

**COORDINATING COMMISSION
FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

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PROPOSAL FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Form 92-40

Institution Submitting Proposal:	Southeast Community College
Title of Program:	Dental Hygiene
CIP Code	51.0602
SOC Code	29-1292
Organizational Unit in which Program will be located:	Health Sciences
Name of Contact Person in the event additional information is needed:	Bev Cummins, Vice President of Program Development and Lincoln Campus Director
Telephone:	402-437-2554
Degree, Diploma, or Certificate to be offered	Associate of Applied Science
Proposal date to initiate program:	Fall 2026
List the location(s) where this program will be offered:	Lincoln & Hybrid
If the program has a projected ending date, please so indicate:	N/A
Date Approved by Governing Board:	

Chief Executive Officer's or other Authorized Officer's signature: 

I. Purpose and Description of the Dental Hygiene Program

Southeast Community College (SCC) proposes to establish an Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene. This degree is designed to prepare students for a career as a licensed dental hygienist. Dental hygienists hold an integral role in assisting individuals and groups in attaining and maintaining optimal oral health. They provide educational and clinical dental services to people and populations of all ages in diverse settings and capacities. The program will prepare dental hygienists to assess, diagnose, plan, implement, evaluate and document treatment for prevention, intervention, and control of oral diseases. They work in close collaboration with other dentistry and healthcare professionals to deliver integrated care. Dental hygienists are employed in both clinical, corporate, public health, and research settings including private dental practices, community clinics and health services, hospitals, university dental clinics, prison facilities, nursing homes, sales, product development, and schools.

The proposed AAS in Dental Hygiene is designed for individuals with a strong desire to work in the healthcare field and are passionate about improving patients’ oral and overall health. They often possess good hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills, which are essential for performing precise dental hygiene procedures. They enjoy interacting with people and are capable of effectively educating patients on oral hygiene practices and the importance of dental care. They have an aptitude for critical thinking and clinical judgement as well as an interest in subjects such as anatomy, physiology, and chemistry, which are foundational to dental hygiene education. A career in dental hygiene provides graduates with strong job prospects and opportunities for growth, as dental hygienists are in demand in our communities. This program will provide students with the requirements to successfully complete the written National Board of Dental Hygiene Examination and complete regional and state clinical board examinations for professional licensure.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) requires program delivery to be a combination of classroom/online didactic instruction, with laboratory practice and clinical experiences to ensure students meet competencies and are well-prepared for the workforce. As shown in the curriculum plan below, the AAS in Dental Hygiene includes oral anatomy, pathology, regulatory standards, and public health principles.

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	New/Existing Course?
ACFS 1015	Success@SCC	1.0	Existing
GENERAL EDUCATION CORE:			
COMM 1090 COMM 1110/SPCH 1110 COMM 2100 COMM 2810	Choose 1 of the following: Fundamentals of Human Communication Public Speaking (Recommended) Communicating in Groups and Teams Business and Professional Communication	3.0	Existing
ENGL 1010 ENGL 1010H ENGL 1054 ENGL 1110	Choose 1 of the following: English Composition I (Recommended) Composition Honors I Writing and Communities Business Communication	3.0	Existing

BIOS 1140	Human Anatomy	4.0	Existing
BIOS 2130	Human Physiology	4.0	Existing
SOCI 1010	Introduction to Sociology	3.0	Existing
General Education Credit Hours: 17			
DENTAL HYGIENE CORE:			
DENH 1000	Dental Hygiene Clinical 1: Pre-Clinic	4.0	New
DENH 1100	Dental Radiography	2.5	New
DENH 1200	Head & Neck Anatomy	2.0	New
DENH 1300	Dental Hygiene 1	3.0	New
DENH 1400	Dental Materials	2.0	New
DENH 1500	Dental Hygiene Clinical 2	4.0	New
DENH 1600	Dental Pathology	3.0	New
DENH 1700	Dental Hygiene 2	3.0	New
DENH 1800	Pharmacology for the Dental Hygienists	3.0	New
DENH 1900	Advanced Dental Pathology	2.5	New
DENH 2000	Dental Hygiene Clinical 3	5.0	New
DENH 2100	Dental Hygiene 3	3.0	New
DENH 2200	Advanced Dental Hygiene	2.0	New
DENH 2300	Dental Specialties	1.5	New
DENH 2400	Dental Hygiene Professions	2.0	New
DENH 2500	Dental Hygiene Clinical 4	6.0	New
Program Core Credit Hours:		48.5	
Total Credit Hours		66.5	

The program learning outcomes for the AAS in Dental Hygiene are to prepare the graduate to:

- demonstrate the clinical skills and judgement necessary to provide preventive oral health care and determine periodontal classifications to medically compromised and ethnically and diverse populations.
- demonstrate ethical decision-making skills and adhere to state and federal laws and standards within the dental hygiene profession.
- assess the oral health needs of individual patients and community groups, develop disease prevention and health maintenance strategies utilizing the basic principles of learning, promote the value of oral and general health and provides education and directs patients to appropriate and available resources.
- demonstrate basic skills in operations of practice management to ensure equitable and fiscally responsible utilization of resources in dental practice.
- demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate information and research pertaining to new products and techniques, take part in professional development activities, promote and identify career options within the dental profession

Graduates of the Southeast Community College Dental Hygiene program are eligible to take national and regional board examinations which are required to become a Registered Dental Hygienist (R.D.H.) An R.D.H. license is required in order to practice in a dental office or clinic.

II. Review Criteria

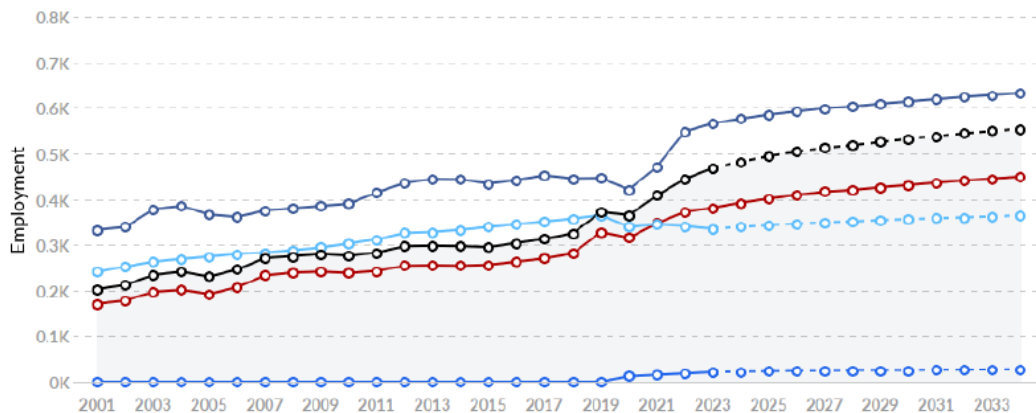
A. CENTRALITY TO ROLE AND MISSION

The mission of Southeast Community College is to *empower and transform the diverse learners and communities of southeast Nebraska through accessible lifelong educational opportunities. The College provides dynamic and responsive pathways to career and technical, academic transfer, and continuing education programs that contribute to personal, community, and workforce development.*

The creation of a/an AAS in Dental Hygiene aligns with SCC’s mission to provide accessible and responsive pathways for students to attain a credential that best serves the employment pathway they determine. This Associate of Applied Science degree will appeal to high school graduates as well as adult learners seeking to reskill or upskill in the industry. Another option for students is to continue their education to obtain a baccalaureate degree.

B. EVIDENCE OF NEED AND DEMAND

Workforce Need. According to *Lightcast Q2 2024 Data Set*, (www.economicmodeling.com), a company used by SCC to provide academic program evaluation data, in Nebraska, the regional employment data is above the national average as shown in in the chart below. For the SCC service area, there has been a 32.1% growth in jobs between 2020 and 2024.



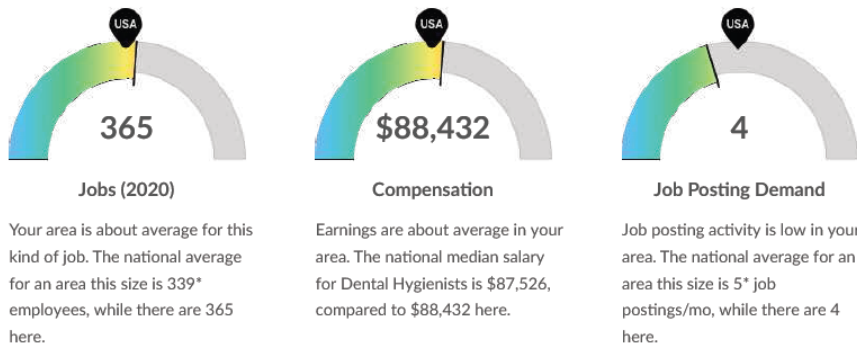
Region	2020 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Change	% Change
● SCC service area	365	482	117	32.1%
● National Average	339	339	0	0.1%
● Beatrice, NE	12	22	10	77.6%
● Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA	421	576	155	36.8%
● Lincoln, NE	315	392	76	24.2%

There are currently two educational institutions in the state of Nebraska with a Dental Hygiene program as shown in the chart below from Lightcast (UNMC and CCC) for a total of 39 completions in 2023. Lightcast also indicates there are 365 jobs posted in 2020, with a salary of approximately \$88,432.

Completions by Institution

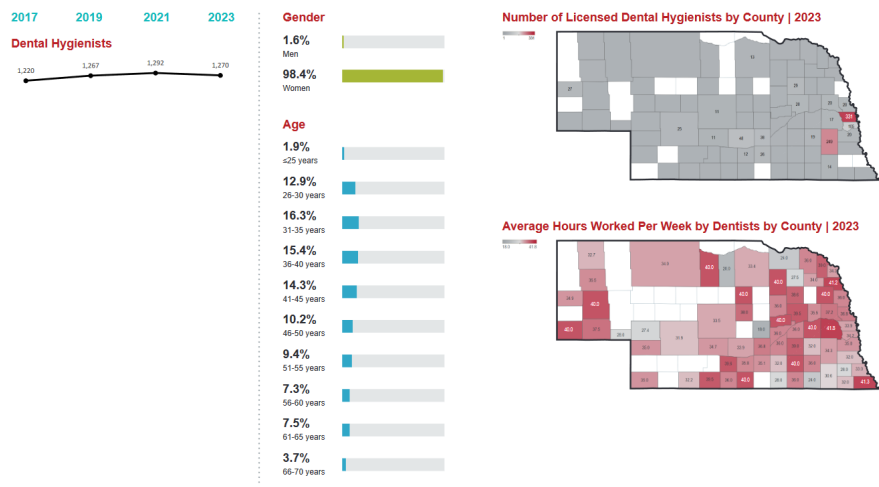
Institution	Completions (2023)	Growth % YOY (2023)	Market Share (2023)	IPEDS Tuition & Fees (2022)	Completions Trend (2019-2023)
University of Nebraska Medical Center	24	9.1%	57.1%	\$14,720	
Central Community College	15	25.0%	35.7%	\$3,300	

Light Job Posting Demand Over an Average Supply of Regional Jobs

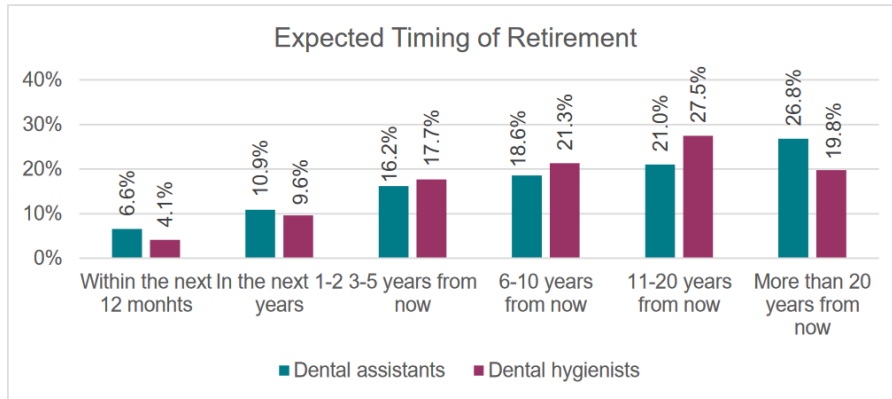


With the need for skilled hygienists outweighing the number of graduates in this field by a factor of nearly 5 to 1, another program in the eastern edge of Nebraska if necessary to meet workforce demand.

In the 2023 Status Nebraska Healthcare Workforce Report shows a decrease in 2023 in licensed dental hygienist in our state. The Department of Labor projects a 7% increase in demand within the profession by 2030.



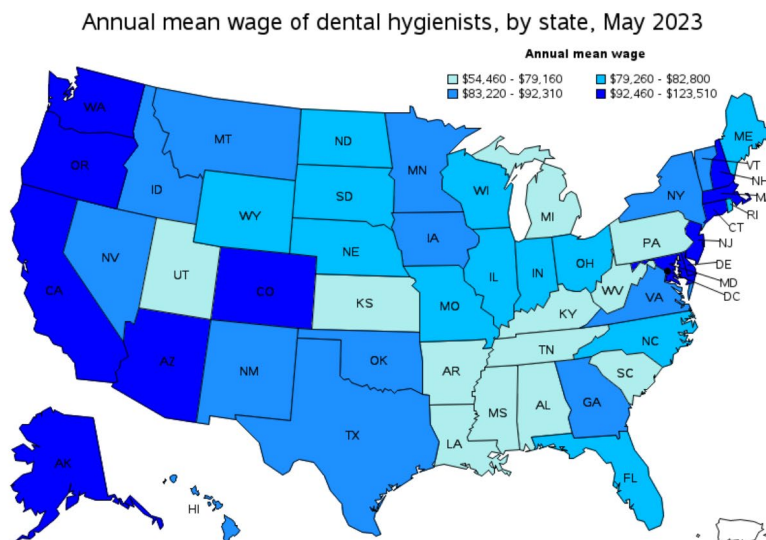
Approximately one-third of the dental assistant (33.7%) and dental hygienist (31.4%) workforce indicate they expect to retire in five years or less according to the 2022 Dental Workforce Shortage Report.



In addition, the report found staffing issues were cited as the most significant concern among dentists in January 2020 and remained the top concern in July 2022. The shortages have caused an estimated 11% reduction in dental practice capacity.

In July 2022, 4 in 10 dental practices indicated they were recruiting or had recently recruited dental assistants (DA), and nearly the same share indicated they were recruiting dental hygienists (DH). Among dentists recruiting for these positions, the vast majority – 9 in 10 – indicated it was “extremely” or “very” challenging. Additionally in July 2022, about 1 in 3 dentists who did not have full schedules indicated that vacant staff positions were at least part of the problem.

According to the Department of Labor statistics, Dental Hygiene is a profession with an annual mean wage above average in the state of Nebraska.



Student Demand. SCC utilizes the PES Markets Scorecard from Gray & Associates, to ascertain student demand for Dental Hygiene, with a 97% percentile ranking for the SCC service area as shown in the chart below. In the past three months, there were 3,790 searches for Dental Hygiene programs which are predicted to increase as the workforce demand increases.

Student Demand
Score: 23 Percentile: 97

Category	Pctl	Criterion	Value	Score
Size	98	Google Search Volume (3 Months)*	3,790	8
	0	International Page Views (12 Months)	0	NS
	94	New Student Enrollment Volume (12 Mo.)	42	4
	91	On-ground Completions at In-Market Institutions	28	2
	95	Online Completions by In-Market Students	6	3
	91	Sum of On-ground and Online Completions	34	2
Growth	100	Google Search YoY Change (Units)*	1,760	2
	8	New Student Enrollment Vol. YoY Change (Units)	-3	0
	6	Completion Volume YoY Change (Units)	-4	0
	99	Google Search YoY Change (%)*	87%	2
	48	New Student Enrollment Vol. YoY Change (%)	-7%	0
	38	Completion Volume YoY Change (%)	-11%	0

Additionally, the Health Sciences Division has had increasing inquiries for a Dental Hygiene program over the past five years. In 2023-2024 the division had 53 inquiries from prospective students interested in an associate degree dental hygiene program.

By offering an A.A.S. in Dental Hygiene, SCC would provide a vital service to the state of Nebraska through high-quality care and positively contributing to the oral health and well-being of patients and communities.

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

1. Faculty and Staff Resources

Currently we do not have any faculty qualified to teach within the dental hygiene program so additional faculty will be needed. We have received inquiries as the community learns of our interest in developing a program. We would implement a national search as well to find the right candidate to develop the program and they would need to start at least 8 months prior to applying for accreditation. Per the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) requirements, the program will need to hire:

- **Dental Hygiene Program Director:** the program director must have a full-time appointment and must be a dental hygienist or a dentist who is a graduate of a program accredited by CODA and possesses a master’s or higher degree, who has background in education and the professional experience necessary to understand and fulfill the program goals. They must be currently licensed or able to become licensed in the state of Nebraska in the profession. The program director will need to be hired 1 year prior to student enrollment.

- **Program Faculty:** The program will need at least 1 additional full-time faculty prior to the enrollment of students. As the program enters its 2nd year, an additional 2-3 adjunct faculty will be needed to deliver the didactic, lab, and clinical courses effectively. Dental Hygiene faculty of a dental hygiene program must possess a baccalaureate or higher degree.

The Health Science Division will provide support for staffing and administrative oversight.

Dental Hygiene courses will be offered in hybrid, online, and face to face delivery methods throughout the academic year, and we will continue to enroll students each Fall term, with an anticipated first enrollment date in August 2026. The program will be two years in length including general education courses. It is difficult to forecast the exact impact on enrollment at this time, but we anticipate beginning with 18-20 students and/or the allotted maximum enrollment determined by accreditation (CODA). The minimum number of students to make the program viable is 8.

For CODA accreditation, it takes approximately 5-7 months from application to initial approval and a site visit in the first 6-8 months after student enrollment starts. Below is a tentative timeline for programmatic accreditation.

- Spring/Summer 2025: Begin to develop curriculum with potential program director as adjunct faculty.
- Fall 2025: Hire Program Director and submit application (Program Director must be hired prior to submit application).
- Fall 2025: Finalize curriculum and submit for the 2026-2027 catalog.
- Anticipate application reviewed and approved at the December/March CODA meetings
- Spring 2026: CODA site visit & advertise program.
- Spring/Summer 2026: Hire adjunct faculty & finalized clinical affiliation agreements.
- Fall 2026: Enroll students
- Spring 2027: Submit first CODA annual report.

While we do not anticipate this occurring, if the timeline for accreditation is delayed, the program chair would be able to teach within the Dental Assisting program. Additional cohorts will be added after the initial cohort and approval from the accrediting body for dental hygiene. The program will explore additional delivery models and/or student flexibility options like online and part-time in additional cohorts other than the traditional two-year, face-to-face classroom model.

2. **Physical Facilities and Instructional Equipment**

The current dental lab in the Health Sciences building with the capacity for 24 students in the skills lab and 16 students in the operatory lab (2 per chair) will be shared with the dental assisting program. The programs will coordinate scheduling to maximize utilization of the labs for both the dental assisting and dental hygiene students.

The dental hygiene program will provide didactic coursework in an online/hybrid format to allow for flexibility for students and maximize the utilization of SCC online resources as well as classroom spaces. The Health Sciences building has eight engaged learning classrooms with seating for up to 30 students, which would provide enough space for a cohort of 20 dental hygiene students.

The dental hygiene program is highly desired by the Lincoln and surrounding areas dental community. Clinical placement within dental offices for clinical rotations should not be an issue with verbal commitments from over twenty-five dentists in the SCC 15 county service area. As the program is developed, opportunities for sponsorship will be an option for both dental offices and students for a portion of their clinical rotations. Formal affiliation agreements will be signed to ensure placement of accepted students prior to enrolling and the start of the program in 2026. These agreements will require accreditation review and approval.

Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources

The program will require minor equipment purchases, as the current Health Sciences Building construction has most of the major durable equipment already installed in the dental lab and classroom spaces are current and available to the program.

Perkins’s funding will be utilized to support the curriculum development and program implementation.

Sufficient library staff, library resources and information technology resources are in place at all campus locations to support the students and program.

The program will utilize the current student services advising and support staff without the need to increase based on cohort size.

Students will have additional fees while in the program:

The student fees are expected to be approximately:

Item	Approx. Cost
Uniforms, lab coats, shoes:	\$200
Instrument kit	\$3,500
Books (total varies/semester):	\$1,500
Criminal Background Check:	\$45
10 Panel Drug Test	\$35
Dental loupes with light (recommended)	\$1,600

3. Budget Projections

2 Full time Faculty Positions (1 in year 1@223 days):	\$186,600 (includes benefits)
Minor Equipment:	\$35,000 (one time startup cost)
Disposable Equipment:	\$ 5,500 (yearly)
CODA Accreditation (initial application fee):	\$16,850



CODA Accreditation (initial site visit):	\$ 5,000
CODA Annual Fees:	\$ 2,100 (yearly)

The tuition rates are projections based on past trends as no rates have been set by the SCC Board of Governors for the 2026-2027 academic year. Salary increases are projections based on past trends of a 3% total compensation increase. Please see the Revenue and Expense Projections.

C. AVOIDANCE OF UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION

As noted in the data from Lightcast, there are currently three Dental Hygiene programs in Nebraska (see below). Central Community College and UNMC-Lincoln Dental College offer dental hygiene programs. As the data indicates, there were 42 completions in 2023, and with 365 jobs posted annually in our service area, we would not be duplicating services or saturating the market.

Completions by Institution

Institution	Completions (2023)	Growth % YOY (2023)	Market Share (2023)	IPEDS Tuition & Fees (2022)	Completions Trend (2019-2023)
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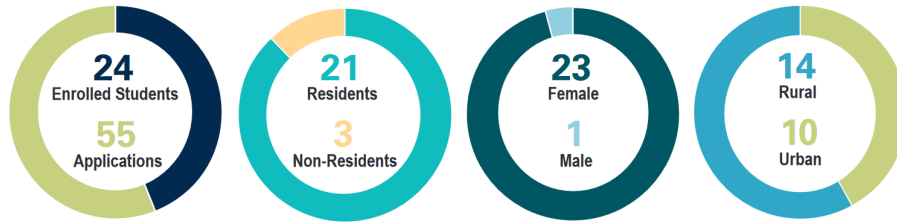
Central Community College Dental Hygiene Program (AAS Degree)

The CCC Dental Hygiene program is in Hastings, NE outside of the SCC service area. The program is 81 total credit hours compared to the proposed SCC program of 66.5 credit hours. The CCC dental hygiene program has had more applicants over the past three years than its allowed maximum enrollment and most of the students are from the CCC service area.

UNMC Dental Hygiene Program (BS Degree)

The UNMC Dental Hygiene program is in Lincoln and provides students with a bachelor’s degree requiring four years to complete. Their maximum enrollment is 24 students and for the past five years they have had more applicants than accepted enrollments while the demand for a dental hygienist has increased. In addition, there are no students of the 14 rural students found to be from communities south of Lincoln and the Omaha metro.

DENTAL HYGIENE CLASS OF 2026 PROFILE



D. CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE PLAN FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

The proposed AAS in Dental Hygiene is consistent with Nebraska’s Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education. The program will provide education “...that prepares students for productive and fulfilling lives...” and “...enhances workforce development...” Specifically, the Comprehensive Statewide Plan directs institutions to “provide specialized certification programs in professional, technical, and vocational fields that address regional and state needs” (p. 3-3). Given the current demand for Dental Hygienists detailed previously, SCC’s proposed AAS in Dental Hygiene is consistent with this goal.

Revenue-Expense Projections

TABLE 1: PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

	(FY2025-26)		(FY2026-27)		(FY2027-28)		(FY2028-29)		(FY2029-30)		Total	
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		FTE	Cost
Personnel	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Faculty*	1	93,300	2.5	205,480	3	234,500	3	241,905	3	248,502	3	1,030,487
Professional		0		0		0		0		0		
Graduate assistants		0		0		0		0		0		
Support staff		0		0		0		0		0		
Subtotal	1	93,300	2.5	205,480	3	234,500	3	241,905	3	248,502	3	1,030,487
Operating												
General Operating		65,000		68,000		68,000		70,000		70,000		341,000
Equipment		3,500		5,500		5,500		6,000		6,000		58,000
New or renovated space		NA		NA		NA		NA		NA		0
Library/Information Resources		0		0		0		0		0		0
Initial Accreditation		21,850		0		0		0		0		21,850
Annual Accreditation		2,100		2,150		2,150		2,150		2,150		10,700
Subtotal		92,450		75,650		75,650		78,150		78,150		431,550
Total Expenses		185,750		281,130		310,150		320,055		326,652		1,455,237

* Funds for additional adjunct instructors estimates 3% annual increase

TABLE 2: REVENUE SOURCES FOR PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

	(FY2025-2026) Year 1	(FY2026-2027) Year 2	(FY2027-2028) Year 3	(FY2028-2029) Year 4	(FY2029-2030) Year 5	Total
Reallocation of Existing Funds **	176,250	0	0	0	0	176,250
Required New Public Funds	0	0	0	0	0	\$0
State Funds/Local Tax	0	0	0	0	0	\$0
Tuition and Fees *	0	33x10x\$127= \$41,910	33x34x\$131= \$146,982	33x48x\$135= \$213,840	33x48x\$139= \$220,176	\$622,908
Other Funding **	\$41,000	0	0	0	0	\$41,000
Total Revenue	\$144,750	\$41,910	\$146,982	\$213,840	\$220,176	\$767,658

* Determined by ½ of total credit hours for first year of students only, Tuition/Fees with a 3% increase of prior year.

** Year 1 will utilize 41,000 of Perkins Grant fund and \$176,250 of internal funds.