

**Information Handbook
for
Advisees and Prospective Students**



Doña Ana Community College

Updated July 11, 2024



Students interested in the Dental Assisting Program are encouraged to

- Schedule an appointment with an academic advisor first. The pre-dental academic advisor is Mr. Marty Brooks (575) 528-7272 and the contact information can be found by visiting <https://dacc.nmsu.edu/advising/who-is-my-advisor.html>
- If students have questions specific to dental assisting, and are getting ready to apply to the program, students are encouraged to:
 - Visit the [dental programs' website](#)
 - Attend a dental assisting advisement session prior to applying
 - Schedule an appointment to speak with a dental assisting advisor.
 - Read this handbook to get a better understanding of the process

Disclaimer: Although every effort is made to keep this handbook up to date, it is the student's responsibility to check with the program faculty to make sure the information is up to date. Please contact the program at dentalprogramsadmissions@dacc.nmsu.edu if you have any questions.

Table of Contents

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT	4
DACC MISSION STATEMENT	8
Mission Statement	8
Vision Statement	8
DOÑA ANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	8
Value Statements	8
ADMISSIONS PROCESS	9
APPLICATION PROCESS	10
Application Point Breakdown:	11
<i>Additional Information Regarding Admissions:</i>	<i>12</i>
DACC Dental Assisting Curriculum	13
ACCREDITATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
COURSE AND CLINICAL INFORMATION – ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS	13
AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT	13
ESSENTIAL DENTAL ASSISTING FUNCTIONS REQUIRED AT DACC	13
HONESTY AND STUDENT ETHICS	14
ATTENDANCE POLICY	15
TRAINING FORMAT FOR INSTRUMENTATION SKILLS	15
TRAINING IN INFECTION CONTROL PROCEDURES	15
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE STATEMENT	15
CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR)	16
DENTAL ASSISTING BOARD EXAMS	16

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Dental Assisting Program and Doña Ana Community College are fully committed to the principles and practice of equal employment and educational opportunities. Accordingly, Doña Ana Community College does not practice, nor condone, discrimination in any form, against students, employees, or applicants on the grounds of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, serious medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation or protected veteran status as outlined in federal and state anti-discrimination statutes.

Doña Ana Community College commits itself to positive action to secure equal opportunity (See NMSU Regents Policy Manual and Administrative Rules and Procedures (ARP) at 3.25)

- A. Notice of Non-Discrimination: New Mexico State University (NMSU), including DACC, is dedicated to providing equal opportunities in employment and learning environments.
1. NMSU does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, retaliation, serious medical condition, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, spousal affiliation or protected veteran status in its programs and activities as required by equal opportunity/affirmative action regulations and laws and university policy and rules.
 2. NMSU has designated the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) to ensure compliance with Title IX and other state and federal laws addressing sexual and gender-based harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner abuse, stalking, and other forms of sexual violence based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
 3. NMSU recognizes that individuals with disabilities are entitled to access, support and, when appropriate, reasonable accommodation. OIE is also assigned to coordinate compliance with Section 504 and other state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination based on disability in admission, treatment, and/or access to its programs and activities.
 4. Inquiries regarding equal opportunity, affirmative action, Title IX, and/or Section 504 should be directed to:
NMSU Office of Institutional Equity
O'Loughlin House
Las Cruces, NM 88003
Office: (575) 646-3635
TTY: (575) 646-7802
equity@nmsu.edu
 5. Complaints of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, and retaliation may be directed to the Office of Institutional Equity at equity@nmsu.edu. Complaints may also be filed with the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and/or New Mexico Human Rights.

DACC MISSION STATEMENT

Mission Statement

DACC is a responsive and accessible learning-centered community college that provides educational opportunities to a diverse community of learners in support of workforce and economic development.

Vision Statement

DACC will be a premier learning college that is grounded in academic excellence and committed to fostering lifelong learning and active, responsible citizenship within the community

DOÑA ANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Value Statements

As a learning-centered community college, DACC is committed to the following core values:

Education that —

- *offers lifelong learning opportunities*
- *fosters dynamic learning environments designed to meet the needs of our students*
- *guarantees equality of rights and access*
- *ensures integrity and honesty in the learning process*
- *provides comprehensive assessment of learning*

Students who will be —

- *respected for their diversity*
- *provided with a safe and supportive learning environment*
- *challenged to become critical and independent thinkers*
- *expected to take an active role in their learning process*

Leaders and employees who—

- *practice transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making through shared governance and with external stakeholders*
- *encourage and support professional growth*
- *demonstrate high ethical standards and integrity*
- *encourage collaborative interaction among faculty and staff*
- *practice responsible fiscal management and personal accountability*
- *ensure equal opportunities for a diverse faculty and staff*

Communities that —

- *build partnerships, including educational alliances*
- *strengthen industry partnerships to provide workforce development services and programs in support of economic development*
- *develop and adapt instructional programs in response to changing educational needs*

History of Program: DACC accepted its first Dental Assisting class in 2003. DACC has been a major contributor to the training of assistants working in Doña Ana and surrounding counties in Southern New Mexico, as well as in dental offices around the US. The Program has a dedicated faculty with many years of experience working together to train and graduate competent assistants.

The Dental Assisting Program has the following goals:

Goal 1: Prepare students to successfully challenge the Dental Assisting National Board Radiation Health and Safety Examination.

Goal 2: Prepare students to successfully challenge the New Mexico Board of Dental Health Care (NMBODHC) Radiology Certification.

Goal 3: Provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to gain employment in the dental assisting field within 6 months of graduation.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

General Information: The Dental Assisting Program is a 3-semester program (Fall, Spring, and Summer). All classes begin in the Fall Semester and are taught Monday through Friday. Dental assisting classes are taught on a hybrid modality with some exceptions; labs and clinics are taught in person as scheduled during the week. Occasional clinical assignments may occur evenings or weekends.

Students receive a Certificate in Dental Assisting.

This is a limited-entry program. Successful candidates generally have a GPA of 3.0 or higher in both, pre-requisite and science-required coursework. **All science courses must be completed within 5 years before admission to the program.**

Prerequisites Required Before Entering the Program:

General education and related classes are required before applying to the Dental Assisting Program and are identical to those offered at New Mexico State University Las Cruces (main) Campus (29 credits):

Course List Code	Title	Credits
BIOL 1130G	Intro Anatomy and Physiology (non-majors)	4
COMM 1115G or COMM 1130G	Public Speaking Principles of Human Communication	3
Total Credits		7

Applicants should refer to the most current [DACC College Catalog](#) for further details regarding Admissions, descriptions of each course, prerequisites, and co-requisites.

Applicants must have satisfactorily completed all prerequisites with a C or better before applying or the spring semester in which they apply to the program. Admission will not be granted until all coursework has been verified completed according to program guidelines.

BE ADVISED: Prerequisite courses and science courses may be attempted only twice to satisfy prerequisite requirements for DACC Dental Assisting.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The following steps are important to follow in the application process:

Application is open to apply from January 1- March 15 by 5 pm of the current year for Summer Program Start Date.

All applicants must complete all steps below:

Completed application and all documents required (50 points) must be received by March 15 @ 5 pm.

- 1) Admission to Doña Ana Community College (DACC). [You can apply to DACC Here.](#) Students must be admitted to DACC before applying to dental assisting and the start of dental assisting coursework.
 - i) **Note:** Admission to NMSU or DACC does not guarantee admission to the Dental Assisting Program.
- 2) Submit Application to the Dental Assisting Program no later than March 15 by 5 pm.
 - i) Incomplete and or late applications will not be considered.
 - ii) The application can be found online on the dental assisting website <https://dacc.nmsu.edu/academics/programs/dental-programs/>
 - iii) As part of the application, you will need to write an essay. Pay close attention to the instructions on the application as it provides you with the topic and guidelines for the essay you will submit.
- 3) Completion of all required pre-requisites are needed before applying to the Dental Assisting Program. If prerequisite courses are in progress the semester in which you apply, they will only be considered if the course(s) is/are completed by the end of the spring semester in which you apply. The program will verify successful completion of these courses by the end of the semester and a C or better will be required in pre-requisite coursework to be considered successful.
- 4) **Official transcripts from all colleges attended outside of DACC and NMSU are required.** An unofficial transcript from NMSU or DACC is acceptable. This process can take time and if not received by March 15, your packet will be marked incomplete.
 - i) If you are having transcripts mailed to DACC make sure they are sent to the office of the Program Director at 3400 South Espina Street, Las Cruces NM 88003, Room# DASH 84F. Mailed official transcripts must be in unopened/sealed envelopes directly from the registrar's office.
 - ii) You can also send your transcripts via email to dentalprogramsadmissions@dacc.nmsu.edu or upload directly to the application. No late submissions of transcripts will be accepted. E-mailed transcripts must come directly from the school's registrar's office to the program admission's e-mail listed above.
Any transferred prerequisite courses must be validated by the admissions. **Remember, if you transferred courses or attended other colleges outside NMSU or DACC, you MUST submit an official transcript from the other college(s) attended by the March 15 @ 5 pm deadline.**

- 5) Information Session participation. Your name must appear on the orientation sign-in sheet. For a list of orientation dates available please visit the [dental assisting webpage](#).
- i) If you live more than 150 miles from the college, you are not required to attend in person but you **must** schedule your orientation [here](#) or check the website for available dates.

The Dental Assisting Program has limited enrollment and can accept no more than sixteen (16) students each summer. **Prerequisite courses must be completed before starting the dental assisting curriculum.** Application to the program is not a guarantee of acceptance. Acceptance is competitive and based on individual academic performance in previous coursework and other criteria.

Applications will be accepted only between January 1 and March 15 for the class starting in the Fall, semester. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. New applications must be submitted each year for students who are re-applying. There are NO exceptions.

The program does NOT offer advanced standing for admission purposes. DACC Dental Hygiene students can receive credit toward dental assisting courses as detailed in the catalog. Contact the program dentalprogramsadmissions@dacc.nmsu.edu if you have questions.

Thank you for your interest in our Program. It can lead you to an exciting and rewarding career! We look forward to your application.

Application Point Breakdown:

- *The points for a complete application are broken down as follow:*
 - *Overall Pre-Requisite GPA points (100)*
 - *Doña Ana County Residency points (3 extra points)*
 - *Prior Degrees points, only for highest degree received. (AS=1; BA/BS/BBA=2; Master=3; Doctorate=4 extra points)*
 - *Essay (100)*
 - *Your essay must be a 2-page essay, double-spaced, 12-point font, and 1x1 inch margins around the page.*
 - *Please write your essay by describing "What are the qualities and skills a good dental assistant must have".*
 - *Please provide a list of sources/references where you got the information and be sure to cite your sources to avoid plagiarism.*
 - *Program faculty are not allowed to help you with the essay but you may seek help from a tutoring center, however, the essay must be written by you.*

The higher the grades and overall points, the higher the opportunity of being invited for admission, therefore, chances of earning a seat in the program are enhanced. Only those courses that are **completed before, or during the semester applying** to the program are counted in the competitive points calculations.

Information Sessions: All students wanting to apply to the dental assisting program must complete an information session. These sessions are offered once a month. Please check the

program website for more information <https://dacc.nmsu.edu/dhyg/how-to-apply/>.

Orientation Session: Students eligible for consideration for the next dental assisting class will receive notice of a **mandatory** orientation session in which the faculty will provide program information and requirements to complete before the summer semester begins.

There is **no waiting list** for the Dental Assisting Program at DACC. The process is a **competitive entry** format in which all students desiring to enter Dental Assisting follow the steps listed above; all students not accepted into the program will need to reapply the following year, including alternates who are not ultimately enrolled. Applications do not carry over to the following year(s). A maximum of 16 students are admitted to the program annually.

Additional Information Regarding Admissions:

Candidates accepted to the Dental Assisting Program must:

- Attend a **mandatory** program orientation/registration meeting and 1st-year class orientation scheduled during the summer before the beginning of the fall semester. Information regarding time and place are announced via e-mail.
- Submit the medical forms and immunization records to the program by the specified deadline.
- Submit a copy of CPR cards to the program by the first day of class or as instructed at orientation.
- You will need a background check upon acceptance to the program, with no exceptions.
- Purchase uniforms as assigned by the program.
- All students are expected to and must participate in the student club DASA and school-related activities.
- Enroll and pay for all classes and pay applicable school fees.
- Candidates accepted to the Dental Assisting Program may lose their position in the class if they do not comply with these instructions in a timely fashion as designated by correspondence sent by the Program Director.
- Applicants and alternates **not admitted** to the Dental Assisting Program must reapply the following year if they wish to be considered for the following year's class.
- Pay any other fees required before admission.
- All students are required to engage in clinical learning by participating as student partners to practice developing skills including practice and exposure to radiographs, dental materials procedures such as impressions, clinical skills, and any other curriculum requirements.
- Students may need to disclose health information to ensure safe student partner treatment and learning. This includes but is not limited to antibiotic premedication, prescribed medications, psychological conditions, or any other problem that may hinder successful learning, skill development, and safe treatment of student partners and patients.
- Students are responsible for recruiting and maintaining their patients to meet clinical requirements, for example, patients for radiology.

DACC Dental Assisting Curriculum

Current Dental Assisting Curriculum and Roadmap

COURSE AND CLINICAL INFORMATION – ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- Because of the demands of the Dental Assisting program, students are strongly encouraged to carefully plan their work and personal schedules around their school requirements.
- Prospective students are encouraged to contact the Dental Assisting Program if they have any questions regarding clinical or lab competencies.
- Students must earn a grade of “C”, 75% or better in all dental courses to retain their seat in the Program. The program uses fractional grading. A grade below a “C” will result in grounds for academic discipline, including a recommendation for dismissal from the program. Any student dismissed from the program may apply for admission again and compete with other applicants for a seat. Only two program attempts are allowed.
- Students with previous dental experience gained from the military, foreign or domestic dental, dental assisting or dental assisting schools, etc. will not receive advanced placement in the DACC Dental Assisting Courses. All courses must be completed with the cohort.
- Students will need access to a working computer, internet connection, and printer for assignments.
- Students will need reliable transportation for clinical rotations, community assignments, and other activities offered off campus. It is the responsibility of the student to arrive on time for these assignments.
- **Students admitted to the program MUST read the Dental Programs Clinic Manual to familiarize themselves with all program and clinical protocols.**

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in their coursework are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services, which is located in DASH room 117 at the Espina Campus or DASR room 104A at the East Mesa Campus as soon as possible to facilitate timely implementation of such accommodations. Students who do not register or who do not fulfill their obligations as they pertain to approved accommodations may jeopardize their ability to fulfill didactic and clinical requirements.

ESSENTIAL DENTAL ASSISTING FUNCTIONS REQUIRED AT DACC

To complete the clinical component of the Program, the student must be able to perform all of the essential functions of a dental assistant:

- Protect the best interest of the patient, the profession, and the public.
- Recruit patients to meet clinical requirements
- Communicate effectively and professionally with patients, physicians, peers, family members, and the health care team, regarding:
 - Referrals
 - Oral assisting instructions and treatment plans
 - Community activities
- Possess the visual acuity to:
 - Note changes in the patient's condition
 - Correctly read handwritten orders, medication records, and chart contents
 - Distinguish oral pathology and health
 - Distinguish changes in contour of working ends of instruments
- Hear adequately to:
 - Note changes in the patient's condition
 - Perceive and interpret various equipment signals
- Use hands for *steady*, fine manipulation and possess the ability to perform fine motor skills for safe patient treatment.
- Demonstrate adequate eye/hand coordination for dexterity in manipulation of hand instruments and other equipment used in clinical practice
- Demonstrate proper knowledge of ionizing radiation safety procedures through utilization of protective aprons, the ALARA principle, and proficient technique
- Manage the care of a patient in a sudden emergency, including one-man CPR when necessary
- Students who are suspected to lack the requisite ability to render safe patient care, which may include temporary or permanent physical or mental conditions, will be referred to the Office of Student Accessibility Services and may be referred for dismissal from the Dental Assisting Program upon appropriate physician diagnosis and referral. Students with unresolved medical issues that make them unsafe clinicians may be recommended for dismissal from the program.
- *Students with a **felony conviction** may have limited licensure and employment opportunities.* A background test is required before admission to the DACC Dental Assisting Program and with most dental assisting licensing boards.

HONESTY AND STUDENT ETHICS

As a developing professional healthcare provider, students are held to a high standard of personal and professional ethics to include:

- Honesty in taking tests, quizzes, and exams
- Honesty and ethical behavior in providing clinical services
- Personal and professional responsibility in the care and maintenance of school supplies and equipment
- Personal and professional responsibility in the rendering of infection control and sterilization procedures
- Truthfulness and professionalism in interactions with fellow students, faculty, staff, and patients
- Adherence to the dress code and professional appearance policy of the DA Program
- Compliance with NMSU and DACC policies and procedures, including the Student Codes of Social Conduct and Academic Integrity and ARP 16.65 – Drug and

- Alcohol-Free University Community.
- Compliance with the rules, regulations, and other directives of the Dental Assisting Program.

An alleged or suspected failure to comply with the Dental Assisting Program requirements will be investigated. As warranted by the investigative findings, student discipline or other administrative action, up to and including dismissal from the program may be recommended.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The student admitted to the program has freely accepted the obligation of class attendance. Program attendance and professional conduct standards are outlined in each dental assisting course syllabus and the Dental Program clinic manual.

TRAINING FORMAT FOR INSTRUMENTATION SKILLS

Students may initially learn and practice basic instrumentation skills on manikins or typodonts provided by the Dental Assisting program. Although the front desk personnel will attempt to schedule patients, students are ultimately responsible for ensuring the presence of a patient for all clinical patient day to meet clinical requirements.

TRAINING IN INFECTION CONTROL PROCEDURES

All students will receive training in infection and hazard controls. Once admitted to the program, students must read in full the Dental Programs Clinical Manual for a more comprehensive understanding of clinical expectations and other protocols. Students must understand that exposure to bloodborne pathogens exists in health programs. Student are strongly encouraged and/or required to receive immunizations.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE STATEMENT

As a healthcare provider, students enrolled in the Dental Assisting Program are exposed to communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, influenza, etc. via exposure to blood, other body fluids, aerosols, and spatter. Students will be trained in standard precautions and aseptic techniques to minimize the potential of transmission. When healthcare providers follow established infection control procedures, disease transmission from dental patients to members of the dental team is extremely low.

The Americans with Disabilities Act forbids discrimination against patients with infectious diseases; therefore, students are required to treat all patients assigned, regardless of the status of the patient. Refusal to treat any given patient will result in disciplinary action that may jeopardize the student's clinical success for that course.

Dental Assisting students are required to obtain a series of three injections of the Hepatitis B vaccination *prior* to intraoral clinical training. The first injection must be received before submitting the medical form to Castle Branch. Students are responsible for obtaining and reporting the dates of the succeeding two immunizations to Castle Branch in a timely fashion. In addition to Hepatitis B, students are required to receive other vaccinations of importance, such as: T-Dap, influenza, chicken pox, MMR, etc. Students will be required to submit documentation of varicella and MMR immunization or titer showing immunity. On a **yearly** basis, the 1st and 2nd year Dental Assisting class will need to be tested for tuberculosis TB in order to participate in clinical rotations and patient care. See the Health Profile form at the end of this document.

Students are also required to comply with NMSU-DACC, the State of New Mexico, and CDC vaccination mandates and requirements as established to address public health orders, public

health emergencies and safety. Any student not wanting to comply with vaccination requirements must submit documentation to the appropriate NMSU authority to request a waiver, however, it is the discretion of the dental assisting program to honor such a waiver based on risk and patient exposure.

The DACC Dental Assisting program strongly recommends that dental assisting students titer for vaccine preventable diseases.

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR)

All dental assisting students must be certified in health care provider level cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on a **yearly** basis. A copy of current certification must be submitted to Castle Branch prior to the first day of class. Students are responsible for scheduling and completing CPR re-certification annually while in the Dental Assisting Program.

Current certification must be maintained throughout the career of the professional dental assistant; CPR certification is a requirement of licensure and recertification of licensure.

Documentation must be on file for any person who is medically or physically unable to perform such services.

DENTAL ASSISTING BOARD EXAMS

All students graduating from the DACC Dental Assisting program must take DANB Radiation Health and Safety Exam by the end of the semester in which they have completed the radiology course and successfully passed the radiation health and safety exam in the course. Students must research the state where they plan to get licensed to comply with those requirements. Board exams and licensing fees are paid by the student.

Dental Assisting National Board Exam – Radiation Health and Safety is approximately a 4-hour, written examination of radiation health and safety as well as other sciences including anatomy.

Completion of the DACC Dental Assisting Program does not guarantee that students will pass their board examinations. It is the students' responsibility to prepare for those examinations on their own time.

Important Information: Doña Ana Community College Students are responsible for meeting all obligations in obtaining, completing, and receiving funds from Federal Pell Grants, scholarships, etc. Registration and payment for classes is required for class attendance. Students are responsible for payment of classes in a timely fashion.

The DACC Dental Assisting faculty and staff thank you for your interest in our program.