

PRE-DENTAL RESOURCES

When reviewing dental school options, it is important to remember that dental programs are extremely competitive. In fact, there is only 1 program in the state of Georgia, **The Dental College of Georgia at Augusta University**. The following are considerations for students looking to apply to Augusta:

- For the last 5 years, successful applicants had an average **3.62 overall GPA** and an average **3.56 science GPA**.
- The average score on the DAT is a 20 and **Kaplan has a breakdown of scores** that high a higher chance of acceptance to a program.
- The number of shadowing hours required **varies from program to program**. You will need to visit the sites for each program you are applying to. Successful applicants to Augusta usually have gained around **250-300 hours** of shadowing with **at least 2 dentists**.

You can search for "The Dental School at Augusta University's Admission Requirements Summary" for more information.

PREREQUISITE COURSES

Most common prerequisite courses:

English Composition I & II – ENGL 1101 & 1102

Principles of Biology I & II – BIOL 1107/L & 1108/L

Principles of Chemistry I & II – CHEM 1211/L & 1212/L

Organic Chemistry I – CHEM 3361/L

Biochemistry – CHEM 3510

Introductory Physics I – PHYS 1111/L

Pre-Calculus – MATH 1113

Probability and Statistics – MATH 2600 or Calculus – MATH 1261

Other highly suggested courses are:

Genetics – BIOL 2100

Cellular and Molecular Physiology – BIOL 3200

Organic Chemistry 2 – CHEM 3362/L

Introductory Physics II – PHYS 1112/L

Human Anatomy and Physiology – BIOL 2160 & 2170 OR Comparative Animal Physiology – BIOL 4440 & Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy – BIOL 4450 (BOTH SETS ARE NOT NECESSARY)

See Augusta's Admission Requirements Summary for specifics on The Dental School of Georgia.

Check with each of the programs you are applying for to ensure that you are taking the correct courses. Requirements may vary from program to program.

***Talk with your academic advisor before choosing courses!*

DAT PREPARATION

To be properly prepared for the DAT, students should plan on spending about **200-250 hours** (around 3 months) of intense studying. The test is broken into **4 types of questions: Natural Sciences, Perceptual Ability, Reading Comprehension, and Quantitative Reasoning** ([ADEA breakdown here](#)). Taking a prep course for the DAT or reviewing **Kaplan's website** on study tips will help you properly prepare yourself. You will want to take the test at least 1 year prior to planned enrollment date in dental school, like with most health professions.

PERSONAL STATEMENT WRITING & SECONDARY APPLICATIONS

Personal Statements used to apply to dental school should be general and not program specific. When applying through a common application service, they will forward your information to the schools you select including your general personal statement. Pay attention to the character count allotted for the essay (4,500 characters), and remember that this could take spaces into account! Follow the instructions listed carefully to ensure that you follow all of the parameters set. You should start writing your personal statement early so that you can get adequate feedback prior to submitting your application. For further information on personal statement writing for dental programs, visit the [ADEA website](#). **Secondary applications** are sent out by most dental programs. They

vary in information requested and could include work history, detailed shadowing experiences, or have question and answer prompts and most often require a fee.

OBTAINING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Developing meaningful relationships with faculty is vital when seeking letters of recommendation. Begin thinking about faculty who you have or will have taken several classes with, have similar research interests with, or that you feel a connection to, so that you can begin building those relationships from day 1. The same goes for shadowing experiences and other potential letter sources. Remember that a person's title is not near as important as how well they know you as a student and as a person. When requesting letters of recommendation, quality highly outweighs quantity. Most dental schools are seeking at least 1 letter from science faculty, 1 from an advisor, and 1 from a dentist with whom you shadowed **however this varies from school to school**. See the [ADEA breakdown here](#). At Georgia College, you will be seeking individual letters rather than a committee letter. **It is vital to check the website of each program you are applying to so that you ensure that you are submitting exactly what they have requested**. See Augusta's Admission Requirements Summary for specifics on The Dental School of Georgia.

When asking for letters, remember to be gracious and *ask* for the letter. "Would you be willing to," is usually a good way to start the conversation rather than demanding that they write you a letter. Faculty expect you to ask, and they will most likely agree as long as they feel comfortable speaking on your behalf. Be sure to give the faculty member, dentist, or whomever you plan to ask plenty of notice, generally a month is suggested. Providing a resume, CV, personal statement, or some other document will show that you are serious about obtaining a letter and give the faculty member some reference as to what you want them to talk about. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO THANK YOUR REFERENCES!

INTERVIEWING PREPARATION

When preparing for professional school interviews, a lot of the same rules apply as with most job interviews. Remember to dress accordingly to interview etiquette and conduct yourself in a professional manner. On Handshake, you can view the Career Center's "Dress for Success" handouts by clicking on the *Resources* tab. In addition, you want to be sure that you practice ahead of time. "Why do you want to be a dentist?" or "Why our program?" are common types of questions that you want to be sure and prepare for. There are different types of interviews for dental school such as traditional interviews, group interviews, mixed multiple interviews (MMI), among others. MMIs are becoming increasingly popular and stray from the traditional interview set-up. The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) offers an association for current and former dental students to get information on the dental school experience, including the interview process and you can search through them [here](#). To become more familiar with interview types and preparation, make an appointment with a pre-professional advisor.

Also, you will want to prepare your own questions to ask. Much like job interviews, you are interviewing the school and program just like they are interviewing you. Finding a good fit is important for you to thrive in a program. Once the interview is over, it is always a good idea to write thank you notes. These can be via email or hand written. Making it to the interview stage is a huge feat, so you want to make sure that you make the best impression!

MAJORING IN SOMETHING OTHER THAN SCIENCE?

You do not need to have a degree in a science discipline to go to dental school! This is a misconception that many have about the majority of health professions. Professional programs are seeking out students that will bring a different perspective to their program, and a major other than a STEM field could help you stand out. However, you must consider the required prerequisites that will need to be worked into the curriculum of your chosen major. Also, consider seeking out additional challenging science or medical related courses as electives to make yourself a well-rounded candidate. But be sure to consult with your academic advisor before choosing courses!

TIMELINE

Year 1	Meet with a pre-professional advisor to start building your timeline and to explore options and opportunities available to you.	Use the Learning Center for Supplemental Instruction to maintain a strong GPA from day 1 <i>especially in science courses!</i>	Register for the Pre-Dental Club to stay up to date on events and information.	Explore professional healthcare careers using Focus2 and Occupational Outlook Handbook, as well as attending the Graduate & Professional School Fair.
Summer 1	<p><i>*Work with the Career Center to start building your resume or CV to prepare your applications for summer experiences*</i></p> <p>Volunteer with local dentists, hospitals, or health centers and keep a journal about your experiences. Other summer experiences could include: research with a faculty member, summer enrichment programs, participate on campus with community science education programs for youth</p>			
Year 2	Assess academic standing and plans for completing prerequisite courses with Academic Advisor.	Identify and connect with faculty for mentorship, research opportunities, and professional advice.	Seek out campus leadership opportunities in addition to participation in Pre-Dental Club.	Continue gaining experience in your field as mentioned above. Attend the Graduate & Professional School Fair to continue growing your network and knowledge of programs available.
Summer 2	<p><i>*Work with a pre-professional advisor to begin looking at schools/programs of interest and choose several*</i></p> <p>Start familiarizing yourself with the DAT (ADA - Dental Admission Test) and the dental school application process (ADEA AADSAS). Continue to gain meaningful shadowing and volunteer hours, preferably with multiple dentists. Create a budget that will include DAT, test preparation, and application fees for each program of interest including secondary application fees.</p>			
Year 3	Begin preparing for the DAT by registering for a course with companies such as Kaplan, Princeton Review, etc. and choose test date by the start of second semester.	Consider what faculty, advisors, dentists, and mentors could potentially write your letters of recommendation and consult with them so that you can include their names on your ADEA AADSAS application.	Keep regular contact with your pre-professional advisor to fine tune your application strategy, schools of interest, personal statement, and create your ADEA AADSAS account .	Discuss alternatives with your pre-professional advisor in case of needed gap year or change in career plans. Attend the Graduate & Professional School Fair to explore your options.
Summer 3	<p>By the end of summer 3, you should have your final DAT score and be ready to start applying. Complete and submit your ADEA AADSAS application and any secondary application requirements. Continue involvement, research, and/or meaningful volunteering and shadowing that can be added to your experiences when applying.</p>			
Year 4	Prepare with the Career Center for different types of interviews with dental schools.	Complete secondary applications/essays as requested.	Evaluate acceptance offers and talk with your pre-professional advisor for guidance.	Consider if a gap year would be in your best interest to acquire the needed shadowing or volunteer hours, practical experiences, or prerequisites.