



# Dental Assisting Department Program Guide

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Calendar Year 2024-2025

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
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## ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS FOR REFERENCE

Several documents are referenced throughout this handbook. When information exists in another College document, it is not repeated in this handbook. Students responsible for knowing and following all information included in any referenced document and the signed statement at the end of this manual confirms comprehensive understanding.

Additional College documents referenced throughout this document include, and may be found, as follows:

Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook

<http://www.hawkeyecollege.edu/students/handbook/default.aspx>

Weather and Emergency Information

<http://www.hawkeyecollege.edu/students/emergency-information/default.aspx>

Parking and Traffic Rules

<http://www.hawkeyecollege.edu/about/public-safety/parking-and-traffic.aspx>

Absenteeism

<http://www.hawkeyecollege.edu/academics/records-registration/course-policies/default.aspx>

The Dental Assisting program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. Allied Dental Professions graduates are eligible to take necessary Examinations of their choice. Successful completion of board examinations is required to receive a license to practice in the State of Iowa. Students and other stakeholders are invited to submit comments or concerns to the commission, as listed below.

[Commission on Dental Accreditation](#)

American Dental Association

211 East Chicago Avenue

Chicago, IL 60611

312-440-4653

[www.ada.org/en/coda](http://www.ada.org/en/coda)

[Policy on Third Party Comments \[pdf\]](#)

# PART ONE:

## DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM SUMMARY

## I. PHILOSOPHY OF THE DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM

As a student who has chosen to pursue a career in the dental assisting profession, students must be aware that they are entering a demanding, rigorous curriculum. This may require an adjustment to lifestyle so studies take on an utmost priority in daily planning. By making studies a top priority will increase levels of success in the program.

The following guidelines can only be interpreted as safeguards for students, peer partners, and patients; providing for efficient, effective management and the assurance that both students and the staff operate in an atmosphere of understanding and the acceptance of our respective roles in the learning environment.

## II. DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

*Upon successful completion of the program, the student will be able to:*

**Program Outcome 1:** Acquire knowledge and skills necessary to provide a safe environment for patients and dental staff.

**Program Outcome 2:** Utilize basic dental theory to understand patient care procedures, and the overall significance of dental care needs in the population.

**Program Outcome 3:** Develop proficiency and refine marketable skills in administrative, chairside, clinical, radiographic and laboratory procedures.

**Program Outcome 4:** Acquire knowledge and skills to promote and participate in preventive dental care.

**Program Outcome 5:** Demonstrate professionalism and ethics utilizing laws and current regulation.

**Program Outcome 6:** Develop a personal commitment to continuing education for career success and advancement.

**Program Outcome 7:** Successfully complete the Iowa State Registry examinations to become a Registered Dental Assistant.

## III. DENTAL ASSISTING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

**SLO 1:** Perform general office procedures

**SLO 2:** Identify structures and functions of dental & general anatomy

**SLO 3:** Identify, describe and maintain dental instruments and equipment

**SLO 4:** Identify principles of microbiology and disease prevention and perform infection control procedures

**SLO 5:** Identify the functions of pharmacology and anesthesia as they relate to dentistry

**SLO 6:** Perform Chairside assisting and intraoral functions

**SLO 7:** Assist in administering dental office emergency care, vital signs and CPR

**SLO 8:** Identify and perform radiographic procedures

**SLO 9:** Identify properties, uses and manipulate dental materials

**SLO 10:** Describe and perform principles of preventive dentistry and techniques

**SLO 11:** Describe the legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of the dental health care worker

**SLO 12:** Demonstrate employability skills

**SLO 13:** Demonstrate knowledge of oral disease and manifestations, including HIV and Hepatitis

**SLO 14:** Identify the eight specialty areas of dentistry and their respective principles and procedures

**SLO 15:** Demonstrate computer applications to the dental office setting

## IV. PROFESSIONALISM

As a dental assistant, registrants will work in close contact with people throughout their professional lives. During the preparation for this career, the personal characteristics that will be emphasized are grooming, impeccable manners, maturity, and respect for administration, faculty, staff and fellow students. Students are encouraged to combine and coordinate these traits with intelligence and clinical skills for a successful future in dental assisting. A few guidelines are presented for student information.

Personal self-care and conduct are two personal factors that can make a lasting positive or negative impression. As a dental assisting student, some clinical assignments may be in a rather formal environment. At other times, the atmosphere may be more relaxed and informal. Whatever the location and situation, students must conform to the expectations of the location.

Professional attitude is a term commonly used by personnel in the health professions. Those in the profession see professional attitude as a combination of traits or personal characteristics such as pleasantness, enthusiasm, engaging smile, and eagerness for learning, motivation, interest, flexibility, adaptability, punctuality, honesty, trustworthiness, and the ability to take and give instructions in the use of good judgment. Personal problems can easily influence academic achievement and clinical skills. These problems do not belong in either the classroom or clinical settings.

If, at any time, students disregard a standard of professionalism or engage in behavior which endangers themselves or others, they may be immediately removed from the class and/or clinical site. If this behavior occurs, each student is required to contact both the clinical supervisor and dental administrative chair. Success in the dental assisting program is dependent upon the ability to function effectively in the clinical setting. Disruptive behavior may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, program dismissal, even if grades in the didactic and/or clinical courses are acceptable.

Honesty and academic integrity are major characteristics of professional integrity. It cannot be measured in parts, and is either present in its entirety or absent. There is no place in any profession for a dishonest person.

Therefore, with this as our goal, all dental assisting students are expected to demonstrate professionalism in behavior, manner and judgment in clinic labs, radiology, clinical rotation sites, and volunteer events, and to follow the policies of the dental assisting program regarding conduct, attire, and asepsis.

### IV. PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS

UPDATED: March 2021 [American Dental Assistant's Association](https://www.adausa.org/)

#### **Dental Assistants Oath**

In my practice as a dental assistant, I affirm my commitment to improve the oral health of the public, and to promote high standards of quality dental care. I shall faithfully respect the Principles of Professional Ethics by the profession.

I pledge to continually improve my professional knowledge and skills, and to uphold the highest standards of professional competence and personal conduct in the interests of the dental assisting profession and the public I serve.

American Dental Assistant's Association  
<https://www.adausa.org/>

# **PART TWO:**

## **DEPARTMENTAL & PROGRAM POLICIES**

## I. General Attendance Policies

In addition to the policy statement in the Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook, please be aware of the following policies:

1. Attendance at all scheduled classes, labs, clinic sessions, and other scheduled activities is required for complete fulfillment of the requirements of each course. Students who enter class greater than 10 minutes late, or who fall asleep in class, will be asked to leave and will be marked as absent for that course. These students will be allowed to attend other courses on that day.
2. If a student is absent from class during the course of the day, the student will not be allowed to attend labs and/or clinic without a medical release and/or approval from the Dental Administrative Chair.
3. All absences are noted and records are kept.
4. If at any time, faculty views your behavior as “unsafe” you will be dismissed from coursework and/or patient care. Time lost will be recorded as an absence, and lab/ clinical experiences will not be recreated in such incidences. **Three “unsafe” incidences, and the student will be dismissed from the program.**
5. If a student is absent, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the course instructor for makeup assignments prior to the start of class. The instructor will determine if makeup assignments are available. This must be done the first day of return.
6. Learning experiences will not be reconstructed (labs, demonstrations, quizzes, etc.). An alternate assignment may be given, at the discretion of the course instructor.
7. Major tests may be made up if alternative forms of the test are available. A major test must be made up at the time set by the instructor, and must be taken at the Testing Center the day of your return to campus, with 5% deducted for each day the test is missed upon return. Major tests missed twice will be given a “0”.
8. Absence/Tardiness Policy: Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Students must notify the Dental Administrative chair and all fulltime program faculty by 7:30 AM when an absence occurs. Three or more absences may decrease an overall grade by 10%. After four unexcused absences, the faculty and administration may recommend withdrawal from the program. Please refer to the Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook for specific policies on course drops and withdrawals.

Absences may “excused” for the following reasons:

- a. Temporary disability
  - b. Critical illness in the immediate family (NOTE: A doctor’s written statement may be requested).
  - c. Death of immediate family member or an exceptionally close friend.
  - d. Court assignments with documents presented to Dental Administrative Chair.
  - e. Other reasons as deemed appropriate by the Dental Administrative Chair.
9. Faculty and Dental Administrative Chair may request supportive information where excessive absences appear to be a problem. All attendance will be recorded and tracked by faculty and administration.
  10. College policies on absences in the Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook will determine students’ eligibility to re-enter a program if their absences are excessive.

Please be aware that, should you leave the program for any reason:

- a. Each student’s situation will be considered individually to determine program outcome. Past attendance records will be considered along with academic standing.
- b. In all cases of readmission to the program, if a student receives less than a “C” (not a C-minus), or takes a “W” in one or more courses, a signed letter must be obtained from both the Dean and the Dental Administrative Chair prior to readmission.
- c. Students will be granted one readmission opportunity, without time spent on the program “wait list”, in the year immediately following program exit if they are unsuccessful in the Fall Term. If the student chooses to wait beyond the next cohort start date, he or she will be required to go to the end of the “waiting list” prior to program re-entry. All students who “re-enter” the program will be required to retake DEA513: Chairside Assisting I and DEA103: Orientation to Dental Assisting.



Students who are unsuccessful in the Spring or Summer Term will be given a seat in the next open cohort.

#### 11. Canvas Learning Platform and Software

Computer internet access using Chrome browser is required for Canvas to properly function. Mobile devices such as cellular phones, tablets, iPads, etc. are not supported by Canvas, and therefore are not recommended for quizzes, exams, or completing assignments. Canvas is actively improving mobile applications to support as many Canvas features as possible, yet sometimes omits information, or does not display graphics correctly. The use of a fully supported computer browser is required for use in the Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene Programs.

Respondus Monitor, the automated proctoring component of Respondus LockDown Browser, is utilized in the dental programs as a means for securing assessment data through the Canvas Learning Management System. Respondus Monitor serves primarily as a deterrent to cheating. It also helps to confirm students' identities. Students are responsible for the utilization of this software. For additional assistance with the lockdown browser, please click <https://web.respondus.com/student-help-livechat/>

It is a dental programs expectation that all students download this software to the personal laptop computer used for assessments prior to the first day of classes. Computer sharing among students is not permitted. If a student does not have a personal computer, one can be obtained at the Hawkeye Community College library by providing the librarian with a valid Hawkeye Community College ID.

If Respondus Monitor does not function at the time of testing, the student will be required to schedule the assessment at the testing center. In this instance, assessment delay policies will take effect, with a 5% deduction per day of overall assessment score.

Additional Testing Security Considerations:

- No electronic communication devices (phones, other computers, tablets, watches, etc.) may be used during testing unless approved by the instructor.
- No access to resources, either in print or on a device, during the exam unless approved by the instructor.
- No headphones, earbuds, or any other listening devices may be used or worn during the test unless approved by the instructor, or unless the student has written learning accommodations.
- Face and eyes of the test taker must be visible for the duration of the exam.

## II. Building Policies

**(PLEASE REFER TO HAWKEYE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR A COMPREHENSIVE LISTING)**

1. Hawkeye Community College is a tobacco-free campus, which includes the parking lots and access roads to campus.
2. Student lockers are for the students' convenience; however, the department maintains the right to open any locker in the event of an emergency or extenuating circumstance.
3. Patient parking is reserved, and students are not allowed to park in the reserved areas. Students will be responsible for any tickets that may occur for parking incorrectly.
4. The women's and men's dressing rooms on the lower level of Grundy Hall is used for changing in and out of clinic scrub uniforms. No scrubs are to be worn outside of clinical hours and/or off the premises. Personal valuables and purses are left in the dressing room at the individual's own risk.

5. Eating or drinking is not allowed anywhere in the Dental Clinic.

### **III. General Program Policies**

#### **A. Grade Policy**

1. A cumulative grade point of 2.0 must be maintained if students wish to continue in the program.
2. The program requires that students repeat any course in which a letter grade of less than a “C” is earned.
3. If repeating portions of the program, the clinical sequence and corresponding didactic courses must be congruent with the established program of study.
4. If students earn less than a “C” in any first semester course, they will need to repeat the entire program.
5. Incompletes: Refer to Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook.
6. If a problem arises between the student and an instructor, the program advises they seek resolution to the issue with the instructor first. The Dental Administrative Chair is also available at any time to discuss concerns.
7. Documented evidence of dishonest behavior will be handled as stated in the Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook.
8. Three failed attempts at the same process (in lab, pre-clinic, or clinic) is grounds for immediate program dismissal.

**B. Working:** Work should not interfere with classes, labs, or clinic.

#### **C. General Dress**

The Hawkeye Dental Clinic is a health care facility where students are training to become licensed professionals. All students are expected to present as such at all times. Exercising good judgment in matters of dress and appearance are essential parts of the process of becoming a professional. When situations arise for students to dress in clothing more formal than business casual, the students will be notified.

#### **D. Faculty and Student Relationships**

Students should communicate with Hawkeye employees via their Hawkeye email account. Students are responsible for checking Hawkeye email on a daily basis to receive incoming messages.

##### **Dental Administrative Chair**

**TBD**

##### **Dental Clinic Manager**

**Ms. Cathy Saak** 319-296-1030

[cathy.staudt@hawkeyecollege.edu](mailto:cathy.staudt@hawkeyecollege.edu)

##### **Full Time Faculty**

**Ms. Judy Poland**

Phone: 319-296-2320, ex. 1352

[judy.poland@hawkeyecollege.edu](mailto:judy.poland@hawkeyecollege.edu)

**Ms. Melissa Miller**

Phone: 319-296-2320, ex. 1367

[Melissa.miller@hawkeyecollege.edu](mailto:Melissa.miller@hawkeyecollege.edu)

#### **E. Substance Use and Abuse**

Students will be required to take a drug test prior to program entry. Positive test results may indicate disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal. If a student comes to classes, labs, clinical sessions, or any other Hawkeye-sponsored event and are suspected to be under the influence of any drug or controlled substance, that student will be approached by a Hawkeye employee and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal. If a student smells like they have been exposed to any drug or controlled substance, that student will be approached by a Hawkeye employee and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal.

#### **F. Conferences**

Conferences may be arranged with an individual instructor and/or the Dental Administrative Chair at their request, or at the student’s request. Failure to attend scheduled conferences may result in program dismissal.

Student Services assists students with academic issues, and administration and faculty often initiate individual student conferences with Student Services.

Mental Health Counseling outside the program may be obtained by contacting the Dental Administrative Chair, or the Hawkeye Student Health Center.

#### **G. Records and Files**

Any papers with patient information and/or electronic patient information must be handled in accordance with Hawkeye Dental Clinic HIPAA Regulation. Appropriate action will be taken if students are found to be transmitting any patient information offsite using processes not in accordance with procedures, as outlined. Clinical software is to be used by students only as directed.

#### **H. Professional Expectations**

1. Only students in clinical scrubs will be allowed in the clinic and x-ray areas when performing patient care services.
2. Please handle hair, make-up, and other self-care in the student changing room. All grooming should be done prior to entering the clinic or reception area.
3. Any clinic equipment borrowed must be returned promptly to its proper place. The program reserves the right to make additional charges to a student's bill with the business office for inappropriately used and/or damaged equipment.
4. Any materials borrowed from instructors must be checked out and returned promptly. Students are financially responsible for lost or broken equipment and/or instrument damage not covered by manufacturer warranty.
5. Promptness is required for clinics and performing assigned duties. Promptness to clinic sessions means reporting at least 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the session. Individuals chronically late or absent from clinic will be asked to refer to the attendance policies and grading implications.
6. Courtesy is expected toward patients, classmates, faculty, and staff at all times and in all situations.
7. Personal appointments must be scheduled at times other than scheduled clinics or classes. Excused absences will be granted through the dental administrative chair on a case by case basis.
8. Students will be asked to leave the clinic if conduct or appearance does not meet the definition of professional standards.

### **IV. College Closing/ Public Safety**

#### **A. Fire Evacuation Plan**

Upon observing a FIRE or activation of a FIRE alarm:

1. Activate building fire alarm if not already activated.
2. Immediately proceed to the nearest exit not affected by fire.
3. All occupants of the building report to Tama Hall until further notification.
4. Standby in Tama Hall until an all clear is announced by Public Safety personnel.
5. Students and staff will be alerted of a fire or fire drill by a continuous blast of the alarm system.

#### **B. Tornado Evacuation Plan**

##### **EXTERNAL WARNING SYSTEM**

It is critical that educational facilities receive early warning of the approach of severe storms or tornadoes. Hawkeye Community College is included in our community warning system.

Hawkeye Community College personnel will be notified by:

1. Hawkeye Alert System
2. An outdoor civil defense siren located on campus.
3. KWWL-TV and KWLO (AM1330) emergency broadcasting.

##### **INTERNAL WARNING SYSTEM**

Individuals on campus will be notified to take shelter by an air horn.

**Tornado Evacuation Plan:** All occupants of Grundy Hall will proceed into the tunnel. Upon entering the tunnel, turn to the right and continue down the tunnel until it turns toward the south. This will allow for everyone to enter the tunnel. The Dental Administrative Chair will decide if clinical patients will be evacuated for safety, or if it is more appropriate for them to remain in the clinic since the clinical area is labeled a “storm shelter”. Remain in the designated areas until the all clear announcement is made.

The Administrative Assistant for the department is the primary person to be notified by the college.

Office Administrative Assistant– Health Sciences – ext. 4013

**Students with disabilities:**

Students with disabilities will be given special assistance by the instructor of their respective class.

**Post Plan:**

Tornado evacuation plan will be posted in all classrooms and office areas.

**Publicize Plan:**

Students enrolled in courses taught in Grundy Hall will be advised of the tornado evacuation procedure and plan by their respective instructors on the first day of each term.

C. Regular Closings

Regular college closings are planned closings for weekends, holidays, and designated dates. When the college is closed designated staff may be called to work. Unscheduled staff who are working in college facilities when closed for other than emergency closings must contact Public Safety staff when arriving, either in person or by phoning 296-2328 or extension 4234.

D. Temporary Closings

The decision to cancel classes is, at time, made by the college administration. Classes may be canceled or delayed for a variety of reasons. Students are notified of cancellations or delayed starts through:

1. Hawkeye Alert System
2. Hawkeye Information and Campus Closings line at 319-296-4444
3. Local radio/television stations
4. College website: [www.hawkeyecollege.edu](http://www.hawkeyecollege.edu)
5. Announcements from instructors

When an emergency closing is designated, only Public Safety staff and those designated to help with a problem would be on duty. All others would be required to leave the college premises.

E. Severe Weather Closing Information

The Dental Administrative Chair will determine whether live patient clinics will take place if inclement weather occurs, based on the road conditions, two hours prior to the start of the clinic session (6 AM for morning clinics, 11 AM for afternoon clinics). If clinic is cancelled, but the college is not, students will be kept on campus as decided. Please refer to Hawkeye Community College Student Handbook for additional information.

## **V. Academic Issues**

- A. **Academic Advising:** Once students have been accepted to the dental assisting program, a full-time faculty will be issued as their academic advisor. The Dental Administrative Chair can serve as an advisor if faculty are absent.
- B. **Changes in Registration:** Withdrawal from a course is a common type of change in a student’s registration. If a dental assisting program student intends to drop a course they should first discuss the situation with full-time faculty or the Dental Administrative Chair prior to taking any action.
- C. **Peer Tutoring Services** are available to currently enrolled students experiencing academic difficulties by contacting the Student Success Specialist for the Dental Programs.



# **PART THREE:**

## **CLINICAL POLICIES & PROCEDURE**

## I. Health & Certification Requirements

Before students may engage in clinical contact, they are required to complete various health and certification requirements. These requirements are uploaded to a personal file with an online company called Castle Branch. Please refer to, and complete, the instructions as provided to open a profile with Castle Branch.

Completing the pre-clinical requirements is the personal and professional responsibility of the individual student. Participation in clinical situations is restricted until all requirements are successfully completed. Clinical time missed due to outstanding requirements will be treated as an absence.

To be allowed access to a clinical experience, the following must be documented:

- A. **Physical Exam and Immunizations:** a complete medical examination with a primary care provider must be completed prior to engaging in patient/peer partner care. In addition, if a communicable disease is contracted during the program, a physician's clearance is required before returning to class.

The following immunizations are required:

1. Hepatitis B vaccine
2. All oral health care workers with birthdates after 1957 are required to show proof of the MMR vaccination or antibody titer
3. Two-step TB test at program entry
4. Influenza vaccine for the current year
5. Additional Vaccines as deemed necessary by the CDC for healthcare providers

\* If a student refuses a vaccination, they are required to provide a physician's statement with a requirement waiver indicating the reason(s) for refusal. The waiver must be uploaded into his or her Castle Branch file. The Dental Administrative Chair will also retain these waivers on file.

### B. Certifications

Student must hold the following certifications prior to seeing patients:

1. Health-care Provider AHA CPR
2. OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Training
3. HIPAA Privacy Training
4. Mandatory reporter, child (State of Iowa)
5. Mandatory reporter, adult (State of Iowa)

### C. Certified Background Check

National criminal background and sexual abuse registry checks will be conducted through Castle Branch. Certain findings can prevent a student from engaging in patient contact in a clinical setting. If the review of records results in a finding, the student will be contacted by the Dental Administrative Chair to discuss the student's situation. They will refer the student to an authority who deems eligibility for licensure following graduation. If a student is unable to complete the clinical experience required by the program, they will be unable to graduate from the program.

Any student found to have a felony, or who is charged with a felony while enrolled in the program, will be referred to the Iowa Dental Board. They will not be allowed to participate in peer to peer or peer to patient clinical activities until the dental administrative chair receives notification from the Iowa Dental Board.

## II. Required Clinic Policies

### A. Attendance

1. Attendance is required at all scheduled clinics and seminars.
2. When a student must be absent from clinic, the clinic manager, fulltime faculty and Dental Administrative Chair must be informed by 7:30 AM, via email. Any other methods of communication, such as sending text messages through a fellow student or leaving a phone message are both unprofessional and unacceptable and will be considered an unexcused absence.

3. Any absences from clinic will jeopardize standing in the program, and unexcused absences in excess of 6 hours will result in the deduction of one letter grade.

**B. Full Use of Clinic Time**

1. Students are expected to fully utilize the entire clinic session. If a student is not staying busy, it is distracting to other students and they may be asked to leave the clinical setting.
2. An instructor's permission is required to leave clinic before the scheduled end.
3. Congregating at open units, in x-ray suites, in clinic lab areas, at the front desk, in reception areas, and in central sterilization during clinic is prohibited. Professionalism points may be deducted in such incidences, or the student may be asked to leave the clinical setting.

**C. Clinic Appointments**

1. Each patient must have a current reviewed health history and a formulated appointment plan prior by a dentist to receiving restorative treatment.
2. All appointments must be scheduled during regular clinic hours when regularly scheduled staff dentists are present.

**D. Payment for Services**

Each patient in the Dental Clinic is required to pay fees at the time of appointment. The student should alert the patient of this policy prior to scheduling.

**E. Referral of Patients**

Diagnostic examination may indicate the need for further medical attention or referral to a dental specialist. All referrals will be made for patients based on the assessment and appointment plan.

**F. Patient Transportation**

1. Transportation to and from the Dental Clinic is the patient's responsibility.
2. Students are not allowed to transport patients.

**G. Radiation Safety Badges and Student ID Badges**

1. Radiation safety badges are worn for the safety of clinical team members. These badges will be distributed in the Radiology Lab.
2. Students are required to leave their radiation safety badge on the wall in the locker room when not worn on their clinic clothing. Badges should not leave the clinical area or locker room to prevent the detection of radiation in other locations.
3. Students will be charged \$50 for a lost or damaged radiation safety badge.
4. Students are to wear ID badges in clinic at all times. Lost or damaged badges can be replaced for \$5 through the dental administrative chair.

### **III. Infection Control Protocols**

**A. Introduction**

All students and faculty at the Hawkeye Community College Dental Clinic practice under the concept of universal precautions, the idea that all persons are potentially capable of transmitting disease. Personal protective equipment and work practice controls are utilized to minimize or eliminate exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials.

Hawkeye Dental Program reserves the right to change infection control policies and procedures at any time with written notification provided to the student. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will serve as the guide for infection control protocols.



## B. Personal Protective Equipment

### 1. Gloves

- a. Overgloves: Procured with the patient setups, these gloves will be placed over the patient gloves each time clinicians leave the chairside, work at the counter, or touch non-disinfected surfaces, charts, and other items.
- b. Heavy, Sterilizable Utility Gloves: These are provided for: transporting cassettes, filling and emptying the ultrasonic bath, cleaning up blood and other potentially infectious material, and changing unit traps for maintenance.
- c. Disposable Patient Gloves: These are provided for: disinfecting operatories, intraoral functions and basic patient care, and basic housekeeping.

### 2. Masks

- a. Masks protect the operator against the entry of pathogens through inhalation or through mucous membranes of the nose or mouth.
- b. All personnel will wear masks of the appropriate level when engaging in direct patient care, in accordance with CDC and ASTM recommendations.
- c. Masks should be removed from the face when escorting patients outside the operatory, or when leaving the clinical area.
- d. Masks are to be replaced with each patient, or when they become moistened when treating a patient chairside.
- e. Masks are to be placed before placing gloves to avoid glove contamination.

### 3. Eyewear

- a. Protective eyewear is worn by all personnel engaged in direct patient care.
- b. Protective eyewear is worn by all personnel when operating equipment in laboratory settings.
- c. Eyewear is disinfected before and after each patient appointment.
- d. Clinicians will be expected to provide their own protective eyewear.
- e. When needed, prescription glasses with side shields can be worn. Personnel who do not wear a prescription, or who wear contact lenses, must purchase high quality protective eyewear. Faculty will instruct students on eyewear in individual courses, clinics, and labs.
- f. Patient-use eyewear is required for treatment.
- g. Protective eye shielding for light-cured fissure sealants is available and must be used by all personnel involved in sealant placement. Please disinfect polymerizing glasses and shields before and after use.
- h. Face shields are available for procedures involving splatter and aerosols. A mask must be worn in addition to the face shield. If reused, shields must be disinfected before and after use.

### 4. Apparel

- a. Tightly-woven, long-sleeved scrub gowns with fitted cuffs are worn for patient care, and are changed daily; or more often if visibly soiled or punctured. Scrub tops and pants are included in the designated uniform.
  - i. Scrub uniforms are issued and laundered on-site for asepsis.
  - ii. An individual scrub uniform is worn for a maximum of one clinic day.
  - iii. Scrubs are put on and taken off in the building.
  - iv. Clean white leather clinic shoes and clean socks are worn whenever the operator is in scrubs. Clinic shoes are not to be worn as street shoes outside the building.
- b. Scrub uniforms are not to be worn except for preclinic, laboratory, and clinic sessions. Gowns must be removed and left in the clinical area whenever the student leaves the operatory area.
- c. Scrub uniforms are not to be worn outside the college, except for approved course-related activities.

- d. Scrubs are to be worn when cleaning up units at the end of the clinic session. No operator should be cleaning a unit in street clothes. Scrub gowns should be worn during off-clinic hours whenever working in the sterilization room or clinic lab.
- e. Gowns, tops, and pants should be placed in the hampers located in the dressing room.

### **C. Personal Grooming**

1. Hair should be kept in a style above and off the collar (ponytails and braids secured to head), and away from the face whenever in scrubs. An appropriate barrette or discrete fastener or tie may be used. Distracting headbands and bedazzled hair accessories are not allowed, as they may collect aerosols and contaminants during treatment procedures.
2. No rings, watches, bracelets, or other hand jewelry is to be worn when in scrubs.
3. Only ONE post earring in each ear will be allowed in clinic. Earrings may not extend below the lobe of the ear. Necklaces can be worn if they are kept securely under scrub tops.
4. No nasal piercings, ear cartilage piercings, eyebrow piercings, lip piercings, or tongue piercings can hold visible piercing jewelry. Adhesive bandages will not be allowed to cover piercings.
5. There is zero tolerance for visible body piercing jewelry.
6. Visible body art will be permitted, unless deemed inappropriate or offensive by the Dental Administrative Chair.
7. Fingernails are to be kept short. Long nails may puncture gloves, traumatize patient tissues, and may harbor or incubate microorganisms. Fingernail polish of any type, along with any type of artificial nails, are prohibited. (Appropriate nail length is determined by holding upraised fingertips at eye level, palm facing the eyes. Fingernail length is acceptable if nails cannot be seen protruding beyond fingertip.)
8. ALL personal grooming will be completed in the locker room area rather than in any clinical setting.

### **D. Sterilization**

1. All critical instruments used at the Hawkeye Dental clinic are sterile. In addition to assessment and periodontal instruments, the following items must be sterile:
  - a. Handpieces
  - b. Anesthesia syringes
  - c. "XCP" bite blocks, beam alignment devices
  - d. All gauze, cotton rolls, and cotton-tip applicators
  - e. Sharpening stones
  - f. Ultrasonic tips
  - g. Metal cotton roll holders
  - h. Mouth bite blocks
2. Instruments are used for one patient only, and are sterilized between patients.
3. Needles are used for one patient only, and appropriately discarded. A one-handed recapping method must be used.
4. The IMS cassette system used at the Hawkeye Dental Clinic is designed to minimize handling of instruments where skin puncture and disease transmission may occur. Extreme care must always be taken to avoid puncturing the skin with a contaminated instrument.
5. Steam sterilizers are monitored every week using biological indicators to assure proper sterilization times, temperatures, and pressures.
6. All sterilizers must be operated for the full sterilization cycle.

### **E. Work Practice Controls**

1. In case of a finger stick injury, resulting in spontaneous bleeding (bleeds on its own), use the procedure:
  - a. Immediately wash hands thoroughly
  - b. Rinse wound with copious amounts of water
  - c. Seek an instructor immediately
2. An incident report will be filed through the Dental Administrative Chair.

3. Post-Exposure Management: Follow-up procedures will include testing to determine baseline status. Any time there is an incident, regardless of the severity, a report will be completed and filed with the School of Health Sciences main office.
4. Certain behaviors may increase a student's risk of contracting infectious disease. Such behavior may include, but is not limited to: eating, drinking, brushing teeth, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, or handling contact lenses. These behaviors are prohibited in the clinic, x-ray, sterilization, and clinic lab areas. Lunches or beverages are not to be stored in the clinical area refrigerator or sterilization areas.

- F. Hand Washing:** Hands are washed periodically throughout the clinic day. A thorough, initial wash is accomplished to remove transient bacteria, oils, and contamination from the clinician's hands. A post-wash immediately before leaving the clinic is necessary to avoid carrying potential pathogens on the hands into the home or other environments.
1. Initial wash: A thorough, initial wash is performed at the beginning of the clinic, pre-clinic, or laboratory day prior to set-up.
  2. Periodic handwashes: (30-second) handwashes are done at the following times:
    - i. Immediately before placing patient gloves
    - ii. Immediately after removing patient gloves
    - iii. After removal of personal protective equipment (gowns)
    - iv. Whenever a student must leave the clinic areas
    - v. At the beginning of subsequent clinic sessions in the day
    - vi. Whenever contaminated material is contacted

Overgloves may be placed:

    - a. Before signing up for any patient procedure check
    - b. Before retrieving supplies from dispensary.
    - c. When working with non-treated items, such as forms, at the counter
  3. Post-Clinic Wash: A thorough (30 second or longer) handwash is to be done as the last item in the clean-up sequence. Hands and arms to the elbow should be lathered and thoroughly washed, rinsed, and dried. Students are to cultivate behaviors that minimize the necessity for glove changing and handwashing. While engaged in direct patient care, students are to refrain from touching any object that is not needed for treatment and therefore has not been sterilized or disinfected. This includes the face, mask, hair & clothes.

#### **G. Disposable Items**

1. Disposable items are those items that are used for only one patient and discarded.
2. Disposable items should be kept in covered containers when not in use.
3. The correct procedure for obtaining disposable items is as follows:
  - a. If items are in a bag, open bag only enough to remove the item
  - b. Use sterile cotton forceps, grasp item, place it on tray
  - c. Return forceps to designated location
4. Any disposable item that is out of the container, except on designated tray or cassette, is considered contaminated and must be discarded.
5. Disposable items are discarded in the white bag taped to the side of the counter.

#### **H. Basic Housekeeping**

Follow procedures as directed for disinfection of household surfaces in other program competency manuals.

#### **I. Waste Disposal**

1. All patient waste is highly contaminated and potentially hazardous. The following procedures are to be followed. These statements refer to items that do not exceed 20 mm of expressed blood:
  - a. All waste is promptly disposed of when unit trash becomes full. Bag is removed, tied securely, and placed in the large receptacle in clinic lab.

- b. Blood contaminated cotton products, gloves, plastic barrier wrap, prophylaxis angles, napkins, masks, suction tips, rubber cups and brushes are placed in the white bag that has been secured to the side of the countertop. The bag is tightly closed, taped, and placed in the holding receptacle. All holding receptacles are tied and placed in the clinic trash bins at the end of the clinic day.
  - c. All clinic trash bins are emptied from the clinic lab area by campus custodial services, who wear gloves during pickup.
- 2. Needles and Sharps
  - a. All used needles, cartridges, and cannulas are placed in the red, puncture-resistant, leak-proof biological waste containers located near the dental unit.
  - b. Containers should not be filled above the exterior "FILL LINE", as noted.
  - c. Contaminated needles are not to be bent or broken. Recapping is only completed using an approved one-handed technique.
  - d. When the red containers are filled to the line, each is placed in the large biohazard container located in the storage room. The safety director of the college monitors when the container is full and contacts the waste disposal company which picks up containers and documents its disposal.
- 3. Monitoring of work practice controls
 

Continuous monitoring of student work practice controls is necessary to ensure compliance. Faculty recognizes that behaviors are best learned when taught and repeatedly practiced in a standardized sequence.

## **J. Engineering Controls**

- 1. Water Lines/Vacuum Lines
  - a. Water lines are cleansed according to established clinic protocol, using products referenced in the clinical manual.
  - b. Vacuum lines should be rinsed after each patient by running 2 cups of water through the oral evacuator and 1 cup through the saliva ejector.
  - c. Vacuum lines are cleansed weekly with a commercial solution of vacuum line cleanser. Students will follow manufacturers recommendations for use.
- 2. Eyewash Station
  - a. Eyewash stations are located in the clinical area.
  - b. Stations are prominently marked.
  - c. Any time an item or droplet enters the eye, the individual should flush the eye with copious amounts of water. PLEASE do not rub the eye. Administration and faculty will complete and submit a written injury report following eyewash station usage.

## **K. Laboratory Procedures**

- 1. Certain items carried into the lab are potentially contaminated by saliva, blood, and mucous membrane contact. They include:
  - a. Impressions, models
  - b. Wax bite registration
  - c. Dentures, partials, retainers, or other removable appliances
  - d. Wheels of bench lathe that contact these items.
- 2. To avoid cross-contamination from the items listed in K1, and to ensure operator safety, the following procedures are followed:
  - a. Spray impression and wax bite with EPA-registered disinfectant after rinsing with water, and prior to pouring with plaster or stone. The microbial reduction sequence includes:
    - i. Rinse
    - ii. Disinfect
    - iii. Wrap in wet paper towel

- iv. Rinse
- v. Pour
- b. Spray model with disinfectant after separating from impression.
- c. Follow stated procedure for cleaning removable appliances as posted on the inside cupboard door of the clinic lab.

**L. X-ray Procedures:** The utilization of aseptic practices in the radiology exposure area is vital. Although tissue bleeding is not a major consideration during these processes, the potential for disease transmission exists. The following policies and procedures serve as guidelines for the safe and efficient exposure, handling, and processing of dental radiographs:

1. Each x-ray operatory is prepared for one patient only, then disinfected again.
2. Bitewing tabs and film barriers are utilized for one patient only and discarded.
3. Bite blocks and rods (XCP set-up position devices) are used for one patient and are sterilized between patients.
4. Barriers are placed on select operator contact sites. These sites are disinfected at the beginning of the lab or clinic and subsequently covered with a barrier. After each patient use, the barrier plastics are stripped and new barriers immediately applied. The sites for barrier wrap are:
  - a. Tubehead and yoke (bag and tape or tie to secure)
  - b. Control panel and Door knobs
  - c. Headrest
5. If the barrier wrap falls off a site, the area should be immediately covered with a new wrap. If time elapses before replacement, the surface should be treated with disinfectant, wiped off, and a barrier wrap placed.
6. A paper bag is taped to the edge of the countertop to collect the contaminated barrier wrap, gauze, and gloves. Following the procedure completion, the bag should be taped shut and discarded.
7. The countertop, drawer pulls, and chair are cleaned and disinfected at the beginning and end of the lab or clinic session.
8. Students are required to wear all necessary PPE during radiographic exposures.
9. Film barriers are utilized for all intraoral films.
10. Clean-up is completed after each patient utilizing gloves and disinfectant.

**M. Policies and Procedures for Off-Campus Extramural Sites**

All students and faculty who attend rotations off-campus shall observe the same infection control guidelines that are observed at the Hawkeye Dental Clinics. These specific policies pertain to externships:

1. Personal Protective Equipment: both students and faculty will wear clinical uniforms consisting of scrub pants and the long-sleeved, cuffed gown. In addition, all PPE will be worn.
2. Gloves are to be changed for each patient at extramural sites. Gowns are to be changed if the clothing becomes soiled. Masks are to be changed if they become soiled or moist.
3. Clinical attire will be worn as directed by the extramural site, per each office's instruction.
4. At the end of the rotation, all personnel will place soiled clothing in a plastic bag, in which it will be transported for disposal in the school laundry receptacles.
5. Waste will be disposed in a manner consistent with state OSHA guidelines. Specifically, all soiled gauze, paper products, mouth mirrors, suction tips, and other contaminated items will be placed in a small white paper bag. The bag will be folded tightly and placed in the area trash facility.
6. All personnel should wash hands thoroughly before, between, and after patient care. A thorough post-wash shall be completed before leaving the facility.

## **IV. Emergency Protocols**

### **Emergency Protocol in Clinic**

- 1. Maintain calm. Do not excite the patient further by words or actions.**
- 2. As soon as the situation is recognized as an emergency, notify two students in adjacent units. The clinician always stays with their patient.**
- 3. One adjacent student will immediately retrieve the oxygen tank/pulse oximeter, ambu bags and emergency drug kit. The other adjacent student will notify the staff dentist, 2 dental assisting instructors and summon the clinic manager.**
- 4. The staff dentist will determine to what extent treatment is necessary. One student will notify the clinic manager, and will come to the emergency area to wait for direction to bring the AED, call 911, and notify the Dental Administrative Chair and School of Health Sciences Main Office.**
- 5. The 2nd dental assisting instructor will document all interventions including times and vitals which will be documented in the patient record.**
- 6. As the clinician with the patient, the student will continue to evaluate patient responsiveness, and airway, and under the direction of the dentist begin oxygen administration as soon as the tank arrives if oxygen administration is recommended.**
- 7. Should CPR become necessary, the student and the staff dentist or instructor will lower the patient to the floor. CPR will begin immediately and will continue until emergency personnel arrive to take over.**
- 8. The staff dentist acts as the team leader and will determine what extent of treatment is necessary.**
- 9. All other students in the clinic should be mindful of the emergency and continue working and reassuring their patients.**
- 10. Students at units near the emergency should take responsibility for patients of students working with the emergency.**
- 11. An instructor will announce the need to clear the clinic if it becomes necessary. Students should direct their patients to the reception area via the back door (by central sterilization). This will keep the pathway to the clinic clear for emergency personnel.**

## **Needle Stick Protocol:**

The following protocol is to be followed in the event of a needle stick, including a needle stick with a contaminated needle:

1. Remove gloves, immediately wash needle stick or cut area with soap and water.
2. Instructor will retrieve a Student/Visitor Report of Injury form (these forms are filed in the main office) to be filled out by the student and the patient. This should be completed as soon as the injury occurs, and given to the Dental Administrative Chair who will submit the document to the IHSS Main Office within 12 hours.
3. The student will be advised to schedule an appointment at Occupational Health Services, Allen Memorial Hospital between 7AM and 5 PM for a blood draw. The student must keep the faculty informed of a) the time of the scheduled appointment and b) inform faculty when the appointment has been completed. If the student chooses not to follow-through, faculty must inform IHSS Administrative personnel.
4. The patient must be advised of the importance of having a baseline blood drawn from their medical provider with permission given to send the report to Allen Occupational Health at his or her own cost.
5. Student blood draws and consultations will be paid by HCC Insurance.
6. Be sure that complete, accurate documentation of the incident is recorded in the patient's record. This includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Date and time of incident
  - b. Description of how incident occurred
  - c. Thorough documentation of any specific directions to the patient and follow up instructions

## **V. Radiographic Exposure**

### **A. Radiographic Examinations Exposed at Hawkeye Community College**

The following radiographic surveys will be assessed:

- 1. Adult full mouth survey (FMS)**
  - a. 16 periapical radiographs (8 posterior; 5 maxillary anterior; 3 mandibular anterior)
  - b. 4 vertical bitewing radiographs
  - c. Ideally, every apex should be seen twice with the exception of the third molar areas and every contact area seen clearly open on at least one radiograph
  - d. Maximum number of retakes on adult FMS: 5
  - e. Exposed every 3-5 years depending upon patient's history and clinical exam
- 2. Bitewing surveys**
  - a. Adult (18 and older); 4 vertical bitewings
  - b. Children and adolescents; 2-4 horizontal bitewings
  - c. Maximum number of retakes on bitewing survey: 1
  - d. Exposed every 12-24 months depending upon patient's history and clinical exam
- 3. Additional radiographs**
  - a. Occasionally a dentist may request that additional periapical or bitewing radiographs be exposed
  - b. The purpose of additional radiographs is to confirm or negate findings on other standard surveys or to provide a view not seen on other surveys
  - c. Radiation hygiene demands all radiographs be authorized by the dentist
  - d. Additional radiographs are not the same as retakes

### **B. Guidelines for Prescribing Dental Radiographs**

- 1. Radiographs are an assessment procedure which should be exposed only after a complete review of the patient's health history and oral inspection**
- 2. All radiographs exposed at Hawkeye Community College Dental Clinics are to be authorized by the staff dentist in writing.**
- 3. Selection criteria for exposing radiographs have been formulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) along with rationale for prescribing each type of radiographic survey.**
  - a. FDA guidelines are established for new and recall patients in the subcategories of adult, adolescent and child
  - b. At Hawkeye Community College these guidelines are the basis for recommending patient radiographs with the final decision made by the dentist using their professional judgment
- 4. Uses of radiographs in Hawkeye Community College dental assisting clinic include aiding the dentist in hard tissue assessments and exam diagnoses.**





I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name), have had an opportunity to ask questions regarding these policies and procedures, and have those questions answered. I understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures manual for the Hawkeye Community College Dental Assisting Program.

I understand that any violation of the policies and procedures of the dental assisting program may influence my ability to remain a student of the Hawkeye Community College Dental Assisting Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dental Administrative Chair  
School of Interprofessional Health and Safety Services  
Hawkeye Community College