

Docket Item: 4.4 - CONSENT ITEM: Portland Community College: Dental Hygiene,
Associate of Applied Science

Summary:

Portland Community College proposes a new Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed program. After analysis, HECC staff recommends approval of the degree as proposed.

Staff Recommendation:

The HECC recommends the adoption of the following program: Portland Community College AAS in Dental Hygiene.

Recommended Motion:

Move to approve the following degree: Portland Community College AAS in Dental Hygiene.



Portland Community College seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission's approval to offer an instructional program leading to an Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene.

Program Summary

Dental hygienists are preventive oral health professionals who have graduated from an accredited dental hygiene program in an institution of higher education and are licensed in dental hygiene to provide educational, clinical, research, administrative and therapeutic services supporting total health through the promotion of optimum oral health.

Dental hygienists provide clinical services in a variety of settings such as private dental practices, community health settings, nursing homes, hospitals, prisons, schools, faculty practice clinics, state and federal government facilities, and Indian reservations. In addition to clinical practice, there are career opportunities in education, research, sales and marketing, public health, administration, and government. Dental hygienists may choose to combine positions in different workplace settings and career paths for professional variety. Working in education and clinical practice is one example. Flexible working hours can be a feature of this profession, with opportunities for part time or full-time employment.

1. ***Describe the need for this program by providing clear evidence.***

Portland Community College (PCC) has consistently offered a 2-year degree program in Dental Hygiene, producing highly qualified graduates who are in high demand within the community. PCC's Dental Hygiene program has been accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). However, with new leadership in the PCC Dental Sciences department starting in Fall 2022, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of the curriculum. This evaluation has identified areas in our curriculum that require enhancement to meet CODA's rigorous standards, maintain our accreditation, and ensure continue to provide top-quality education for our Dental Hygiene students. Given the extent of proposed changes, the PCC Dental Hygiene Subject Area Committee (SAC) is recommending a new 2-year degree program to replace the existing one. If approved, this new program will launch in Fall 2024. The revisions are substantial, constituting more than 30% change to the existing Dental Hygiene degree, necessitating the proposal of this new degree. The field of Dental Hygiene has experienced sustained growth and is projected to expand by 7-8% from 2022 to 2032, according to nationwide and regional employment statistics. In Oregon and the Portland metro area, there remains a shortage of qualified Dental Hygienists entering the workforce. The field of Dental Hygiene has experienced sustained growth and is projected to expand by 7-8% from 2022 to 2032, according to nationwide and regional employment statistics. In Oregon and the Portland metro area, there remains a shortage of qualified Dental Hygienists entering the

workforce. Upon completing PCC's Dental Hygiene program, students are well-prepared for job placement, with many securing positions directly after their externship experience. Some graduates choose to pursue further studies to become an educator, while others aim for a career in dental supply sales, research, dental insurance specialists, or dental office administrators. Our commitment at PCC is to provide an exceptional educational experience, ensuring our graduates are not only job-ready but also equipped with the skills and certifications necessary to thrive in the dynamic field of Dental Hygiene. Through our updated curriculum and the introduction of the new degree program, we are poised to continue this tradition of excellence and meet the evolving needs of both our students and the dental industry.

2. ***Does the community college utilize systemic methods for meaningful and ongoing involvement of the appropriate constituencies?***

PCC's Dental Hygiene program has long been an integral component of our dental community. The program's strength lies in its deep-rooted connections within the industry. The Dental Sciences Advisory Committee includes diverse community partners from the dental field. This committee convenes biannually to stay abreast of industry developments and community needs, actively shaping the direction of our program. Understanding the critical role our program plays and the necessity of upholding its accreditation, the Advisory Committee supports our new degree initiative. This support underscores our collective commitment to providing highly skilled Dental Hygienists to both the local community and the broader state of Oregon, ensuring the continuity of exceptional dental care for all. Our Dental Hygiene program has cultivated many fruitful partnerships, including Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Care Centers, the Boys and Girls Clubs, OHSU Russell Street, and Multnomah County. These collaborative efforts have given our students the opportunity to hone dental care skills, chairside techniques, and interpersonal skills.

3. ***Is the community college program aligned with appropriate education, workforce development, and economic development programs?***

For several years, the PCC Dental Hygiene program has collaborated with local area high schools, offering tailored information sessions to prospective students. High school students interested in healthcare professions have the opportunity to rotate through our hands-on lab course, gaining a firsthand glimpse into the daily life of a Dental Hygiene student. High school students are paired with our Dental Hygiene students for lunch, enabling them to ask questions and gain a realistic understanding of this educational career path. This initiative has encouraged many students to enroll in our program after this engaging experience. Additionally, to streamline the pathway for high school students, we have actively and systematically evaluated our program prerequisites and admissions requirements to ensure applicants can complete many of the prerequisites at their local area high school- shortening their pathway to the program. Upon successful completion of PCC's Dental Hygiene program, students are eligible to sit for the National Board Examination and the Western Regional Board Examination.

4. ***Does the community college program lead to student achievement of academic and technical knowledge, skills, and related proficiencies?***

The PCC Dental Hygiene program has consistently maintained a successful program design for many years, which we intend to preserve and enhance with this new degree. The program's maximum capacity is 20 students per year, allowing us to deliver high-quality education within our physical constraints and to meet staffing ratios mandated by our accrediting body, CODA. Our Dental Hygiene program provides a fully in-person model, recognizing the significant importance of hands-on learning vital to this profession. This approach not only ensures comprehensive skill development but also fosters a strong sense of teamwork and community - a vital component in the dental field. Students are actively engaged in field experiences and community outreach, rotating through various dental offices and sites throughout their 2 years. This hands-on exposure equips them with invaluable practical knowledge essential for their future careers. To ensure our curriculum remains in line with accreditation standards and responsive to evolving student and industry needs, the Dental Hygiene program SAC has meticulously restructured the curriculum. This realignment is informed by comprehensive evaluations of various program outcomes conducted annually. Data collected from diverse sources, including student questionnaires and scores on various course activities, serve as the foundation for continuous program improvements. In addition to academic and technical instruction, PCC's Dental Hygiene program is dedicated to providing students with abundant opportunities for employment information and career preparation. In the second year, students enroll in a specialized career preparedness course. In this course, they develop essential documents such as resumes and cover letters and refine their interview techniques. Furthermore, our program collaborates with PCC's Jobs and Internships Specialist, who offers expert guidance on employment opportunities and essential career preparedness skills.

5. ***Does the community college identify and have the resources to develop, implement, and sustain the program?***

The proposed Dental Hygiene degree is a revision of the current degree, requiring no changes or adjustments in terms of capacity. PCC already possesses the appropriate budget, qualified instructors, and facilities to run the Dental Hygiene program seamlessly. PCC's Dental Sciences department houses a working dental clinic for the community. The Dental Hygiene program plays a pivotal role in offering this low-cost, accessible solution for dental care to our community members. Dental Hygiene students actively participate in screenings, patient exams, radiography, and they assist in restorative PCC's Dental Sciences department houses a working dental clinic for the community. The Dental Hygiene program plays a pivotal role in offering this low-cost, accessible solution for dental care to our community members. Dental Hygiene students actively participate in screenings, patient exams, radiography, and they assist in restorative seamlessly. PCC's Dental Sciences department houses a working dental clinic for the community. The Dental Hygiene program plays a pivotal role in offering this low-cost, accessible solution for dental care to our community members. Dental Hygiene students actively participate in

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screenings, patient exams, radiography, and they assist in restorative treatment for patients. Team teaching is a prominent feature of PCC's Dental Hygiene program, with instructors practicing at the highest level of their licenses and certifications. Courses are taught based on individual skill sets, and labs feature 2-3 instructors per session, providing students exposure to multiple teaching styles and instructors an opportunity to learn from each other.

Assurances

Portland Community College has met or will meet the four institutional assurances required for program application.

1. *Access.* The college and program will affirmatively provide access, accommodations, flexibility, and additional/supplemental services for special populations and protected classes of students.
2. *Continuous Improvement.* The college has assessment, evaluation, feedback, and continuous improvement processes or systems in place. For the proposed program, there will be opportunities for input from and concerning the instructor(s), students, employers, and other partners/collaborators. Program need and labor market information will be periodically re-evaluated and changes will be requested as needed.
3. *Adverse impact and detrimental duplication.* The college will follow all current laws, rules, and procedures and has made good faith efforts to avoid or resolve adverse *intersegmental* and *intra-segmental* impact and detrimental duplication problems with other relevant programs or institutions.
4. *Program records maintenance and congruence.* The college acknowledges that the records concerning the program title, curriculum, CIP code, credit hours, etc. maintained by the Office are the official records and it is the college's responsibility to keep their records aligned with those of the Office. The college will not make changes to the program without informing and/or receiving approval from the Office.