

Pre-Dental at JWU

Coursework: JWU courses for DMD entry overview (see link below)

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:854c8aea-2ed0-4e16-8428-2e6eaf2a268d>

Overview on Getting Into Dental School:

https://www.adea.org/GoDental/Application_Prep/The_admissions_process.aspx

AND <https://www.shemmassianconsulting.com/blog/how-to-get-into-dental-school>

Shadowing: START EARLY! Prior to holiday breaks, contact any dental contacts you may have & ask about possibility of shadowing. Shoot for at least 20, with at least 2 different dental providers. Most schools recognize that Covid has made difficult & some flexibility, but still required.

Community Volunteering: Service in just about any capacity is encouraged! Food pantries, online crisis counseling, tutoring, hospital volunteering, religious volunteering, Greek-life volunteer projects, etc..

Patient Contact Care: Experience is key for dental school admission. To be competitive, at least 150 hours working directly in dentistry. Some offices may be willing to take you on and train you as a dental assistant which is a very good addition to your resume; inquire when you shadow. You could also consider taking courses at trade school.

Scientific Research: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in a scientific research project. Undergraduate research opportunities are often available within your major (advertised when they become available) or by applying to outside summer research fellowships and outreach programs (go to AMCAS, How to Gain Experience). Consider looking or using research opportunities here and abroad for internship credit, contact Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond to help set up.

Programs: In-state, public schools are often most affordable and best chance of acceptance. Consider moving to a state with/more medical schools in your gap years (see FAQs). FAQ for other considerations.

DAT Testing: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/mcat-faq/mcat-faqs?topic=general>

The DAT is a challenging exam that covers a wide breadth of mainly scientific knowledge based upon the required coursework for entry as well as spatial orientation. It is often best to take it once or near the end of required and suggested coursework. Students should plan on studying 4-6 months in advance. Various review books and courses exist, such as Kaplan, & Princeton Review. While the courses are expensive, they are very helpful for most students. Free online resources like Leah4Sci are also great.

International Dental Outreach: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in volunteer travel programs outside of the US. *Be careful as some may have significant costs.* See link below:

<https://www.volunteeringsolutions.com/blog/recommended-pre-med-volunteer-projects-abroad/>

Application Process:

Begin ~2 years before hope to begin dental school

DAT: Plan on taking 1 ½ - 2 years in advance, often Fall [2 years in advance] - late Winter [1 ½ years in advance] before you plan to matriculate as will give you time to re-take in Spring/Early Summer if necessary.

Write AADSAS Personal Statement:

Start 1 year (often Spring) before you plan to matriculate. Take help from writing tutors/faculty on personal statements!

AADSAS Application: Portal opens each year in May. Best to have application submitted no later July the year before you plan to matriculate.

AADSAS Recommendation:

3-4 total: 2 faculty (at least 1 science) and 1 dental, and possibly 1 other who can reflect on volunteer and/or research experience.

Interviews: Top candidates will be asked for secondary responses and then interviews 3-9 months prior to matriculation. Ask for help to prep from faculty or Experiential Learning!

IMPORTANT Pre-Dental FAQs:

1. Keep log on your computer of your experiences, including names as you will need to document your experience later in your application.
2. Science mastery and grades, especially the BCPMs (Biology [BIO], Chemistry [CHM], Physics [PHY], and Math courses) should be strong as possible in order to be competitive for any of these programs! Please avoid online/community college courses (Covid year 20-21 only allowance) as some schools will not accept for core science requirements. Check school requirements for AP credit allowance.
Take advantage of tutoring & consider re-taking a course if grade less than/equal to a C, especially in the core sciences.
3. Please be aware that ALL collegiate grades will be counted when you applied (even if you re-take a course) and will be converted to standardized AADSAS system which adjusts your JWU GPA slightly (ex. B+ at JWU = 3.5 → adjusted AADSAS system B+ = 3.3). You may also need to convert quarter terms to semester equivalents. To do this, MAKE A COPY of the linked sheet and save a copy for your keeping: <https://1drv.ms/x/s!Ak5n0wrbFYysg4Ff52Yr8vziv-huAw?e=crPGbl>
4. In 2019, the average adjusted overall GPA of 3.57. US acceptance rate was ~ 7%.
5. Most accepted students have taken TWO to several gap years in order to improve their applications, gain experience, and save up money before actually applying. More maturity is a big positive as well as it is best to have completed the coursework (which is extensive) before taking the DAT; so, unless you complete your BCPM courses by the end of your 3rd year of 4 that is typical, you should wait. As of 2020, the average age of acceptance was 24 years of age.
6. When to apply: it is best to apply EARLY (by July) and only when you are a SOLID candidate.
7. Where to apply: State, public schools are most affordable & best chance of acceptance for in-state residents. Rhode Island does NOT have a state DMD school unfortunately. UConn and UMASS dental schools offer RI residents reduced costs for out-of-state tuition. If you speak Spanish fluently, consider applying to Puerto Rican medical schools!
8. Your state of residence is the one in which you are claimed by parent/custodian or file as an independent on income taxes, not necessarily where you live, and sometimes an issue when parents are divorced. Some forward-thinking students move to states with state, public dental schools to establish residency in those states as an independent for 1-2 years (ie. no parent/guardian claiming you as a dependent on taxes for that year, set up banking/license in that state) before applying.
9. If you are not a strong candidate by graduation, some students continue to take new courses or re-take. Many schools will not accept online courses for science pre-requisites. Some students also go into post-bac medical programs (often expensive) that are designed to give experience, help with DAT testing, and take classes; some give promises of interviews at their MD or DO school upon successful completion. Search for “Post-Baccalaureate Pre-Medical” or “Dental.” Some other students opt to go into masters or other graduate programs in some relevant field to gain courses and experience.
10. Some online and free courses via Coursera that count in many cases towards professional experience (as they realize challenging to attain during Covid restrictions). <https://www.coursera.org/learn/dental-medicine-penn> AND <https://www.coursera.org/learn/oralcavity>
11. If you require more coursework that is not included while a student, consider minoring in Chemistry as could help (talk to advisor or SAS).
<https://catalog.jwu.edu/programsofstudy/arts-sciences/chemistry-minor/>; all of the required Chemistry will then be part of your degree and usually encompassed by financial aid. Some students opt to double major in Biology.

b. If you require additional coursework after you have graduated, consider a pre-medical certification or post-bac medical program. JWU's can be found at <https://catalog.jwu.edu/programsofstudy/arts-sciences/postbaccalaureate-pre-medical-pre-health-professions-program-nondeg/providence-ce/>