

Northwood Technical College

FY26 (2025-26) Dental Assistant Program

The following is additional information about the Northwood Tech Dental Assistant (DA) program.
This information supplements the program webpage and district catalog.

Degree: One-Year Technical Diploma

DENTAL ASSISTANT (DA) PROGRAM - 33 credits

The Dental Assistant program is a one-year (two-semester) program. Students must complete 33 credits to graduate. The program is available at the Rice Lake campus with a maximum of 12 students. The program is only offered on a full-time basis, Monday through Friday.

The program combines lecture, laboratory, and internships with clinical settings. These experiences include chairside assisting, radiography techniques, manipulation of dental materials, office procedures for general and specialty practices, and professionalism. Travel is required to clinical sites; students must provide their own transportation.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Megen Elliott, MS-OCL, RDH, CDA
Northwood Technical College
1900 College Dr.
Rice Lake, WI 54868
Telephone: 715-788-7150
E-mail: megen.elliott@NorthwoodTech.edu

PROGRAM LOCATION

Northwood Tech
Rice Lake Campus

CLINICAL LOCATIONS

Northwood Tech District,
Wisconsin, Minnesota, and other
states

ACADEMIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

You will be admitted to the program based on the date and time the admission criteria are met.

DA COURSEWORK

DA students must adhere to the course sequence of the DA program plan. Students may not take core DA courses prior to the start of the DA core program. Completion of "BLS Basic Life Support" training is a prerequisite to treating patients and must be maintained throughout the program. Courses that may be taken prior to starting the program are:

1. Oral/ Interpersonal Communication (801-196)
2. Students are expected to have entry-level computer and keyboarding skills.

CLASS COMMITMENT

The average amount of time spent in the classroom for a full-time student is between 32-35 hours per week. In addition to scheduled class time, it is expected that students spend at least two to three hours studying for each hour of classroom lecture they attend. This represents a significant time commitment, and most students find it necessary to reduce work hours during the program.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Official college transcripts are required for any college coursework that has been completed. Official college transcripts must be sealed and sent from the sending institution.

COMPUTER NEEDS

Since all DA courses include a web-based component, students must have a computer and internet access.

Northwood Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or status in any group protected by state or local law in employment, admissions or its programs or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the College's nondiscrimination policies: Amanda Gohde, Associate VP, Talent & Culture, 1900 College Drive, Rice Lake WI 54868, 715.645.7042, Wisconsin Relay TTY:711, amanda.gohde@NorthwoodTech.edu.

DA PROGRAM STANDARDS

DA students must complete all required courses with a 2.0 or better. In addition, all DA (508-xxx) courses must be passed with a satisfactory performance in professionalism components, clinical, and observation requirements. A DA student may repeat a core course only once. In addition, students enrolled in the DA program may repeat only two core courses in the program during their progress toward graduation. This policy also applies to coursework taken at other colleges. A formal evaluation with the Dental Assistant Program Director and any supporting faculty will occur, as needed, if exceptions are to be made to this policy.

ACCREDITATION

The program in dental assisting is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation *[and has been granted the accreditation status of "approval without reporting requirements"]*. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (312) 440-4653 or at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611. The Commission's Web address is <https://coda.ada.org/>.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN RISK STATEMENT

All Dental Assistant students should be aware that the field they are entering does have some special occupational hazards. The nature of the occupation could involve contact with infectious diseases, including AIDS and Hepatitis. Students will receive instruction in standard precautions and use of protective equipment to reduce the risk of blood and body fluid exposures. However, if an exposure should occur, diagnostic tests, treatments, or vaccinations may be necessary. The costs of these tests, treatments, and/or vaccinations are the responsibility of each individual student.

BACKGROUND CHECK AND CONVICTION RECORD

Students in the DA program will attend clinical sessions in dental agencies that are regulated by state and federal government. The laws state that these clinical agencies may not hire anyone with a history of conviction of certain crimes. Northwood Tech must contract with these agencies to provide your clinical experiences while in the program. In order to do so, the agencies expect Northwood Tech to adhere to the same guidelines—in other words, they view students as temporary employees.

Conviction history will be explained at the mandatory program orientation. Prior to attending clinical coursework, a caregiver background check will be obtained from the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#), along with a national criminal background check from [Verified Credentials, LLC](#). and, if applicable, a caregiver background check from the [Minnesota Department of Human Services](#). Having a conviction history will not necessarily stop you from entering the program. We will need to discuss the charges with you and will make every attempt to confidentially resolve the concern with the clinical agencies utilized for the clinical courses. Ultimately the clinical agencies reserve the right to determine what is an acceptable background check. The clinical agency may deny access to their setting based on a negative background check. If this occurs, you would not be able to complete the DA program requirements. The costs of background checks are the responsibility of the student.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available to help you pay for your education. It can come in the form of grants, loans, federal work-study, military and veterans benefits, division of vocational rehabilitation benefits, and scholarships.

Students in the Dental Assistant program may not be eligible to receive full financial aid, due to Department of Education regulations on how credits are recognized. For more information contact your [campus Financial Aid Advisor](#).

GRADUATE SALARY EXPECTATIONS

Graduates earn between \$ 38,477-\$ 52,412 annually. The most recent graduate follow-up study indicates the average yearly salary to be \$ 43,032.

FY26 (2025-26)
Checklist for Dental Assistant Admission

Admission Requirements

- _____ Complete Online application form
- _____ Have earned a high school diploma or GED certificate; current high school seniors must provide both a current high school transcript and a final (official) transcript with confer date
- _____ Review and sign Background Check Disclosure
- _____ Review and understand Technical Standards for this program
- _____ Complete admissions meeting with Northwood Tech counselor (academic admission requirements apply)

Students who are considering the program must meet one of the following items:

- Minimum High School GPA of 2.1
- ACT Score of 18
- Minimum College GPA 2.0 (min 3 cr)
- Associate or bachelor's degree
- Accuplacer scores

Additional measures may be considered as determined by the counselor.

Program-Specific Requirements

Proof of the following items MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO the first day of Semester 1 of the DA program:

- _____ Submit Background Check fee
- _____ Have an acceptable Wisconsin Caregiver Background Check, National Criminal Background Check, Minnesota Caregiver Background Check (if applicable), and other states, if applicable
- _____ Pass a physical exam, have current immunizations, and demonstrate negative status for tuberculosis (Tb).
- _____ COVID vaccination---highly recommended
NOTE: Northwood Technical College cannot guarantee clinical placement or ability to progress in the program if a student is not able to meet the clinical site requirements including but not limited to; influenza vaccine, covid vaccine, negative tb skin test or QuantiFERON®-TB Gold In-Tube test (QFT-GIT) or T-SPOT®.TB test (T-Spot), up to date acceptable background check, or any other clinical requirements required by the clinical site. Northwood Technical College cannot guarantee clinical placement if the clinical site must be changed due to students inability to meet the site specific requirements. Many sites require the student information 4-6 weeks prior to the clinical start date.
- _____ Possess current certification of "BLS Basic Life Support"
- _____ Review and sign Health Sciences Confidentiality Statement

- _____ Review and sign Dental Office Visit form
- _____ Review and sign Dental Assistant Program Permission form
- _____ Participate in a mandatory program orientation session

FY26 (2025-26)**DENTAL ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

Prices listed are approximate costs and subject to change

TEXTBOOKS (DA occupational specific courses)	\$380.00
BACKGROUND CHECKS (required): \$78.00	
WI Caregiver Background Check	\$15.00
National Criminal Background Check	\$68.00
ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:	
Uniforms (Navy, lab jacket x2, pants x2, clinic shoes)	\$150.00
Equipment (Includes: nitrile utility gloves and OSHA approved protective eyewear)	\$18.00
PROGRAM/COURSE PREREQUISITES	
47-531-437 BLS/CPR Basic Life Support for Healthcare Provider	\$99.00
(note must be AHA or American Red Cross approved and must include a hands-on, in person, component)	
SUMMER TERM - TUITION/FEES	
10-801-196 Oral/Interpersonal Communication	\$482.60
FIRST TERM - TUITION/FEES: \$2,995.95	
10-508-101 Dental Health Safety	\$211.85
10-508-103 Dental Radiography	\$385.90
10-508-113 Dental Materials	\$385.90
10-508-304 Dental & General Anatomy	\$323.40
31-508-302 Dental Chairside	\$964.75
31-508-306 Dental Assistant Clinical	\$578.85
31-508-307 Dental Assistant Professional	\$164.20
SECOND TERM - TUITION/FEES: \$2,576.30	
10-508-120 Dental Office Management	\$323.40
31-508-308 Dental Chairside Advanced	\$964.75
31-508-309 Dental Laboratory Procedures	\$771.80
31-508-310 Dental Radiography-Advanced	\$192.95
31-508-311 Dental Assistant Clinical Advanced	\$323.40
CDA Exam Fee	\$450.00
*Optional: HESI Exam Fee	\$35.00
*Optional: ADAA student membership	\$35.00
APPROXIMATE PROGRAM TOTAL	\$7,323.75

Note:

Transportation costs to and from clinical agencies will vary.

Students are responsible for additional clinical agency requirements.

Computer, other required hardware, or upgrade costs will be discussed on an individual basis.

Students are responsible for health form costs (TB test, Immunizations, titers, exam, etc.)

Students are responsible for costs related to injury or incidence while at clinical site.

