

Pre-Dental

at the University of Oregon



Prepared by:
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Academic Advising and Pre-Dental Objective

Each student has an opportunity to be advised by a Pre-Health Advisor in the Office of Academic Advising (OAA). Call (541) 346-3211 to schedule an appointment. Please see your academic advisor on a regular basis to confirm you are on track for your degree and dental school admission.

In order for the Pre-Health Advisors to communicate directly to you and your interests, it is highly recommended to declare a Pre-Dental Professional Objective. To do so, email *health@uoregon.edu* with your name and University of Oregon (UO) ID number, or fill out a form in the OAA.

You are also encouraged to sign up for the Pre-Health mailing list, which provides students with timely announcements and a monthly newsletter. OAA also has a facebook page, located at *www.facebook.com/uo.prehealthadvising*, which is where more health information can be found.

Undergraduate Requirements For Dental School

General Requirements

Most dental schools require a bachelor's degree, and yet a few admit students after a few years of undergraduate education and having met all the science prerequisites. All students are urged to plan an academic program leading toward a baccalaureate degree.

Specific Course Requirements

Admission requirements vary between dental schools; minimum expectations are, however, markedly similar. Students are encouraged to review the Official Guide to Dental Schools, provided for a cost, found on the American Dental Education Association's (ADEA) website.

All dental schools demand at least one year of work in the following areas:

- Biology
- General (or Inorganic) Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Physics
- English Composition

OHSU has Oregon's only dental school.

Recommended University of Oregon Curriculum:

The minimum requirements for admission to OHSU's dental school and most other US schools can be met with the following classes:

- English Composition – WR 122, 122 or 123
- General Chemistry – CH 221, 222, 223 with labs CH 227, 228, 229
OR Honors Chemistry – CH 224H, 225H, 226H with labs CH 237, 238, 239
- General Biology – BI 211, 212, 213 or 214
OR Foundations Biology (H) – BI 251, 252, 253
 A Pre-Health Advisor can assist you in determining which biology sequence you should take.
- Organic Chemistry – CH 331, 335, 336 with labs CH 337, 338
- General Physics – PHYS 201, 202, 203 with labs 204, 205, 206
- Anatomy & Physiology – HPHY 321, 322, 323, 324, 325
- Biochemistry – CH 360, or better yet, CH 461 (must be Upper Division)

Advanced placement credits are sometimes accepted for some required courses if such credits appear on an undergraduate transcript. Consult with the Pre-Health Advisor for clarification. All of the courses listed above must be taken on a graded basis.

The Pre-Dental Curriculum

First Year

Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term
CH 221 & 227 lab	CH 222 & 228 lab	CH 223 & 229 lab
-or-	-or-	-or-
CH 224H & 237 lab	CH 225H & 238 lab	CH 226H & 239 lab
MATH 111 or higher	MATH 112	MATH (if required for major or school)

Consider:

- English Composition (graded)
- Arts & Letters, Social Science or Multicultural classes
- Major requirements (if a major has been chosen)

Second Year

CH 331 & 337 lab	CH 335 & 338 lab	CH 336
BI 211	BI 212	BI 213 -or-

Consider:

- English Composition (graded)
- Arts & Letters, Social Science group or Multicultural classes
- Major requirements (if a major has been chosen)
- Apply for UO dental scholarships

Third Year

HPHY 321	HPHY 323	DAT ¹
HPHY 322	HPHY 324	HPHY 325
BI 214		

Consider:

- English Literature
- Arts & Letters, Social Science or Multicultural classes
- Major requirements³
- Apply for UO dental scholarships
- June - earliest possible time for submitting dental school applications

Fourth Year

PHYS 201 ² & 204 lab	PHYS 202 & 205 Lab	PHYS 203 & 206 Lab
CH 461		

Consider:

- Completion of all university and department requirements.

Comments:

¹ The dental school application process usually begins with the spring of the junior year with the Dental Admissions Test (DAT) and continues well into the next year.

² Physics is best scheduled in the third or fourth year because there is no physics on the DAT.

³ Additional science courses such as microbiology, cell biology and neuroscience are highly recommended.

This curriculum is not set in stone. Talk to an Advisor for course plans that are right for you.

The Undergraduate Major

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 requirements do vary considerably, you should plan your second year in college very carefully in anticipation of a major choice if you have not already committed yourself.

Non-Science Majors

Most dental schools make a point of welcoming non-science majors. Successful dental students come from a wide variety of educational backgrounds, including those who major in English, business, communications, among others. Advisors encourage non-science majors to plan carefully, as many of the dental prerequisites can be taken as electives around a student's major and General Education requirements.

The Major as an Alternative Career

As a pre-dental student, you should face realistically the possibility of not gaining admission to dental school. What will you do if you are not accepted? Another health career? Reapply? Follow other pathways within your major? Don't be surprised if you are asked this often by friends, advisors, and interviewers. It isn't intended to discourage you but to remind you of the realities of dental school application.

Non-Curricular Requirements for Dental School Admission

The following information can be found in the Official Guide to Dental Schools, which can be purchased from the ADEA website.

The Dental Admission Test (DAT)

The DAT is a test specifically designed to assess academic, scientific and perceptual readiness required for dental school and is only part of the evaluation for admission. All dental schools require the DAT. The test itself is a series of multiple-choice items. The test must be completed in no more than 4 hours and 15 minutes (which includes a break halfway through the test).

The four separate parts the DAT cover natural sciences, perceptual ability, reading comprehension and quantitative reasoning.

Letters of Recommendation

Many dental degree programs require one to four letters of recommendations (otherwise called “letters of reference” or “letters of evaluation”). Schools may require you to submit letters from a dentist, professor, advisor, or supervisor. You are encouraged to find individuals who can speak to your maturity, dependability, dedication, compassion, communication skills, leadership, and any experience you may have in the field. Dental schools want information that can help them confirm that you will be a good dental student and that you have the personality traits to be a competent dentist.

Since the University of Oregon does not compose an institutional letter, you will need to approach individuals for letters of evaluation. Check the admission requirements school by school for instructions about letters of recommendations, because some schools ask you to use a school-specific evaluation form in lieu of or in addition to the letter from the evaluator, many times signed, and on letterhead.

Official Transcripts

All dental schools require official transcripts from every college you have attended. Although few dental schools publicly list mandatory GPAs for admission, accumulated statistics illustrate that only applicants with averages at 3.2 and above stand a good chance of admission. The recent national mean for accepted applicants was 3.5 in all college work and 3.5 in sciences.

Take all required courses graded.

In general, you should avoid dropping below a full academic load of 15 or 16 credit hours.

Health-related Experience

Dental schools encourage if not require students to have either volunteer or paid experience working with or observing patients in a dentist's office or health-related setting. Not only is this a test of your own interests, but this is the exposure necessary to understanding what a dental career entails. Consult each school's hours of observation requirements.

The Application Process

60 of the 61 dental colleges in the U.S. participate in the Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS) for admission. A wealth of knowledge about the application process can be found on the ADEA web site and through the ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools.

Students applying to non-participating schools should contact the individual programs for application materials.

Chances for Admission: Self Evaluation

The best way to assess your chances for gaining admission to dental school begins with a review of selection features.

Early planning and preparation is virtually essential for improving your chances for successful admission. Do not fall into the “trap of the minimums,” as virtually no one with just the minimums gets into dental school. Going above and beyond the minimum admission requirements is a very good thing! Over and over again, admission websites and committees stress the importance of the “whole candidate,” representing your academics, extra-curricular activities, leadership, motivation, experience and character. Above all, there is no guarantee of being accepted. Even the most qualified candidates may have to apply more than once.

Residence

The likelihood of acceptance is greatest at the public institutions in the state of which you are a resident. OHSU does accept non-residents. Private schools do not preference residents and therefore all applicants are considered.

Academic Record

The GPA is critical in selection. Good grades, by themselves, guarantee nothing. They do indicate a solid performance in the past and can be used to predict a high probability of repeated success in the first two years of the dental school curriculum. It is clear that students with a 3.2 GPA and below are in a high-risk category.

Experience

Grades prove scientific competence; medically allied experience can demonstrate both your commitment and your understanding of health careers. Pick up or download the handout on local medically related experiences at the Office of Academic Advising. Use the Office of Academic Advising’s website, advising.uoregon.edu/AA_Pages/AA_PreHealth_Opps.html, to locate health related opportunities in the area. Don’t ignore this important part of your preparation. Health-related experiences are required at most schools.

Minority Students

All U.S. public and private schools are seeking underrepresented minority and other non-traditional applicants. Be sure to contact a pre-health advisor for information.

International Students

When applying to public schools, foreign students are considered non-residents. Private schools accept some foreign students; review the Official Guide to Dental Schools for recent statistics. Students with permanent residence (green card) status are considered U.S. residents.

Of Special Interest

Students accepted into OHSU dental school for Fall 2010:

- Average cum GPA – 3.68
- Average science GPA – 3.63
- Average DAT score – 19.44
- Average Salary from May 2010 \$158,770

Dental programs are typically 4 years in length, and once finished, dentists have to pass a written and practical exam to get their license. To be licensed to practice in a specialty field within dentistry, a 2 year residency is required.

Look into whether the school prefers residence of the state. There are some states that receive preference in admission because there are no dental programs in their home states. OHSU participates in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Refer to <http://wiche.eeu/psep> for more information.

UO Scholarships

The Pre-Dental Scholarship committee awards two scholarships each year.

The Thomas Bleakney pre-dentistry Scholarship is a one-year scholarship awarded to an outstanding student who plans a career in dentistry. The scholarship is awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement. This scholarship is available to college sophomores, college juniors, college seniors, or post-bacs. The selection process for this scholarship is competitive. The scholarship committee considers academic performance and the student must have declared a career objective of dentistry to be eligible.

To apply complete the General University Scholarship application through the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office. Make sure you have officially declared pre-dentistry as your professional objective. We will only review applications for this scholarship for students who have declared pre-dentistry. You may designate pre-dentistry as your professional objective by

emailing prehealth@uoregon.edu with your name and UO ID or completing a form in 364 Oregon Hall.

Deadline: Mid-February

We strongly encourage all pre-dental students to apply for all university scholarships through the office of student Financial Aid at: financialaid.uoregon.edu

For more information see advising.uoregon.edu/prehealth/scholarships.htm or contact a pre-dental advisor in 364 Oregon Hall. Financial assistance is also available through military scholarships.

Pre Dental Club

The Pre-Dental club at the University of Oregon is organized to help students learn more about professions related to the dental field. All interested students are welcome. The Pre-Dental club meets every other Wednesday, times vary. If you have any questions please email dental@uoregon.edu.

The ADEA Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (ADEA AADSAAS) website to begin building your dental school application is portal.aadsasweb.org.

Websites for more information and which provided material for this handout include:

American Dental Education Association (ADEA)
www.adea.org

The Bureau of Labor Statistics
www.bls.gov

Oregon Health and Science University Dental School
www.ohsu.edu

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