ability to fully utilize their intellectual abilities to include the exercise of good judgment and the prompt completion of all responsibilities with honesty and forthrightness.
- Ability to demonstrate attributes of empathy, integrity, and concern for others.
- Ability to develop mature, sensitive, empathetic, and effective relationships with patients from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.
- Ability to critically evaluate performance, accept constructive criticism professionally and be responsible for improving performance.
- Ability to work within the context of a group or a team of peers.
- Ability to demonstrate intrapersonal coping skills.
- Ability to maintain a professional appearance and hygiene.
- Ability to be timely and dependable.
- Ability to demonstrate professionally ethical behavior, including the ability to comply with rules, regulations, professional Code of Ethics, and policies of the College and Affiliates.