PREPARING FOR DENTAL SCHOOL: 
A GUIDE FOR FRESHMEN AND 
SOPHOMORES 

2013-2014
The Health Professions and Prelaw Center (HPPLC) advises freshmen through graduate students who are preparing for careers in dentistry. Admission to dental school is competitive, and it is important for you to have correct and up-to-date information. Read this document carefully, attend appropriate meetings, and use the resources in the HPPLC office.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY

The minimum requirements for the Indiana University School of Dentistry are listed below. In order to enhance performance in dental school, the predental student frequently takes more than the minimum science requirements.

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<th>IU SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>IU BLOOMINGTON COURSE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ENGLISH:</strong></td>
<td>One semester of English composition</td>
<td>ENG-W 131 or 170²</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BIOLOGY OR ZOOLOGY (WITH LAB):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 8 semester hours</td>
<td>BIOL-L 111, 112, and 113 or BIOL-L 112, 113 and 211</td>
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<td><strong>ANATOMY (WITH LAB):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 4 semester hours</td>
<td>ANAT-A 215³</td>
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<td><strong>PHYSIOLOGY (LAB NOT REQUIRED):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 3 semester hours</td>
<td>PHSL-P 214,³ PHSL-P 215,³ BIOL-P 451,³ or ANAT-A 464³</td>
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<td><strong>GENERAL PHYSICS (WITH LAB):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 8 semester hours</td>
<td>PHYS-P 201 and 202 or P 221 and P 222</td>
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<td><strong>GENERAL/INORGANIC CHEMISTRY (WITH LAB):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 8 semester hours in major level classes.</td>
<td>CHEM-C 117/127 and CHEM-N 330⁵</td>
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<td><strong>ORGANIC CHEMISTRY (WITH LAB):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 4 semester hours</td>
<td>CHEM-C 341⁶ and 343</td>
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<td><strong>BIOCHEMISTRY (LAB NOT REQUIRED):</strong></td>
<td>Minimum of 3 semester hours</td>
<td>CHEM-C 483 or 484⁷</td>
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<td><strong>PSYCHOLOGY:</strong></td>
<td>One semester</td>
<td>PSY-P 101 or higher</td>
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1 For specific requirements of other schools to which you expect to apply, consult the Official Guide to Dental Schools in the HPPLC office early in your college years.
2 Please note that an exemption from a degree requirement, such as composition, is not equivalent to credit and cannot be used to fulfill the English requirement. Other writing courses above the level of English Composition may be substituted, including courses that meet intensive writing requirements.
3 Offered through Medical Sciences. See course descriptions under the Biology section in the College of Arts and Sciences Bulletin.
4 Preferred.
5 IU School of Dentistry will accept CHEM-C 118 in place of CHEM-N 330. However, based upon the recommendations of the IUB Department of Chemistry, IU School of Dentistry encourages IUB predental students to take CHEM-N 330 rather than CHEM-C 118. Please be aware that many dental schools require two semesters of organic chemistry.
6 Predental students should not enroll in the alternate organic chemistry course CHEM-R 340. CHEM-R 340 will not be accepted to meet the admission requirements of the IU Dental School.
7 BIOL-T 440 or BIOL-M 350 may be substituted. CHEM-C 342 is a prerequisite for CHEM-C 483, CHEM-C 484 and BIOL-T 440.
8 Prerequisites for BIOL-M 350 are BIOL-M 250, BIOL-M 255, and CHEM-C 341.

Required science courses (except biochemistry and physiology) must include laboratories. Students may be admitted with a minimum of 90 semester hours of undergraduate work, preferably with an "A-" average or better, although most students complete an undergraduate degree prior to matriculation. Additional useful sciences include molecular biology, cell biology, microbiology, genetics, endocrinology, and histology. Additional recommended courses include social and behavioral sciences, medical terminology, Spanish, speech, and art (ceramics, jewelry, three dimensional design) or music. It is very important that you engage in specific activities through which you can develop your manual dexterity skills (such as playing a musical instrument or doing three-dimensional artwork).
Students interested in the seven year B.S./D.D.S. program should consult with a pre-dental advisor in the Health Professions & Prelaw Center early. The dental degree is granted by the IU dental school, and the undergraduate B.S. degree is granted by the Biology Department, I.U. Bloomington.

Please consult the publication *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*, available in the Health Professions and Prelaw Center, for information on the requirements for other schools.

Please note: Students should be aware that some health professions programs will not accept Advanced Placement credit or credit-by-examination towards meeting admission requirements, or accept such credit only under restricted circumstances. Students should also be aware that receiving an exemption from a degree requirement is not generally considered equivalent to Advanced Placement credit, credit-by-examination, or credit from coursework.

**MAJOR**

Indiana University Bloomington does not offer a "predental major," and dental schools do not have a preference for any specific major. There may be people who suggest that there is a "preferred" major. Our information that there is not a "better" major comes from dental school admissions officers – the people who make the admissions decisions. The Indiana University School of Dentistry prefers students who have a broad education which includes strengths in the humanities and the social sciences as well as the required physical and biological sciences. You should consider a major which you enjoy, in which you perform well, and one that might serve as a basis for graduate work or a different career path if you decide not to attend dental school. If you decide to major in a science area, you should consider minoring in a humanities or social science field. If you decide to major in a nonscience area, you should consider minorin in biology and chemistry. Facility in a second language is strongly recommended.

**FACTORS IN ADMISSION**

There is no set formula for admission to dental schools. Schools and committees vary in their preferences. Grades in college courses (science courses in particular), Dental Admission Test scores, academic letters of evaluation (recommendation letters), the personal interview, and individual character and personality all can be important. It should be noted that a low GPA and DAT cannot be overcome by an excellent interview; however, a low grade or one semester of poor grades will probably not keep a good candidate out of most dental schools. *Admissions committees also consider it very important that you have engaged in some type of activity to develop your manual dexterity skills.* Dental schools are also keenly interested in candidates who have actively investigated the dental profession. Applicants must observe a minimum of 40 hours with general dentists.

**DENTAL ADMISSION TEST**

The Dental Admission Test (DAT) is an exam conducted by the American Dental Association and is designed to assess academic ability, comprehension of scientific information, and perceptual ability. Information about the test and application may be obtained at the ADA website at www.ada.org. The test is administered by computer at Prometric Testing Centers throughout the country.

Students should become acquainted with the content of the test early in their undergraduate years. Your coursework in biology, general/inorganic chemistry, and organic chemistry will provide important preparation for the DAT exam. If you are prepared and have completed coursework in these areas, it is recommended that you study and take the DAT during the summer after your sophomore year. Physics is not covered on the DAT.
ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

As part of your application for dental school you will be required to submit academic evaluations written by your professors. Evaluations are usually requested from professors in the sophomore and junior years, and at the conclusion of the class, rather than a year later. If you have had particularly noteworthy achievements in a freshman class, these too may contribute to a valuable evaluation. HPPLC offers a recommendation service that allows you to ask your professors to mail evaluations to our office, where we will keep them on file so that you can later request that we send them to the dental schools at the time you are submitting applications. **We strongly urge enrollment in some small size or seminar type classes in which you work closely with your instructors. Make yourself known to professors during their office hours. Taking more than one small class from an instructor may be helpful. A small upper level class in which you have demonstrated exemplary work may be ideal for obtaining a strong evaluation.** At least three academic letters of evaluation must be received by IUSD. Two of the three academic letters must be from science professors. Personal evaluations are not required by the IU dental school, but they can be helpful if they address specific ways in which you have prepared for dental school, such as through gaining exposure to dentistry, developing manual dexterity, or building interpersonal skills through community service.

Requirements for recommendations vary from school to school. You should check the websites of the individual dental schools where you hope to apply.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What are my chances of being accepted at the Indiana University School of Dentistry?**

Many state-supported schools show preference to their own state residents, and so students often have the best chance for acceptance at dental schools in the state where they are residents. The percentage of acceptance for Indiana residents is considerably higher at the Indiana University School of Dentistry than for out-of-state residents. Preference is given to candidates with stronger GPA's. For the entering class in 2012, 77 of the 104 matriculants to the Indiana University School of Dentistry were Indiana residents. The suggested **minimum** overall grade-point average (GPA) and science GPA is 3.3 on a 4.0 scale.

**How important are my GPA and DAT scores for admission?**

One of the most important criteria used by the Indiana University School of Dentistry for selection is your science GPA, followed by your overall GPA and DAT scores. **Average GPA's** for the 2012 entering class at the IU School of Dentistry are: science GPA 3.45, overall GPA 3.53. Note these scores represent the mean. Accepted students' GPAs range above and below. Interest in dentistry has increased sharply over the past years. It is increasingly important to be well prepared with a clear understanding of the profession based on extensive observation in addition to good DAT scores and GPA.

**How many students apply to the Indiana University School of Dentistry? How many are admitted each year?**

These statistics are for the class matriculating in 2012:

| Total applicants: 1662 | Indiana resident applicants: 233 | Non-resident applicants: 1429 |
| Size of entering class: 104 | Indiana resident matriculants: 77 | Non-resident matriculants: 27 |

**What are my chances for admission after three years of preparation?**

Students are eligible for admission to the Indiana University School of Dentistry after three years, although preference is given to students with four or more years and to those who will complete degrees. For the 2012 entering class at the IU School of Dentistry, approximately 81 had completed a B.A. or B.S. degree, and 23 had completed masters degrees.
Is participation in extracurricular activities required?

Dental schools prefer students with interests and experiences beyond academics; however, such activities should not interfere with academic performance. Students ask if there are preferred activities. There is no prescribed list of activities. Enthusiastic participation (commitment) rather than “joining” or “membership” is critical. Some students are heavily committed to service organizations in the community. Some are involved in undergraduate research. Others work many hours to support their educations. Perhaps one of the keys is your ability at the time of your application to speak with conviction and pride about what you accomplished in your undergraduate education, in the classroom, and beyond.

I AM NOT FROM INDIANA. HOW CAN I LEARN ABOUT OTHER DENTAL SCHOOLS AND THEIR ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS?

Consult the publication *Official Guide to Dental Schools*, available at the front desk of the Health Professions and Prelaw Center. Information is also available through the website of each dental school. You may link to them through the following website: [www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org). Requirements for different schools differ as do admissions profiles.

HOW CAN THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND PRELAW CENTER HELP ME?

Advisors at the Center specialize in helping students prepare for dental school. They can advise you on preparing to apply, factors in admission, and the use of the recommendation service. The Health Professions and Prelaw Center provides comprehensive resources for predental students through their website at [www.hpplc.indiana.edu](http://www.hpplc.indiana.edu).

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT A CAREER IN DENTISTRY?

1. In addition to reading this guide, please read about preparing for a career in dentistry and about other health professions on the HPPLC website at [www.hpplc.indiana.edu](http://www.hpplc.indiana.edu).

2. Observe dentists in your hometown or here in Bloomington. Consider summer work (volunteer if necessary) with a dentist or dentists.

3. Attend the Indiana University School of Dentistry Dental Day, which is held every year during the fall semester. The program includes an opportunity to talk with current dental students.

4. Schedule an appointment with a representative of the IU School of Dentistry. A representative from the IU School of Dentistry visits the Center twice each semester during the school year to talk with students about careers in dentistry and admission to the school.

5. Attend the orientation meeting for predental students, as well as those meetings of the I.U. Bloomington campus organization, Hoosier Dentist (watch for email messages from HPPLC about their new member meeting in the fall semester).

This document has been prepared for Indiana University - Bloomington students by the Health Professions and Prelaw Center. Please note that specific requirements and policies can change at any time without notice. Students are responsible for obtaining the most current information directly from the application services, schools, and programs in which they have an interest.