

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**  
**REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION**

**COMMITTEE:** Academic Affairs

**NO.:** AAC 11-34

**COMMITTEE DATE:** May 31, 2011

**BOARD DATE:** June 7, 2011

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**APPLICATION OF MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO AWARD THE  
CERTIFICATE IN DENTAL ASSISTING**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the expedited application of **Mount Wachusett Community College** to award the **Certificate in Dental Assisting**.

One year after graduating the first class, the College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty, resources, and program effectiveness.

**Authority:** Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A Section 9(b)

**Contact:** Dr. Francesca Purcell, Associate Commissioner for Academic and P-16 Policy

## **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **Mount Wachusett Community College**

#### Certificate in Dental Assisting

#### **INTENT**

Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) has submitted an expedited proposal to offer a 42-credit Certificate in Dental Assisting (CDA). The intent of the proposed program is to prepare students to become credentialed certified dental assistants. Graduates will be able to obtain entry-level jobs as dental assistants or transition into the College's associate degree in dental hygiene (DHY) or similar programs at other institutions.

Upon successful completion of the proposed program students will be equipped with the comprehensive understanding of the fundamentals and skills necessary to assist in the dental environment. They will also gain knowledge into the legal provisions and regulations pertinent to the Massachusetts Dental Practice Act and dental auxiliary utilization.

The proposal has obtained all necessary governance approvals on campus and was approved by the institution's Board of Trustees on May 19, 2011. The letter of intent was circulated on April 20, 2011. No responses were received.

#### **MISSION**

The proposed DCA is consistent with the mission of Mount Wachusett Community College which "provides relevant, high quality learning opportunities and services that respond to diverse student and community needs, foster student success, and stimulate civic, workforce and economic vitality." The proposed program links to the College's mission in distinct ways. It was created in direct response to workforce needs and provides graduates immediate access to entry-level employment and places them on a career ladder to other dental related occupations, if they choose to continue their education. The College is also seeking accreditation for the proposed certificate from the Council of Dental Accreditation (CODA).

#### **NEED AND DEMAND**

According to the Bureau of Labor Market Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010-2011 employment for dental assistants is expected to increase faster than average at 36% from 2008-2018. This is due to an increased focus on preventive health that is leading to a greater demand for dental care. Likewise, dentists' workloads have increased and are expected to hire more assistants to perform routine tasks. Job prospects for dental assistants are expected to be excellent.

The College surveyed 27 dentists of the Wachusett District Dental Society and confirmed this demand for dental assistants. Seventy percent of those dentists surveyed indicated a need to hire both full-time and part-time assistants between 2011 and 2014. Furthermore, the College reports that demand for its associate degree program in dental hygiene is so high that it cannot accommodate all interested students. The admissions office receives 50-75 applications annually for only 14 seats available in the associate degree program.

The College will target several groups of students for enrollment into the proposed program: students who are not accepted into the associate degree program in dental hygiene; current dental assistants who need to earn certification; high school graduates of career and technical high schools, and working professionals.

The proposed program will be the only part-time dental assisting certificate program available in the central Massachusetts area. Currently there are five public and four private accredited institutions that offer dental assisting in Massachusetts. They are Middlesex Community College, Northern Essex Community College, Quinsigamond Community College, Springfield Technical Community College and Massasoit Community College. The private institutions are McCann Technical School in North Adams and Porter and Chester Institute in Chicopee and Westboro. The College reports that these institutions enroll 140 students per year.

### **ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS**

#### *Admission Requirements*

The dental assisting certificate program will have open enrollment. Students must provide verification of completion of high school or its equivalency. Additionally, students whose native language is not English and who have not completed grades K-12 or a bachelor's degree in the U.S. must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Before starting the dental assisting courses, the College suggests that students complete the following courses: Anatomy and Physiology I, English Composition I, Introduction to Psychology, and Topics in Mathematics with a minimum grade of C+ (77%).

Students are also expected to meet a number of technical standards, such as the ability to lift and move supplies up to ten pounds. These standards must be met with or without accommodations. The College will make a reasonable accommodation for an applicant with a disability who is otherwise qualified.

#### *Projected Enrollment*

### **PROGRAM ENROLLMENT PROJECTION**

	<b># of Students Year 1</b>	<b># of Students Year 2</b>	<b># of Students Year 3</b>	<b># of Students Year 4</b>
New Full Time	0	0	0	0
Continuing Full Time	0	0	0	0
New Part Time	15	15	15	15
Continuing Part Time	0	13	13	13
Totals	15	28	28	28

### *Curriculum (Attachment A)*

The dental assisting program was developed to articulate with the College's current associate degree in dental hygiene. The proposed certificate program consists of 42 credit hours and is designed to be completed in 15 months with two full semesters, fall and spring (15 weeks), two two-week sessions in January (winter session) and two courses offered in the summer sessions. This schedule is comparable to dental assisting programs at other community colleges in Massachusetts.

The curriculum is comprised of 29 credits in core classes and 13 credits in general education courses. In the second fall semester students take a 7 credit clinical rotation course. During this course students will rotate through two dental practices actively assisting and participating in patient care.

After successful completion of the curriculum, it is expected that all students will sit for the Dental Assisting National Board Examination (DANBE). Once the students complete the exam successfully, they will obtain certification to become certified dental assistants.

Upon completion of the dental assisting certificate, students who wish to continue their education may apply and enter the associate degree program in dental hygiene at MWCC. The College also anticipates that students will be able to transfer to other two-year dental hygiene programs.

### *Student Learning Outcomes*

The proposed program's outcomes are as follows:

1. Communicate effectively and accurately through oral, written and electronic means.
2. Integrate knowledge of basic science, psychosocial, dental and dental assisting science in the provision of assisting in procedures and in the general operation of a dental practice.
3. Demonstrate the application of theory to practice in providing optimal patient care to diverse patients across the lifespan.
4. Practice within the legal, ethical, and regulatory framework of dental assisting in accordance with the standards set by the State Practice Act and Code of Ethics for Dental Assistants.
5. Demonstrate a commitment to the dental assisting profession through assuming responsibility for lifelong learning and professional growth.

## Program Goals and Outcome Measures

The College developed four goals and corresponding outcome measures to assess the impact and effectiveness of the proposed certificate.

Goal	Outcome Measures
<p><b>Goal #1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate knowledge of basic science, psychosocial, dental and dental assisting science in the provision of assisting in procedures and in the general operation of a dental practice.</li> <li>• Competently perform the skills essential to assist in the efficient delivery of dental care.</li> <li>• Skillfully and knowledgably perform delegable tasks so that dentists may devote more time to non delegable procedures.</li> <li>• Utilize critical thinking and problem solving skills in the practice of dental assisting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass rate on DANB exam will be at least 80 percent.</li> <li>• Eighty percent of students will demonstrate successful competency skills.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an entry level program into the profession of dentistry that fosters personal and professional growth and a career ladder to climb, if desired.</li> <li>• Provide inclusive process of admission with the selection of students based on an understanding of cultural and lifestyle differences.</li> <li>• Provide learning opportunities that challenge the student's current world view, intellectual curiosity and ideals of service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eighty percent of the students will report personal and professional growth through graduate surveys.</li> <li>• Eighty percent of admitted students will be from the college service area.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Goal #3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote learning through a variety of technical milieus that encourages students to develop broadened technological expertise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 90 percent of faculty and students surveys will indicate that the clinical practice experience ensures that a variety of different teaching mechanisms and learning opportunities have allowed the graduates to acquire a broad range of skills and knowledge which demonstrate practice competency for graduation and will directly contribute to ultimately passing the DANBE examination.</li> <li>More than 80 percent of students will rate the clinical learning experiences in the dental assisting program as good to excellent relative to the achievement of knowledge, skills, values, and competencies necessary for graduation outcomes and entry into the novice level of dental assisting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal #4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience diverse delivery of dental health care settings and identify areas of oral health inequities.</li> <li>Recognize the need for personal and professional growth through life-long learning and participation in professional activities and associations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 90 percent of graduates will articulate an understanding of the need for professional growth through lifelong learning.</li> <li>80% of employer surveys will rate satisfaction with graduate performance in assisting in the efficient provision of dental procedures and in the performance of all delegable procedures in the good to excellent range</li> <li>More than 90 percent of graduates' surveys returned will articulate an understanding of the need for professional growth and development and involvement in professional associations as an important element in their practice.</li> </ul>

## **RESOURCES**

### *Faculty and Staff*

The director of the College's associate degree program in dental hygiene will serve as the director of the proposed certificate in dental assisting program. The director reports to the Dean of Health Sciences and Community Service Programs. The administrative assistant from the associate degree program will work evenings while classes are running to provide support to students in the proposed program.

All faculty hired to teach in the proposed dental assisting certificate program will need to be credentialed as certified dental assistants. A faculty member will be hired by June 2011 as a part-time coordinator of the proposed program. Two adjunct faculty members from the associate degree program in dental hygiene have expressed interest in teaching in the proposed certificate program. In addition, the College anticipates hiring three or four adjunct faculty each year to support the proposed certificate program.

### *Facilities*

The courses will be offered in the evening at the Burbank campus in Fitchburg, which houses the College's current associate degree program in dental hygiene. The present dental facility/space will be accessible for the proposed program during the evening hours, 5:00 p.m. through 10:00 p.m. There is a classroom to accommodate 15 students, a dental materials laboratory, seven clinical operatories, a library, a conference room, and a student lounge. The facilities are used by the dental hygiene program during daytime hours.

### *Library Resources*

The Burbank Campus houses a dental library with reference materials/periodicals/ journals that will be available to the dental assisting students. Faculty and students will have full access to data bases and reference material online and at the Gardner campus.

The information technology department supports classroom instruction through multimedia equipment and training. The Blackboard course management program is available to all instructors, and will be used to supplement instruction in the dental assisting courses. Multimedia instructional resources are available at the Burbank campus and dental assisting faculty will be encouraged to use these. The College has a director of instructional design who will work with faculty to incorporate multimedia and other technologies into instruction.

MWCC anticipates moving the dental program to an upgraded facility in a new building slated for completion in January 2012.

### *Fiscal (Attachment B)*

A budget for the dental education department will fund the additional supplies, dental materials, and dental radiology equipment for the dental assisting program. The institution has submitted a four-year budget for the proposed program.

## **EVALUATION**

Margaret Bloy, CDA, RDH, MS, Dental Assisting Coordinator/Director at Middlesex Community College and Kathleen Held, MEd, Assistant Director/Assistant Professor at Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine reviewed the proposal and expressed strong support for the proposed certificate program.

Furthermore, the college submitted an application to the Council on Dental Accreditation (CODA), the accrediting body for dental assisting and hygiene programs, in fall of 2010. The CODA accreditation team visited the college on April 26, 2011 to review the application for initial accreditation of the anticipated program. The site visit consisted of a comprehensive curriculum review, tour of the proposed facility, and interviews with faculty, administrators, and program director. The CODA accrediting board meets in August 2011 and the College anticipates that the program will be accredited at that time.

### *Institutional Response*

Following the reviews of Margaret Bloy and Kathleen Held and the CODA accreditation site visit, MWCC has committed to the following:

- Reorganize the dental advisory board of the proposed program to ensure that a variety of members are equally represented such as dental assistants/dental hygienists, dentists, educators and dental vendors.
- Purchase, by fall 2011, additional radiography supplies, dental material supplies, dental instruments to support the proposed program.
- Hire a formally trained dental assistant educator, who is a certified dental assistant and knowledgeable of the standards of care and standards and governance of the dental assisting profession.

### **STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION**

Department staff has thoroughly evaluated all materials submitted by Mount Wachusett Community College. Recommendation is for approval of the institution's application to offer the Certificate in Dental Assisting.

One year after graduating the first class, the College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty, resources, and program effectiveness.



**Attachment A: Program Curriculum Outline for the Certificate in Dental Assisting.**

<b>Required (Core) Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 0)</b>		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
DAS 101	Dental Assisting	3
DAS 102	Dental Science 1	4
DHY 106	Dental Materials	3
DAS 104	Practice Management	2
DHY 103	Dental Radiology	3
DAS 105	Dental Science II	4
DAS 110	Prevention	3
DAS 117	Clinical Rotation	7
	<b>Sub Total Required Credits</b>	29
<b>Distribution of General Education Requirements</b> Attach List of General Education Offerings (Course Numbers, Titles, and Credits)		# of Gen Ed Credits
English Composition and Literature		3
MAT 126 Topics in Math (3 credits), BIO 203 Anatomy & Physiology 1 (4 credits)		7
PSY 105 Introduction to Psychology		3
		13
<b>Curriculum Summary</b>		
Total number of courses required for the degree		12
Total credit hours required for degree		42
<b>Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:</b>		

**ATTACHMENT B: BUDGET**

**NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM BUDGET**

<b>One Time/start Up Costs</b>		<b>Annual Expenses</b>			
		<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>
<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>Cost Categories</b>				
	Full Time Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	0	0	0	0
	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$21,855.28	\$44,270.89	\$44,270.89	\$44,270.89
	Staff	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
	General Administrative Costs	0	0	0	0
	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
	Facilities/Space/Equipment	\$3,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
	Field & Clinical Resources	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
	Marketing	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
	Other Membership, Liability, and License	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$42,855.28</b>	<b>\$68,270.89</b>	<b>\$68,270.89</b>	<b>\$68,270.89</b>

<b>One Time/Start- Up Support</b>		<b>Annual Income</b>			
		<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>
	<b>Revenue Sources</b>				
	Grants HCOP	\$11,650.00	\$24,280.00	0	0
	Tuition	\$12,000.00	\$15,750.00	\$15,750.00	\$15,750.00
	Fees	\$76,800.00	\$124,440.00	\$124,440.00	\$124,440.00
	Departmental				
	Reallocated Funds				
	Other (specify)				
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$100,450.00</b>	<b>\$164,470.00</b>	<b>\$140,190.00</b>	<b>\$140,190.00</b>