Choosing a Career in Dentistry
If you are thinking about a health science career, consider dentistry—a field offering many options for a rewarding and challenging career. A dentist can be an independent practitioner, work in a group practice, or in a public or private agency. You can practice general dentistry, specialize, or focus on research and/or education.

Becoming a Dentist
The first step toward a dental career is to complete at least three years in college (at least 87 semester or 130 quarter credits of pre-professional coursework). Most pre-dental students work toward a baccalaureate degree while completing pre-dental requirements.

Your undergraduate courses will include English, biology, chemistry, biochemistry, math, psychology, and physics, as well as elective liberal arts classes. (See reverse side of this brochure for U of MN semester based requirements.)

Majors
"Pre-dentistry" is not an academic major. There is no preferred major for pre-dental students. Your major should be one that interests you and would provide an acceptable alternative if you are not admitted to dental school. You must declare your major by the time you have 60 credits.

Early Admission
The U of M School of Dentistry offers an early admission program for prospective applicants. Toward the end of sophomore year, after completing the basic sequences in biology and general and organic chemistry, persons are encouraged to meet with the School of Dentistry Enrollment Management staff to plan their prerequisite and elective coursework. At that time, a provisional acceptance may be granted to qualified applicants for the appropriate entering class. Qualified applicants must meet specific criteria and maintain a minimum 3.2 overall and 3.0 science GPA while completing specific prerequisite and elective courses. Individuals must also take the Dental Admission Test (DAT) and score at or above the national average. For further details, contact the School of Dentistry, Office of Enrollment Management, (612) 624-7149.

The Dental Admission Test (DAT)
The DAT is required for admission to all U.S. dental schools. Applicants to the U of MN must take the DAT by fall, one year prior to their expected matriculation into the program. The computerized test is available at Prometric Testing Centers. Scores must be received by December 1, 2004.

You must register to take the test at least a month prior to the test date. The fee is $165. Test results will be sent to you and five designated schools. There is an additional charge of $10 per report for more than five test reports, if the request is made at the time of application to the DAT.

The DAT has four categories: (1) natural science, which includes biology, general and organic chemistry; (2) reading comprehension; (3) quantitative reasoning; and (4) perceptual ability, which includes two- and three-dimensional problem solving. Scores for each of the subtests should be at or above the national average.

Test preparation materials are available at the School of Dentistry.

Applying to Dental School
The majority of U.S. dental schools, including the U of MN School of Dentistry, use AADSAS, a centralized application service. You must use an official AADSAS application if you apply to an AADSAS school. The AADSAS fee is $195 for the first school and $60 for each additional school. The application is available online after June 1 at www.aades.org.

On the AADSAS application you must list courses completed, write a brief statement about your interest in dentistry, and designate the schools to which you are applying.

DAT scores are not sent to AADSAS but go directly to your designated school.

AADSAS schools may require you to complete a supplementary application and charge an additional application fee. The U of MN School of Dentistry supplemental application is located online at www.dentistry.umn.edu.

To be considered for admission to the U of MN School of Dentistry, AADSAS applications must be postmarked by December 1, 2004. Supplemental materials must be postmarked by January 1, 2005.

The admissions committee at the U of MN begins reviewing applications in early fall. Most candidates are notified of their acceptance or rejection between December and June. The School of Dentistry recommends applying early—by September 1, 2004.

Admission Criteria for the U of MN

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: The Admission Committee looks for proof that you can succeed in dental school. While a strong grade point average (GPA) is convincing (accepted students average about 3.5), other factors may be taken into account—improvement in academic performance, amount and difficulty of courses taken and completed each semester, and outside responsibilities you may have had while going to school. All required courses must be completed before enrollment. A pattern of repeated withdrawals or incompletes may be seen as an indication of an inability to carry a heavy academic load.

Repeating courses to improve grades is not recommended but may be wise if you need to improve your knowledge before continuing a course sequence or if you took required science courses more than five years ago. Grades from repeated courses are averaged together.

DAT SCORES: To be competitive, your overall score should be at or above the national average, including each of the subscores. However, lower scores on one or two of the subscores may not eliminate you if they are balanced by high scores on some of the other subscores.

RESIDENCE: While all qualified candidates are considered, Minnesota residents are given preference. In addition, students from Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Manitoba, Canada are given special consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Three letters of recommendation must be included with your AADSAS application, by people who have known you well within the past four years. One recommender should be an employer; the other two must be from science faculty.

INTEREST IN/KNOWLEDGE OF DENTISTRY: This information is gleaned from sources like your personal statement on the AADSAS application and recommendation letters. Experiences in dental settings are important, giving you an opportunity to see or participate in patient care. Direct observation of patient care is required. For assistance in finding a practice in which to observe, contact the U of MN School of Dentistry.

HUMAN SERVICE EXPERIENCE: Experience in working closely with people in need on a one-to-one basis (e.g., as youth counselor, hospital orderly, big brother/sister) is important. Investigate health science and community service opportunities at the Career and Community Learning Center web site: www.cclc.umn.edu.

FINE DEXTERITY SKILLS: The U of MN School of Dentistry Admissions Committee looks favorable on experiences giving evidence of fine manual dexterity (e.g., sculpturing, drawing, sewing, playing the piano, building models).

OTHER PERSONAL FACTORS: communication skills, extracurricular activities, etc.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY: The test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) is required of all applicants who are non-native speakers of English. The TOEFL exam must include the Test of Written English (TWE). Applicants must have a minimum overall TOEFL score of 240 with a 21 on Part 1 Oral Comprehension and a 5 on the TWE. Applicants taking the MELAB must score at least 85 with a mean score of 85 in Part II, Listening. The test must have been administered not more than two years prior to applying to dental school.

PERSONAL INTERVIEW: Invitations for an interview/visit are extended to applicants based on the competitive nature of their applications. By interviewing qualified applicants, the Admissions Committee gains further information on the following attributes which contribute to students’ success in the program and career: communication skills, maturity, motivation for dentistry, responsibility, social awareness, and empathy.

Contribution to Diversity
The School of Dentistry encourages applicants to demonstrate through experiences and then, in writing, their interest and commitment to diversity.

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Courses Required for Admission to the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry

**Requirement**

**U of MN Courses Meeting Requirements**

**ENGLISH**
8 semester credits: 2 composition and 1 speech course preferred; or 1 composition, 1 speech course, and 1 additional course in either literature or humanities that has a composition component

EngC1011, EngC3027 (or upper level writing intensive course), and one additional course suggested (speech preferred)

**MATH**
3 semester credits: 1 semester of college algebra or precalculus by college credit or validation OR 1 semester of computer science or statistics

Math 1031 or 1051; Stat 3011. Science majors should take Math 1271/72 (calculus)

**CHEMISTRY**
8 semester credits of general chemistry: 2 semesters of inorganic chemistry with labs;
8-9 semester credits of organic chemistry: 2 semesters of organic chemistry with labs:

Chem 1021 and 1022

**PHYSICS**
8 semester credits: 2 semesters with labs

Phys 1101 and 1102 (Biology majors should take 1201 and 1202, or Phys 1301 and 1302 as other science majors require.)

**BIOLOGY**
8 semester credits: 2 semesters with labs

Biol 1009 plus 3211 and 2005 OR Biol 1001 and 1002 plus 3211 and 2005

**BIOCHEMISTRY**
3 semester credits: at least 1 course

BioC 3021 or BioC4001 or BioC4331
BioC 4025 recommended laboratory, if desired

**PSYCHOLOGY**
3 semester credits: at least 1 course

Psy 1001, CPsy 2301, CPsy 3301 or Mgmt 4002

**ELECTIVE COLLEGE COURSES**

Elective courses should be selected to achieve as broad and liberal an education as possible. Consult a planning sheet for a list of preferred electives.

*All required courses should be taken A/F. S/N grading should be limited to 15% of four years of coursework or 10% of three years. See planning sheet for University of Minnesota semester based requirements.

**USEFUL RESOURCES**

ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools— an annual publication with information about each U.S. and Canadian school and a profile of each year’s entering class.

ISEEK—occupational information about most health fields in the state and where training is available [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org).

**TEST PREPARATION MATERIALS**

Kaplan Test Preparation— a company that provides many options for preparing for the DAT: books, CD-ROM, classroom instruction, and tutors. [www.kaplen.com](http://www.kaplen.com).

**SELECTED WEB SITES**

American Dental Education Association [www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org)

American Dental Association [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)

University of Minnesota School of Dentistry [www.dentistry.umn.edu](http://www.dentistry.umn.edu)

Dental Admissions Test [www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/index.asp](http://www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/index.asp)

TOEFL—Test of English as a Foreign Language [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org)

**INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMS**

- Dental Career Day (offered biennially)
- Applying to Dental School (fall & spring)

**TIMETABLE**

Since the decision to enter dentistry occurs at a variety of points in an individual's life, pre-dental students often follow different timetables in preparing for dental school. The following is one example, but consult your adviser to tailor a plan for your specific situation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begin biology and composition. Complete organic chemisty and math or related subject</td>
<td>Complete biology, organic chemistry, and psychology. Register for DAT 8 organic chemistry and biology will be completed by end of spring semester, otherwise, take in the fall</td>
<td>Complete physics, composition, humanities and speech courses. Threeyear applicants initiate application process (as early as May 15 before third year begins)</td>
<td>Complete remaining required courses and preferred electives. Fouryear applicants initiate application process (as early as May 15 before fourth year begins)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk with dental professionals and explore dentistry through observation and participation in patient care</td>
<td>Continue to explore dentistry</td>
<td>Do volunteer work</td>
<td>Do volunteer work</td>
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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities and employment without regard to race, religion, color, gender, national origin, handicap, age, veteran status, or sexual orientation.