

WHAT IS A DENTIST?

Dentists diagnose, prevent, and treat problems with teeth or mouth tissue. They also administer anesthetics and write prescriptions for antibiotics and other medications.

PREREQUISITES:

NOTE: EACH DENTAL SCHOOL ESTABLISHES ITS OWN SET OF PREREQUISITES. CHECK THE WEBSITES OF THE SCHOOLS THAT YOU ARE MOST INTERESTED IN TO OBTAIN A CURRENT LIST OF UNDERGRADUATE REQUIREMENTS.

Listed below are the courses at the University of Dubuque that students must complete to meet the University of Iowa's School of Dentistry prerequisite course requirements for admission.	
Physics (8 Credits)	PHY 151 (MATH 112 is a prerequisite for this course.) and PHY 152
Math	MATH 112 and/or 150
Chemistry (8 Credits)	CHM 111 (MATH 112 is a prerequisite for this course.) and CHM 112
Organic Chemistry (8 Credits)	CHM 221 (CHM 112 is a prerequisite for this course.) and CHM 222 (CHM 221 is a prerequisite for this course.)
Biochemistry I (3 Credits)	CHM 331 (CHM 222 is a prerequisite for this course.)
Biological Sciences (8 Credits)	May be satisfied by a one-year course in general biology or BIO 135 General Zoology and BIO 235 Cell Biology. Upper-level courses in gross anatomy or physiology (BIO 211) would be beneficial as well.
English	ENG 101, RES 104 and ENG 112 (Or other Literature course)
<i>If you choose not to major in one of the natural sciences, you may wish to include one or two additional science electives in your program of study if your schedule permits.</i>	

EXAM AND GPA:

The Dental Admission Test (DAT) is a standardized examination that consists of four multiple-choice sections that include natural sciences, perceptual ability, reading comprehension, and quantitative reasoning. The DAT is designed to measure general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information, and perceptual ability. It is required by all of the American dental schools. It tests your knowledge of science from the required coursework and, therefore, should not be taken until those courses are virtually complete. The months immediately following your completion of the course requirements is the best time to take the DAT. This may be the spring of junior year, the summer after sophomore year, or anytime during senior year or beyond; it will depend on your individual timeline. The DAT is a knowledge-based examination. To do well, you will need both strong test-taking skills and a thorough knowledge of the material covered by the exam. How you prepare is up to you. Your DAT score is good for three years at most dental schools, so taking the test in the spring of junior year does not necessarily mean that you must enter dental school right after college graduation.

Grade Point Average (GPA): Dental schools expect academic excellence. Good grades- typically an undergraduate GPA of 3.5 or better is required to be competitive. In addition, most programs require that all prerequisite courses must be passed with a "C-" or better.

TIMELINE:

Freshman Year:

- Connect with a Health Professions Advisor or Faculty Member.
- Start taking basic sciences (See chart above).
- Think about possible majors (Study what you love).
- Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community).
- Start shadowing
- Join some student organizations.

Sophomore Year:

- Continue with next sequence of courses.
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities (shadowing, volunteer, etc).
- Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations.
- Begin research on professional schools, their requirements, and assess your competitiveness.
- Investigate DAT preparation options.
- Identify programs you are interested in.
- **BOTTOM LINE:** Keep working on the things you established your first year!!

Junior Year:

- Talk to Health Professions advisor or faculty member to narrow program options and assess competitiveness (Fall semester).
- Register for the DAT (Fall Semester).
- Study for DAT and take it (Spring/Summer).
- Identify 3-4 individuals to write letters of recommendation (Spring Semester).
- Complete Application (AADSAS) (Spring Semester-Summer).
- Schedule a mock interview with Career Services.
- Keep working on the things you have established thus far.

Senior Year:

- Submit Application(s) if you haven't already (Fall semester).
- Wait to be contacted for interviews from dental schools.
- Continue with activities and professional experiences/shadowing.
- Talk with an advisor about Plan B if necessary.
- Finish degree requirements and GRADUATE!

RESOURCES:

American Dental Education Association [Click Here](#)

American Dental Association [Click Here](#)

ADA Guide to the DAT [Click Here](#)

The University of Iowa College of Dentistry [Click Here](#)