



# William & Mary Arts & Sciences

## Advising for Students Interested in Dental Programs

Updated March 2023 by Dr. Beverly Sher

### William & Mary Resources

Pre-dental students can schedule individual advising appointments with Professor Beverly Sher, William & Mary's pre-dental advisor, by emailing her at [btsher@wm.edu](mailto:btsher@wm.edu).

To receive announcements of interest to pre-dental students, as well as information about other health professions, subscribe to the Health Careers Advising listserv. To do this, log into [lists.wm.edu](https://lists.wm.edu), click on the Academic line in the list of types of lists, scroll down to Health Careers Advising, click its name, and then click the Subscribe link on the left side of the page.

The William & Mary Dental Society is the College's pre-dental student group. The Society sponsors events of interest to pre-dental students, including visits by dental school representatives. The website is <https://tribelink.wm.edu/organization/dentalsociety> and the email address is [dentalsociety@email.wm.edu](mailto:dentalsociety@email.wm.edu). They also have a Facebook group called "Dental Society of William and Mary."

### Books and Websites

The ADEA website has excellent information for prospective dental students: see the GoDental section of the website, available at <http://www.adea.org/GoDental/>.

To learn more about dentistry, as well as about the admissions policies and requirements of the various U.S. and Canadian dental schools, consult the dental schools' websites, as well as the Online ADEA Dental School Explorer. See <https://www.adea.org/officialguide/> for details.

### Course Selection

Most of the dental schools in the United States require two semesters each of introductory biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics, all with lab. Many dental schools also require a semester of biochemistry. Additionally, many dental schools require two semesters of English; COLL 150 seminars and English literature and composition courses can be used to fulfill this requirement. Mathematics requirements vary; some dental schools require or recommend taking calculus or statistics.

At William & Mary, the dental schools' usual requirements can be met as follows, with lecture/lab combinations designated for space-saving purposes as **lecture/ lab**: BIOL 203 /203L and BIOL 204/204L; CHEM 103/103L, 206/206L, 207/253 (or 209/253), 208/254, and 314; and PHYS 101/101L plus PHYS 102/102L or PHYS 107/107L plus PHYS 108/108L. Students planning to major in Chemistry or Physics should take PHYS 101/101L and PHYS 102/102L.

Important note: MATH 108 is NOT a pre-dental calculus course! Appropriate calculus courses include MATH 111 and 112 or MATH 131 and 132.

Appropriate statistics courses include MATH 106, PSYC 301, and Biostatistics, as well as KINE 394.

Note that many dental schools require that students earn a C or better in the required prerequisite courses. At William & Mary, it is not possible to retake a course for which you have already earned credit here, so if you earn a C- or worse in a required dental school prerequisite course at William & Mary, you will need to retake that course elsewhere in order to complete your dental school prerequisites.

Because dental schools' requirements differ, and because many dental schools encourage students to take additional recommended courses in addition to the courses they require, students should consult the individual schools' websites and the ADEA Online Dental School Explorer to learn more about the course requirements and recommendations of the schools that interest them.

Important note: Dental schools often expect students to have taken the majority of their required and recommended pre-dental courses by the time the student submits the AADSAS application.

### **Clinical Experience**

Dental school admissions committees expect competitive applicants to have spent a significant amount of time volunteering or working in dental settings. Prior to the pandemic, the VCU School of Dentistry's representatives suggested that students should acquire about 150 hours of dental experience before applying to dental school; 130 of these hours should be split between two general dentists, 10 should be spent with an orthodontist, and 10 with an oral surgeon. See the dental schools' websites for current clinical hour requirements.

Additional opportunities to acquire dental experience and learn more about the dental profession include volunteering in a free clinic that offers dental care (in the Williamsburg area, Olde Towne Medical Center and the Lackey Clinic provide dental services to uninsured patients) and participating in enrichment programs such as Rutgers's Gateway to Dentistry program and SHPEP (<http://www.shpep.org/about/>).

The ADEA has developed ethical guidelines for pre-dental students who participate in clinical activities abroad, and students should familiarize themselves with these guidelines before signing up for any international service opportunity to be sure that the things that they will be doing on the trip will not violate the ADEA guidelines. The guidelines are available on the ADEA website. William & Mary's Office of Community Engagement can provide further guidance.

### **AADSAS and the DAT**

The AADSAS application is the primary application for students applying to dental school. Dental schools recommend filing the AADSAS application as early as possible don't wait until the formal AADSAS deadlines later in the year to submit your AADSAS application! See the ADEA website for comprehensive information on the dental school application process.

The DAT is the standardized test for dental school applicants. Commercial DAT study materials have worked well for our students in the past. You should plan to take the DAT by early July of the year in which you intend to start applying to dental school.