

PREPARATION FOR THE STUDY OF DENTISTRY

Important general information

Students interested in the pre-dental advising track must complete a minimum of 90 credit hours including the listed prerequisite courses and be on track to receive a baccalaureate degree to be considered for admission to dental school. Students interested in dental school should consult with a pre-professional health career adviser to learn about requirements that are specific to the schools of dentistry to which they hope to apply.

Declaration of the pre-dental career advising track through VCU Career Services - Pre-Professional Health Career Advising (<https://careers.vcu.edu/majors-and-careers/career-pathways/health-care/>) does not constitute admission to the VCU School of Dentistry. Students must apply separately to the dental school of their choice at the appropriate time.

Students with an interest in preparing for dental school must declare an academic major and should declare and maintain their pre-dental career advising track. Students do not earn a pre-dental degree. Students unsure of their academic majors initially should clarify their academic interests through regular conversations with their academic adviser and pre-professional health advisers. Pre-dental students are encouraged to major in fields of greatest interest to them. To declare a pre-dentistry career advising track, see the Pre-Professional Health Hub (<https://virginiacommonwealth.instructure.com/enroll/YNNN7J7/>).

Prerequisites for the VCU School of Dentistry

Students need to complete the prerequisite science courses before being eligible to start the dental program at the VCU School of Dentistry. Students are also required to complete the Dental Admission Test. The DAT is taken before or during the dental school admissions process. Students preparing for the DAT are strongly advised to take courses to build competency in tested subjects prior to taking the exam. Completing all prerequisite course work and taking the DAT prior to applying is highly recommended but not required. Students must provide official DAT scores before their application will be considered for an interview. All prerequisite courses must be completed with a minimum grade of C prior to entering VCU's dental program if accepted.

Science and non-science courses required for the VCU School of Dentistry

General biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry and physics are required science prerequisites for admission to dental school. With the exception of biochemistry, the laboratory component of these prerequisites must also be completed.

English composition and a mathematics/statistics course are non-science prerequisites required for dental school.

Other upper-level science courses in general microbiology, bacteriology, animal or vertebrate physiology, anatomy, genetics and cell biology are strongly recommended. If time permits and the courses are available, courses in immunology, embryology, or developmental biology and histology are highly recommended. Additionally, non-science courses in the behavioral sciences and those involving psychomotor skills are recommended.

Prerequisites for the VCU School of Dentistry

Course	Title	Hours
VCU courses		
BIOL 151 & BIOZ 151	Introduction to Biological Sciences I and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory I	4
BIOL 152 & BIOZ 152	Introduction to Biological Sciences II and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory II	4
CHEM 101 & CHEZ 101	General Chemistry I and General Chemistry Laboratory I	4
CHEM 102 & CHEZ 102	General Chemistry II and General Chemistry Laboratory II	4
CHEM 301 & CHEZ 301	Organic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry Laboratory I	5
CHEM 302 & CHEZ 302	Organic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry Laboratory II	5
CHEM 403	Biochemistry I	3
MATH 151 or MATH 131 or MATH 141 or MATH 200 or STAT 210 or STAT 212 or STAT 314	Precalculus Mathematics ¹ Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics Algebra with Applications Calculus with Analytic Geometry I Basic Practice of Statistics Concepts of Statistics Applications of Statistics	3-4
PHYS 201 or PHYS 207	General Physics I ² University Physics I	4-5
PHYS 202 or PHYS 208	General Physics II ³ University Physics II	4-5
UNIV 111 Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	Focused Inquiry I	3
UNIV 112 Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	Focused Inquiry II	3
Total Hours		46-49

1

MATH 151 is highly recommended and is a prerequisite for other dental school course requirements.

2

MATH 200 is a prerequisite for PHYS 207.

3

MATH 201 is a prerequisite for PHYS 208.

Additional recommended prerequisites for dental schools nationwide

Dental schools across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission into their program. The list below shows courses required by various schools beyond the courses listed above for the VCU School of Dentistry. Students should discuss career plans with their pre-professional health career adviser for additional guidance.

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 205 or BIOL 402	Basic Human Anatomy Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy	4
BIOL 303	Microbiology	3
DENS 101	Introduction to Dentistry	1
PHIS 206 or BIOL 411	Human Physiology Physiology	3
UNIV 191	Student Success Special Topics	1-3

Students should also consult with their academic adviser and pre-professional health career advisers to discuss an individual plan of study in parallel with their academic majors.