

Syllabus for DA 166, Dental Assisting Functions in Dental Practice Management

Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2026
Course ID & Section #: DA 166 (E0098)
Instructor's Names: Hillary Reed, RDAFF, CDA, COA, CDPMA, CPDA (lecture) & Teresa Moore RDA, CDA (lab)
Day/Time: Daily Lecture (E0098): 8:30 AM- 10:00AM (Winter Session Course January 5-10) Daily Lab (E0098): 10:15 AM- 11:45 AM
Lecture Location: AT 115
Lab Location: AT 112
Course Units: 0.5
Lecture Hours: 9
Lab Hours: 9
Number of Proctored Didactic Exams: 1
Prerequisites: Acceptance in Dental Assisting Program cohort, successful completion of fall semester courses with a 75% or better in DA 150, DA 153, DA 155, DA 156, DA 156C
Co-requisites: DA 163, DA 164, DA 165, DA 166, DA 167

Instructor Contact Information

Office Location: AT 101
Office Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays by appointment
Office Phone Number: 707-476-4250
Absences: In the event of emergency contact 476-4250. To be eligible for alternative exams the absence must be reported ½ hour prior to the beginning of class. Excessive absences will result in Program dismissal.
Communication Note: Communications with the instructor in-person or electronically that need a response occur during customary business hours during the business week.
Instructor Email Address: Hillary-reed@redwoods.edu & Teresa-moore@redwoods.edu
Program Coordinator Phone Number: 707-476-4253
Program Coordinator Email Address: Hillary-reed@redwoods.edu

Required Materials

Textbook Title: Modern Dental Assisting, 14 th Edition (ISBN: 978-0-323-82440-8)
Author: Bird and Robinson
Other Requirements: Dental Assisting Program Handbook, Uniform, Personal Protective Equipment, Darby Dental Kit

Course Description

A basic introduction to business office procedures applicable to dental assisting. Communications and practice management operations are emphasized. Customary terms and proper vocabulary are practiced in preparation for clinical competency in patient care.
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Course Objective

1. Identify basic vocabulary terms and be familiar with the day-to-day operations in dental practice management.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify proper business terminology in communications and practice management.
2. Demonstrate fundamental administrative duties to preclinical competence.

Pre-requisites and Co-requisites

The Dental Assisting Program of Study requires the cohort of students to have successfully completed DA 153, DA 154, DA 155, DA 156, and DA 156C with a 75% or better to be eligible to enroll in the spring semester cohort of courses.

Additionally, the Dental Assisting Program of Study requires the cohort of students to enroll in DA 163, DA 164, DA 165, and DA 167 concurrently. This is a Dental Board of California (DBC) and Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) requirement. The curriculum reiterates and combines concepts, information, and proficiencies from other courses to prepare students for the clinical setting.

Course Content

1. Communication in the Dental Office
2. Business Operating Systems
3. Financial Management in Dental Office
4. Marketing Your Skills

Specific Didactic Course Skill Sets (Objectives)

Communication in the Dental Office

1. Discuss the role and duties of the administrative assistant in the dental office and clarify how customer service is crucial in this position.
2. Characterize clear effective communication skills and describe good phone and message etiquette.
3. Describe the various types of written communication in the dental office and explain the basic steps for preparing written communications.

Business Operating Systems

4. Identify the category, purpose, and appropriate filing systems used in the maintenance and retention of business records
5. Describe management of patient information and how to implement Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).
6. Explain the rationalization of common efficiency practices involved in scheduling appointments for maximum productivity.
7. Describe the function of computerized practice management systems, bookkeeping systems, and new technologies in the dental office setting.

Financial Management in the Dental Office

8. Identify the financial importance and management of collections to the dental office.
9. Explain various types of consent.
10. Identify common payroll withholding taxes and discuss the financial responsibility of the employer.
11. Categorize the procedures, codes, and processes involved with insurance claims and prepaid dental programs.
12. Describe external and internal marketing.
13. Discuss the management of inventory systems and budgeting practices.
14. Explain the difference between "legal" and "ethical".
15. Determine insurance fraud.

Marketing Your Skills

16. Identify career goals.

Specific Pre-clinical Course Lab Skill Sets (Objectives)

Communication in the Dental Office

1. Answer the phone according to business protocol.
2. Critique a business letter.
3. Address an envelope.

Business Operating Systems

5. Alphabetize files.
6. Prepare an order identifying consumables/ disposables

Financial Management in the Dental Office

7. Define petty cash.
8. Prepare end-of-day and bank deposit.
9. Identify CDT codes and ADA Dental Claim Form.
10. Identify W-2 and W-4.

Marketing Your Skills

11. Prepare a professional resume and cover letter on appropriate paper with appropriate font.
12. Demonstrate proper interview dress, conduct, and responses.

Educational Accessibility and Support

College of the Redwoods is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for qualified students who could benefit from additional educational support and services. You may qualify if you have a physical, mental, sensory, or intellectual condition which causes you to struggle academically, including but not limited to:

- Mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, or bipolar disorder
- Common ailments such as arthritis, asthma, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, and diseases
- Temporary impairments such as a broken bone, recovery from significant surgery, or a pregnancy-related disability
- A learning disability (i.e. dyslexia, reading comprehension)
- Neurodevelopmental disorders such as a learning disability, intellectual disability, autism, acquired brain injury, or ADHD
- Vision, hearing, or mobility conditions

Available services include extended test time, quiet testing environments, academic assistance and tutoring through the [LIGHT Center](#), counseling and advising, alternate formats of course materials (e.g., audio books, braille, E-texts), assistive technology, learning disability assessments, approval for personal attendants, interpreters, priority registration, on-campus transportation, adaptive physical education and living skills courses, and more. If you believe you might benefit from disability- or health-related services and accommodations, please contact [Student Accessibility Support Services \(SASS\)](#). If you are unsure whether you qualify, please contact Student Accessibility Support Services (SASS) for a consultation: sass@redwoods.edu.

Eureka campus Location: Student Services Building, first floor

Phone: 707-476-4280

Handbook

All students have signed acknowledgement that they have accessed the Dental Assisting Handbook in Canvas, as well as read and agreed to detailed information provided regarding information, notifications, requirements, policies, rules and disciplinary actions. The Handbook further discusses Student Support Services, Grading Policies, Disruptive Behavior, and Emergency Procedures.

Canvas Information

College of the Redwoods Canvas System is used by students and the instructors for grade tracking, referencing handouts (files), and discussion participation. Students can access Canvas at any time, using their college e-mail and password to determine their current grade in the course as well as specific scores for completed participation, assignments, or exams/ quizzes. Instructors enter grades weekly.

Accessing Canvas

1. Log into Canvas at [My CR Portal](#)
2. For help logging in to Canvas and general tech help, visit [Canvas Support Home](#)
3. Once you're logged in to Canvas, you click on the Help icon on the left menu

Special Note

The course instructor(s) and/or the Program Coordinator have the right to alter the syllabus content at any time for any reason. Course content alterations can only be done by faculty at their discretion.

Lecture and Lab Preparation

Students are to have read assigned chapters prior to arriving to lecture and lab. The lecture and lab activities assist the students in comprehending the content and preparing for the clinical setting.

Each week the student will participate in activities designed to reinforce the information discussed in lecture. A "Preclinical Competency Tracking Sheet" is used to determine participation and preparedness. Step-by-step procedures in the textbook include illustrations, the equipment and supplies needed, icons, and the rationale behind certain steps. These step-by-step procedures are used to practice in the lab setting to prepare for RDA Skills Competency Tests required prior to performing the function in the clinical setting. The step-by-step procedures are provided in the MDA 14th Edition Workbook.

Didactic (Lecture) Examinations

All lecture examinations are given in the beginning of class. The exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, short answer, and identification questions. Please refer to your course syllabus for exam times, dates, and chapters covered.

Work Readiness Points

To be successful in the workforce, students must develop skill sets and healthy work habits necessary for lasting employment.

Students are awarded five Pay Day Points for full participation in the activities and tasks assigned to each class session (lab and lecture), where all requirements, policies, and rules are followed as stated in the Program Handbook. Students begin the course with zero Pay Day Points. Pay Day points are a 5% portion of the course grade.

Students who do not participate in activities or tasks or not following requirements, policies, and rules or who are absent will not acquire any Pay Day Points for that class session(s). This includes those that are tardy or leave early. Additionally disciplinary action (as outlined in the Program Handbook) for the second, third, and fourth offense will affect the final course grade negatively.

Course Requirements/ Evaluation and Grading Policy

Overall Course Grade Calculation:

The overall course grade is determined by an average. Students' cumulative scores on quizzes (35%), written exams (50%), assignments (10%), and participation (5%) are averaged together to generate a percentage, determining the overall course grade.

Participation Portion:	Weighted 5% of total grade
Pay Day - Work Readiness Points 5 points per lecture	
Assignment Portion:	Weighted 10% of total grade
Cover Letter and Resume (50 points)	
Quiz Portion:	Weighted 35% of total grade
2 Quizzes (40 points each)	
Written Exam Portion	Weighted 50% of total grade
1 Written Final Exam (200 points)	

Registered Dental Assistant Program Grading Scale

The Commission on Dental Accreditation and the Dental Board of California require the lecture and lab grade to be 75% or better. The Registered Dental Assistant Program courses are sequential and have co-requisites. Students not passing with a 75% or better in the course cannot continue.

Grade	Percentage	Definition
A	96-100	Outstanding progress
A-	90-95	Outstanding progress
B+	87-89	Above average progress
B	84-86	Above average progress
B-	81-83	Average Progress
C+	78-80	Satisfactory Progress
C	75-77	Lowest acceptable Progress
D	65-74	No progression,
F	<65	Failure
W	N/A	Official Withdrawal

Course Schedule of Activities and Assignments

Day 1 - Monday, January 5 (Lecture)

Unit: Communication in the Dental Office

Textbook reading assignment in preparation for lecture class:

Chapter 61 Communication in the Dental Office

Day 1 - Monday, January 5 (Lab)

Procedures: 6.1 Answering phones, taking a message; composing a Business Letter (61.2); Address an envelope; prepare a recall card

Day 2 - Tuesday, January 6 (Lecture)

Unit: Business Operating Systems

Textbook reading assignment in preparation for lecture class:

Chapter 61 Communication in the Dental Office

Chapter 62 Business Operating Systems

Day 2 - Tuesday, January 6 (Lab)

Procedures: Alphabetize files; Prepare End-of-Day Deposit; Define petty cash Prepare an order; Scheduling an appointment and fill-out appointment card; Order consumables, expendables, and non-expendables; coordinate equipment repair.

Day 3 - Wednesday, January 7 (Lecture)

Quiz #1 (Chapters 61 and 62)

Unit: Financial Management in the Dental Office

Textbook reading assignment in preparation for lecture class:

Chapter 62 Business Operating Systems

Chapter 63 Financial Management in the Dental Office

Day 3 - Wednesday, January 7 (Lecture)

Procedures: Identify CDT codes and ADA Insurance forms; Identify W4 &W2

Day 4 - Thursday, January 8 (Lecture)

Quiz #2 (Chapters 63 and 64)

Unit: Marketing Your Skills

Textbook reading assignment in preparation for lecture class:

Chapter 64 Marketing Your Skills

Day 4 - Thursday, January 8 (Lecture)

Procedures: 64.1 Refining your Professional Resume

Day 5 - Friday, January 9 (Lecture)

Cover Letter and Resume Due

Textbook reading assignment in preparation for lecture class:

Chapter 64 Marketing Your Skills

Day 5 - Friday, January 9 (Lecture Activity)

The interview will take place in class, please wear appropriate interview attire to class.

Day 6 - Saturday, January 10 (Lecture)

Written Final- Cumulative (Chapters. 61-64)

Textbook reading assignment in preparation for lecture class:

Chapter 61 Communication in the Dental Office

Chapter 62 Business Operating Systems

Chapter 63 Financial Management in the Dental Office

Chapter 64 Marketing Your Skills