

Program Review Executive Summary

Dental Hygiene

Majors Reviewed:

- *Dental Hygiene, B.S.*
- *Dental Hygiene, A.A.S.*

August 2011



Executive Summary

The Dental Hygiene program (DH) was developed in 1977. The first class of students began in January, 1978 and graduated in May, 1979. The bachelor's degree program was implemented in 1992, and the first students enrolled during the fall of that year. The program has grown in many ways since its inception.

The applicant pool for the Dental Hygiene program continues to remain consistent, and we have more applicants than we can accommodate within the major. As a result, all students begin in a pre-dental hygiene major and complete general courses towards the major. The program utilizes a point-based admissions ranking system to select students for admission into the major. The associate degree dental hygiene program currently accepts 36 students into the program each year.

Current employment trends published by the Bureau of Labor statistics suggest that the demand for dental hygienists will continue to grow by 36% by the year 2018. However, local reports from recent graduates and area dental hygienists indicate that there may be a geographical maldistribution of employment opportunities. It is common for dental hygienists to work multiple part-time positions. The program will need to continue to monitor this trend.

The dental hygiene program will continue to seek modern technologies to enhance the teaching and learning process. Today's learner provides a unique challenge, and the program is dedicated to providing the best learning opportunities for our students.

Recommendations to maintain program excellence include the following:

- Maintain excellent clinical facilities to enhance recruitment of students. This is vital since the competing community college programs have tuition rates that are significantly less than Penn College.
- Continue to monitor the admissions ranking system to ensure the most qualified students are earning acceptance into the major.
- A curriculum revision will be required during the 2011/12 academic year; in conjunction with the CODA site visit, to accommodate local anesthesia as a required course.
- Explore technologies to enhance the teaching/learning experience. The program should also consider incorporating a computerized clinical grading system to allow for improved student tracking and outcomes assessment.
- Monitor graduate employment trends and threats to the dental hygiene profession.
- Submit a new course elective to curriculum committee for the mission to Nicaragua (currently offered as DEN399).