

Predentistry

Dentistry is the only doctoral health profession that deals with the maintenance of health in the mouth and the prevention and treatment of oral disease. In addition to the medical and surgical aspects, dentistry also deals with the restoration of teeth and other tissues of the mouth.

Dentistry is a specialized discipline of medical science but is not a specialty of the practice of medicine. Dentistry is a profession with its own traditions and governance. Dentists must have a basic understanding of human form and function and current medical therapy while having specialized knowledge and skills to provide an effective health service to their patients. In addition to the general practice of dentistry, there are several specialties within the profession: endodontics (root canal), oral surgery, oral pathology, orthodontics (braces), pediatric dentistry, periodontics (gums), prosthodontics (dentures), and public health.

Dentistry has been a recognized profession in the United States since 1840. The first class of The Ohio State University College of Dentistry entered the college in 1890. The college offers a pre-doctoral program leading to the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree as well as advanced post-doctoral programs in general dentistry and all of the dental specialties.

Preparing for Dentistry School at Ohio State

Students interested in the dentistry profession have a variety of undergraduate majors from which to choose as preparation for their chosen profession. The undergraduate major should prepare the student for a people-oriented profession. Along with a strong science core, students are encouraged to take course work in the social sciences, humanities, interpersonal communication, and business administration.

Although a bachelor's degree is not required for admission to the College of Dentistry, it is highly recommended. Students pursue an undergraduate major when they start as a freshman and integrate their dentistry prerequisite course work into their specific program. The majority of dentistry applicants complete their undergraduate degree and then apply for admission to dentistry.

Admission to the College of Dentistry is based on completion of prerequisite course work, the undergraduate cumulative point-hour ratio (CPHR), the score on the Dental Admission Test (DAT), references, and a personal interview.

In addition, applicants are required to spend a minimum of 20 hours observing in a private general practice dental office. In the selection of students, preference is given to students who are residents of Ohio. Nonresidents will be considered on a competitive basis.

Admission to the College of Dentistry requires a solid science foundation in college. As a result, the undergraduate program at Ohio State should include the following courses:

- Biology 113, 114
- Microbiology 509
- Anatomy 199 or 200
- Chemistry 121, 122, 123*
- Biochemistry 511
- Organic Chemistry 251, 252*
- Physics 111*
- English 110 and any 3rd year writing course
- Physiology 311 or EEOB 232

*lab required unless lab is taught as separate course

Students are encouraged early on in their undergraduate years to participate in some type of volunteer and/or paid work experience within a dental setting. This experience not only satisfies the admission requirement of 20 hours of observation in a private dental practice, but it also helps to confirm the student's career choice. Since the College of Dentistry relies on letters of recommendation in the application process, volunteer and/or work experience with a practicing professional can provide students with a professional reference that may be needed later.

Predentistry students at Ohio State are also encouraged to participate in the Predentistry Club. This enables prospective students to take advantage of a variety of educational activities to help familiarize them with the profession. Speakers at meetings might include a dentist from private general practice or a researcher from the field of education. Involvement in community service activities and social functions also helps students to get to know one another outside the academic setting.

Co-Curricular Opportunities

Ohio State offers many opportunities for students to learn and grow outside of the classroom. These range from cooperative education (co-op) and internships to

For more information, check these web sites:

College of Dentistry: dent.osu.edu/admissions

Dentistry Financial Aid:

dent.osu.edu/current_students/DDS/financial_aid

Ohio State: www.osu.edu

Admissions: undergrad.osu.edu

First Year Experience Program: fye.osu.edu

study abroad programs to student organizations. Co-ops and internships place students in professional environments while they are Ohio State students. Ohio State offers more than 100 study abroad programs in 40 countries around the world. In addition, there are hundreds of student organizations on campus to meet the interests of a diverse student population.

These experiences enable students to gain valuable work experience, learn about cultures, and take on leadership roles before they enter the workforce. All of these experiences enhance learning and may provide an advantage in the job market.

Honors & Scholars Opportunities

Ohio State offers the Honors & Scholars programs to create an environment of intellectual support and stimulation within a close-knit community of high-ability undergraduate students. Through these programs, students have access to smaller classes, undergraduate research opportunities, close working relationships with faculty, priority scheduling, and unique housing options.

Honors & Scholars programs represent great opportunities to be part of a smaller community within a large university. Good candidates for these programs will receive additional information after admission to the university. Learn more about the Honors & Scholars program at honors-scholars.osu.edu.

Career Prospects in Dentistry

About 75 percent of dentists practice general dentistry, primarily in private office settings. It has been estimated that the demand for dental care will continue to increase as the population increases. Many established dentists are seeking associateships with recent dental school graduates to assist them in meeting the growing demand for services. There appears to be a similar need for dental specialists. In addition to the private office, many dentists also practice in hospitals and nursing homes.

Some dentists elect to pursue primary careers in dental research and education; others elect government service as dental officers in one of the branches of the military or in public health service.

It is predicted that if dental school enrollments remain constant and the demand for dental care increases as expected, there will be a shortage of dentists in the first quarter of the 21st century.

The national expenditure for dental services rises each year based on increased demand. Recent dental school graduates who start their employment in established practices can make \$40,000–\$50,000 annually. General dentists in practice for

10 years will approach an income of \$120,000; specialists will earn more. The average income of a dentist is in the highest eight percent of U.S. family incomes. Salaries in education and government service are commensurate for the educational qualifications for health professionals.

Doctor of Dentistry Program

The four-year dental college curriculum is divided into the following four components:

- Basic human health sciences, including anatomy, biochemistry, cell biology, histology, microbiology, pathology, and physiology, with emphasis on the oral aspects
- Basic training and education in the mechanical arts of restorative dentistry
- Training in diagnostic and communication skills
- Applications of these basic skills and sciences in providing patient care in dental school and other community clinics

Upon graduation and licensure, dentists are prepared to begin general practice.

About Ohio State

The Ohio State University is recognized throughout the nation and the world for its innovative programs, exceptional faculty, and cutting edge facilities. In fact, Ohio State is consistently ranked among the country's best public institutions for overall academic reputation. Because Ohio State is a major teaching and research university, our students receive excellent preparation for entry into top graduate/professional programs and the job market.

Offering over 160 majors and more than 12,000 courses, Ohio State allows students to tailor their education to their interests through double majors, minors, and personalized study programs.

Apply to Ohio State

Students wishing to apply for admission have a number of options. Those with Internet access can download application materials or apply online by visiting undergrad.osu.edu. Students may also contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at (614) 292-3980 or askabuckeye@osu.edu to have an application mailed.

Revised March 2009. For the most up-to-date information on the Dentistry program, visit dent.osu.edu.

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