

UW Career & Internship Center
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Pre-Dent Planning Guide

Explore

Motivation for medicine/personal characteristics

A qualified applicant to dental school must have not only a general understanding of the profession, but also a demonstrated interest in and awareness of dental/medical and social issues. Prospective applicants should be prepared to answer the question, “Why do you want to be a dentist?” with a response that goes beyond “I want to help people.”

Experience

Desirable qualifications are a well rounded academic background, a knowledge of and exposure to the needs of individuals and society, and an awareness of current health care delivery systems. Diversity and cross-cultural competency are critical. Further, motivation for dental careers can be measured in part by the candidate’s exposure to health-care environments.

Choosing a Major

While a bachelor’s degree is necessary to be a competitive applicant to dental school, **dental schools do not give preference to any particular major.** You should be considering majors that align your interests, passions, and abilities. Your departmental adviser, in partnership with your pre-health adviser, can help ensure you take the appropriate pre-requisite courses for dental school as part of your coursework.

Prepare

An excellent dental school applicant will have a strong grade point average, both overall and in the pre-requisite coursework. Additionally, a strong applicant will have competitive DAT scores. Beyond grades and test scores, dental schools will look for ample time spent shadowing a dentist, experience volunteering in a clinical setting, and both research and leadership experiences.

Prerequisite courses for most dental schools are listed below; you should review the admissions information for each of your desired schools to be sure you are meeting all coursework and other requirements.

Math/Stats	Chemistry	Biology	Physics	Other	English
Intro Stats	CHEM 142/145	BIOL180	PHYS 114/117	OHS 201	COMP
	CHEM 152/155	BIOL 200	PHYS 115/118		ENGL LIT
	CHEM 162/165	BIOL 220	PHYS 116/119		ENGL LIT
			or		
	CHEM 223	MICROM 410	PHYS 121		
	CHEM 224	MICROM 442	PHYS 122		
	or	or	PHYS 123		
	CHEM 237/335	MICROM 301			
	CHEM 238/336	MICROM 412			
	CHEM 239/337				
	BIOC 405				
	BIOC 406				

Sample Schedule 1: No gap year

	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer
FR	MATH 120	QSCI 291		STAT 220
	CHEM142	CHEM 152	CHEM 162	Humanities
		Comp		
SO	BIOL 180	BIOL 200	DPHS 201	BIOL 220
	CHEM 237	CHEM 238	CHEM 239	
		CHEM 241	CHEM 242	
JR	PHYS 114	PHYS 115	PHYS 116	Humanities
	PHYS 117	PHYS 118	PHYS 119	
	MICROM 410	MICROM 442		
SR	ENGL	ENGL		
	BIOC 405	BIOC 406		

Other Important Activities

Freshman Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health 101"
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to dental field
- Review pre-health website

Sophomore Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)
- Begin researching dental schools and DAT on ADA, ADEA and other sites

Junior Year

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, DAT, and application(s) timing
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health Application Class" in winter or spring quarter
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Finalize list of 10-15 dental schools
- Familiarize yourself with application to dental schools (AADSAS)
- Request recommendation letters

Spring quarter:

- Take DAT by mid-April or earlier
- Apply to dental schools beginning June 1

Senior Year

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Complete UG coursework and graduate!
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible

Sample Schedule 2: Gap year

	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer
FR	Comp	MATH 120		
	CHEM 110	CHEM 142	CHEM 152	CHEM 162
SO	CHEM 237	CHEM 238	DPHS 201	CHEM 239
		CHEM 241	MATH 124	CHEM 242
JR	BIOL 180	BIOL 200	BIOL 220	Humanities
	STAT 220	Humanities		
SR	PHYS 114	PHYS 115	PHYS 116	
	PHYS 117	PHYS 118	PHYS 119	
	BIOC 405	BIOC 406		

Other Important Activities

Freshman Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health 101"
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to dental field

Sophomore Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)

Junior Year

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Begin researching dental schools and DAT on ADA, ADEA and other sites

Senior Year

- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Meet with pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, DAT, and application(s) timing
- Finalize list of 10-15 dental schools
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health Application Class" in winter or spring quarter

Familiarize yourself with application to dental schools (AADSAS)

- Request letters of recommendation

Spring quarter:

- Take DAT by mid-April or earlier
- Apply to dental schools beginning June 1

After Graduation

- Continue meaningful clinical experience
- Meet with pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible