

## Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Undergraduate Page

### DENTAL SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

There are two degrees offered by the over 50 U.S. Schools of Dentistry: D.M.D. (Doctor of Dental Medicine) degree or the more traditional D.D.S. (Doctor of Dental Surgery) degree. Both degrees are equivalent and require the same schooling, board exams, and licensure.

#### APPLICATION

Fifty-nine (59) dental schools in the U.S. participate in the American Association of Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS). AADSAS applications can be obtained or completed on-line at [http://www.adea.org/dental\\_education\\_pathways/aadsas/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Pages/default.aspx). AADSAS simplifies the application process for students by acting as an application clearinghouse.

#### DENTAL ADMISSIONS TEST

Dental schools use the Dental Admissions Test (DAT) as an instrument in the evaluation and comparison of dental school candidates. The DAT is administered by an independent testing center, Prometric, Inc. (<http://www.prometric.com> or 800-688-5804). There are four (4) tests within the DAT: Survey of Natural Science Test; Perceptual Ability Test; Reading Comprehension Test; and Quantitative Reasoning Test. There are also three (3) optional sections in the DAT: Optional Tutorial prior to the Survey of Natural Science Test; an Optional Break between the end of the Perceptual Ability Test and the beginning of the Reading Comprehension Test; and an Optional Post Test Survey at the conclusion of the Quantitative Reasoning Test.

The test is designed to be taken after having taken most prerequisites, and is recommended to be taken well before the time for application and interviewing - preferably the spring before the year you expect to matriculate. Although dental schools prefer that DAT scores be available when students apply for admission, you should not delay submission of your application simply because the DAT scores are not yet in. Students should strive to take the DAT no later than June of the year they apply. For more information about the DAT, visit [http://www.ada.org/sections/educationAndCareers/pdfs/dat\\_examinee\\_guide.pdf](http://www.ada.org/sections/educationAndCareers/pdfs/dat_examinee_guide.pdf).

#### ADMISSION

Many dental schools accept students after three or more years of undergraduate courses. However, the Council on Dental Education recommends a baccalaureate degree prior to dental school matriculation. When selecting students, schools consider scores earned on the DAT, the applicants' grade point average, and information gathered through recommendations and interviews. Students are encouraged to explore their interests and gain an understanding via exposure or experience in the field of dentistry. For more specific admissions information, students should inquire to individual schools. A list of Dental Schools can be found at <http://www.adea.org/publications/library/ForStudents/Pages/default.aspx>

#### PREPARATION COURSEWORK

\*It is important to remember that different schools may require different coursework and strongly recommend other coursework. It is up to you to find out the specific requirements for the schools that you are interested in.

- One year of **BIOLOGY** with lab
  - Taking the Life Sciences series 1-4 can satisfy this. It is recommended that you take this entire series to prepare for Survey of Natural Science test on the DAT. Upper division course work in the life sciences, such as in Physiology or Histology, will also help on the DAT.
- Two years of **CHEMISTRY** (through Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry)
  - The Chemistry 14-series (through 14D) or the 20/30 series (through 30C) and Biochemistry 153A & 153L can satisfy this requirement. It is recommended that you take this entire series to prepare for Survey of Natural Science test on the DAT. It should be noted that the Chemistry 20/30-series is actually the equivalent of two and

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a half years, due to the curriculum of each series taught at a different pace. Some dental schools may require an additional quarter of a lower division organic chemistry lab (Chemistry 30CL). Check with individual schools for specific requirements.

- One year of **PHYSICS**
  - Taking the Physics series 6ABC or 6AH, BH, CH or 1ABC, 4AL, 4BL can satisfy this. One year with labs is generally required which is included in any of the series. Trigonometry-based physics can also satisfy this requirement, but UCLA only offers calculus-based courses and these are required for the various science majors.
- One year of **MATH**
  - Taking Math 3ABC or Math 31AB, 32A can satisfy this. This is your preparation for calculus-based physics. Several schools require one year of college level math. For other schools, this requirement is strongly recommended, especially as preparation for physics. One year of math can include statistics (see below) and computer programming classes (PIC 10A, 10B, 10C).
- **STATISTICS**
  - Taking Statistics 10, M11, M12, 13, Biostatistics or Biomath, Psychology 100A\* One quarter of statistics is required for some schools including UCLA and strongly recommended for others. \*Check with individual schools for acceptability of classes offered outside of the Statistics department.
- One year of **ENGLISH**
  - One year of college level literature and composition. Writing I and Writing II courses, select general education literature courses, and any upper division English literature or English Composition courses will satisfy this requirement. Please see the “English requirement for health professions schools” sheet for a complete list of suggested courses. These courses will prepare you for the Reading Comprehension Test of the DAT. A list of English courses that will satisfy this requirement can be found at: <http://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/GradProfSchCounseling/PreHealthCareerServices/EnglishRequirement.aspx>
- One course in **PSYCHOLOGY**
  - Psychology 10 (or the equivalent). One course in this area is sufficient, but more coursework is helpful.

The following course work is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** for most dental schools:

- Additional **BIOLOGY** courses
  - Physiology (Phy Sci 166, 3, 5, 111A-C), anatomy (Phy Sci 13, 107 Neurosci M102), microbiology (MIMG 101/100L or some schools will also accept MIMG 102/103L), embryology (MCD Bio 138), histology (EE Biol 157), and cellular biology (any upper division cell biology class will work for most schools) are all recommended. Check with individual department counselors for availability of upper division courses.
- One year of **MATH**
  - Taking Math 3ABC or Math 31AB, 32A can satisfy this. This is your preparation for calculus-based physics. These courses will prepare you for the Quantitative Reasoning section of the DAT.
- **STATISTICS**
  - Statistics 10, M11, M12, 13, Biostatistics or Biomath, Psychology 100A (Check with individual schools for acceptability of classes offered outside of the Statistics department). These courses will prepare you for the Quantitative Reasoning section of the DAT.

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- Knowledge and cultural competency of at least one **FOREIGN LANGUAGE**
  - This need not have been taken at the college level. If your future plans include working in California or the southwestern states, Spanish is highly valued and somewhat expected.
- **HUMANITIES** and **SOCIAL SCIENCE** courses
  - The non-science GPA is an important component of your overall academic record and liberal arts education. Courses in the following can enhance your communication skills and overall understanding of the world: Anthropology, Communication Studies, Economics, any ethnic studies area (e.g. Women's Studies, LGBT Studies, Afro-American Studies, Chicana/Chicano Studies, Near Eastern Studies), Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Speech to name a few. It is important to look at individual school sites to find if they recommend any courses in particular.
- **COMPUTER SKILLS** are highly recommended.
  - Many programs have incorporated computers and electronic media into their curriculum. It is not necessary to take computer courses if you feel you have sufficient knowledge. Several programs are strongly recommending that students own a computer. Other programs have indicated that students will soon have to purchase a computer as part of the requirements of their program.

***UCLA is not responsible for coursework being accepted by recipient schools.***

An applicant's character, personal integrity and leadership abilities are other factors considered by dental schools to determine if you have a future in dentistry and health care. To develop these aspects of your personality, consider volunteering at a local hospital or clinic to gain practical experience in the health professions. In addition, a well-rounded sample of extracurricular activities or work experiences, both related and unrelated to medicine such as community service and involvement, will help broaden an applicant's knowledge and development:

- ✓ **Community service.** This is an indication of your commitment to helping others. Your community service doesn't have to be through UCLA; it can be in your home community, through a church group, etc., but your record of service should show a genuine commitment.
- ✓ **Experience in a health care setting.** This is to show that you have a realistic idea of what being a dentist is about.
- ✓ **Research.** Some admission committees don't consider this absolutely necessary, but most schools will expect you to have done research if you were an undergraduate at UCLA. You needn't have earned units for it, but be prepared to answer a few questions about your research at your med school interviews. There is no minimum number of quarters of research involvement. Consult the Life and Physical Sciences Undergraduate Research Center for help in choosing a sponsor or enrolling in SRP (Student Research Program).

### **USEFUL WEBSITES**

UCLA Career Center – Pre-Health Career Services Dentistry:

<http://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/GradProfSchCounseling/PreHealthCareerServices/Dentistry.aspx>

American Dental Education Association: <http://www.adea.org/Pages/default.aspx>

ADEA Dental Education Pathways:

[http://www.adea.org/dental\\_education\\_pathways/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/Pages/default.aspx)

American Dental Association: <http://www.ada.org/index.aspx>

ADA – For Current and Future Dental Students: <http://www.ada.org/96.aspx>

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UCLA Pre-Dental Student Outreach Program:

<http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/sgweb/details.asp?keyword=pre-dental&search=search&ORGID=21>

The Student Doctor Network: <http://www.studentdoctor.net/>

Information about the DAT: <http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx>