



# Pre-Dental Advising Sheet

Admission to dental school is highly competitive. Generally speaking, a degree in dentistry requires four academic years of study. The first two years usually cover the basic sciences and the last two years, diagnosing oral disease, surgery, and clinical study. At the completion of the curriculum, students are awarded either a DMD (Doctor of Dental Medicine) or DDS (Doctor of Dental Surgery) degree.

## Choosing an Undergraduate Major

"Pre-dental" is **not** a major at universities. You should give careful consideration to your choice of major and select an area of study that interests you. Most dental schools do not require a specific degree in order to apply. Instead, they are looking for a well-rounded applicant who does well in the dental school admissions requirements. Students should select an appropriate major that could lead to an alternative career, if necessary. The majority of dental students possess a bachelor's degree before they enter dental school. Some have graduate degrees. A few dental schools will admit a few students through early admissions programs with two to three years of undergraduate preparation. However, you should plan to earn your bachelor's degree before starting dental school.

Students applying to dental school need to plan carefully and complete not only the dental school admissions requirements, but also the requirements for their undergraduate major and the general education required by the undergraduate transfer institution.

## Dental School Selection Criteria

- Completion of the prerequisite coursework.
- **Bachelor's Degree** or 3 or more years of undergraduate coursework.
- **GPA** in terms of overall college grades and science grades are a major factor in the selection process. For most dental schools, the average "competitive" applicant has a cumulative grade point average of above a 3.4.
- Score on the Dental Admissions Test (DAT). This computerized test measures general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information and perceptual ability.
- **Community service/leadership** There are endless options for community service work, College clubs and service organizations, Church involvement, Community centers, Soup kitchens, Homeless shelters but you should find a project that fulfills you and motivates you to continue your work in the community. Your passion for community service will be clear to admissions officers if you genuinely enjoy what you are doing, and this will ultimately help your application to dental school.
- **Letters of recommendation** from science faculty, non-science faculty, and a supervisor from relevant clinical experience, research, or relevant work.
- **Interviews** with faculty from the institutions you apply to.

### Suggested courses for most Dental School:

One Year of General Biology with Lab

One Year of General Chemistry with Lab

One Year of Organic Chemistry with Lab

One Year of Physics with Lab

One or more courses in Biochemistry

One Year of English (Comp. and Lit.)

Recommended (required at some schools):

One year of Math (Calculus)

One or more courses in Psychology

One course in Statistics

### Suggested GCC courses:

BIOL 101 and 102

CHEM 101 and 102

CHEM 105 and 106

PHYS 105 and 106 or PHYS 101, 102, 103

ENGL 101, 102 or 104

MATH 103, 104

PSYCH 101

MATH 136

**Note: All courses should be taken for a letter grade, not Credit/No Credit.**

**Salary Information**

In 2013, the California average annual wage was \$147,750 for dentists ([www.cacareerzone.com](http://www.cacareerzone.com)). The median is the point at which half of the workers earn more and half earn less.

**Recommended Websites**

American Dental Education Association	<a href="http://www.adea.org">www.adea.org</a>
American Dental Association	<a href="http://ada.org">http://ada.org</a>
American Student Dental Association	<a href="http://www.asdanet.org">www.asdanet.org</a>
Dental Admission Test	<a href="http://www.scholarware.com">www.scholarware.com</a>
ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools	<a href="http://www.adea.org/officialguide/">http://www.adea.org/officialguide/</a>

**Select Dental School Websites**

Loma Linda University	<a href="http://www.llu.edu/llu/dentistry">www.llu.edu/llu/dentistry</a>
UCLA School of Dentistry	<a href="http://www.dent.ucla.edu">www.dent.ucla.edu</a>
UC San Francisco	<a href="http://dentistry.ucsf.edu">http://dentistry.ucsf.edu</a>
University of Pacific	<a href="http://dental.pacific.edu">http://dental.pacific.edu</a>
USC School of Dentistry	<a href="http://dentistry.usc.edu">http://dentistry.usc.edu</a>

**Preparation Programs**

Summer Medical and Dental Education Prep	<a href="http://www.smdep.org">www.smdep.org</a>
UCLA PREP	<a href="http://www.medstudent.ucla.edu/offices/aeo/prep.cfm">www.medstudent.ucla.edu/offices/aeo/prep.cfm</a>
UCLA Pre-Dental Program	<a href="http://www.dentistry.ucla.edu/continuing-education/coursesfor-pre-dental-students">www.dentistry.ucla.edu/continuing-education/coursesfor-pre-dental-students</a>