

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE  
**DENTAL ASSISTING (RDA)**  
Information/Application Guide for Fall 2010

**Job Title**

Dental Assistant/Registered Dental Assistant

**Job Description**

Registered Dental Assistants are skilled members of the allied dental health care team, assisting dentists in all dental procedures. They may be licensed by the State to perform many sophisticated and challenging duties under the supervision of a dentist. They may prepare patients for the treatment and perform an initial inspection of the patient's mouth, take x-rays, and assist the dentist in performing dental procedures. They may work for general dentists or specialists in areas such as orthodontics, surgery, and pediatric dentistry.

**Aptitudes & Characteristics of a Dental Assistant/ Registered Dental Assistant**

- Attention to detail
- Desire to learn specialized procedures
- Service oriented
- Enjoy working with a diverse population of both employees and patients of all ages and sizes, as well as the special needs patients.
- Flexible; reliable; versatile; timely; and exhibits the manual dexterity, visual and auditory acuity and motor coordination necessary.
- Patient; emotionally stable; demonstrates sound judgment, tact and self control even when presented with demanding patients or the presence of strong odors.
- Able to work directly under a dentist's direction; can follow written and verbal instructions; accepts responsibility for the results of his/her actions.
- Team player who works within the parameters of the Dental Assisting job description in an ethical manner and who is able to communicate with health team members, patients, and patient's families.
- Able to accept constructive criticism and perform self evaluation activities which result in personal and professional growth.

**Employment Outlook**

Because there is a shortage of Registered Dental Assistants, the field offers excellent career opportunities. Employment may be obtained in private dental offices, dental clinics, hospitals, mobile dental clinics, dental schools, government facilities, dental equipment and supply sales, dental practice management, insurance companies, and teaching in dental assisting programs.

**Probable Salary Range for San Diego County**

Start \$16.00 - \$18.00 per hour

**Program Director**

Margaret Fickess, RDA,CDA,MEd  
Mesa College, Bldg S-314

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**Program Prerequisite**

High school graduation or equivalent  
Must complete Dental Assisting 102 or equivalent during the summer session.

**Optional**

English 51 and 56, or equivalent, Psychology 101 or 112, Speech 103 or 135, Personal Growth classes, or computer 101, or 103, or 114, or 120 or equivalent.



**REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM**

**FIRST SEMESTER (SUMMER)**

	<b>LECT</b>	<b>HOURS LAB</b>	<b>CLINIC</b>	<b>UNITS</b>	<b>PHASE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>
<b>DENA 102</b> -Dental Communications	54			3	1	5 weeks

**SECOND SEMESTER (FALL)**

	<b>LECT</b>	<b>HOURS LAB</b>	<b>CLINIC</b>	<b>UNITS</b>	<b>PHASE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>
<b>DENA 103,103L</b> -Preventive Dental Care	27	27		1.5, .5	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 106</b> - Basic Dental Science	63			3.5	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 116</b> -Dental Materials	36			2	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 116L</b> -Dental Materials Lab		54		1	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 124</b> -Basic Dental Assisting	36			2	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 124L</b> -Basic Dental Assisting Lab		108		2	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 128</b> -Dental Radiology	45			2.5	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 128L</b> -Dental Radiography Lab		54		1	2	16 weeks
<b>DENA 186A</b> -Directed Clinical Practice			75	1	2	16 weeks
TOTALS OF FALL SEMESTER	207	243	75	17.5		

Continuation in the program is dependent upon completion of **ALL** above courses with a grade of "C" or better.

**THIRD SEMESTER (SPRING)**

	<b>LECT</b>	<b>HOURS LAB</b>	<b>CLINIC</b>	<b>UNITS</b>	<b>PHASE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>
<b>DENA 132,132L</b> -Clinical Business Mgmt	27	54		1.5,1	3	16 weeks
<b>DENA 162</b> -Intermediate Dental Asst.	45			2.5	3	16 weeks
<b>DENA 162L</b> -Inter. Dental Asst. Lab		88	20	2	3	16 weeks
<b>DENA 182</b> -Advanced Dental Asst.	36			2	3	16 weeks
<b>DENA 182L</b> -Adv. Dental Asst. Lab		88	20	2	3	16 weeks
<b>DENA 136</b> -Dental Radiography II			54	1	3	16 weeks
<b>DENA 186B</b> -Directed Clinical Practice			225	3	3	16 weeks
TOTALS OF THIRD SEMESTER	108	230	349	15		

## **DENA Curriculum**

### **DENA 102 Dental Communications**

*Advisory: English 51 and 56, each with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent, or assessment skill levels W5 and R5.* This course aids the student in an understanding of the dental profession by exploring its advances from early times through present day practice. Ethical and legal aspects and standards of patient care are presented. Students develop oral, written, and non-verbal communication skills and an understanding of psychological needs of patients, employers, and co-workers. This is an introductory course to the Dental Assisting program. Students completing the course are prepared for Dental Assisting 124 and 124L. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 103 Preventive Dental Care**

*Prerequisite: Completion of Dental Assisting 102. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 104. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 103L.* This course focuses on the principles and techniques necessary for preventing tooth decay, including the importance of nutrition, personal preventive oral hygiene, and education of the dental patient on preventive dental care. The goal and components of a preventive dentistry program are included. This course also includes the discussion of personal nutrition and nutritional counseling plus charting a diet diary. Identification of sources and the practice of using fluoridation as a preventive measure against tooth decay and the purpose of dental sealants are also presented.

### **DENA 103L Preventive Dental Care Lab**

*Corequisite: Dental Assisting 103. This course is not open to students with previous credit for Dental Assisting 104.* This course is for students enrolled in the Dental Assisting Program. This laboratory course presents the practical application of preventive dental care, including an analysis of personal/patient nutrition and nutritional counseling. This lab course also focuses on the principles and techniques necessary for personal preventive oral hygiene. Patient education strategies for maintaining preventive oral hygiene and regular professional care are included. The practice of using fluoridation and sealants as preventive measures against tooth decay is covered.

### **DENA 106 Basic Dental Science**

*Completion of or concurrent enrollment in Dental Assisting 102 or equivalent. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 103.* This is a basic science course covering anatomy and physiology of the human body. It exposes the student to various dental science areas including tooth morphology, bones, nerves, and muscles of the head and neck. It also includes an introduction to dental office microbiology and sterilization. Pharmacology, anesthesiology, oral pathology, and first aid are included. Field trips are required to obtain CPR certification. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 116 Dental Materials**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 102 with a grade of "C" or better or equivalent. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 103, 106, 116L and 124, and 18A.* This course covers historical development, chemical and physical properties as well as the agencies responsible for the standards of dental materials. The preparation of dental materials and their effect on the oral environment are examined. The dental assisting student will learn the effects of proper and improper manipulation and the safe practice of handling dental materials. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 116L Dental Materials-Lab**

*Corequisite: Dental Assisting 103L, 116, 124L, and 186A.* This course affords the student an opportunity to prepare and manipulate a variety of dental materials, including the safety issues of each dental material. The demonstrations and evaluations focus on the effects of proper and improper material manipulation by the chairside assistant. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 124 Basic Dental Assisting**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 102 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 122. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 116, 124L, and 186A.* This basic dental assisting course presents the role of the chairside dental assistant. This role includes sterilization principles, preparation of instruments, and care and maintenance of equipment. Principles of team positioning in four- and six-handed dentistry and oral evacuation methods are stressed. Patient relations and techniques of team interactions are introduced. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 124L Basic Dental Assisting - Lab**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 102 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 124. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 106, 124L, and 186A.* This basic dental assisting laboratory course allows for the practical application of chairside dental assisting techniques. Students develop skills in manipulation and delivery of restorative materials. In addition, skills are developed in sterilization procedures and in the preparation of instruments. Care and maintenance of equipment used in restorative dentistry are stressed. Team positioning, four- and six-handed dentistry, and oral evacuation skills are developed as well as skills in patient handling. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 128 Dental Radiology**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 102 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 124. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 128L, 106, or equivalent.* This is a lecture course designed to acquaint the student with principles of dental radiographic production, including exposure and processing. Intra-oral techniques, dental anatomy and landmarks pertaining to dental radiography are presented. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 128L Dental Radiography Lab**

*Corequisite: Dental Assisting 128 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. This course is not open to student with credit for Dental Assisting 124L.* This is a laboratory course in which students practice the process of caring for darkroom equipment, preparing solutions, exposing, processing, mounting, and evaluating dental x-ray films. Exposures are accomplished using dental x-ray manikins in preparation for exposures on real patients. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

### **DENA 132 Clinical Business Management**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 128 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 132L, 161, and 186B with a grade of "C" or better or equivalent.* This course presents a basic foundation for the administrative dental assistant in accounts receivable and payable for manual and computerized systems. Included is the role of the dental assistant in clinical record keeping, preparing treatment plans, telephone techniques, effective scheduling, and insurance processing. The topics of this course also include maintaining recall system, inventory control, and marketing systems. Employment skills necessary to obtain a position as an administrative dental assistant and cultivate skills necessary to remain employed are also covered in this course. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.

**DENA 132L Clinical Business Management Lab**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 128L with a grade of "C" or better. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 132, 162, 186B, with a grade of "C" or better. This lab course presents a basic foundation for the administrative dental assistant in accounts receivable and payable when theories can be applied to a computerized system. Included is the role of the dental assistant in clinical record keeping, preparing treatment plans, telephone techniques, effective scheduling, insurance processing, and maintaining recall and inventory control systems.*

**DENA 136 Dental Radiography II**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 128L, with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 186B. This course covers techniques and skills of exposing full mouth series of dental radiographs, including the use of various radiographic positioning aids. The student has the opportunity to expose radiographs in a simulated private practice environment through a program of referral of patient by local dentists. Students obtain a California State Radiation Safety Certification upon satisfactory completion of course requirements. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 162 Intermediate Dental Assisting**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 116, 124, and 186A, each with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 161. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 132, 162L, 182 and 186B. This course presents the role of the chairside dental assistant in specialty areas such as surgery, and fixed and removable prosthodontic practice. Principles of time, motion, and work simplification are presented. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 162L Intermediate Dental Assisting Lab**

*This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 161. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 132L, 162, and 186B. This laboratory course presents the practical application of chairside and laboratory techniques in assisting in the specialty areas of fixed and removable prosthodontics and surgery. Laboratory practice includes developing skills in constructing provisional crowns and bridges for direct and indirect application, use and care of specialized instruments, and preparation of impression materials. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 182 Advanced Dental Assisting**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 116 and 124 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 181. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 162, 182L and 186B. This course presents the role of the chairside dental assistant in the specialty areas of periodontia, orthodontia, and endodontia. After completing the course, students are prepared to take the California State Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) and National Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) written examinations. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 182L Advanced Dental Assisting Lab**

*This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 181. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 162L, 182 and 186B. This course allows the student to perform procedures of the chairside dental assistant in the specialty areas of periodontia, orthodontia, and endodontia. Students develop the skills that prepare them to take the California State Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) practical and written examinations and the National Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) written examination. The laboratory practice includes mouth mirror inspection, use of intro-oral camera, recording findings, taking impressions for study casts, bite registration, intro-oral and facial measurements, placement of isolation dams, matrices, liner bases and temporary restorations, and coronal polish techniques. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 186A Directed Clinical Practice**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 102 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 106, 116L, and 124L. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 185. This course is designed for students in the Dental Assisting program to gain experience in directed clinical practice in a private dental office or clinic. Students are assigned basic dental assisting support procedures, including sterilizing instruments, preparing patients for treatment, assisting in simple chairside procedures, confirming appointments, and filing and retrieving charts. The directed clinical practice is coordinated by a member of the college staff. Supervision of the student is shared by the staff of the affiliating institution and the college faculty. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 186B Directed Clinical Practice**

*Prerequisite: Dental Assisting 186A, with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent. Corequisite: Dental Assisting 162 and 162L. This course is not open to students with credit for Dental Assisting 185B. This course requires supervised clinical practice in a private dental office or clinic. Students are assigned duties delegated to the dental assistant and put into practice duties learned in current and previous dental assisting laboratory courses. These duties include preparation of laboratory, impression, and restorative materials, and chairside assisting with fixed and removable prosthetic procedures. Supervision of the student is shared by the staff of the affiliating institution and the college faculty. The directed clinical practice is coordinated by a member of the college staff. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**DENA 290 Independent Study**

*Limitation on enrollment: must obtain an Add Code from instructor for registration. Provides for additional research, academic or clinical experiences for students with special interests. The course consists of individualized research problems, conferences with the instructor at prearranged intervals and a final written report on the work completed. This course may be taken four times with different content for a maximum of six units. (FT) Transfer Credit: CSU and/or private coll/univ.*

**Disclaimer**

**"The San Diego Community College District is governed by its Board of Trustees. No oral or written representation by any employee of the college is binding on the San Diego Community College District without the express approval of the Board of Trustees."**

The information in this pamphlet is subject to change without notice. Consult the current San Diego Mesa College catalog for current information.

Mail to: Special Admissions Clerk – I410  
San Diego Mesa College  
7250 Mesa College Drive  
San Diego, CA 92111

Application Deadline: No later than June 4, 2010

San Diego Mesa College  
Dental Assisting Program  
**Application for 2010-2011**

**1. General information (Please Print or type)**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CSID or SSN** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip

**2. Program Focus**

Do you intend to finish the program with a Certificate of Achievement or an Associate in Science Degree? (Circle **ONE**)

**3. Education (circle your answer)**

High school or equivalent completed	Yes	No
Associate's Degree or higher	Yes	No
DENA 102 – Dental Communications class	Completed	Will take this summer 2010

**Optional**

English 51 or 56 (College Reading & Basic Composition), or equivalent	Yes	No	In progress
Personal Growth Classes	Yes	No	In Progress
Speech 103 or 135, or equivalent	Yes	No	In progress
Psychology 101 or 112 or equivalent	Yes	No	In progress
CBTE 101, 103, 114, or 120 or equivalent	Yes	No	In progress

**4. Personal Statement - Write a one page personal statement that includes: personal, academic, community involvement, and work related background which would qualify you for admission to this program. The statement may be handwritten or word processed. Conclude the personal statement with the reason you chose dental assisting as a career.**

CONFIRMATION CHECK LIST

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)

Instructions: Read each item and then place a check mark confirming notification. It is recommended that you retain a copy for your records.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have read all of the material contained in the DENA Information/Application packet and understand the application and selection process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that after my application is accepted and verified, it is my responsibility to notify the Mesa College Special Admission Clerk of any changes in my address or telephone number.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that, in the event I should require accommodation to any part of the application, selection process, it is my responsibility to contact the College Disabled Student Program and Services office (619-388-2780) early in the process so as to ensure time to validate and establish the necessary reasonable accommodation which maintains the essential elements of the program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand it is my responsibility to: meet program requirements; insure course equivalency; follow proper application procedures; provide transcripts; and keep informed on revisions regarding degree requirements, program requirement, and selection process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the general education requirements for the A.S. degree or certificate are subject to change with the publication of each year's Mesa College catalog.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if I am notified of being admitted into the program, my failure to submit a "confirmation of acceptance" with the Special Admission Clerk in the allotted time frame constitutes grounds to assign my position to an alternate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the DENA program admission policies are based on published College policies; program admission is an equal opportunity process and persons are not excluded based on ethnicity, age, gender, or religion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that a wait list is generated as a result of the Special Admissions Process. Program admission is based on a first-come, first-served basis. If the program becomes impacted (more applications than slots available), I understand that an alternate list will be generated. All alternates are encourage to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the summer class (DENA 102)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that Mesa College reserves the right to revise program requirements and/or selection procedures, immediately after the application filing date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have read the current Allied Health Department Policy manual ([www.sdmesa.edu/allied-health/index.html](http://www.sdmesa.edu/allied-health/index.html).) and understand that I will be expected to adhere to the terms and conditions outlined in the most current version of the manual as part of my participation in an Allied Health Department program.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_