

# SODC INSIDER

## The Value of Hands-On Learning

### In this issue:

- Why hands-on learning, flexible hybrid delivery, and real clinical experience prepare students for success.
- Beyond the Op
- Study Tip of the month
- Events
- Happy Canada Day! 

# THE ROOT OF THE MATTER:

## HYBRID LEARNING, HANDS-ON SUCCESS

Today's students are looking for flexibility, and we understand why. Balancing family responsibilities, employment, and personal commitments can make educational choices challenging. That's why our Dental Assistant – Level I & II and Dental Hygiene programs are designed with a hybrid learning model that combines online theory with essential in-person clinical training.

While many aspects of education can be delivered online, healthcare professions require more than academic knowledge. Dental professionals work directly with patients and must develop clinical skills, critical thinking abilities, and professional confidence through hands-on practice. These experiences cannot be fully replicated in a virtual environment.

Our hybrid approach allows students to complete many course components online while attending campus for practical labs, simulation exercises, and clinical experiences. This model provides flexibility while ensuring graduates are prepared to meet industry standards and employer expectations.

The time spent on campus is an investment in career readiness. Students benefit from direct faculty support, collaborative learning opportunities, access to specialized equipment, and real-world clinical experiences that help build confidence before entering the workforce.

At the end of the program, what matters most is not how far a student traveled to class, but how prepared they are to begin a rewarding career in oral healthcare.

### Flexible learning. Hands-on experience. Career-ready graduates.

If you've been considering a career in Dental Assisting or Dental Hygiene, we invite you to explore how our hybrid programs combine flexibility with the hands-on clinical training needed for success. Your future clients deserve a skilled professional—and that journey begins with real-world experience.



*Clinic really does emulate real life office practice - you can't learn how to scale the distal of ALL the 7s, how to handle multiple mobilities, when to refer to a specialist, how to handle an anxious child or adult, or how to get rid of overlap on your bite wings from reading a textbook. You need the hands-on experience that clinic gives you, AND you need to listen to the instructors. They have worked in real clinical practice and understand and know what the expectations are. - Sarah B.*

Apply now or book a college tour to see it for yourself. **Call us at 905 304 4706**

# Beyond the OP

**Q: Many prospective students are looking for fully online programs. Can you explain why Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene education requires some in-person learning?**

**A:** Online programs are an excellent way to deliver education in today's learning environment. Online instruction can be offered in either a synchronous or asynchronous format, making it well-suited for theoretical and didactic components of a program. However, in-person training remains essential for pre-clinical and clinical coursework. These hands-on components require instructors to demonstrate procedures directly, after which students practice and refine their skills under supervision until they achieve competency and proficiency. This experiential learning process is critical to developing the practical skills required in the profession and is the primary reason students must attend in-person sessions at the college.

**Q: Location and commuting can be factors when students choose a college. What would you say to someone who is hesitant to apply because of the commute?**

**A:** Location and accessibility are certainly important factors when choosing a school. For many prospective students, commuting can be a significant consideration. However, students are often willing to travel greater distances to attend a reputable institution that offers a high-quality education. Our college has built a strong reputation for excellence in dental hygiene and dental assisting education. Ultimately, students have options, and many choose our college because of the quality and value of the education we provide.

**Q: Why is investing time in hands-on education one of the best investments students can make in their future careers?**

**A:** People learn in different ways. Some learn best by hearing information, while others prefer to see it demonstrated. However, many people learn most effectively by doing. Hands-on training allows students to apply what they have learned, build confidence, and develop practical skills through experience. This is why hands-on learning is so valuable, especially in programs that require clinical and technical skills.



Dr. Roland Estrabillo, DDS  
Dean and President

Apply now or book a college tour to see it for yourself. **Call us at 905 304 4766**

# Ancaster

## We are closer than you think!

Ancaster's prime location along Highway 403 makes it easily accessible from surrounding communities. Typical drive times include approximately 15 minutes from Downtown Hamilton, 20 minutes from Burlington, 30 minutes from Oakville, 40 minutes from Mississauga, and just over an hour from Toronto and London.



For local students, Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) bus routes connect Ancaster with Downtown Hamilton, Hamilton Mountain, and surrounding neighbourhoods. Public transit provides an affordable and convenient option for getting to campus.

Students traveling from outside Hamilton can take advantage of nearby GO Transit stations, including Hamilton GO Centre, West Harbour GO, and Aldershot GO. Many students combine GO Train or GO Bus service with a short drive, carpool, rideshare, or local transit connection to campus.



Many students choose to carpool with classmates from neighbouring cities, helping reduce commuting costs while making the journey more enjoyable.



# THE TOOTH TRUTH FILES



*Life at Southern Ontario Dental College*

## Where do you commute from to attend SODC? What does your typical day look like?

I moved to Hamilton from Brampton after I got enrolled in SODC because my kid was 2-year-old when I was joining the school, So commuting long distance was not an option for me. Every day was different and goes with the flow of SODC schedule, usually I drop off my kid at daycare every morning before heading to school. The school schedule is usually 8am-5pm with online classes and clinical activities. After school I just prep for the next day completely following the schedule.

## What challenges, if any, have you faced with your commute, and how have you overcome them?

I lived on Main Street westside of Hamilton, usually commute by bus. Traffic during peak hours and occasional weather-related delays can make travel times unpredictable. Moreover, fatigue after clinic days at school and going back home.

## What advice would you give to prospective applicants who may have concerns about commuting to Ancaster?

I would say moving to nearest location of the college can help you to get enough rest in between the accelerated program (it is for 2 years) but even if you plan to commute its fine you can do it !



## STUDY TIP OF THE MONTH

### Think Beyond Memorization

Challenge yourself to understand the why behind what you learn and not just simply memorizing the facts. Collaborate and think critically about treatment decisions, client care and clinical outcomes. Be patient and trust the process, every challenge is an opportunity to learn. Developing the 'why' mindset will help to strengthen your clinical judgment and prepare you for the board exam.

Remember to always celebrate progress!

**Carley S, RDH**  
Dental Hygiene Clinical Instructor

## EVENTS AT SODC

**JULY 1 - HAPPY CANADA DAY**

**JULY 10 - END OF TERM COHORT 31,32,33,35,36**

**JULY 17 - END OF TERM COHORT 34**

**JULY 22 - HAPPY GRADUATION DAY COHORT 31, DA 10 & RDHP 3**

### ★ Your Feedback Matters ★

If you had a positive experience at Southern Ontario Dental College, please consider leaving a Google review. It helps us improve and reach more future professionals.