



TENNESSEE COLLEGE  
OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY  
— MURFREESBORO —

## **2023-24 PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

**Dental Assisting  
TCAT Murfreesboro  
1303 Old Fort Parkway, Murfreesboro, TN 37129**

**Instructor  
Suzanne Dowdle**

**2023-24 PROGRAM HANDBOOK  
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## INTRODUCTION

### **Institution Mission**

The mission of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro is to be the leading training provider for workforce development by delivering the best in technical education to our region.

### **Institution Accreditation**

Tennessee College of Applied Technology is accredited by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE). The COE, originally founded in 1971 as a regional accrediting agency of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is the successor to the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (COEI). In 1995, the Council became a national accrediting agency. In 2006, the Council celebrated its 35th year of assuring quality and integrity in career and technical education. The Council's accreditation process is conducted on behalf of more than 181,000 students across the nation who pursue careers in a variety of technical fields.

### **Program Mission**

The mission of the Dental Assisting Program is to guide selected individuals through an educational experience to become personally, professionally, and socially effective dental assistants.

### **Program Accreditation/Oversight**

The Tennessee State Board of Dentistry provides oversight over the Dental Assisting program.

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro. Entering one of the Allied Health Programs indicates a commitment on your part to enhancing your future. The Allied Health Programs aim to assist you in developing into a healthcare professional capable of giving thorough, competent, supportive, and safe care. This is possible through the guidance and instruction of our faculty, combined with your interest and enthusiasm. Our curriculum is designed to meet the requirements established by accreditation agencies per program.

This student handbook provides specific information regarding program requirements, policies, and guidelines for students enrolled in the Dental Assisting Program. It is the responsibility of each of you to become thoroughly familiar with all information contained in the handbook.

This handbook plus the official school handbook and other documents your instructor might give you will guide you through your career at the TCAT Murfreesboro. You are expected to understand and comply with the requirements, policies, and guidelines in this handbook; your signature will attest to your willingness to do so. If you have any questions, please contact your Instructor. We are here to assist you!

Sincerely,

Suzanne Dowdle, BS, CDA, RDA

## Acknowledgement Page

(Please return the completed form to your instructor.)



I have received and read my copy of the Program Handbook in preparation for my course of study at TCAT – Murfreesboro.

The Program Handbook describes important information about TCAT – Murfreesboro. I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the Handbook, I will consult my instructor for clarification.

I will act in accordance with the standards of conduct outlined in this Program Handbook and in the TCAT – Murfreesboro Student Handbook as a condition of my enrollment.

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Student's Signature

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Student's Name (Print)

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Date

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Definition of Dental Assisting**

The dental assistant, who is a member of the dental health team, may serve as office manager, chairside assistant, or laboratory assistant.

As a business assistant, he/she is the liaison between the dentist and the patient. He/she may help maintain records, answer the telephone, make appointments, make financial arrangements, file insurance claim forms, collect fees, order supplies, and prepare bank deposits.

As a chairside assistant, he/she may be required to prepare the patient for treatment, prepare dental treatment set-ups, and assist the dentist in the treatment of the patient. Other duties may include the missing of materials for restorations, preparing materials, making impressions, sterilizing instruments, and disinfecting treatment rooms, exposing, and processing radiographs, and performing other duties under the supervision of the dentist.

### **Program Description**

The Dental Assisting program prepares students to become members of the dental health care team. The course includes theory with demonstrations and classroom instruction. Students receive supervised experience performing procedures using study models, mannequins, and other simulated methods.

Program content includes OSHA standards, CDC guidelines, infection control procedures, anatomy and physiology, radiographs, teaching adults and children oral hygiene and nutrition information, as well as 6 weeks of external rotation in general dentist offices, clinics, and specialty practices.

### **Program Objectives**

The purpose of this Dental Assisting Program is to provide unique hands-on learning experiences, to enable the graduate of the program to obtain the basic competencies needed to obtain licensure/certifications in the Dental Assisting field and gain employment in dentistry.

Based on this philosophy, the program has established the following objectives:

- To select mature persons who are in good physical and mental condition with high ethical standards, which have the aptitude for an interest in the dental assisting profession.
- To prepare individuals for successful careers in dental assisting through a progressive education program.
- To give the student an understanding of his/her role as a member of the dental health team.

- To develop a high degree of proficiency in dental practice management, chairside assisting, fourhanded dentistry, dental laboratory procedures, dental radiology, and other intra-oral procedures.
- To prepare and inspire students to continue education following graduation.
- To provide guidance in obtaining employment best suiting for the individual.

### **Program Evaluation**

The Dental Assisting Program is evaluated by the following methods:

- Advisory Committee input
- Student Evaluation of Instructor/Program
- Program Evaluation Data Review by School Administration, Tennessee Board of Regents, and the Council on Occupational Education each year
- Alumni and Employer Surveys
- Standardized Testing and Certification test results
- Clinical Evaluations of student performance

### **Dental Assisting Advisory Committee**

All Allied Health Programs at TCAT Murfreesboro utilize an advisory committee composed of local area residents who assist in the development and guidance of each program. These committee members are chosen because of their expertise in each of the individual fields and their commitment to the role of education.

The functions and responsibilities of the advisory committee to the Allied Health staff and faculty are as follows:

- Assist and advise the instructor(s) in the development and updating of short and long-range educational goals.
- Provide advice on curriculum development, materials, and training policies to ensure that content is related to employment needs.
- Assist in the evaluation of the Allied Health Programs.
- Introduce individual programs to the community, employers, and prospective students through public information activities. These may include articles, news releases, speeches, advertisements, and participation in special events and meetings.
- To aid in the process of finding appropriate instructors as the need arises.
- To address the Allied Health students, as needed, to inspire and to reach their goals.
- Help to provide teaching materials and provide placement opportunities for graduates.



### **Program Outline**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Customary Hours</b>
DTA 0001	Worker Characteristics	6
DTA 1010	Professional Orientation	10
DTA 1030	Dental Anatomy	35
DTA 1040	Head and Neck Anatomy	40
DTA 1050	Embryology and Histology	15
DTA 1060	Microbiology/Infection Control/ Hazardous Waste Mgt	50
DTA 1070	Oral Pathology	26
DTA 1081	Oral Diagnosis	40
DTA 1091	Prevention & Nutrition	25
DTA 1101	Office Emergencies	24
DTA 1110	Pharmacology	18
DTA 1121	Operative I	40
DTA 1130	Communication/Psychology	28
DTA 2011	Dental Materials I	40
DTA 2030	Dental Radiology	35
DTA 0002	Worker Characteristics	6
DTA 2021	Dental Materials II	45
DTA 2041	Dental Radiology II	46
DTA 2051	Operative II	65
DTA 2070	Ethics & Jurisprudence	18
DTA 2080	Prosthodontics	35
DTA 3035	Dental Specialties	67
DTA 3021	Clinical Externship	150

### **Program Awards**

Dental Assistant Certificate

864 hours

## GRADING AND PROGRESS STANDARDS

### Grading Standards for Nursing and Allied Health Programs

Evaluations of student achievement toward a program's identified occupational competencies are recorded for each student at the end of 432 hours of instruction that comprise a term.

Those evaluations shall be based on the following scale of progress:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79 (failing)
D	60-69 (failing)
F	0-59 (failing)

Students will be graded in the following categories:

- Theory/Related Information
  - A theory grade comes primarily from assignments consisting of workbook materials and worksheets, pop quizzes, tests, and a final. online modules, chapter tests, and course final tests. This information will be expressed in the course outline for each subject. The percentile will be as follows:
    - MindTap Assignments 20%
    - Quizzes 50%
    - Final 30%
  - Note: For tests that use an answer sheet for student responses, the responses on that answer sheet are the answers that will be used to determine the student's grade. In the event there is an error on a test key used to grade students' answer sheets, the instructor will correct the students' grades, if necessary.
- Skill Proficiency (Clinical)
  - Skill grades come from lab reviews and instructor evaluation of hands-on activities in the lab and clinical evaluations during clinical externship.
  - When a student fails a lab skill, or competency-based skill, the student will have to retake the skill, and at this point, the highest grade the student can receive is 80%. The student will be responsible for scheduling the retake with the instructor for the nearest possible date. After three days the skill cannot be retaken, and the original grade will be recorded in the grade book.

A course grade will be determined by averaging the theory and skill grade. If there is only a theory grade, that is the course grade. If there is only a skill grade, that is the course grade.

Students must maintain a satisfactory average of 80 for each course and may be suspended if a final course grade is below 80.

Students will be given a progress report at the end of the trimester. Students are encouraged to keep track of their grades throughout the trimester. Your grades will be documented on

jupitergrades.com. This gives you 24-hour access to your grades. Your instructor will be glad to talk with you about your grades and give you an update on your progress at any point during the trimester. Contact your instructor to schedule a mutually convenient time.

It is your responsibility to submit all work and/or take all tests. If you are absent, please check your weekly schedule and communicate with your instructor on the day you return regarding missed work and/or tests.

Academically, grades of A, and B are considered satisfactory progress; grades of C, D or F are considered unsatisfactory progress. A student who receives an unsatisfactory academic grade at the end of the term or unit will be suspended from the program due to failure to progress.

### **Competency Evaluation Guidelines**

During the matriculation through the Dental Assisting Program, Dental Assisting students are required to successfully complete various competencies in the laboratory and on clinical rotation. The following guidelines apply for competency-based education.

1. The actual written competency is given to the student.
2. A competency performance date is set.
3. The student along with his/her peers are given laboratory time under instructor supervision to practice competencies and address area-specific questions.
4. Each student must perform the competency, students are NOT allowed to ask the instructor any questions or communicate with peers during the scheduled skill time. Skills are considered tests that are subject to the cheating standards discussed in the student conduct section.
5. To continue matriculation through the dental assisting program, each competency MUST be passed at a score of 80% or greater.
6. Each student must perform the competency individually at the set time and date.
7. In the event of a failed competency, the student must retake the entire competency.
8. Each student has a maximum of three opportunities to pass the entire competency.
9. A five-point deduction is made each time the competency is re-administered.
  - a. Example: 2nd attempt= 95% highest possible score.
  - b. 3rd attempt= 90% highest possible score.
  - c. The highest recorded grade on 2nd and 3rd attempt is 80%.
10. After an unsuccessful / failed competency, the Student and Instructor must complete a Competency Improvement Plan Form and set a re-test date.
11. If competency is failed on the 3rd attempt, the student may be suspended from the dental assisting program.

All competencies, re-test, and Competency Improvement Plan Forms are filed in the student's academic file folders and always kept in the facility.

### **Retention Standards**

A student who fails during any term to attain a cumulative GPA at or above the level indicated below for the customary clock hours attempted or the average grade per course will be placed on suspension at the end of the term.

Standard:

- Students must maintain a satisfactory average (80) for each unit of the curriculum.

Additional retention standards for specific programs may be established by the college based on accreditation or licensing requirements applicable to a program.

### **Makeup Policy**

Assignments, tests, and comprehensive exams will be given. Assignments, tests, pop tests, and comprehensive exams are to be submitted or taken on the day they are scheduled. If you are absent and not able to turn in an assignment on the day it is due, you must turn it in on the day you return to receive credit. There will be a 5-point deduction per day that an assignment is late up to three days. On the fourth day, a zero is recorded on jupitergrades.com. If you are absent and miss a test, you must take it on the day you return to receive credit and the test will fill in the blank. After that, there will be a 5-point deduction per day that it is late. The make-up test will be given after school hours, so you must make arrangements with the instructor first thing in the morning of your return and stay after 2:30 p.m. Pop tests may not be made-up. The instructor has the right to negotiate the points' deduction in certain circumstances.

Note: You are required to contact your instructor of any tardy or absence prior to 7:30 a.m. If you do not, you will receive an automatic zero on any missed assignment(s) and/or test(s). If the test has already been passed out, you will not be allowed to begin taking the test. If a student is not present at the time a comprehensive exam is given, he/she will not be eligible to take the exam at a later time, unless there is an extreme reason for the absence (a severe illness that is documented, death in the immediate family), and the student notifies the instructor of absence. The instructor will determine whether the student may or may not take the exam based on the reason for absence.

### **Worker Characteristics**

Worker characteristics measure a student's professionalism in the workplace. The instructor will observe your actions throughout your time in class and give you an evaluation based off the following categories. A number grade will be issued to you during mid-term and at the end of the trimester.

- **Attendance:** Attends class, arrives/leaves on time; notifies the instructor in advance for planned absences
- **Character:** Displays loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, dependability, reliability, initiative, self-discipline, and self-responsibility
- **Teamwork:** Respects the rights of others; respects confidentiality; is a team player; is cooperative; displays a customer service attitude; seeks opportunities for continuous learning

- **Appearance:** Displays appropriate dress for the profession (grooming, hygiene, etiquette, uniform)
- **Attitude:** Demonstrates a positive attitude; appears self-confident; has realistic expectations of self
- **Productivity:** Follows safety practices; conserves materials; keeps work area neat and clean; follows directions and procedures; makes up assignments punctually; participates in class
- **Organizational Skills:** Manifests skills in prioritizing and management of time and stress; demonstrates flexibility in handling change.
- **Communication:** Displays appropriate nonverbal (eye contact, body language) and oral (listening, telephone etiquette, grammar) skills
- **Cooperation:** Displays leadership skills; appropriately handles criticism, conflicts, and complaints; demonstrates problem-solving capability; maintains appropriate relationships with supervisors and peers; follows chain of command
- **Respect:** Deals appropriately with cultural/racial diversity; does not engage in harassment of any kind

## **TCAT – MURFREESBORO POLICIES**

### **Attendance**

As stated in the Student Handbook, “The nature of the programs at the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology is such that it is necessary for every student to attend regularly. Excessive interruptions due to absences will have an adverse effect on student progress.”

### **5.5% Absences – Instructor Counseling and Documentation**

- Students who miss 5.5% of their enrolled hours for the term (24 hours for full-time students enrolled in 432 hours) must be formally counseled by their instructor. Absences affect the work ethic grade and could affect financial aid.
- The instructor documents the meeting with a signed attendance counseling form or memo. The student receives a copy, and the instructor retains a copy for his/her records.

### **9.7% Absences – One-Term Suspension with Appeal Opportunity**

- Students who miss 9.7% of their enrolled hours for the term (42 hours for full-time students enrolled in 432 hours) are reported by the instructor to Student Services.
- The Student Services Office notifies the student of the option to (1) accept the one-term suspension or (2) appeal the suspension within three business days of notice. An appeal form is provided to the student.
- Student appeals are forwarded to an Attendance Appeal Committee (appointed by the Vice President of Student Services) for review of the documentation. Only one appeal will be granted within a 12-month period.
- If approved to continue, the student and the instructor are notified via email of the stipulations for approval (e.g. not missing additional classes for the term); if the student fails to meet the stipulations, the instructor notifies Student Services to proceed with suspension. If the initial appeal is not approved and suspension is recommended by the committee, the appeal is then reviewed by the Vice President of Student Services.
- In consultation with the President, the Vice President provides the final decision on suspension to Student Services, so the student and the instructor can be notified via email.

### **Three-Day No Call/No Show**

Students are responsible for notifying their instructor each time they are absent. When a student misses three (3) consecutive days without contacting the college, that student may be presumed to have withdrawn from the college and will be exited from the program.

### **Tardies**

As stated in the Student Handbook, “A student is considered tardy if not in the classroom at the designated time for class to start. Multiple tardies will result in the following discipline.”

### 5 Tardies – Instructor Counseling and Documentation

- Students who are tardy five times in the term (four times for part-time students) must be formally counseled by their instructor. Further tardies can lead to probation and other sanctions.
- The instructor documents the meeting with a signed tardy counseling form or memo. The student receives a copy, and the instructor retains a copy of his/her records.

### 6 Tardies – Probation and Student Success Plan

- Students who are tardy six times in the term (five times for part-time students) are reported by the instructor to Student Services.
- The Student Services Office places the student on probation, and the student is required to complete a Student Success Plan with the appropriate Student Services representative.

### 7 Tardies – Review by Vice President for Possible Suspension

- Students who are tardy seven times in the term (six times for part-time students) are reported by the instructor to Student Services.
- The Student Services Office notifies the Vice President of Student Services for review. In consultation with the President, the Vice President provides the final decision on suspension to Student Services, so the student and the instructor can be notified via email.

### **TBR General Policy on Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions**

TCAT – Murfreesboro is governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). Students enrolled in a TBR postsecondary educational institution are citizens of their civic communities as well as the academic community. As such they are expected to conduct themselves as law-abiding members of each community at all times.

Admission to an institution of postsecondary education carries with it special privileges and imposes special responsibilities apart from those rights and duties enjoyed by non-students. In recognition of the special relationship that exists between the institution and the academic community which it seeks to serve, the Tennessee Board of Regents (“TBR” or “the Board”) has authorized the presidents of the institutions under its jurisdiction to take such action as may be necessary to maintain conditions on institution-owned and controlled property and to preserve the integrity of the institution and its educational environment.

Pursuant to this authorization and in fulfillment of its duties to provide a secure and stimulating atmosphere in which individual and academic pursuits may flourish, the Board has developed this policy, which is intended to govern student conduct at the institutions under its jurisdiction.

In addition, students are subject to all federal, state, and local laws and ordinances. If a student’s violation of such laws or ordinances also adversely affects the institution’s pursuit of

its educational objectives, an institution may enforce its own policies regardless of the status or outcome of any external proceedings instituted by other civil or criminal authorities.

Students are responsible for compliance with this policy and with institutional policies and regulations.

The policy in its entirety may be found at: <https://policies.tbr.edu/policies/general-policy-student-conduct-disciplinary-sanctions>.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is any action or attempted action designed to provide an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for oneself or others. Academic misconduct includes a wide variety of behaviors such as plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and other academic dishonesty. For purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

- Plagiarism. The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper attribution. Examples include but are not limited to copying of passages from works of others into one's own work without acknowledgment; summarizing or paraphrasing ideas from another source without proper attribution, unless such information is recognized as common knowledge; and using facts, statistics graphs, representations, or phrases without proper attribution.
- Cheating. Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or test/examination. Examples include but are not limited to copying another's work; obtaining or giving unauthorized assistance; unauthorized collaboration or collusion with another person; having another person take a test for a student; and the use of unauthorized materials or devices. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
- Fabrication. Falsifying, fabricating, or misrepresenting data, research results, citations or other information in connection with an academic assignment. Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Academic misconduct is prohibited. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly, through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed in accordance with this policy, the instructor has the authority to take academic discipline consistent with institutional policy, procedures, and processes.

An instructor who determines that a student has engaged in academic misconduct may choose to exercise academic discipline by lowering to any extent, including to a grade of "F" or "zero," a student's grade in the course, assignment, or examination affected by the alleged academic misconduct.

The policy in its entirety may be found at: <https://policies.tbr.edu/policies/general-policy-student-conduct-disciplinary-sanctions>.



### **Acceptable Computer Use**

All computer use, including Internet use must be in support of education and research and appropriate for the assignment. The College is not responsible for a student's access to any inappropriate material. All students at the College will be taught ethics and acceptable use of the computer system and the Internet. If there is a complaint about inappropriate usage, the instructor will resolve it. If not resolved by the instructor, the President or Vice Presidents will review the complaint. Inappropriate usage may be grounds for suspension or dismissal from the College.

This policy is in conjunction with TBR Policy IT Acceptable Uses 1.08.05.00.

Inappropriate usage includes but is not limited to:

- Using the network or Internet for personal and private matters including electronic mail outside the College.
- Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors including spamming.
- Accessing pornographic or obscene material.
- Accessing confidential material including but not limited to test files and personal/personnel records.
- Destroying, inappropriate deleting or changing, or otherwise damaging hardware or software.
- Downloading and/or installing programs or data files on college computers without permission of the Instructor.

### **Removal from Class for Disruptive Conduct**

As stated in the TCAT – Murfreesboro Student Handbook, "Students are expected and encouraged to develop proper work habits and to maintain a sincere, cooperative attitude at all times." This includes:

- actively and routinely participating in all class functions in a timely manner
- coming to class with the necessary tools and equipment required to participate in class activities.
- wearing appropriate attire for the program area and displaying their name tag
- maintaining a respectful and cooperative demeanor at all times with instructors, institutional officials, and classmates
- avoiding inappropriate language or conduct deemed disruptive to the institution's learning environment.
- following all institutional procedures related to absences and tardiness (e.g. arriving to class on time, notifying instructor of planned and unplanned absences, etc.)

Pursuant to Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) policy, students who engage in disruptive conduct or other conduct that violates the TBR's General Policy on Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions 3:02:00:01 may be temporarily removed or excluded from class by the

instructor for each class session in which the conduct occurs. Repeated infractions may result in additional disciplinary sanctions.

**Smoking**

TCAT Murfreesboro's campuses are smoke free. This includes all tobacco and electronic cigarettes, vape products, and smokeless tobacco. Students may only use tobacco products in their personal vehicles.

## **CLASSROOM POLICIES**

### **Dress Code**

Appropriate attire must be worn that is representative of what the industry requires in the workplace. Solid color scrubs (scrub top and bottom) must be worn daily. A t-shirt, with no visible lettering or imagery, may be worn under the scrub top, but not in place of a scrub top. A clean pressed lab coat may be worn over scrubs if desired. No hoodies or sweatshirts may be worn over scrubs. Some clinical sites may require a white lab coat.

See Clinical Performance Policies section for clinical dress code.

### **ID Badge**

Students must always wear their Tennessee College of Applied Technology student photo identification badges while on campus. The badges must be displayed so that they are readily visible. If a student loses his or her student ID badge, the student may request a replacement from Student Services after paying a \$5 fee to the Business Office.

### **Inclement Weather and School Closure**

It is the philosophy of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Murfreesboro that students are being prepared for the workplace. For this reason, the TCAT Murfreesboro normally does not close because of inclement weather, even though public school classes may be cancelled.

We recognize that inclement weather such as winter ice and snow, occasionally, make it difficult for students to attend school and clinical.

In the event of snow, ice or other severe weather conditions, students should use their own judgment in deciding whether to travel to school or clinical. When weather conditions are severe, information regarding school closing will be provided to you through the RAVE alert system, which is the rapid notification system we utilize.

### **Food/Drink**

A drink is allowed in the classroom at the instructors' discretion.

### **Cell Phones**

In following similar policies in place currently in dental offices in our area, your cell phone and smartwatch will not be allowed in the classroom, lab, and clinical areas even in the off mode. It is an interruption to those around you and it is therefore prohibited. If at any time cell phones or smartwatches are used in the classroom, lab, clinical area, or in the bathroom for texting or talking, it will be grounds for disciplinary action. It should not be on your person either and you will be found in violation of the policy if observed during regularly scheduled class times.

### **Class Break Times**

Class begins at 7:45am. Students are to be in their seats when the roll is taken. Lunch is 11:30-12:15pm. Lunch is to be eaten during this time, not when you return from lunch break.

### **Sleeping in Class**

Students are expected to develop proper work habits and to remain engaged and on task in class. Students are not permitted to sleep in class. Repeated violations may result in the student being sent home for the day.

### **Classroom/Lab Space Maintenance**

Good housekeeping practices should always be followed. Trash must be picked up on site; tools, equipment, etc. should be kept in appropriate places-not on benches, machines, and floors when not in use. As an integral part of instruction, each student is expected to participate in housekeeping and cleanup activities at the conclusion of each day to maintain efficient, high-level training programs.

### **Attitude and Conduct**

You are expected to be cooperative and to demonstrate a professional and respectful attitude at all times. Everyone is encouraged to work as a team. Horseplay, hazing, inappropriate language, and any other behavior deemed inappropriate for this program will be reflected in a reduction of the worker characteristics grade and may be referred to the Vice President of Student Services for progressive disciplinary action.

### **Absence Notification**

If you know in advance that you will be absent, you must notify your instructor. If you do not know in advance that you will be absent, call the instructor as soon as possible. If you leave class before the class is over, you must inform the instructor. Failure to notify the instructor will result in a deduction in your worker characteristic grade.

### **Computer/Internet Privileges**

The classroom computers and internet are provided only as a resource for research and learning. They are not to be misused in the classroom.

### **Additional Classroom Rules**

- Unnecessary and unrelated conversations should not occur during a lecture or study time.
- Students are responsible for housekeeping in the classroom and lab areas.
- Please observe the 15 MPH speed limit in the parking area. No parking in tow-away zones.
- Students are requested to make dependable childcare arrangements, as children are not permitted in classrooms even on inclement weather days.
- Examinations may NOT be removed from the classroom, nor may questions from examinations be copied. Failure to comply with this directive may result in dismissal from the program. There will be a separate form regarding examinations to include online classroom procedures in the event of transitioning into a virtual classroom.

- Students are expected to be alert during class time and responsible for attending all lectures, including videos.
- Students are expected to show respect to peers, classmates, faculty, and staff. Disrespectful behavior, with malicious intent, will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action by the administration.
- Students are expected to notify the instructor when leaving early or coming late.
- Instructor phones are not for student use unless there is a true emergency.
- Students will be required to obtain or provide documentation of CPR certification through the American Heart Association.

## CLINICAL PERFORMANCE POLICIES

### Clinical Dress Code

- A student/clinical ID tag must be worn at all times.
- Solid color scrubs (scrub top and bottom) must be worn daily. A t-shirt, with no visible lettering or imagery, may be worn under the scrub top, but not in place of a scrub top.
- A clean pressed lab coat may be worn over scrubs if desired. No hoodies or sweatshirts may be worn over scrubs. Some clinical sites may require a white lab coat.
- Moderation and professionalism are the general rules.
- Dress conservatively. Hair coverings in the form of surgical caps or bouffant are encouraged on clinical and lab days per CDC recommendations.
- Hair must be neat, clean, and arranged away from the face always. Extreme hair fashions or ornaments are not acceptable. If the hair is longer than shoulders, it must be pulled back for all Dental Assisting students. With new COVID recommendations, some dental offices are covering hair as part of the new PPE.
- Facial hair must be neat. Sideburns, beards, and mustaches will only be allowed if kept clean and neatly trimmed close to the face and if allowed by the clinical facility. Sideburns must be kept above the earlobe level.
- Personal grooming is allowed at break time and lunch only in the restroom.
- Appropriate hygiene is a must. Smelling clean, having clean hair, brushing your hair, and brushing your teeth every day is a requirement.
- If you smoke, wash your hands after smoking. Make sure you do not smell like a cigarette when you come back in.
- Moderate make-up, perfume, and jewelry are allowed. Jewelry is limited to a wedding ring and one pair of post earrings in ear lobes only. No facial and/or tongue piercings are allowed.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- Clean, neatly manicured fingernails that do not extend beyond the end of your finger. Nail polish will not be allowed during clinical rotation. No artificial nails are allowed.
- Clothes should fit properly, be in good condition, be neat (not wrinkled), and clean always. Only your arms, feet, neck and head should be visible from the openings in the scrubs. Shorts, tank tops, short skirts, short dresses, sweatpants, yoga pants, spandex, revealing clothing including low necklines are not allowed in the Dental Assisting programs.
- Sandals, flip flops, and open-toed shoes are not allowed, this includes crocs with holes in them.
- Shoes should be neat, clean, and in good condition at all times.
- Students are required to adhere to all policies and procedures in the classroom and clinical settings.

Students may be disciplined by the administration for any violation of the dress code in the classroom and/or clinical setting. Violations of the dress code may result in a lower Worker Characteristic grade.

### **Conduct Code and Behavioral Standards**

Students accepted into the Allied Health Programs are expected to always demonstrate professional behavior and demeanor which include, but not limited to, bathrooms, hallways, break room, parking lot, classroom, clinical sites, and field trips. There are no exceptions. Professional behavior encompasses a broad range of expectations, including the expectation of trustworthiness and at all times keeping the welfare of others as a priority.

All clinical sites with which this school is affiliated, have granted students the privilege of learning in their facilities. Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior at all times. This means that each Student is individually responsible for his/her actions and, also, must abide by the affiliates' standard procedures, policies, rules, and regulations as outlined by the clinical affiliates. While off-campus during clinical assignments, students are representing the program, profession, and school to the public and community.

**\*VIOLATING THESE STANDARDS COULD LEAD TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION/SUSPENSION\***

### **Confidentiality for the Student**

Individuals who provide health services and know that they are infected with a communicable disease are ethically and legally obligated to conduct themselves responsibly under the following protective behaviors:

- Seek medical advice.
- Follow the program and/or agency guidelines when clinical assignment makes it necessary to be involved in direct patient care.
- Be knowledgeable about the practice measures to prevent transmission of infectious diseases.
- Obtain the release of a physician to continue direct patient care activities relative to the program of study.
- No specific or detailed information concerning complaints or diagnosis will be provided to instructors, administrators, or even parents, without the expressed written permission of the individual in each case. This position, concerning health records, is supported by an amendment to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
- Officials and other institutional officers must remember all confidential medical/health care information is protected by statutes and that any unauthorized disclosure may create legal liability.

### **Confidentiality of Records and Information**

We abide by all HIPAA laws and a student who "breaches confidentiality" in the classroom or clinical setting may be subject to disciplinary action/suspension.

In the process of performing, one's assigned duty in the health care facility, it is possible to overhear information regarding patients, physicians, and/or personnel, which must be considered confidential. Therefore, you are directed not to discuss, outside the health care

facility or even with other health care facility students or personnel, these bits of information. Even casual conversations with other students may be overheard and thereby violates the privacy of others. Be particularly careful about your conversation in elevators, eating places, and other places of assembly within or outside the health care facility.

Any discussion of patient information must be done to fulfill clinical assignments. Anyone who delights in idle conversation about patient care does not show appropriate demeanor for a health-care professional.

Respect the fact that a patient owns the information contained in his/her medical record and that the facility owns the recorded document itself. Therefore, students must not remove original, microfilmed, or photocopied records from the facility's premises. Any health data that identifies a patient, physician, or health-care provider by name is considered to be confidential information.

Confidential information is privileged information that may not be disclosed without proper, written authorization from the patient. Not only is medical information confidential, but also identifying information such as a patient's age, address on discharge, and the service or medical unit on which the patient was hospitalized. Unauthorized disclosure of health information is a breach of confidentiality punishable by state or federal law. Students who release health information without proper authorization may be dismissed from the program.

### **Employment During Training**

Employment outside of school hours is permissible in the Allied Health Programs. However, this is the choice of the student. If outside employment interferes with the progress or behavior in the classroom, and/or clinical setting, the student will be sent home and this absence will be considered as leave early and can lead to disciplinary actions. If the student is/becomes employed with a clinical site, the student will not be allowed to receive paid compensation during the clinical time.

Allied Health students WILL NOT be allowed to work 11:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m. (night shift) and then report to a clinical site due to the public safety issue. If this occurs, the student will be sent home for the day and the total hours deducted.

### **Clinical Attendance Policy**

The nature of the Allied Health programs at TCAT Murfreesboro is such that it is necessary for every student to attend regularly. Excessive absences will have an adverse effect on student progress.

The TCATM attendance policy states that students are to attend all classes regularly and punctually. During the clinical externship component, concerning both excused and unexcused absences, the student is expected to abide by additional attendance policies. The Allied Health programs have a more stringent attendance policy because of the condensed delivery format, demands of the Allied Health curriculum, and the problems encountered when clinical



externship hours are missed. For these reasons, the Allied Health programs have the following policies regarding student attendance:

### Definitions

- "Excused Absence" - An absence can be excused ONLY if the student has notified the program office/program faculty member and clinical instructor/preceptor before the scheduled clinical time on the missed day. Excused absences include, but are not limited to, personal illness, illness of an immediate family member, or death of an immediate family member. Excused absences require documentation and will be included in the total absence hours for that term. However, if a student is summoned for jury duty or military duty that Student will not be responsible for missed hours accumulated.
- "Unexcused Absence" - An absence which does not meet the definition of an excused absence or one in which the program office/program faculty member and clinical instructor/preceptor were not contacted before the scheduled clinical time is considered unexcused. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, car trouble, routine doctor appointments, dentist appointments, or child care issues. Unexcused absences will be included in the total absence hours for that term.

### Allied Health Program Policy Regarding Excused Absences

For clinical externship absences, one (1) excused absences will result in a documented with student signature verbal counseling. Two (2) excused absences will result in written counseling. Three (3) excused absences will result in clinical probation. Any additional absence will be referred to the director for possible termination.

### Allied Health Program Policy Regarding Unexcused Absences

For all Allied Health clinical externship courses, one unexcused absence can result in clinical probation.

\*Students should be aware that if employment interferes with attendance and participation in clinical externships these absences will be unexcused, and students will be subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

Clinical Externship Total Contact Hours, absences not to exceed two (2) days.

Dental Assisting DTA3020 Clinical Externship 150 hours, 2 days will equal 16 hours, which is 11% of your total scheduled clinical hours.

During clinicals, students MUST contact by phone, the clinical site first and Instructor second before the scheduled time if they are going to be tardy or absent. Exceptions to the time requirement may only include situations that occur while in transit to the clinical site, such as a vehicle accident, vehicle malfunction, and family or severe weather-related emergency. Documentation may be required for the exception to be granted. Students MUST also notify the clinical site and Instructor if they are going to leave earlier than the scheduled time. It is not good practice to miss clinical time. This time is crucial to you as it is a reflection of your dependability as a future employee in this profession.

\*The first time a student fails to contact by phone, the clinical site first and instructor second (as described in the previous section), the student is placed on clinical probation for the remainder of clinicals. \*

\*\*For a student on clinical probation, an additional violation of handbook policy, including unsatisfactory clinical performance, may result in suspension from the program.

It is the student's responsibility to attend all scheduled classes, clinical, laboratory sessions, and conferences.

### **Clinical Performance Policy**

Successful clinical performance is essential to the completion of all Allied Health Programs. Students must successfully complete the preceding trimester and be skill-ready to be eligible for clinicals.

Clinical probation resulting from unsatisfactory performance - A student is placed on clinical probation when a student's performance is unsatisfactory according to the clinical preceptor. The student will be counseled regarding the cause for probation, suggestions for improvements, and the time element for probation length. The information will be documented and signed by all concerned parties and placed into the student's file. If the Student's clinical performance does not improve within the time allowed, the student may be suspended from the program. If the clinical site requests the student be removed from the site due to unsatisfactory performance, the student will be referred to the President of the school for suspension.

\*\*For a student on clinical probation, an additional violation of handbook policy may result in suspension from the program. \*\*

### **Clinical Area**

- Allied Health students are required to purchase liability insurance. Liability insurance will be paid before clinicals.
- It is the student's responsibility to be in the clinical area promptly and in proper uniform.
- Clinical hours are as assigned per each clinical site. Any tardy or absence should be reported to the clinical site FIRST and Instructor SECOND before your scheduled time.
- The student should be prepared for the clinical day. Failure to be prepared will result in dismissal for the day and counting this time as an absence.
- At no time will the student do any procedure outside of the scope of their practice.

### **Drug and Alcohol Testing**

Screening before the clinical experience: Students should be aware that the clinical facilities with which the campus contracts require successful completion of a drug and/or alcohol screen before the commencement of participation in the clinical site. Students are required to provide the instructor with receipt of payment for the drug and/or alcohol screen by the due date set

by the instructor. Students are required to have available the results of the drug and/or alcohol screen at the request of the clinical site, as it is the clinical site that will review the results and determine the ability for the student to be at the site based on the results.

Reasonable Suspicion Screening: Students engaged in classroom/clinical activity may be requested to undergo a blood or urine screening for drugs and alcohol if reasonable suspicion exists. Before testing, the student will be asked to sign a statement of understanding and consent to drug and/or alcohol screening. A student who refuses to undergo testing will be subject to suspension.

### **Background Check**

All students will be required to have a background check done prior to observing at the clinical site. Clinical contracts require the program to comply with this request. Every student will have the same parameters evaluated for their background check. The parameters for the background check are determined by the clinical contracts. Students are required to provide the instructor with receipt of payment for the background check by the due date set by the instructor. The instructor is required to verify the background check is completed prior to the first day of clinicals. Students that do not complete the background check will not be allowed to attend clinical. The clinical sites have the right to refuse students based on their background check results. Clinical hours are required to complete this program of study.

### **Health Policies**

- All illnesses should be reported to the instructor if a student appears ill or unable to perform duties as assigned, whether in the classroom or clinical area; it will be the instructor's discretion to determine if the student should remain in the classroom or clinical place. Dismissal from the school or the clinical area may occur due to a possible contagious illness; and/or undue influence of prescription medication.
- Suppose a student is absent for serious illness/injury. In that case, they must present a written statement from /her physician before returning to the clinical setting stating that the student is physically able to perform the required clinical duties.
- It is recommended that all students maintain their accident and sickness insurance.
- The clinical facilities will in no way assume workman's compensation liability for students.
- First Aid and supportive treatment will be provided in the event of an accidental injury or sudden illness while on campus or in the clinical facility. Each Student is responsible for his/her medical expenses incurred.
- In the event of pregnancy, the student must have written verification from an authorized health care provider stating eligibility to continue in the program. This verification must state that the student can safely perform all duties necessary for her training program without limitations or danger to her personal health or that of the patient.

### **Student Protection**

The Dental Assisting program will follow the guidelines established in the "Ionizing Radiation Rules" governing radioactive material and electronic product radiation by the Department of Public Health, Division of Radiological Health.

According to the General Provision R325.5205 Dose Limits, Rule 205, the maximum permissible dose equivalent for occupational exposure for fertile women (concerning fetus) is 0.5 REM in the gestation period.

During the gestation period, the student will remove herself from specific radiology areas or situations that could cause her to receive excessive or unnecessary stray radiation during X-ray exposure.

### **Infection Control Policy**

All students must submit documentation to Student Services with:

- Proof of MMR immunity
- Proof of VZV (Chickenpox) immunity

In addition to the above items, clinical sites require:

- Hepatitis B series vaccination, proof of immunity or declination of vaccine
  - Dental Assisting requires a series of three shots to be completed before the start of clinicals.
- Proof of negative TB test or normal chest x-ray

Clinical sites may require more stringent vaccination documentation based on clinical affiliation agreements. COVID vaccinations and boosters may be required per the clinical sites depending on their standards at the time of clinical rotations.

If you ever come into contact with one of the infectious diseases listed below, make a note of and report the following to your instructor/preceptor at the clinical site:

- The date, time and duration of the contact
- The name of the contact (i.e. if patient or classmate)
- The nature of the contact

(Rubella, chickenpox or shingles, any illness with a rash, needlestick or other body fluid contact, potential MRSA contact, infectious material, COVID, and Tuberculosis)

### **Standard Precautions**

Standard Precautions are work practices required for a basic level of infection control. They include good hygiene practices, particularly washing and drying hands before and after patient contact, may include the use of protective barriers such as gloves, gowns, plastic aprons, masks, eye shields or goggles, appropriate handling, and disposal of sharps and other contaminated or infectious waste, and use of aseptic techniques. Standard precautions are recommended for

the treatment and care of all patients, regardless of their perceived infectious status, and in the handling of:

- Blood
- All other body fluids, secretions, and excretions (excluding sweat), regardless of whether they contain visible blood.
- Non-intact skin; and
- Mucous membranes

Universal precautions apply to dried blood and other bodily substances, including saliva.

The main goal of following Universal Precautions is to minimize the risk of acquiring blood-borne viruses from contact with patients. To make such work practices effective, it must be assumed that all patients are potentially infected with such viruses. Only following these precautions with patients who are known to be infected gives a false sense of security and promotes risky work practices.

Confidentiality of these and all student records is a priority. Immunization information will be made available to the clinical site upon request.

### **Protocol for Emergencies**

The supervising faculty, and if appropriate, the clinical personnel, must be notified immediately should a student suffer an injury or illness which requires medical attention. Students are considered guests in the clinical facilities and are therefore responsible for securing and financing any medical treatment required as a result of accidental injury. Students must realize that although medical facilities may offer/suggest treatment within the facility, charges for service will be assumed by the student. All students are individually responsible for obtaining adequate health insurance or for bearing any costs incurred for medical treatment while on campus or in assigned clinical facilities. Students wishing to purchase health insurance through a policy available to TCAT students may contact the Student Services Office for the appropriate forms. Students are strongly encouraged to have adequate health insurance while enrolled in this program of study. Clinical sites require more stringent documentation to verify every student maintains their own medical coverage.

For injuries or health problems which occur during a clinical assignment that require treatment, but are not life threatening, the student should consider the following options:

- Treatment from an independent physician and/or facility of the student's choice at cost to the student.
- Treatment by the emergency department of the clinical facility at cost to the student.

The supervising faculty and program office, if appropriate, clinical personnel, must be contacted immediately should a student be responsible for, or involved in, an unusual incident in the clinical area. Examples of such include, but are not limited to:

- Self, patient, staff or visitor injury or potential injury.

- Sharps related injuries.
- Formal complaints lodged against a student.
- Major equipment damage attributed to student misuse.
- Incorrect administration of pharmaceuticals or procedures to a patient
- Contamination of patient or environment
- Any activity which may, or does, result in adverse consequences to patients or personnel.
- Misrepresentation of students' identification, clinical duties, qualifications, or abilities.

The student and clinical instructor must submit a completed report to the program instructor within 24 hours. Additionally, the clinical facility's procedures for dealing with the incident must be strictly followed and the necessary reports completed and properly signed. Disciplinary action may follow based on the individual incident.

## **SAFETY POLICIES**

### **First Aid Kit**

A first aid kit is mounted to the wall in operatory two between the eyewash station and the fire extinguisher. If you are injured, you should notify the instructor as soon as possible.

### **Safety**

Each individual program instructor will discuss safety in the classroom and occupational setting. After completion of the safety instruction, you will be required to sign a Safety Form, identifying you have been instructed and understand the safety procedures that apply for your individual program.

### **Fire Procedures**

In the event of a fire drill or an actual fire, students should immediately exit the building and report to Hwy 99 parking lot next to the green box outside.

### **Tornado Procedures**

In the event of a tornado drill or an actual tornado, students should immediately seek shelter in the hallway outside the classroom alongside the Digital Graphic Design classroom wall.