

Pre-Dental
Education at the
University of Oregon
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Pre-Dental Advisor:

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PRE-DENTAL EDUCATION AT UO

This is a general outline of the pre-dental program at the University of Oregon. It provides you with a broad plan and should be used as a map to locate sources of more complete information. Please see your academic advisor on a regular basis to confirm you are on track for your degree and dental school admissions. Watch for changes in course numbers and credits.

Curricular Requirements for Dental School Admission

High School Background

The scientific skills and curiosity developed in high school classes can prepare you for more successful work at the university level. Biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics courses are strongly recommended, as well as others which help you to be sensitive to your social environment.

Undergraduate Requirements for Dental School

General Requirements:

A few dental schools will admit students with only two years of undergraduate education, but most require the minimum of three years of full-time work at an accredited college or university. The majority of admittees, however, have a bachelor's degree. All students are urged to plan an academic program leading toward a baccalaureate degree.

Specific Course Requirements:

Specific course requirements vary between dental schools; minimum expectations are, however, markedly similar. All schools demand some work in biology or zoology, chemistry, physics, and English. Exact admission requirements are detailed in the yearly revised *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*. This text can be ordered from the Publications Department, American Dental Education Association,

1400 K Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005 or at www.ADEA.org for \$35 per copy. A recent edition is in the office of the pre-health sciences advisor (364 Oregon Hall) for quick reference.

The Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) School of Dentistry Requirements:

- Organic chemistry-two terms with lab
- Inorganic chemistry-one year sequence with lab
- Biology or zoology-one year sequence with lab
- Physics-one year sequence with lab
- Anatomy-two terms with lab

- Human physiology—two terms with lab
- Biochemistry—one term
- WR 121, plus either WR 122 or WR 123

For additional information on the OHSU program, write to Admissions/Registrar's Office, School of Dentistry, Oregon Health Sciences University, 611 SW Campus Drive, Portland, OR 97201-3097, or check out their web site at: <http://www.ohsu.edu/sod/>

Recommended University of Oregon Curriculum—The minimum requirements for admission to OHSU and most other U.S. schools can be met with the following classes:

- General Chemistry CH 221, 222, 223 with labs CH 227, 228, 229 or Honors General Chemistry CH 224, 225, 226 with labs CH 237, 238, 239.
- Organic Chemistry CH 331, 335, 336 with labs CH 337, 338.
- Foundations I: Biochemistry and Cell Physiology (BI 251) Foundations II: Genetics (BI 252), Foundations III: Evolution & Biodiversity (BI 253)
OR
- General Biology I, II, III (BI 211, 212, 213, & 214) BI 214 is needed to take upper division biology courses. A pre-health advisor will assist you in determining which biology sequence you should take.
- General Physics PHYS 201, 202, 203 with labs PHYS 204, 205, 206.
- Mathematics to satisfy prerequisites for biology, chemistry, and physics, and to satisfy major requirements. The courses most often taken are MATH 111, 112, 251 (see majors for specific course requirements). Higher-level course are recommended—most science majors require more calculus.
- Human Anatomy (ANAT 311, 312) and labs (ANAT 314, 315)
- Human Physiology (HPHY 313, 314) and labs (HPHY 316, 317)
- Biochemistry (CH 360)
- WR 121 and WR 122 or 123. Some dental programs require additional English literature.
- Recommend elective courses in philosophy, music, art appreciation, and foreign languages which would also satisfy UO group requirements.

Advanced placement credits are sometimes accepted for some required courses if such credits appear on an undergraduate transcript. Consult with the pre-health science advisor. All of the courses listed above should be taken on a graded basis. Also, a full load of 15-16 credit hours per term should be maintained.

The Undergraduate Major and Academic Advising

The curricular requirements described so far constitute the pre-dental program, but not an undergraduate degree-granting major. The American Dental Association reported that in 2001 90 percent of first year students entered with 4 years of pre-dental education or more, the majority with completed baccalaureate degrees.

Science Majors:

Given the pre-dental curriculum, the obvious and ready major is someplace in the sciences; chemistry, biology, human physiology and general science dovetail efficiently with the recommended classes. Many of the requirements of those majors are satisfied with the pre-dental offering. Since major require-

Non-Science Majors:

Almost all dental colleges make a special point of saying any major is acceptable. Scrupulous planning is important in completing a pre-dental program with a non-science major.

The Major as an Alternative Career:

All pre-dental students should face realistically the possibility of changing their minds about dentistry or of not gaining admittance to a dental school. A major may represent an alternative career.

Academic Advising:

Each student is advised by Arwen Spicer, Office of Academic Advising, 364 Oregon Hall, 346-3211

Four-year Study Plan

The following represents a typical four-year program. If this plan does not seem appropriate to your situation, please consult with the pre-dental advisor. Talk to advisors about the possibility of transferring the first year of dental school (48 credits) to UO and completing a bachelor's degree. **There are some important residency restrictions.**

I. The Pre-Dental Curriculum:

Freshman Year:

Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term
CH 221 + 227 lab -or- CH 224 + 237 lab	CH 222 + 228 lab -or- CH 225 + 238 lab	CH 223 + 229 lab -or- CH 226 + 239 lab
MATH 111 or higher	MATH 112	MATH continuation

- Consider:**
- English Composition (graded)
 - Arts & Letters, Social Science group or Multicultural requirement satisfying classes
 - Major requirements (if a major has been chosen)

Sophomore Year:

CH 331 ¹ + 337 lab Math if needed BI 251 ²	CH 335 + 338 lab BI 252	CH 336 BI 253
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- Consider:**
- English Composition (graded)
 - Arts & Letters, Social Science group or Multicultural requirement satisfying classes
 - Major requirements (if a major has been chosen)

Junior Year:

ANAT 311& 314 lab HPHY 313 & 316 lab	ANAT 312, 315 lab HPHY 314, 317 lab	DAT ³
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- Consider:**
- Arts & Letters, Social Science group or Multicultural requirement satisfying classes
 - Major requirements

Senior Year:

PHYS 201 ⁴ + 204 lab Biochemistry CH 360	PHYS 202 + 205 lab	PHYS 203 + 206 lab
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Completion of all University and department requirements.

Comments:

1. Organic Chemistry must be taken before or concurrently with BI 251. Organic Chemistry is frequently offered during the Summer Session.
2. There are 2 Biology sequences. BI 251-253 or BI 211, 212, 213. If you elect to complete the general biology sequence (BI 211-213), we recommend you also take BI 214.
3. The dental school application process usually begins in the spring of the junior year with the Dental Admissions Test (DAT) and continues well into the next year.
4. Physics is best scheduled in the third or fourth year because there is no physics on the DAT.
5. Additional science courses such as microbiology, cell biology and neuroscience are highly recommended.

Non-Curricular Requirements for Dental School Admission

The Dental School Admission Test (DAT)

There are four examinations included in the Dental Admission Testing Program. The entire program requires one day for administration. The examinations included are:

- Survey of Natural Sciences - biology, general & organic chemistry
- Reading Comprehension (dental and basic sciences)
- Quantitative Ability (math problems)
- Perceptual Ability (two-and three-dimensional problem solving)

There are classes (Linguistics 150) and services (Academic Learning Services) that can help you build your vocabulary and improve reading skills. The American Dental Association has a booklet and sample examinations for all students who register for the DAT. A copy is in the office of the pre-health science advisor, 364 Oregon Hall.

The DAT is offered electronically through the Thompson Prometric Testing Centers. Candidates who are applying for the DAT can complete the application online at www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/dat/registering.asp. After the application and fee payment are processed, the Thompson Prometric National Registration Center will receive notification of the candidate's eligibility for DAT testing. Also, the candidate will receive instructions to call an 800-number to register with the Thompson Prometric National Registration Center for the DAT. By calling the 800-number, the candidate will be able to arrange the day, time and place to take the DAT at a Prometric Testing Center. Thompson Prometric requires at least 48 hour advance notice for scheduling a test. A list of Prometric Testing Centers can be found on-line at www.prometric.com. The candidate is eligible for a 12 month period. If candidates do not register during this period, they will have to submit another application and fee in order to take the DAT examination. **A candidate must wait 90 days to retake the DAT.**

Letters of Evaluation

Most schools require letters of evaluation. Ideally the letters accomplish two things: they amplify your academic record and they contribute personal information to an otherwise highly quantified application. OHSU usually requests three letters from science instructors (biology, chemistry, and/or physics, upper division where possible) and one letter from a dental professional. Consider the following when preparing your letters of reference:

- Ask for a letter addressing your potential in the *health professions*, in case you change your mind and choose another profession.
- Ask for references from teaching assistants if they can contribute more personal information to your application. They may collaborate on a jointly signed letter with a faculty member to strengthen the recommendation
- Assume the responsibility of checking to see if letters have been submitted.
- Many schools like a letter from a dentist

Official Transcripts

All dental schools require official transcripts from **every** college that applicants have attended. Superior work cannot be recorded in a Pass grade thus required classes should be taken graded, including English composition. OHSU requires that at least 115 quarter hours be graded on a grade differentiated basis. A record replete with work attempted but never finished (recorded in “Y,” “I,” or “W”s) does not predict success for dental school.

The Application Process

The application process is lengthy, complex, costly, and it is best to be informed about the stages of the process.

Methods of Applying

There are two distinct methods of applying to dental schools, and you must adhere to the wishes of the particular schools in which you are interested.

- *Indirect, multiple application.* The American Association of Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS) is a national agency which accepts a single form, verifies its contents from transcripts, then duplicates and forwards the forms to schools designated by the applicant. Fifty-two U.S. schools and two Canadian schools participate in the AADSAS. You may apply online at <www.adea.org/AADSAS/> Students are encouraged to complete the application during their junior year prior to Labor Day.
- *Direct Application:* Applicants for dental schools in Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Georgia, with the exception of Meharry Medical College in Tennessee, must apply directly to each school. Contact each school’s Registrar’s Office for an application.

Interviews

Interviews are not uniformly required before acceptance. Many times the interview is used to clarify a detail in the application which is unclear to an admissions committee. Interview schedules start as early as August and continue into the spring of the following year at dental schools throughout the country. OHSU will require a personal interview.

An Application Calendar

Fall Term and Through the Junior Year

Complete your letter of recommendation file.

Winter Term of Junior Year

Buy or review a copy of *Admission Requirements of U.S. and Canadian Dental Schools* and decide on schools. Review for DAT. File for DAT test.

Spring Term of Junior Year

Take DAT. Notify the pre-health sciences coordinator of your intentions to apply to dental school. Double check recommendation files, follow-up with people who promised letters but have not written them.

Summer Term Between Junior and Senior Year

Complete and submit applications. Apply early for summer DAT.

Fall Term and Early Winter of Senior Year

Anticipate and fulfill requests for letters and interviews.

Chances for Admission: Self-Evaluation

Without attempting to predict exactly your chances for admission, you can begin to assess the likelihood of acceptance by reviewing the major selection factors.

Applicants and First-Year Places—In 2008, there were about 4-5 applications per available space.

Residency—Numbers are not, however, the only deciding factor in selection; the likelihood of acceptance is greatest at the public institutions in the state of which you are a legal resident. Some state schools automatically screen out non-residents unless their objective record is excellent. Furthermore, the dental schools are not equitably distributed throughout the nation; some states have more than one school and others have none.

Most of the positions at OHSU go to residents (69%) and to students from the Western states which participate in the WICHE program (23%) (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education): Arizona, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Wyoming. The WICHE applicants may also apply to Loma Linda University, University of California Los Angeles, University of California San Francisco, University of the Pacific, University of Southern California, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and University of Washington. Since WICHE students must certify their eligibility early in their stay at Oregon, contact the pre-health advisor if you fall into this category. Residents of other states and foreign countries are also acceptable in small numbers.

International students (unless a permanent resident holding a green card and therefore considered a state resident) are usually considered as non-residents in their applications and should consult the *Admission Requirements of U.S. and Canadian Dental Schools* for a list of those private schools which accept applicants from the entire pool and not solely from one state or regional group. OHSU generally does not accept international students.

Grade Point Average—Next to residency, the GPA is the critical selection factor. The national average of the accepted dental student has ranged between 3.0 and 3.78 across 55 U.S. dental schools. OHSU's mean GPA for the 2007 entering class was 3.66.

DAT Scores—Dental schools vary in the way the test scores are used. If applying to OHSU, applicants need to achieve a minimum score of 15 in all subcategories. The admissions personnel like to see students at the mean and above. OHSU's mean for 2007 was 19.57.

Experience/ Motivation—Although impossible to quantify, demonstrated motivation for dentistry can influence your application. This is registered in letters of recommendation from persons in the dental field, and from your comments on the application reflecting your explorations in the field. OHSU now requires applicants to have a minimum of 50 hours of observation in a dental setting (minimum of 25 hours in general dentistry).

Minority Students—All U.S. public and private schools are seeking underrepresented minority and other non-traditional applicants.

Of Special Interest

Pre-Dental Club—For information on the activities of this group, visit the Pre-dental advisor in the Office of Academic Advising, 364 Oregon Hall or email: dental@uoregon.edu

Glossary:

tion	AADSAS	American Association of Dental Schools Application Service
	AR	<i>Admission Requirements for U.S. and Canadian Dental Schools</i>
	DAT	Dental Admissions Test
	GPA	Grade Point Average
	OAA	Office of Academic Advising 364 Oregon Hall, 346-3211
	OHSU	Oregon Health & Science University

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This publication will be made in accessible formats upon request—(541) 346-3211.