

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND PRELAW CENTER

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A GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS TO DENTAL SCHOOLS

2008-2009

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1. HOW TO APPROACH THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Before beginning your application please read this guide thoroughly so you will understand how the entire application process works. Unfortunately, in the Health Professions and Prelaw Center we have observed that many excellent applicants are not accepted every year due to a simple failure to read instructions and follow them in a timely manner. Don't let this be you! You need to thoroughly read this guide, the HPPLC document "A Guide to the Recommendation Service," all instructions on the AADSAS application website, as well as every communication sent to you by AADSAS and dental schools that gives you instructions on your application.

Your initial contact with the dental school admissions committee will be through your written application. Submitting complete, polished documents that you have spent some time preparing will reflect well on your potential as a dental student and future dentist. Your attention to detail and your ability to communicate to the committee through the application will reflect on the abilities you will bring to the practice of dentistry. If you make many mistakes in the application process, or your approach is disorganized, an admissions committee may conclude that your performance as a dental student and as a dentist will be error-prone and disorganized. Your application should reflect all of the thoughtful preparation you have made for a career in dentistry so far.

As dental schools begin to receive applications, they start reviewing them and inviting students for interviews. Many start offering acceptances to students long before the deadline to apply. You will give yourself the best chances for admission if your completed application is one of the first that they consider, rather than one of the last.

The first question to ask before you start your application is whether you are ready to apply to dental school. You should apply as the strongest applicant you can be. If you have recognizable weaknesses in your application, you should consider delaying application to dental school until you can address these weaknesses. You can earn a lot of respect from an admissions committee by having the maturity to recognize weaknesses and do the hard work to address them *before* you apply.

Do not think in terms of just meeting the final deadlines. If a school has a published application deadline of December 1, it does not mean that it's the first date the school will begin to look at applications. It basically means, "December 1 is the last date we will look at an application from any applicant who has superior qualifications." Most schools operate on a rolling admissions basis, admitting many students long before the deadline to apply. Do not wait until the deadline to submit materials. Remember that just as applicants are competing to be admitted, schools are competing for the best students and do not wait on late applications to fill their classes.

If you have applied previously to dental school and were not admitted, please make sure to read the section "For Reapplicants."

2. OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The process of applying to dental school has been centralized to a great extent by the American Dental Education Association (ADEA). The ADEA runs an online application service called AADSAS that allows students to initiate the process of applying to many dental schools at once through one initial primary application. Most dental schools participate in AADSAS, although there are some that do not (54 out of the 56 dental schools in the US participate in AADSAS).

The process of applying to most dental schools works like this: 1) you fill out one online electronic primary application, choose the schools you would like to receive the application, and send any supplementary materials requested by them; 2) those schools receive your application and if they would like to consider you further for admission they contact you to submit further materials or schedule an interview.

For the AADSAS primary application you will create your own User Name and Password that will allow you to create your online application. You can log in and out of your online application and spend several weeks entering information and making sure that everything is accurate and complete. When you are satisfied with the application you submit it electronically and it is sent to AADSAS for processing. Once you submit the application you cannot make changes on it.

The 2009 AADSAS application will become available on May 15, 2008. You can begin to work on the application as soon as it becomes available. It can take six to eight weeks for AADSAS to process your application and send it to the schools you select. Please start early. You should try to submit your AADSAS application by early June.

3. THE PRIMARY APPLICATION

The 2009 AADSAS online application will be found at the following web address:

<http://www.adea.org/AADSAS/default.htm>

The application is scheduled to become available on May 15, 2008.

A full Instruction Booklet for the AADSAS application can be found by clicking on "AADSAS Instructions" on the website. Before starting to fill out the application, print out this instruction booklet so that you can refer to it while you fill out the various sections. This is a large file to print out but it really will save you time if you have a hardcopy to refer to as you fill out the application. The application is complicated but most questions really can be answered by referring to the appropriate sections listed in the table of contents.

You will be assigned a number by AADSAS. Please provide your AADSAS number to the HPPLC office.

Some Tips on the Various Sections of the Applications:

Colleges Attended

List every school that you have attended and the dates of attendance. You will need to submit transcripts from every school you have attended to AADSAS (see the section on "Transcripts" in this document).

Coursework

You will need to have a transcript from every college you have attended before you can fill out this section. In this section you fill in information on every college course you have taken. Before filling out this section you should gather copies of all your transcripts from every school you have attended. This section should match your transcripts as exactly as possible. If you completed coursework at another university and transferred credit to IU, make sure you enter the course information as it appears on *the original school's transcript*, not as it appears on the IU transcript as transferred coursework.

AADSAS requires each student to submit grade information in one standardized form so that the application system can then calculate each applicant's GPA in a standardized form that can be used to compare all applicants, regardless of the grading system used at the university the applicant attended. For this reason your GPA as calculated by the application system may be slightly different from the GPA that appears on your IU transcript.

Some tips on how to fill in special course information:

- You will choose a course classification for each course you have taken. Please consult the AADSAS instruction book for advice on how to classify courses.
- If the course is listed on your transcript then you should list it in this section, even if you withdrew and received a grade of W. If you dropped early enough so that the course does not appear on your transcript then do not list it in this section.
- You should make note of any classes that were Intensive Writing courses. Some dental schools may be willing to count these courses towards their English course requirements, where applicable.
- Use deferred grade for research if no grade has been assigned yet.
- Your transcript may show that you have taken Advanced Placement or departmental exams which earned you college credit. List these courses with the appropriate number of credit hours as they appear on your transcript, and list the "Special Classification" as "Advanced Placement" or "Departmental Exam" if applicable. You should be aware that some dental schools do not accept, or restrict the use of, Advanced Placement or credit-by-examination toward admission requirements. An *exemption from a requirement* is not generally considered equivalent to earning Advanced Placement credit or credit from coursework.

Activities and Experience

The AADSAS application asks you to provide information on Awards, Honors, and Scholarships; Extracurricular, Volunteer, Community Service, and Leadership Activities; Job Shadowing; Work Experience; Research Experience; and Activities Requiring Manual Dexterity. It may be helpful for you to assemble a resume and/or list of appropriate activities before beginning to fill out these sections of the application. It is sometimes more impressive to an admissions committee to list a smaller number of significant achievements, and activities in which you were deeply involved, rather than a longer list of activities in which you were only superficially involved. Some limited space is provided for you to write about each experience.

Personal Statement

Beyond knowing your GPA and your DAT scores, an admissions committee wants to know who you are as a person and why you are pursuing a career in dentistry. Your personal statement provides the opportunity to communicate directly about these issues to the admissions committee. Your personal statement should reflect all the preparation you have made for a career in dentistry so far.

The personal statement essentially tells a story about you and how you have come to this stage in your life. Often, applicants employ narrative techniques in their statements, through which the writer recounts an experience or event that shaped the writer, sparked an interest in dentistry, or an event that clarified that dentistry was the right choice for him or her. Using concrete, descriptive language in writing about your personal experiences can be very effective and convincing to an admissions committee. Detailed descriptions of events and experiences tend to reveal more about the inner experience of the writer than generalizations.

Admissions committees are reading lots of essays and after a while they all sound alike. There are many commonalities in the backgrounds and experience of the students who are attracted to the dental profession. You may have had similar experiences to other students who are applying to dental school, but your unique ability to reflect on your experiences and draw insights about them can set you apart from other applicants. Often, writing in a more detailed, specific way and avoiding generalities can turn a vapid statement into a more interesting one. It usually takes considerable time spent in writing and revising to craft a good statement.

A good personal statement demonstrates a healthy balance between self-awareness and reflection on the larger society. One should not come across as so self-absorbed in the personal statement that an admissions committee will be concerned about your ability to relate to your patients as human beings, but the statement should reflect a personal perspective. In addition, through the personal statement the admissions committee can assess the complexity of your reasoning and analytical skills. An essay stating relatively simple reasons for why you are interested in a career in dentistry (“I want to help people”) may not be as impressive as one that demonstrates an understanding of the complex realities that healthcare providers and their patients often face.

Keeping a journal can be very helpful for preparing for this stage in your journey to dental school. The journal can help you generate ideas so that then you can pick out the best ones to include in your personal statement. You may find that you have written some material in your journal that you can revise and incorporate into your personal statement. Your journal can be very helpful also when preparing additional essays for supplemental applications and in preparing for your interviews.

Some additional tips:

- Your essay should not simply recount things that are included in other parts of your application.
- You want to demonstrate your best features to an admissions committee without coming across as conceited. It may take some revision to strike the right balance.
- Even if you have a 4.0 GPA and a 25 DAT score you should spend some time crafting a thoughtful essay that reflects the intellectual skills indicated by your numbers.
- Proofread, proofread, and proofread some more. Do not rely on a spell checker alone.
- Have someone else whose opinion you trust read your essay. Make an appointment with Dr. Tolen in the HPPLC office if you would like her to read your essay and provide comments (just call 812-855-1873 to set one up). Also, remember that the essay reflects your unique personal experiences. There is no strict formula for a good personal statement.
- You may choose to address a personal, judicial, or academic problem (such as a bad semester or a bad grade) in the personal essay. You may instead decide to address these problems in some other way, through a letter to the admissions committee, or in the interview. If you choose to address a sensitive problem in your essay do not allow the whole essay to become focused on it, to the extent that you fail to communicate about all the positive ways that you have prepared for dental school.
- It is okay to use the word “I” with some discretion, as long as you do not overdo it.

- Start early and prepare many drafts over time. Re-read your essay each time with fresh eyes.

4. CHOOSING WHERE TO APPLY

You will select the dental schools that you would like to receive a copy of your application on your primary AADSAS application. You also can select additional schools later for additional fees. The processing fee for the 2009 AADSAS application is \$195 for the first dental school and \$60 for each additional school you select. See the AADSAS website for full information on the fees.

There are many sources for help in deciding where to apply:

- Admissions directors or representatives
- 2008 ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools (available in the HPPLC office)
- Individual dental school websites and publications
- Dental School Admissions Statistics (handout available from the HPPLC office)
- Friends and colleagues in dental school (realize they probably know their own school quite well, but not other schools)
- Dentists who are recent graduates or who remain involved with dental education (however, realize that their knowledge of many issues may not be up-to-date)

Before you apply try to take a realistic assessment of your DAT score and GPA. A realistic assessment means neither overly pessimistic or overly optimistic. There are resources available in the HPPLC office to help you research the average DAT scores and average GPA's of students accepted at each school. Please remember that averages are just that; there are many students above and below the average numbers. The numbers represent a simple statistical outcome of a very complex process of evaluation. However, if your DAT score or GPA is far, far below the average of the school's accepted students, it is statistically likely that the process of evaluation that the school uses will not favor your acceptance.

You should also be aware that overall the average DAT scores and average GPA's of students admitted to dental schools have been rising, and most likely will continue to rise. Therefore, you may need to meet higher standards of admission this year than applicants had to meet last year.

Your state school(s) will afford some of the best chances for admission. However, admission to IU dental school is becoming increasingly competitive (some general guidelines of the credentials you would need to have a good chance for admission at IU dental school would be 3.4 cumulative GPA; 3.4 science GPA; and 18's in all areas of the DAT).

All applicants should make sure to apply to some additional schools out of state that accept larger numbers of non-residents. There are some private schools outside of Indiana that accept larger numbers of out-of-state residents with somewhat moderate DAT scores and GPA's (some of the schools you may wish to consider are Boston, Case Western, Creighton, Marquette, NYU, Temple, and Tufts). The tuition rates at these private schools may be considerably higher than in-state tuition at IU dental school, but these schools may provide additional options for admission for you if you are serious about a career in dentistry.

Do not make the mistake of taking too narrow of an approach initially by applying to only a very small number of schools. Too many applicants do this and regret it when they get further into the application process and can only apply to more schools as a late applicant.

Some additional points to consider:

- Reputation for clinical dentistry
- The local environment where the school is located. Where do you want to live?
- Teaching/learning style: traditional-organ system, practice-based learning, or a combination? How do you learn best? Which system would fit you?
- Proximity to support (family, friends, significant others)
- Strength of programs of interest

- Specialty placement: Where do grads go for specialties?
- Costs and living expenses.
- Goals of the school for the next decades
- Class size and student-faculty ratio; consistent, significant evidence of faculty interaction and availability beyond the class room
- Student resources (entertainment, library, computer) and support systems at school
- Early patient contact. Some schools seem to foster much earlier patient contact.
- Organization of clinical years
- Grading system
- Housing and transportation: Expensive? Extensive?
- Student colleague reputation: Competitive or collegial?
- From where does the school attract students? Are students drawn from a broad range of schools or a limited range of schools and geographical regions? How might this impact your learning?
- Programs for underrepresented students
- Student organizations: How many are there and how much are they publicized by the school? Do they seem important to the school?
- Financial support: Is there a very helpful financial aid office? Are scholarships available?
- Combined programs (DDS/PhD, DDS/MBA, DDS/Masters in Public Health). Could you add a program after starting school?
- What about specialties? If you have a strong interest in Orthodontics or Periodontics, how many in the class go on to these?

5. TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts are ordered from the Office of the Registrar from the colleges and universities you have attended (you do not need to order high school transcripts). The HPPLC Office does not process transcripts. Transcripts must be sent directly from the schools you attended to AADSAS. AADSAS matches up your transcripts with your application, verifies that you have entered all the information accurately, and then sends your application to the schools you have selected. On the AADSAS application you print off a Transcript Matching Form, which has all the information needed to order your transcript from each school you have attended. This form should be submitted to the Registrar's Office at each school you attended. The printed form includes your AADSAS ID number to assist in matching your transcript with your application. You do not need to submit high school transcripts.

You must submit a transcript from the original college or university where the coursework was completed, even if the coursework transferred to Indiana University. All courses taken at IU campuses appear on one centralized transcript, with the only exception being Purdue courses completed at IUPUI or IU-Fort Wayne (if you completed a Purdue University course you will have to order a transcript from them, in addition to your IU transcript). This situation has caused some confusion and processing problems in the past. If the AADSAS system appears to indicate a hold because they have not received a transcript from another IU campus, call and tell the AADSAS representative to look on the back of the IU transcript where there is an explanation that the IU transcript is a centralized transcript.

Your application will not be processed until AADSAS receives transcripts from all schools you have attended. One of the most common causes of delays in processing your application is a problem with a transcript. Make sure that you do not have any holds on your account at IU that could prevent the Registrar's office from mailing out your transcript. If AADSAS does not receive your transcript they will not process your application and send it to the dental schools.

You can update the coursework section of your AADSAS application at the end of the fall semester to reflect newly-completed coursework using the "Academic Update" process. Details about this are available on the AADSAS website. The Academic Update period runs from mid-December to February. You should receive an email directly from AADSAS giving you instructions on how to complete this process.

6. DAT

The best advice is to prepare thoroughly and take the DAT as early as possible. We generally recommend taking the DAT soon after completing the general/inorganic and organic chemistry course requirements, while this material is still fresh in your mind. Often this timing coincides with the summer between your sophomore and junior year. If you have completed these chemistry courses by the spring of your sophomore year, we would recommend that you spend the summer preparing for the DAT and take it at the end of the summer, before beginning your junior year.

After you take the DAT, you must wait 90 days before registering to re-take the DAT.

You provide DAT score information on the AADSAS application for any test you have previously taken. You should then order official DAT scores for any school to which you are applying. You do not send DAT scores directly to AADSAS. DAT scores are sent directly to the dental schools to which you are applying.

For the IU dental school, the Director of Admissions, Dr. Kasberg, advises that you should have 18's in all areas of the DAT to have a good chance for admission. Scores above 18 will of course improve your chances for admission.

7. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

After completing the primary AADSAS application you will need to submit supplemental materials that are required by each individual dental school to complete your application. On the AADSAS application website, click on the link for "Participating Dental Schools" in order to access instructions on the additional materials requested by each dental school. Send these materials directly to the dental schools as instructed.

After the schools receive your AADSAS application, each school follows its own procedure. Some schools request that applicants submit these materials at the same time they submit the AADSAS application while other schools ask that applicants wait until the school invites them to submit supplemental application materials. Some schools may contact you by email and have you fill out an online form. Some schools will send you additional forms by postal mail. If you have questions you should check the school's website for additional instructions on their procedures, or call or e-mail the admissions office at the school. Supplemental materials should be sent directly to the dental schools, not to AADSAS (with the exception of letters of evaluation sent through AADSAS).

You should be aware that most schools will not review your file at all until all supplemental materials, including letters of recommendation, have been received. In essence what this means is that you have not actually applied to that school until you have completed your supplemental application, even if you selected the school months earlier on your primary application.

Many great applicants do not do as well in the admissions process because they fail to follow-up in a timely manner. Applicants who submit their primary applications early in the summer often gain an advantage in the admissions process, but if you subsequently submit your supplemental materials late, you have lost all the advantage you had in the beginning as an early applicant, as your application will now be reviewed after students who submitted their supplemental materials before you. It can really be to your advantage to follow-up in a timely manner and stay determined *throughout the entire application process*.

Some of the schools may ask you to submit additional essays on topics related to your preparation for dental school and a career in dentistry. Your journal may prove very valuable at this stage. You may find that you already have written material on relevant topics in your journal that can be expanded and incorporated into your essays for the supplemental applications.

It would be a good idea to set up a filing system once you reach the supplemental application stage, with a file folder for each school so that you can track your correspondence and contacts with them.

8. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

The HPPLC office does not automatically send your letters of recommendation to dental schools or to AADSAS. You must request that we send your letters to AADSAS and/or the individual schools where you are applying. Please refer to the HPPLC publication, "A Guide to the Recommendation Service" for complete instructions on how to use the recommendation service.

Some schools require that letters be sent through AADSAS while others request that you send them directly to the school. Please check the link on the AADSAS website for "Participating Dental Schools" to find the instructions for each school where you have applied.

AADSAS does not delay the processing of your application if they have not received your letters of evaluation. Letters of evaluation can be sent after you have submitted your primary AADSAS application. If your letters are sent to AADSAS after your application has been processed, they will be forwarded by AADSAS to the dental schools to which you have applied.

You have the option of sending individual letters of recommendation or the Predental Composite to dental schools. The Predental Composite is HPPLC's version of the committee letter which is often requested by admission offices at medical, dental, and other health professions programs. The Predental Composite consists of a compilation of all the letters written by your faculty recommenders into one document (please see the sample available in the HPPLC office). The letters are presented unedited and in entirety. You must have at least three recommendation letters written by faculty (you may include associate instructors) in order to have a composite made by our office.

The IU dental school requests three faculty evaluation letters, two of which must be from science professors. It is often helpful to have both science professors and non-science professors submit letters of evaluation, as they may reflect on knowledge of different aspects of your academic abilities. Personal evaluations are not required by the IU dental school, but they can be helpful if they address specific ways in which you have prepared for dental school, such as through gaining exposure to dentistry, developing manual dexterity, or building interpersonal skills through community service. Indiana University School of Dentistry will only accept letters of evaluation through AADSAS.

You should check with other dental schools regarding their guidelines on the number and types of evaluation letters to submit or consult the link for "Participating Dental Schools" on the AADSAS website.

Please ask professors well in advance and give them plenty of time to write letters of evaluation for you. Our office will send you an email when we receive a letter from one of your recommenders. Please monitor the status of your recommendation file and politely follow-up with any professors who have not submitted letters they said they would submit.

If you would like the HPPLC office to prepare a composite for you, you will need to submit a "Request to Create Faculty Composite Letter" form to the HPPLC office. Please note that there is a priority deadline of June 16 for submitting this form to our office (see section #14 for more information).

Applicants may submit to AADSAS a maximum of 1) four individual Letters of Evaluation OR 2) One Predental Committee Letter/Composite, plus the option of one additional letter of evaluation (this would generally be a personal recommendation).

Sending Your Letters through AADSAS:

Letters may be transmitted through AADSAS either electronically or by paper. We generally recommend that you request that we send them electronically. If you would like us to send your letters to dental schools through AADSAS you will need to submit a green "Request for Recommendations to be Sent" form to HPPLC, indicating on the form that you would like your letters to be sent to AADSAS. You also need to indicate on this form whether you would like us to send them by paper or electronically.

You are asked on the AADSAS application to provide the names of the evaluators who will be providing letters on your behalf. If you are using the HPPLC Recommendation Service please **do not** list the names or email addresses of individual recommenders. Instead, list Rachel Tolen and the email address recserve@indiana.edu. This will ensure that email communications regarding your letters come directly

to our office so that we may respond. You do not need to list the names and individual email addresses of faculty members or personal recommenders, and doing so may result in emails being misdirected to them that should come to our office so that we may process your letters.

If you would like your letters sent to AADSAS electronically, you will need to indicate so on the AADSAS application. You will also need to fill out a green “Request for Recommendations to be Sent” and turn it in to the HPPLC office, asking us to send your letters to AADSAS, and indicating on the form that you would like your letters to be sent electronically.

If you would like to have your letters sent by postal mail you will need to print out a Letter of Evaluation Matching Form from your AADSAS application and turn it in to HPPLC. The form that you will print out from your individual application will contain a unique barcode for your application. You only need to turn one copy of this form in to HPPLC. You do not need to give a copy of it to each of your evaluators. You will also need to fill out a green “Request for Recommendations to be Sent” and turn it in to the HPPLC office, asking us to send your letters to AADSAS, and indicating on the form that you would like your letters to be sent by postal mail.

9. INTERVIEWS

Once you have submitted your supplemental applications take some time over the summer to begin to prepare for your interviews. Why do dental schools hold interviews? The interview is used to assess your interpersonal and communication skills and how you would conduct yourself with patients.

Interviewing applicants requires a significant investment of time and money on the part of dental schools. They would not make this investment if they did not consider the interview to be critical in determining how prepared you are for dental school and a career in dentistry. Therefore you should prepare carefully for this crucial component of the admissions process.

The interview allows the admissions committee to find out – beyond your GPA and DAT score - who you are and how you have prepared for a career in dentistry.

Interviews at IU dental school in particular seek to determine how well an applicant will fit the teaching model they use, which is based on problem-based learning. Interviews also typically delve deeply into the student’s manual dexterity skills and exposure to dentistry.

Keeping a journal that you can review in preparing for your interviews can be very helpful. If you have kept a journal all along about the process you have gone through in preparing for a career in dentistry, you will have a valuable resource that you can review before walking into an interview. Reviewing this journal before going into your interview will help you be able to recall information about your background, and will help you come across as someone who knows where they’re coming from, where they want to go, and why they want to do it.

In preparation for the interview stage it is also important to research and investigate through reading and talking with dental practitioners about dental education and current issues in the practice of dentistry. For IU dental school, it is especially important to be familiar with their curriculum and the emphasis placed on problem-based learning.

It also would be helpful to review the handout available from the HPPLC office, “Dental School Interview Questions,” and attend one of the HPPLC Interview Skills Workshops in the fall semester.

10. ACCEPTANCES

Rules have been established by the ADEA that regulate the process by which schools make offers of admission and applicants accept offers. Please read the section on “Offers of Admission” available on the AADSAS website.

11. FOR REAPPLICANTS

If you have already applied to dental school and you were not admitted, you should take some time for self-assessment. The first question you need to answer is whether a career in dentistry is the best fit for you. Have you fully explored the profession, so that you are clear about the special demands needed to be successful in dental school and as a dentist? If after some self-reflection you decide that you want to pursue a career in dentistry, and that you will work very hard to do what it takes to be successful, the next step is to thoroughly evaluate what went wrong in the application process the first time. You should carefully review all aspects of your candidacy, to determine any weaknesses that resulted in denial of admission. Please feel free to set up an appointment with Dr. Tolen in the HPPLC office to discuss your candidacy. Many dental schools also are willing to advise students on why their applications were rejected.

After doing a thorough review, you need to endeavor to strengthen any aspects of your application that were weak **before** you reapply. Some students actually turn around and reapply with exactly the same academic record, same DAT scores, same application, even the same personal statement. If you do this, you should expect that the decision on your application will be the same as it was the first time and you will be rejected again. Do not make this mistake.

As a dental student you will need to be able to do continual self-assessment, recognize problems, and address them head on. If you reapply with obvious weaknesses in your application you may be communicating to the admissions committee that you lack these abilities. On the other hand, you can earn a lot of respect from an admissions committee by having the maturity to recognize weaknesses and do the hard work to address them *before* you reapply.

12. TIMELINE

APRIL

- Assemble materials in preparation for completing your application (spring transcript from IU, transcripts from all other universities attended, list of activities or resume).
- Work on writing personal statement. Keep a journal throughout the application process, and use it for ideas for your personal statement, supplemental applications, and interviews.
- Research dental schools. Consult the chart from the [Official Guide to Dental Schools](#) (a copy of this is available in the HPPLC office) which shows in-state and out-of-state acceptance rates, and the average grade point averages and average DAT scores of accepted students.

MAY

- Mid-May: Begin working on the AADSAS application as soon as it becomes available.
- Submit your completed AADSAS application as soon as possible. You should submit the application early, as soon as you feel it is complete, even if your DAT scores are not available yet or your recommendation file is incomplete. Your DAT scores and letters of recommendation can be sent later.
- Order transcripts from every school attended, using the AADSAS Transcript Matching Form.
- Check the Supplemental Materials Table on the AADSAS website and follow the instructions for submitting supplemental materials for each school to which you have applied. Order DAT scores to be sent to each school to which you are applying.

JUNE

- Check on the recommendations in your file and adhere to the June 16 priority deadline for completing your recommendation file and requesting your composite. Submit a "Request to

Create Faculty Composite Letter” by June 16 at the latest if you would like us to prepare a composite for you.

- After you submit your AADSAS application you should periodically log in to the AADSAS website and monitor the status of your application. You should call and check with AADSAS regarding any transcripts that are listed as not having been received and then check with the Registrar’s office to see if there was a problem with the order.
- As you receive supplemental application materials from each dental school, you should follow their instructions and submit the supplemental applications in a timely manner. Do not wait until the deadline to submit.

JULY and AUGUST

- Double check on everything. Be sure that supplemental applications and recommendation packets have been received by each school. Admissions offices receive thousands of documents and it is easy for one to get misfiled. Check everything by phone or on the school website if there is one dedicated to applicants and application status.
- Send recommendations as requested by the dental schools and confirm that they have received them.
- Research the programs and characteristics of the schools to which you have applied.
- Prepare for interviews. Continue to keep your journal, and review it for ideas to emphasize to an admissions committee. Consult the Dental School Interview Questions handout from the HPPLC office and prepare for questions you may be asked. Review questions from dental interviews at the Student Doctor website on “Dental School Interview Feedback” (<http://share.studentdoctor.net/interviewdent/index.asp>).
- Imagine that at the end of the year you may have a number of dental schools that have offered you admission and you may have to choose between them. What would you want to know about each school to help you decide? This will help you identify good questions you may wish to ask your interviewers in the interviews.

SEPTEMBER – MARCH

- Attend one of the HPPLC Interview Skills Workshops to be held in the fall semester.
- Many schools will allow you to send additional recommendations in December or January from professors from your fall classes if you have not received an acceptance yet and would like to try to strengthen your application. Check with the school admissions offices.
- Update the coursework section of your AADSAS application at the end of the fall semester to reflect newly-completed coursework using the “Academic Update” process. Details about this are available on the AADSAS website. AADSAS should send instructions about this to you by email.
- Visit with the representative of any dental school to which you have applied who visits campus. Dr. Kasberg from the IU dental school visits the IU Bloomington campus several times each semester. In 2008, six dental schools participated in the Indiana University Health Programs Fair. We recommend meeting with the representatives of all dental schools that participate in this event, and these schools would be good to include on the list of schools where you are applying, as they are particularly interested in recruiting students from our campus.
- Remain in contact with schools if you have submitted applications and have not heard back. A polite email or phone call to inquire about your status is generally acceptable.

- Prepare alternate plans with Dr. Tolen if your admission to dental school is in doubt.

13. SOME FINAL ADVICE

Make sure that your e-mail address is working and reachable at all times and that your Inbox never gets over capacity. Many students experience problems with their applications due to failure to respond quickly and appropriately to mailings from the schools. Check your email often for communications from the schools and follow up with every request from them in a timely manner.

The admissions cycle for dental schools takes place over a long period, allowing schools to thoroughly evaluate applicants and select the best candidates. The long admissions cycle also allows candidates to thoroughly investigate the schools so they can choose the best option for them. Schools are competing for the best applicants, just as applicants are competing to be admitted to schools. You will give yourself the best chance for admission if you apply early, follow-up swiftly, and pay attention to the details.

Please release your DAT scores and AADSAS information to Indiana University. Our office can help you better if information is released to us. The data we receive is crucial to our ability to advise students on our campus about how to prepare for admission. Our job here is to help you. Whether it is acting as a sounding board for choice of dental schools, providing comments on your essays, or helping you with problems, that's why we are here.

REMEMBER, DO IT EARLY AND DO IT RIGHT!

14. DEADLINE POLICY FOR COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATIONS

PRIORITY DEADLINE FOR COMPOSITE LETTERS: June 16, 2008

All applicants to medical and dental schools for the 2008-2009 application period should have their letter of recommendation files complete by June 16, 2008 if they would like to request that HPPLC prepare a composite letter for them (composite letters are highly recommended for applicants to medical and dental schools).

In order to guarantee that your composite will be prepared and ready to be sent by July 31, 2008, applicants must have their letter of recommendation files complete by June 16, 2008. This means that ***all*** of your letters ***must be received*** by the HPPLC Recommendation Service on or before June 16, 2008. Applicants who meet this deadline and who submit a "Request for Composite" form to HPPLC by June 16, 2008, are guaranteed to have their composites sent by July 31, 2008.

Requests for composites to be sent will be processed in the order received.

It is highly recommended that **all applicants**, including those who choose to send individual letters rather than a composite letter, have their letter of recommendation files complete by June 16, 2008, and submit requests for their letters to be sent immediately upon receiving a request from a school for letters of recommendation.

Applicants whose files are not complete by June 16, 2008 or who submit a "Request for Composite" form after June 16 will have their composites processed **after** August 1, 2008.

This document has been prepared for Indiana University - Bloomington students by the Health Professions and Prelaw Center. Please note that specific requirements and policies can change at any time without notice. Students are responsible for obtaining the most current information directly from the application services, schools, and programs in which they have an interest.

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