

## Technical Standards for Admission to USD Dental Hygiene

This form may be printed and returned with all application materials to:

Secretary, Admissions Committee  
University of South Dakota Department of Dental Hygiene  
School of Health Sciences  
414 East Clark Street  
Vermillion, SD 57069

**\*Please note: Failure to sign and return this document will cause the application to be considered incomplete.**

The USD Department of Dental Hygiene faculty believes that an applicant for admission to the program must possess certain abilities and skills in the areas of intellect, sensory function, communication, fine and gross motor function, and behavior. This document outlines the minimum abilities each applicant should possess prior to entry into the program. The department will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, transgender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or membership in any other protected classification. Qualified applicants with disabilities will be considered individually in relation to the guidelines outlined below.

In order to assume the responsibilities and perform the duties of a dental hygienist, individuals must be able to satisfactorily possess/accomplish the following:

1. Intellectual abilities requiring reason, analysis, problem solving, critical thinking, self-evaluation, and lifelong learning skills are required. Students must be able to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. Comprehension of three dimensional and spatial relationships is necessary. Consistent, accurate, and quick integration of information is required especially in rapidly changing or emergency situations. All entering students must have the ability to read and understand English rapidly and with comprehension and communicate with faculty, patients, and peers in English using reasonable grammar and syntax.
2. Somatic sensation and functional use of all the senses is required. Visual, auditory, and tactile sense are significantly important, as well as exteroceptive (i.e. touch) and proprioceptive (i.e. position, pressure, movement). Applicants must be able to observe demonstrations from a distance and close at hand; performance of procedures in the classroom, lab, and clinic is required. Willingness to participate as a patient for certain skill development is mandatory.
3. Applicants must be able to communicate effectively with patients, peers, faculty, other professionals, and guests. Interpersonal communication is vital to the relationship between the dental hygienist and all others. Forms of communication include verbal speech and nonverbal movements, as well as written and electronic formats. Interpersonal abilities must also include the ability to interact professionally and respectfully with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and other diverse backgrounds.
4. Sufficient fine and gross motor function is required to perform a variety of clinical procedures. Applicants must be able to execute those motor movements required to provide comprehensive dental hygiene care in a manner consistent with traditional and non-traditional dental hygiene practice settings. In addition, applicants must be able to perceive and interpret tactile vibrations appropriately, manipulate small objects and materials, and pay attention to fine detail. Under no circumstance can a patient's health and/or safety be compromised because of a condition or characteristic possessed by the applicant.
5. Applicants must possess sufficient physical health to tolerate physically taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. Applicants must be able to maneuver through small spaces, from room to room, and from indoor to outdoor conditions. Applicants must be able to push, pull, or lift a minimum of fifty (50) pounds. The applicant must be able to obtain and maintain CPR certification for the healthcare provider.
6. Applicants must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, exercise of good judgment, and prompt completion of all responsibilities associated with the care of patients. The development of mature, sensitive, respectful, and professional relationships with all persons is essential. Compassion, integrity, empathy, and respect are all personal qualities that are required of the professional dental hygienist. The applicant must satisfactorily complete all program requirements including clinical placement in a variety of settings, act appropriately and follow all rules, plus obtain successful clearance of several criminal background checks.
7. Upon acceptance to the USD Department of Dental Hygiene, the student must meet the HA and Department immunization and testing requirements as well as those required of clinical partners. Compliance with these policies is mandatory.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA) of 2009, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the University of South Dakota policy prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. One of the purposes of this document is to ensure that students are aware of the requirements of this program and acknowledge their understanding of the program requirements. Students who have a disability and are in need of accommodations or modifications must contact USD Disability Services. USD Disability Services, after consultation with the Program Director, will determine whether or not any reasonable accommodations or modifications can be provided.**

I attest that I am capable of performing the technical standards expected of a student in the USD Dental Hygiene Program as outlined above with or without reasonable accommodations.

Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_