

Dentistry, D.D.S.

Degree Offered

- Doctor of Dental Surgery

Nature of the Program

The WVU School of Dentistry prepares students to provide high-quality, comprehensive oral health care. Students train using state-of-the-art technology which includes, but is not limited to, electronic health record, digital radiography, CAD/CAM and lasers. The school offers enriching interprofessional learning opportunities with the other Health Sciences Center health professions programs to promote their value as essential members of the health care team. Community service is also integral to our mission. Students participate in a plethora of local, state and global community outreach programs. Prior to graduation, students experience a community-based clinical rotation in rural West Virginia for at least six weeks.

A dental degree offers a variety of career options including private practice, teaching, research, and public health dentistry. In addition, after earning the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree, specialty practice areas may be pursued by advanced training.

Due to a large number of applications 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 with the Higher Education Policy Commission Rules and Policies, Series 25. The dental admissions committee utilizes a holistic selection process that takes into account cognitive and non-cognitive attributes in accordance with defined admission criteria. 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 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.

Admissions for 2025-2026

Admission to the 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 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 school admissions committee.

The WVU School of Dentistry has minimal technical standards for the assessment of all students admitted to the D.D.S. program. Enrollees must have abilities and skills in the following areas: observation; communication; motor; intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative; behavioral, and social. Technological compensation can be made in certain situations, but candidates should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. (Refer to the School of Dentistry website for details about Technical Standards (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/students/dds-student-resources/policies-and-standards/>)).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

A minimum of three years of college coursework completed at U.S. or Canadian colleges or universities is required. Applicants must have earned at least 90 semester credit hours at the time of application. Up to 64 semester credit hours completed at community colleges are accepted toward the minimum course hour requirement.

Online courses are accepted toward the prerequisite courses. A letter grade must be documented for all required courses completed through in-person, online or hybrid learning platforms. Science courses with grades of Pass/Fail or Satisfactory will not be accepted. Non-science prerequisite courses impacted by Pass/Fail grading system will not be evaluated negatively.

The prerequisites for admission include:

English composition and rhetoric, or equivalent	6
Biology or Zoology (with laboratory)	8
General/Inorganic Chemistry (with laboratory)	8
Organic Chemistry (with laboratory)	8
Physics (with laboratory)	8
Biochemistry	3
Anatomy (Comparative or Human)	3
Total Hours	44

Completion of courses in microbiology, embryology/developmental biology, physiology, cellular and molecular biology, genetics, and psychology are strongly recommended. In addition, courses in the humanities and the social sciences are suggested to acquire a well-rounded intellectual background for the study and practice of dentistry. AP credit will be accepted for the English course requirement. All science prerequisites must have a letter grade. Admitted students must complete all required courses by June 1st prior to matriculation.

Considerations:

- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Science Grade Point Average (SGPA)
- Performance in required courses
- Performance in upper-division science courses
- Performance improvement/consistency
- Course load

APPLICATION INFORMATION:

1. The School of Dentistry participates in the Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS). All applications must be submitted online via AADSAS (<http://www.adea.org>). The application deadline is November 1st of the year immediately prior to the applicant's anticipated enrollment. Each year the AADSAS application becomes available in mid-May. The school uses a rolling admission process and begins admitting highly qualified individuals on December 15th.
2. Applicants are required to have specific letters of recommendation submitted to AADSAS. Information regarding recommendations is available on the School of Dentistry (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/apply-now/doctor-of-dental-surgery/>) website.
3. 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) (<https://www.ada.org/education/testing/exams/dental-admission-test-dat/apply-for-the-dental-admission-test-dat/>) website. DAT scores must be submitted by November 1st of the year preceding the date of matriculation. Scores are valid up to three years after the test date.
4. Applicants must complete shadowing experiences in clinical dental settings, including private offices, community health clinics, and service missions. While there is no specific minimum shadowing hour requirement, successful candidates usually observe at least 100 hours in various dental environments. Due to limitations previously caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, limited virtual shadowing experiences will be accepted and considered on a case-by-case basis.
5. The Dental Admission Committee evaluates all AADSAS applications and invites selected applicants to submit a secondary (WVU Graduate) application. West Virginia resident applicants are usually offered an interview, although the admissions committee may elect not to interview unrealistic applicants. Selected non-resident applicants are invited to interview depending on their qualifications.
6. Individuals who receive provisional acceptance must obtain a criminal background clearance, provide documentation of the specified immunizations, and meet all other requirements as listed in the provisional acceptance offer prior to matriculation and the date specified.

Detailed information is available on the Doctor of Dental Surgery (<https://dentistry.hsc.wvu.edu/apply-now/doctor-of-dental-surgery/>) admissions webpage.

If you have specific questions regarding the West Virginia University School of Dentistry's application procedures and requirements, please email the Office of Dental Admissions (dentaladmit@hsc.wvu.edu) or call 304-293-6646.

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 should contact the School of Dentistry Office of Dental Admissions for additional information regarding specific guidelines and requirements.

Major Code: 8007

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. 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 in all disciplines. 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 upon entering school and are required to acknowledge, by their signature, that they have read and accept the conditions set by the material contained therein. At the completion of each academic term, following the meeting of the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards, the status of each student is reported to the dean. The committee may decide 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.

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 a full-time student 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 roles 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 REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Hours
Oral Health Sciences Courses		
DENT 700	Anesthesiology	1
DENT 701	Arts & Sciences of Preventive Dentistry	2
DENT 703	Introduction to Patient Care	3
DENT 704	Operative Dentistry	4
DENT 706	Interprofessional Education	2
DENT 707	Introduction to Clinical Dentistry	2
DENT 710	Dental Anatomy and Occlusion	4
DENT 711	Periodontics	2
DENT 712	Dental Materials	3
DENT 713	Dental Radiology	1
DENT 714	Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology	1
DENT 715	Dental Public Health 1	2
DENT 717	Physical Diagnosis and Urgent Care	1
DENT 721	Endodontics	2
DENT 724	Advanced Treatment Planning	2
DENT 722	Tooth-Colored Restorations	4
DENT 723	Advanced Restorations and Esthetics in Dentistry	2
DENT 725	Practice Management	1
DENT 726	Removable Partial Dentures	5
DENT 729	Indirect Restorations	3
DENT 730	Dental Public Health 2	2
DENT 731	Occlusion	2
DENT 732	Advanced Endodontics 1: Biological Applications in Endodontics	1
DENT 733	Advanced Endodontics 2: Biological Applications in Endodontics	1
DENT 734	Complete Dentures	6
DENT 735	Pediatric Dentistry	1
DENT 737	Treatment Planning	3
DENT 739	Oral Surgery	1
DENT 740	Periodontics	2
DENT 744	Orthodontic Diagnosis and Treatment Planning	1
DENT 745	Principles of Orthodontics	1
DENT 746	Orthodontic Techniques	1
DENT 747	Management of Medical and Dental Emergencies	1
DENT 752	Professional Communication in Dentistry	2
DENT 754	Introduction to Dental Implantology	2
DENT 756	Fixed Prosthodontics: Part 1	4

DENT 757	Fixed Prosthodontics: Part 2	4
DENT 758	Senior Seminar	2
DENT 759	Oral Surgery	2
DENT 761	Special Needs in Dentistry	1
DENT 762	Anxiety and Pain Control	1
DENT 763	Periodontics	2
DENT 765	Orthodontics	1
DENT 766	Applied Pediatric Dentistry	2
DENT 767	Community Dentistry	1
DENT 770	Clinical Oral Radiology	4
DENT 771	Practice Management	2
DENT 774	Principles of Medicine	2
DENT 775	Practice Management	1
DENT 776	Removable Prosthodontics	5
DENT 777	Periodontics	5
DENT 778	Law & Ethics in Dentistry	2
DENT 780	Endodontics	4
DENT 781	Patient Management 1	4
DENT 782	Clinical Patient Management 2	2
DENT 783	Operative Dentistry	6
DENT 784	Oral Surgery	6
DENT 785	Orthodontics	2
DENT 786	Pediatric Dentistry	4
DENT 787	Clinical Oral Diagnosis	1
DENT 788	Clinic Completion Practicum *	3
DENT 789	Fixed Prosthodontics	5
Biomedical Sciences Courses		
BMM 705	General Biochemistry	5
MICB 702	Microbiology	5
PALM 718	Dental Histology	6
PALM 724	Human Gross Anatomy	7
DENT 728	General Pathology	5
DENT 738	Oral Pathology 1	3
PALM 753	Oral Pathology 2	2
PCOL 760	Pharmacology & Therapeutics	3
PCOL 763	Applied Dental Pharmacology	2
PSIO 743	Fundamentals of Physiology	5
Total Hours		195

*

Hours may vary based on a student's clinical progress.

SUGGESTED PLAN OF STUDY

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
DENT 701		2 BMM 705		5 DENT 703	3
DENT 710		4 DENT 700		1 DENT 745	1
DENT 712		3 DENT 704		4 DENT 731	2
PALM 724		7 Interprofessional Education		2	
PSIO 743		5 DENT 706			
		DENT 715		2	

		PALM 718			6	
		21			20	6
Second Year						
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours	
DENT 722		4 DENT 707		2 DENT 725		1
DENT 729		3 DENT 714		1 DENT 746		1
DENT 734		6 DENT 737		3 DENT 763		2
DENT 735		1 DENT 739		1 DENT 724		2
DENT 756		4 DENT 744		1 DENT 721		2
MICB 702		5 DENT 757		4 DENT 726		5
PCOL 760		3 DENT 766		2		
DENT 713		1 DENT 774		2		
		DENT 728		5		
		DENT 738		3		
		DENT 711		2		
		DENT 717		1		
		27			27	13
Third Year						
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours	
DENT 740		2 DENT 730		2 DENT 771		2
DENT 754		2 DENT 747		1 DENT 781		4
DENT 761		1 DENT 752		2 DENT 762		1
DENT 778		2 DENT 759		2 DENT 788		2
PALM 753		2 DENT 765		1		
PCOL 763		2 DENT 723		2		
DENT 732		1 DENT 733		1		
		12			11	9
Fourth Year						
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours			
DENT 770		4 DENT 758		2		
DENT 788		1 DENT 767		1		
		DENT 775		1		
		DENT 776		5		
		DENT 777		5		
		DENT 780		4		
		DENT 782		2		
		DENT 783		6		
		DENT 784		6		
		DENT 785		2		
		DENT 786		4		
		DENT 787		1		
		DENT 789		5		
		5			44	

Total credit hours: 195

Major Learning Outcomes

DOCTOR OF DENTAL SURGERY

The ultimate benefits of Competencies for the Graduating Dentist will be a more efficient and rational curriculum that is responsive to the educational mission of the School of Dentistry.

The twenty-five major competencies are divided into seven categories of thought, behavior or knowledge. Each major competency is furthered by course objectives the sum total of which, when accomplished by the student, enable acquisition of the competency. Assessment of the acquisition of each competence will occur in many ways that are appropriate to the subject matter.

I. Scientific and Critical Thinking

1. Scientific Process: The graduating dentist must acquire, critically evaluate and assimilate scientific information necessary for the evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, management and prevention of oral health problems.

II. Patient Evaluation

2. Examination of the Patient: The graduating dentist must be able to perform an examination that collects the medical, physical, psychological and social information needed to evaluate the systemic and oral condition(s) of patients of all ages (infant through older adult) or with special needs (including, but not limited to, persons with developmental disabilities, complex medical problems and physical limitations) and manage behavioral factors which affect oral health and use the information to implement strategies that facilitate the delivery of oral health care.

III. Diagnosis

3. Diagnosis: The graduating dentist must be able to determine a differential, provisional or definitive diagnosis for patients of all ages by interpreting and correlating findings from the history, clinical and radiographic examination and other diagnostic tests.

IV. Treatment Planning

4. Treatment Planning: The graduating dentist must be able to develop, present, and discuss individual treatment plans for patients of all ages consistent with the patient's condition, interest, goals and capabilities.

V. Patient Treatment and Management (for Patients in all Stages of Life)

5. Prevention of Disease and Maintenance of Health: The graduating dentist must be able to provide evidence-based interprofessional care for patients of all ages that emphasizes prevention of oral diseases and supports the maintenance of existing systemic and oral health.
6. Tobacco Cessation: The graduating dentist must be able to provide evidence-based tobacco cessation strategies.
7. Diversity Awareness: The graduating dentist must be able to discuss cultural factors that impact oral health and provide culturally-sensitive care to persons with varying individual characteristics and backgrounds.
8. Control of Pain and Anxiety: The graduating dentist must be able to employ techniques to manage orofacial discomfort and psychological distress.
9. Caries Management: The graduating dentist must be able to treat and manage caries in the primary, mixed and permanent dentitions.
10. Endodontic Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able to treat diseases of pulpal and periradicular origin in the primary, mixed and permanent dentitions.
11. Periodontal Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able to treat and manage periodontal disease in the primary, mixed, permanent and implant dentitions utilizing a non-surgical approach.
12. Surgical Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able to recognize, evaluate, treat and/or manage conditions requiring surgical procedures on the hard and soft tissues in patients of all ages.
13. Emergency Situations: The graduating dentist must be able to prevent and manage dental and medical emergency situations encountered in the practice of general dentistry.
14. Occlusal/TMD Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able to assess, and treat or refer functional disorders of occlusal or non-occlusal origins.
15. Orthodontic Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able assess, and treat or refer developmental or acquired abnormalities in esthetics or occlusion.
16. Stomatology: The graduating dentist must be able to manage limited or common non-life threatening oral mucosal diseases or disorders.
17. Restorative/Prosthetic Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able to convey laboratory instructions and provide restorations and prostheses that are correct in anatomical form, comfortable and functionally effective, and which satisfy the esthetic requirements of the patient or legal guardian.
18. Implant Therapy: The graduating dentist must be able to assess, diagnose, treatment plan and treat patients requiring single tooth posterior implant-supported restorations and mandibular implant-supported overdentures.

19. Assessment of Patient Treatment: The graduating dentist must be able to determine the prognosis for proposed patient care, evaluate the initial results of the care and determine appropriate periodic maintenance.

VI. Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

20. Community Engagement: The graduating dentist must be able to assume a leadership role in improving the oral health of individuals of all ages, families and groups in the community by planning, implementing and evaluating programs to eliminate oral health disparities through a dynamic, evidence-based and interprofessional approach to wellness.

VII. Practice Dynamics

21. Ethics: The graduating dentist must be able to discern and manage the ethicolegal issues of dental practice.

22. Dental Informatics and Research: The graduating dentist must be able to effectively utilize computer programming, digital imaging and electronic communication to retrieve and communicate information for patient care, practice management, research and professional development purposes.

23. Professional Practice: The graduating dentist must possess the skills to transition from dental school to various practice settings.

24. Scope of Practice: The graduating dentist must be able to know the limit of one's competence and when to make referrals to colleagues.

25. Dental Sleep Medicine: The graduating dentist must recognize and refer patients at high risk for sleep disorders as a member of the sleep medicine team.