

DENTISTRY

Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)



PROFESSION OVERVIEW

Dentists examine, diagnose, and treat diseases, injuries, and malformations of teeth and gums. May treat diseases affecting oral hygiene and provide preventive care.



LENGTH OF PROGRAM (depending on specialty)

- **Dental School:** Four Years
- Specialties (e.g. orthodontics) require additional education after dental school is complete

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The most common course prerequisites for students applying to dental schools are listed below. However, most programs will require additional coursework. Check individual dental school websites or the ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools; www.adea.org **Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the applicant to know the exact requirements and deadlines for each school to which they apply.**

- **One year of general biology*** BIOL 101/BIOL 102 or BIOL 107/108
- **One year of general chemistry** CHEM 201/CHEM 202
- **One year of organic chemistry** CHEM 311/312
- **One year of physics** PHYS 101/102 or PHYS 105/106
- **One semester of biochemistry** BIOL 317 or CHEM 414
- **One year of English**

Most dental schools strongly recommend: cell biology, genetics, math (recommend through

- **Math 176; Calculus I), statistics, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Immunology, Histology**

**Only Biology majors interested in pursuing a career in dentistry should take BIOL 101/102; all other majors should take BIOL 107/108.*

Students considering dental school are strongly encouraged to major in biology. The strongest candidates have a significant number of rigorous science courses.

There are three dental schools in Illinois: Southern Illinois University, University of Illinois at Chicago and Midwestern University.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Dental schools look for well-rounded applicants. The following list identifies criteria considered during the application process. Check the **ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools** for average grade point average (GPA) & Dental Admission Test (DAT) scores for programs of the interest; www.adea.org.

• Overall and science GPA

• Extracurricular activities

• Research experiences

• Leadership experiences

• Interview

• DAT scores

• Dentistry-related experiences

• Community service

• Personal statement

• Letters of evaluation (often including a letter from a

APPLICATION TIMELINE

The application timeline is unique depending on when you are prepared and ready to pursue dental school. If you plan to apply directly after graduating from IWU, you will want to complete the prerequisite courses by the end of your junior year and apply during the summer before senior year. If you choose to take a gap year, you should complete your prerequisites by the end of your senior year and then apply the summer after graduation OR when you are ready.

Students today are often waiting a year or more after graduation before applying to a health professions school. This does not put the applicant at a disadvantage. Many programs look favorably upon applicants who have taken an extra year or two to mature and gain work experience, and who can make a better decision regarding a career in a health profession; see **“Make the Most of Your Gap Year”** (<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/making-most-your-gap-year/>).

APPLICATION SERVICE

The American Association of Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS) is the centralized dental school application processing service. Most U.S. dental schools use AADSAS as the primary application method. Texas Medical and Dental Schools use the TMSAS.

- American Association of Dental Schools Applications ([AADSAS](#))
- Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (www.tmdsas.com)

STANDARDIZED TEST

The Dental Admission Test (DAT) is a prerequisite for admission to all dental schools.

- Take after general biology, all chemistry and physics courses are completed
- Length approximately 5 hours
- **Four sections:** Survey of the Natural Sciences (Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry), Perceptual Ability, Reading Comprehension and Quantitative Reasoning
- Receive scores immediately
- Scores are scaled (1-30) in each of the following areas: Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Quantitative Reason, Reading Comprehension, Perceptual Ability and Total Science (standard scores from Biology, General Chemistry and Organic Chemistry)
- Academic Average (average of Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry Quantitative Reason)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Dental Association ([ADA](#); www.ada.org)
- American Dental Education Association ([ADEA](#); www.adea.org)
- American Student Dental Association ([ASDA](#); www.asdanet.org)
- Explore Health Careers (<https://explorehealthcareers.org/>)
- Go Dental (<http://www.adea.org/GoDental/>)
- Summer Health Professions Education Program (<http://www.shpep.org/>)



Don't forget to check out **Handshake!**

Handshake is your one-stop source for internship and job postings, campus recruiting, career fairs, and career center resources. Once you're on the login page, enter your iwu.edu email address and click next. If you are already in the system, then you can just select "IWU Single Sign-on" and enter your IWU net-ID and password.

Please visit www.iwu.edu/career-center/handshake for more information on Handshake.