



Dental Programs

UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

This handbook has been especially designed to answer questions you may have about the Dental Assisting Program. Do not hesitate to contact your instructor when school-related problems arise.

This handbook is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as the basis of a contract between a student and the University of Alaska Anchorage. Although every effort is made to ensure its correctness, regulations of the university and this program's requirements change from time to time during the period any student is attending the University of Alaska Anchorage; to the extent there is a conflict between this handbook and university policies, regulations, rules, or procedures, the university policies, regulations, rules, or procedures will control.

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DENTAL ASSISTING FACULTY

Stephanie Olson, MS, CDA

smolson@uaa.alaska.edu

Desk: 786-6923

Cell: 907-632-5450

Stephanie is the program coordinator of the Dental Assisting Program and a graduate of both UAF and UAA. She is a lifelong Alaskan with 4 children and a passion for adventure and learning. She has two golden retrievers that she shows along with her husband. Her favorite food is chocolate and pizza. Her favorite movie is the original Overboard.

Laura Stoddard, RDH, CDA, M.Ed.TLRN

lstoddard@alaska.edu

Desk 786-6983

Cell: 907-748-4374

Laura Stoddard has a long history with UAA, UAA Dental Programs and the profession of dentistry. She graduated in 1999 with AAS in Dental hygiene from UAA Dental Hygiene, earned her BS in 2012, and M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning in 2021. Her studies in the masters program focused on online education, technology and student engagement. She practiced as a dental hygienist for 21 years in a public health facility serving Alaska Native and American Indians (AN/AI). Laura's career in teaching began in 2005, when she began teaching AN/AI students in the SCF Dental Assisting Training Program. She joined the UAA Dental Assisting program in January of 2019. Laura loves seeing students grow into dental professionals who love to help their patients and community. She enjoys photography and exploring Alaska with her family. Her favorite food is tacos, loves hockey and watching episodes of Seinfeld.

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is the ultimate source of consumer protection for prospective students. It is often a prerequisite for governmental funding. Graduation from an accredited program is almost always stipulated by state law and is an eligibility requirement for licensure and/or certification examinations. In short, accreditation of a school or program is a student's most important source of independent validation that the program has at least enough educational value to be "approved" by a credible (expertise-based), independent (free of outside influence), reliable (consistently applied standards) organization that has the U.S. Department of Education's approval.

CODA was established in 1975 and is nationally recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) as the sole agency to accredit dental and dental-related education programs conducted at the post-secondary level. CODA's mission is to serve the oral health care needs of the public through the development and administration of standards that foster continuous quality improvement of dental and dental related educational programs. The general public and communities of interest have direct access to CODA's Meeting Agenda and Materials. Additionally, updated information about CODA's activities is available by reviewing information in the Accreditation News.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation, often referred to by the acronym CODA, accredits dental schools and programs including advanced dental education programs and allied dental education programs in the United States. The Commission functions independently and autonomously in matters of developing and approving accreditation standards, making accreditation decisions on educational programs and developing and approving procedures that are used in the accreditation process. It is structured to include an appropriate representation of the communities of interest.

STUDENT ADVISING

1. Any questions concerning a particular class or clinic should be brought to the attention of the designated instructor of that class, lab, or clinic.
2. Stephanie Olson is the Dental Assisting Program Academic Advisor and is available to discuss academic and degree planning.
3. Class meetings are held when requested by the students and/or faculty or held a minimum of once a semester.
4. You must maintain a GPA of 2.0 to be in compliance with UAA policy regarding minimum GPA for a student completing a certificate and/or AAS program
5. All Dental Assisting classes have attendance requirements. Missing an excessive amount (10%) of class may subject the student to a teacher-initiated withdrawal from a class.
6. Excess tardiness (Tardy 3 or more times for each course) is considered unprofessional and counterproductive to instructor and student use of time and may result in dismissal from the course.

PROFESSIONALISM STANDARDS

The dental assisting educational process is directed at aiding the student in acquiring psychomotor, cognitive and affective behaviors necessary to become a dental assistant competent to function within the dental profession. Faculty and program administrators have the responsibility to plan learning experiences designed to assist the student in becoming a competent dental auxiliary. In addition, students must exhibit behaviors consistent with those required to function effectively as part of the dental team.

Professionalism is defined as "professional character, spirit or methods." It is the standard practice or methods of a professional as distinguished from an amateur.

Behaviors and attitudes required by dental professionals are expected of dental assisting students. These include but are not limited to:

1. Utilizing communication skills that are appropriate and effective in relating to volunteers, peers, and faculty.
2. Conducting one's self in a manner considered appropriate legally and ethically by members of the dental profession.
3. Assuming responsibility for one's academic and professional development.
4. Complying with the departmental dress code as stated.
5. Attendance in scheduled labs and clinics is prohibited if not in compliance.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Students are responsible for notices sent via UAA's email and announcements made by faculty through UAA's Blackboard system.
- Students should address questions pertaining to classes and/or clinic sessions should be addressed to the instructor of that class.
- Cell phone use within classes is at discretion of the faculty teaching the course. For infection control purposes the use of cell phones in clinic is prohibited. In labs, cell phones may be used on a limited basis for learning purposes only.
- Posting student images or "going live" during class time or clinic is strictly prohibited as this could potentially violate HIPAA laws and student/faculty privacy.
- Students are responsible for their own transportation to their assigned clinical area during the practicum sessions of the program or to other extramural activities.
- Students must demonstrate cooperative behavior with students, faculty and staff on your externship assignment.
- Students are required to adhere to the hours of operation for their assigned clinical area during practicum sessions.
- The repair or replacement of equipment, instruments, and materials damaged due to carelessness during use is the student's responsibility.
- The Dental Programs require a series of immunizations to help insure the health of students and others.
- When you directly care for patients, you have an extra measure of responsibility for their safety as well as your own. Report immediately, to the instructor, any potentially dangerous conditions or defective equipment.
- Maintain an up-to-date Medical/Dental History in personal file. Inform program secretary of any relevant changes.
- Review the "Students' Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities [located here](#)
- Student fees do not include medical service or student insurance. Students who do not have private medical coverage must participate in the Group Health Plan offered by UAA. See the UAA catalog for further information.
- All handouts and assignments will be made available via Blackboard. If you would like a printed copy, it is your responsibility for the printing.
- Students are responsible for completing graduation requirements and for filing necessary paperwork in a timely manner. Due dates are posted online at [University of Alaska Anchorage website](#) so please be aware of important deadlines and dates.

STUDENT CONDUCT

1. Adherence to all policies established by the University of Alaska Anchorage and discussed in the UAA catalog is required.
2. The dental team handles confidential information concerning the history and condition of patients/volunteers. We are bound by strict ethical and legal restrictions. You must never discuss a patient/volunteer's condition or personal problems with anyone, except as it relates to the care of the patient. Safeguarding the privacy of the volunteer is the responsibility of all of us. Names must not be used in any written case studies or discussions.
3. All students, faculty, staff, patients, and applicants to the program will be seen without regard to their bloodborne pathogen status. However, we ask that all students use common sense when ill. Please be thoughtful and take the necessary precautions to prevent your classmates from catching your illness. Please be up to date on the Covid-19 policy at UAA.
4. Keep traffic through and discussion in the reception area and dental suite hallway to a minimum. The rear entrance to the suite is the door that must be utilized by students. Each student will be given a code to open the door lock.
5. Personal belongings and school-related materials should be kept in lockers. Theft has occurred in the past. Do not store personal items under the sink in the locker room or outside of your designated locker.
6. Foods and beverages are not permitted in the clinic area (this includes gum and cough drops). Food and beverages are allowed in lecture classrooms at the discretion of your instructors.
7. All food kept in the refrigerator must have a name and date. We have many students; please respect food belonging to others.
8. Students are not permitted to work in the clinic when under the influence of intoxicants, drugs, or medications affecting psychomotor responses. Anyone suspected of being under the influence will be asked to leave class and will be subject to dismissal.
9. The clinical area was chosen for specific learning experiences. The value you receive will depend on you and your attitude. Any problems that develop should be discussed privately with your instructor. Undesirable conduct could cause disciplinary action. [Disciplinary procedures](#) are discussed further in the UAA catalog.
10. The clinical, extramural activities and externship assignments are usually very specific. Your assignment areas are not to be changed, except by your instructor.
11. You should know all legal implications that affect you. Do not perform any procedure or operate any equipment unless you are given permission to do so by your instructor. When on externship, tactfully explain any limitations you have because of your student status.
12. Decline any gifts or tips from patients/volunteers for services.
13. For your health and safety and the health and safety of others, infection control, safety policies and grooming policies are strictly enforced.
14. Children and infants- are not permitted in classes, audio conferences, laboratories or clinical settings.
15. Requesting a faculty reference. There are times when students would like a faculty member to serve as a reference or to write a letter referencing their performance as a student. Before the faculty member can prepare the letter, students need to complete the UAA Reference Letter Request – FERPA Release and Release of Liability form which is available from the [Registrar's](#)

[office](#). The form must be completed, signed, and received by the faculty member before any student information is released.

GRADING POLICY & ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

Academic progression policy for classes and semesters:

- The competency/skills assessments for individual courses must be passed at the minimum competency level (student may have 2 attempts to pass each competency). The grade that the student earns on the first attempt is the grade that will be recorded in the gradebook. If these competency/skills assessments are not passed, then the student will fail the course, even if the student is numerically passing the course.
- In the fall semester, a student who does not pass both DA 101 and DA 102, may not move on the DA 130 and DA 195A (fall semester late starting courses) and may not take the following spring and summer courses: DA 201, DA 195A, DA 160 and DA 295A.
- In the fall semester, a student who does not pass DA A110 and DA110L may not take DA 195A (late starting fall course) and may not take the following spring and summer courses: DA 195A, DA 201, and DA 295A.
- A student must pass all fall and spring courses (and have a GPA above 2.0) to take DA 295A.

Generally Dental Assisting classes follow one of two grading scales

Courses with Lab

93 – 100	A
84 – 92	B
75 – 83	C
Below 75	F

Lecture only classes (no lab)

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
65-69	D
Below 65	F

The following descriptions are used to assign grades to students work:

A	An honor grade indicating original, outstanding, independent work demonstrating mastery of the subject.
B	Quality work with a very good level of performance; better than average
C	Satisfactory or average level of performance
F	Non-passing grade, failure and will count in the student's grade point average; course must be repeated to receive a passing grade/credit toward graduation.
I	Indicates additional work must be completed prior to assigning a permanent grade; may be given for unavoidable absence or other conditions beyond the control of the student when work already completed is a grade "C" or better. Teachers and students must complete and submit the Notice of Incomplete Grade form listing unfinished requirements to the Department Chairperson.
P	Passing grade on the Pass/No Pass option. It does not count in the GPA; indicates work of "C" or better. DA 195A and B are graded on the P/NP option.

Distance Education Policy

- All distance delivery courses require online student participation.
- Students will access course related materials through the [UAA Blackboard Learning Management System](#).
- The verification processes used are to protect student privacy. Identity verification and distance education courses and programs. Board of Regents' Policy 09.01.080 requires each University of Alaska student to have a unique identification code.
- UAA students wishing to enroll in online classes do so by logging into a secure portal (UAOnline) using their UAA credentials (username and password). Students can select one of the three security levels for their account.
- The same credentials are used to access Blackboard, the online education delivery platform. Distance students requiring services have their identities verified in multiple ways.
- For account lookups, testing appointments, etc. a student's identity is validated in person or from a distance by a UAA employee using Elmo Verifier, a tool that connects to the Banner student information database.
- Testing requires a valid government or university ID if the distance student is testing in person with a proctor, or a valid government ID along with an image of the student captured by the student's computer camera if using UAA's Remote Proctor Now virtual proctoring service.
- FERPA rights are protected and enforced for students regardless of attendance method. Students taking distance education courses and/or programs are informed of their FERPA rights and regulations against identity falsification through the UAA Catalog and in an annual email.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Students are expected and required to report to class in appropriate mental and physical condition. It is our intent and obligation to provide a drug-free, healthy, safe and secure learning environment.

This policy may include drugs that have been obtained with a prescription. Engaging in dental assisting activities or coming to class and the laboratory classroom (clinic) while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances constitute unprofessional practice and will not be tolerated. Possessing and/or using alcohol or controlled substances on campus violates UAA policy (described in the UAA Catalog, Student Life Section) and may subject the student to University discipline.

Procedure When Substance Abuse is Suspected

The following behaviors may indicate substance abuse by a student: Change in behavior, Chronic lateness, Missed assignments, Erratic or uneven performance in clinical or classroom settings, Chronic alibiing (excuse-making), Possible odor of alcohol on breath.

Procedure When Student Appears Under Influence

Procedure when a student appears to be under the influence of a chemical substance in the clinical setting: The instructor will confront the student with the suspicion that s/he is under the influence of a chemical substance (drugs or alcohol). The instructor will share the specific observations that led to the suspicion with the student. If the student admits that they are under the influence of a chemical substance, the student will be required to leave the clinical/laboratory setting immediately. If the student denies being under the influence of a chemical substance and the evidence is strong (e.g., odor of alcohol on breath or use of a drug observed by an instructor, a staff member or another student), the student will be immediately requested to have a urinalysis and blood drawn for a toxicology screening. Refusal to undergo a toxicology screening will result in the student being required to leave the clinical setting immediately. If the student denies being under the influence of a drug and the evidence is unclear, the student will be allowed to remain in the clinical setting unless, in the instructor's judgment, safety would be compromised. Prior to the next class/clinical day, the student will be required to meet with the instructor to discuss the behavior that led to the suspicion and to develop a plan for preventing similar behavior in the future. If a student has been under the influence of a controlled substance in a clinical setting, the student will not be permitted to return until a satisfactory plan for preventing future occurrences has been achieved.

Student Ride Home When Under Influence

Students required to leave the clinical setting for being under the influence of a chemical will not be allowed to drive themselves home. The process for ensuring that the student arrives home safely will be as follows:

The student will call someone to come to drive him/her home.

If there is no one to call: The student will contact a taxi cab to drive him/her home.

PROFESSIONAL GROOMING STANDARDS & CLINICAL UNIFORM POLICY

UAA Dental Assisting program follows professional standards set by organizations such as Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Organization for Safety Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP).

Personal Grooming

- **Daily personal grooming** including showers with deodorant is expected. Most professional healthcare settings require natural makeup and limited perfume since professionals are working with a wide variety of patients.
- **All jewelry is removed for clinic and lab sessions.** No visible face piercings including tongue rings. No rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings or watches may be worn in clinical areas.
- **Hair is clean and secure.** Hair must be pulled back from the face and behind the shoulders. Long hair must be secured in a bun or ponytail. When a student bends at the waist, their hair must not fall in front of the face.
- **Fingernails must be short (less than ¼ inch long).** Cuticles should be well-groomed. No nail polish (color or clear) is acceptable.
- **Any tattoos** that are icons of hate, discrimination and/or sexually explicit are not appropriate in this professional setting and must not be displayed and must be covered.
- **Students should present with good oral hygiene.** Active periodontal disease and breath odor must be controlled. In the case of bad breath (such as “smoker’s breath”) a breath spray is required. Avoid smoking, food or drink odors on the breath or clothing.

Dental Assisting Uniforms

- **School Uniforms** (will be worn in labs, clinics and during student’s externship)
- **Uniforms style and color chosen by faculty each year.**
- **Shoes.** Black clinic style shoes are required. Shoes should be clean, including laces. For infection control purposes and student safety, no open toes or mesh material is allowed. Shoes should remain at school or at the practicum site.
- **Socks** that cover the ankle bone are required.
- **Uniforms** should be clean, pressed and wrinkle free.
- **Pants** should be 1” above the floor when shoes are on. No skin should be exposed when the student sits down.
- **An approved name tag** must be worn in labs, clinics and externships.
- **A medical cap to be worn at all times** during patient treatment. The cap may be chosen by the student, must have their name written inside of it and of a suitable appropriate print/design.
- **Lab and/or clinic attire is not to be worn outside** the Allied Health Sciences Building. Lab coats are not to be worn outside the dental suite area.

Infection Control, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Hand Hygiene

- Students are expected to maintain professional standards set by the CDC, OSHA and OSAP and to follow all UAA infection control protocol. For example, PPE must be worn in accordance with established professional standards. Such items such as side shields and utility gloves are to be worn.

- One pair of nitrile protective gloves will be provided to students. If lost, replacements must be purchased by each student.
- Hand hygiene is expected before and after glove use, in accordance with CDC standards.
- When students report to the clinic and upon leaving the clinic, hand washing is expected.
- Students must follow all safety and infection control protocols as taught in DA A102 Infection Control.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE- THROUGH THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION

The Commission on Dental Accreditation strongly encourages attempts at informal or formal resolution through the program's or sponsoring institution's internal processes prior to initiating a formal complaint with the Commission.

A “formal” complaint is defined as a complaint filed in written (or electronic) form and signed by the complainant. This complaint should outline the specific policy, procedure or standard in question and rationale for the complaint including specific documentation or examples. Complainants who submit complaints verbally will receive direction to submit a formal complaint to the Commission in written, signed form following guidelines in the Evaluation and Operational Policies and Procedures manual.

An “anonymous comment/complaint” is defined as an unsigned comment/complaint submitted to the Commission. Anonymous comments/complaints may be received at any time and will be added to the respective program’s file for evaluation during the program’s next scheduled accreditation site visit. At the time of the site visit, the program and site visit team will be informed of the anonymous comment/complaint. The program will have an opportunity to respond to the anonymous comment/complaint; the response will be considered during the site visit evaluation. Anonymous comments/complaints will be assessed to determine trends in compliance with Commission standards, policies, and procedures. The assessment of findings related to the anonymous comments/complaint will be documented in the site visit report.

The Commission will consider only formal, written, signed complaints; unsigned complaints will be considered “anonymous complaints” and addressed as set forth above; oral complaints will not be considered. Students, faculty, constituent dental societies, state boards of dentistry, patients, and other interested parties may submit an appropriate, signed, formal complaint to the Commission on Dental Accreditation regarding any Commission accredited dental, allied dental or advanced dental education program, or a program that has an application for initial accreditation pending. An appropriate complaint is one that directly addresses a program’s compliance with the Commission’s standards, policies and procedures.

The Commission is interested in the continued improvement and sustained quality of dental and dental related education programs but does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for treatment received by patients or individuals in matters of admission, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff or students.

In accordance with its responsibilities to determine compliance with accreditation standards, policies, and procedures, the Commission does not intervene in complaints as a mediator but maintains, at all

times, an investigative role. This investigative approach to complaints does not require that the complainant be identified to the program. The Commission, upon request, will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the identity of the complainant from being revealed to the program; however, the Commission cannot guarantee the confidentiality of the complainant. More information about filing a complaint can be found on the [CODA website](#).

Professionalism Contract for the UAA Dental Assisting Program

The spirit of this handbook is aimed at promoting safety standards and cultivating the professional image of the students of the UAA Dental Assisting program. Faculty, staff, student and patient safety are of the utmost importance. For this reason, departures from the established provisions of this policy will be considered breaches of enrollment policies.

Students not adhering to the professionalism, student behavior and dress code policies will not be permitted to attend/participate in classroom or simulation clinic activities or care for patients, which could result in course failure, removal from the academic program and impact enrollment in future courses within the Dental Assisting program.

By initializing each section, you are acknowledging you have read and understood the policies outlined in this handbook.

____ (Initial) *This contract pertains to Fall 2021, Spring and Summer 2022 semesters of the Dental Assisting Program.*

____ (Initial) *I have read and understood each section of the document.*

____ (Initial) *I understand the professional responsibilities of a Dental Assisting student within the program and will follow all policies defined in the Dental Assisting Student Handbook.*

____ (Initial) *I will be punctual in attendance and use my time management skills to allow for optimal learning.*

____ (Initial) *I will be properly groomed and dressed appropriately for labs, clinics and externships and work to create positive relationships with my classmates while working in a team environment.*

____ (Initial) *I will use good judgement, maintain infection control standards set by CDC, OSHA and UAA policies to ensure safety for myself and others.*

____ (Initial) *More than five (3) documented violations may result in dismissal from the program.*

____ (Initial) *I understand that I must pass all clinical competencies to continue with my coursework as a Dental Assisting student.*

Date: _____ Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____