Doctor of Dental Surgery

The WVU School of Dentistry is dedicated to fostering a humanistic learning environment and preparing students to meet the oral health needs of a diverse society. A dental degree offers a variety of career options including private practice, teaching, research, and public health dentistry. In addition to the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree, specialty practice areas may be pursued by advanced training. Oral health professionals are integral to the health care team. Emerging research indicates oral systemic health linkages and profound oral health disparities. The School of Dentistry engages students in a plethora of educational research experiences to identify reasons for these disparities and to develop culturally sensitive and interventions.

Due to the large number of applications received each year and limited class size, qualified West Virginia residents receive priority consideration, and outstanding nonresident applicants are also considered. Residency status is determined by the WVU Office of Admission in accordance to the Higher Education Policy Commission Rules and Policies, Series 25. Because the dental admissions committee utilizes a holistic selection process, it does not set absolute minimum Grade Point Averages (GPA) and Dental Admission Test (DAT) scores. Competition for admission has elevated the academic profile of admitted candidates to a rather high plateau. Nonresident applicants generally have earned a GPA of 3.75 or above and DAT scores of 19 or above. The School of Dentistry recognizes the importance of diversity in fulfilling its mission and encourages individuals from diverse backgrounds to apply.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the WVU School of Dentistry Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.) program is contingent upon satisfactory completion of all admission requirements, appropriate completion of all application instructions, submission of all transcripts from each college attended, submission of Dental Admission Test (DAT) scores, a personal interview, satisfactory completion of all courses taken before the time of registration in dental school (includes courses taken during the summer session immediately preceding initial enrollment), and all other requirements as set forth by the dental admission committee. Detailed information is available on the dental admissions webpage: http://dentistry.wvu.edu/admissions.

Applications should be submitted in the summer or early fall of the year prior to anticipated enrollment. Candidates for the D.D.S. degree must have abilities and skills of five varieties including observation; communication; motor; intellectual; conceptual; integrative; quantitative; behavioral and social. Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in certain areas, but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. (Refer to the School of Dentistry website for additional details about technical standards).

Applicants for admission must also present evidence of having successfully completed at least three years of college course work in U.S. or Canadian colleges or universities. To be considered for admission, applicants must have completed a minimum of 90 semester credit hours at the time of application. The prerequisites for admission include:

Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English composition and rhetoric, or equivalent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoology or Biology (with laboratory)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inorganic Chemistry (with laboratory)</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Chemistry (with laboratory)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics (with laboratory)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
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Completion of courses in anatomy and physiology, microbiology, embryology/developmental biology, biochemistry, physiology, cellular and molecular biology, genetics and psychology are strongly recommended. In addition, courses in the humanities and the social sciences are recommended for a well-rounded intellectual background for the study and practice of dentistry. The School of Dentistry participates in the Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS). All applications must be submitted online via AADSAS at http://www.adesa.org. The AADSAS application becomes available in the beginning of June each year. November 1st is the deadline for submission of a completed AADSAS application for the West Virginia University School of Dentistry. Because the Dental Admissions Committee uses a rolling admissions process and begins admitting highly qualified individuals on December 1, applicants to the DDS program are strongly encouraged to apply early via the AADSAS. Each applicant is required to have letters of recommendation submitted to the AADSAS. Specific information regarding letter of recommendation requirements is available on the School of Dentistry website. Satisfactory completion of the Dental Admission Test (DAT) is required. The test is given at testing centers throughout the U.S. and in Canada. DAT registration is available on the American Dental Association (ADA) website www.ada.org. DAT scores must be submitted by November 1st of the year preceding the date of anticipated matriculation. The Dental Admission Committee evaluates all AADSAS applications and invites selected applicants to submit a secondary (WVU) application. Applicants who are West Virginia residents are usually interviewed, although the admissions committee may elect not to interview an unrealistic applicant. Selected non-resident applicants will also be invited for an interview depending on their qualifications. Individuals who receive provisional acceptance must obtain criminal background clearance and provide documentation of the specified immunizations prior to matriculation.

International Dental Graduate Guidelines
International dental graduates who wish to apply to the WVU School of Dentistry Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.) program as a student in the first-year class must:

Submit an application through the Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS) by November 1. For additional information, please refer to the general admissions requirements, which include completion of at least 90 semester credit hours at a U.S. or Canadian College or University prior to application submission.

1. Provide documentation of a D.D.S. or D.M.D. degree (or equivalent) from a non-U.S. dental school.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in the English language as demonstrated by performance on the TEST of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - paper-based minimum score of 500 or computer-based minimum score of 173 or internet-based test minimum score of 61 - and completion of English 1 and English 2 (or equivalent) at an accredited U.S. college or university earning grade of C or above.
3. Provide three letters of recommendation by college instructors who are familiar with the applicant, excluding family members.
4. Submit Dental Admission Test (DAT) scores showing at least average competence in the various subsections of the test - 17 minimum score, or provide evidence of having successfully passed the National Board Dental Examination, Part I, within five years preceding the application.
5. Have all previous coursework from non-U.S. colleges evaluated by Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) or the World Educational Services (WES). An official or certified copy of the evaluation must be provided to WVU. The applicant is responsible for payment of fees for this service.
6. Provide official transcripts from all schools attended in the original language of issue.

If granted an interview, applicants must present to the school for personal interview with the admissions committee. Applicants who are invited for an interview must complete the secondary (institution) application for admission and submit the associated fees. The transcripts of international dental graduates who are approved for an interview will be evaluated by the WVU Office of Admission, International unit. West Virginia residents will be given priority consideration.

Degree Requirements

Candidates for graduation are recommended by the faculty of the School of Dentistry to the Board of Governors for approval and for the conferring of the degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.), provided they fully meet the following conditions:

- Shall have been in regular attendance in the School of Dentistry for the academic period prescribed for each student.
- Shall have completed the prescribed curriculum for each of the academic sessions.
- Shall have shown good moral character and shall have demonstrated a sense of professional responsibility in the performance of all assignments as a student.
- Shall have met in full all financial obligations to the University.

In view of public and professional responsibilities, the faculty of each of the professional schools of WVU has the authority to recommend to the president of the University the removal of any student from its rolls whenever, by formal decision reduced to writing, the faculty finds that the student is unfit to meet the qualifications and responsibilities of the profession.

Curriculum

The required courses in the prescribed curriculum are presented throughout eight semesters and three summer sessions. During this time, all students are enrolled in courses designed primarily to prepare them to be competent in the general practice of dentistry. Throughout the program, overall student progress is continually monitored by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Students must remain full-time and must satisfactorily complete all courses for which they have registered. Additional requirements include participation in mock board examinations and a minimum of six weeks of remote-site training by fourth-year students.

Promotion

At the end of each grading period (i.e., each academic semester or summer session) all students will have their individual progress reviewed by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee convened for their class. The progress of each student in the curriculum is governed by minimum acceptable performance standards upon which the committee bases its decisions.

The standards consist of three categories: scholastic performance, clinic performance and utilization, and professional development. Scholastic performance requires that each student must earn a specified grade point average to be promoted to the succeeding year. Clinic performance and utilization requires that each student must utilize a specified percentage of available clinic time to demonstrate steady progress toward attainment of clinical competency. Professional development is an important component of the study of dentistry. The criteria for determining this development are based on the student’s personal behavior and patient management skills.

These performance standards are explained in detail in the document entitled WVU School of Dentistry Academic and Professional Standards. All first-year students are presented this document prior to entering school and are required to acknowledge by their signature that they have read and accepted the conditions set by the material contained therein. At the completion of each academic term, following the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards meetings, the status of each student is reported to the dean. The committee may recommend that a student be promoted unconditionally,
be promoted on probation, be allowed to make up deficiencies, be given the opportunity to repeat the year, or be suspended or dismissed from further studies in the School of Dentistry. Final disposition in each case is the prerogative of the Dean of the School of Dentistry.