

# TRADITIONAL ADMISSIONS

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Any college student or graduate can apply for admission to the four-year Doctor of Dental Surgery program. A student should be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. (the only exception is for students considered through the school's agreement with the State of Kuwait). As a public institution financially supported by the state of Missouri, our first obligation is to qualified residents of **Missouri**. Additionally, we have long-standing agreements with the states of **Kansas, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Hawaii** to accept qualified residents of those states to our program. Applications from other states are welcome and are considered on an individual basis for highly qualified candidates. A limited number of students are also considered through an agreement with the State of Kuwait.

Candidates may apply and be considered for acceptance after successful completion of a minimum of 90 hours of college credit. After completion of a minimum of 120 hours of college credit, the accepted applicant will be eligible to matriculate into the program. All candidates for this program are encouraged to complete a baccalaureate degree before entry. In fact, college degree-holders with a broad educational background are the preference of the Dental Student Admission Committee.

**The admission process** is "selective". A holistic review is taken to consider a number of variables which include objective criteria, subjective criteria, background experiences, personal statements, and interviews. Interviews are "invitation only". Approximately 109 candidates are admitted to the D.D.S. program annually.

Those who want to apply for admission must apply online through the AADSAS Application Service administered by the American Dental Education Association at <http://www.adea.org/>. Although the UMKC deadline for application submission is October 1, early applications are strongly recommended. **A preference is given to applications received in the Office of Student Programs of the School of Dentistry prior to September 1.** Keep in mind that AADSAS can take up to six weeks to process and deliver an application. Therefore, it is extremely important that you apply in June or July of the year prior to anticipated entry into dental school.

Counseling by the School of Dentistry's admissions staff is available to those interested in applying for admission. It is advisable to seek this counseling early in the undergraduate program.

## Candidate Objective Criteria

### GPA/College Hour Minimums

**The following are the Dental Student Admission Committee's guidelines for GPA/college semester credit hour/Dental Admission Test (DAT) minimums and preferences:**

- Preference will be given to candidates with 90 or more semester hours of college credit at the time of application with a science GPA of 3.40 or higher and/or a DAT academic average of 17 or higher.
- A candidate with 90 or more semester hours of college credit at the time of application with a science GPA of 3.00 and a DAT academic average of 16 or higher can be considered for an interview.
- It should be noted that no more than 60 hours of college credit can be earned at a community college and preference will be given to candidates who complete the science prerequisites at a four-year institution.

A broad liberal education culminating in a bachelor's degree is strongly encouraged of applicants seeking admission into this program. Recent history indicates that admission of a candidate who does not have a B.S./B.A. degree or who is not likely have one at the time of enrollment in the D.D.S. program is rather rare.

### Pre-Dental Course Requirements

There is no required college major for admission to the School of Dentistry. However, certain courses are required prior to entering. Strong academic performance is expected with minimal acceptable performance of a 'C' in lectures and labs.

#### Biology

- A minimum of four semesters of biology with labs. In particular, we require general biology I, anatomy, physiology, and one of the following – cell biology, molecular biology, microbiology, or histology.
- Other courses that have counterparts in the dental curriculum (i.e., genetics, immunology, neuroscience, medical terminology) are strongly recommended.

#### Chemistry

- A minimum of two semesters of general chemistry with labs (Chemistry I and Chemistry II).
- A minimum of two semesters of organic chemistry with labs (Organic Chemistry I and Organic Chemistry II).
- A minimum of one semester of biochemistry (lab is recommended but not required).

#### Physics

- A minimum of two semester of physics with labs (Physics I and Physics II).

## English

- A minimum of 6 credit hours of English composition. (Courses in speech are not acceptable as substitutes for English composition.)

## Other

- It is advantageous to have course credit in mathematics, formal logic, histology, business, social/behavioral sciences (such as psychology), communication skills, computer science, the humanities and applied arts (such as sculpting, drawing, etc.). A suggested pre-dental schedule of activities can be reviewed at the Pre-Dentistry (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/specialized-academic-opportunities/pre-dent/>) catalog page.

## Dental Admission Test

All dental school applicants must take the Dental Admission Test (DAT) administered by the American Dental Association. The DAT is given throughout the year by computer at designated testing centers, and a score must be submitted to be fully considered.

DAT scores are based on a range of 1 to 30, with 19.0 generally being the national average of accepted dental students. The Dental Student Admission Committee requires a minimum DAT score of 16, but prefers that a candidate's DAT scores be 17 or higher to be considered for admission. Multiple sub-scores below a 17 will impact a candidate's competitiveness.

For more information about the DAT go to <http://www.ada.org> (<http://www.ada.org/>). Learn more about the UMKC SOD's summer **STAHR Dental Scholars DAT Prep Program** at <https://info.umkc.edu/stahr/scholars/dat-prep/>.

## Candidate Subjective Criteria

When considering candidates for possible admission, the UMKC School of Dentistry's Dental Student Admission Committee (DSAC) reviews the entire scope of information that is available on each applicant. For each candidate the sources of this information include the academic record (i.e., overall GPA, science GPA and Dental Admission Test scores), AADSAS essay, responses to items on the UMKC School of Dentistry's Application Survey, letters of reference, interview assessment, and any other information provided by the candidate (e.g., personal statement). Specifically, the committee will expect evidence of the following factors in making the difficult choices among candidates:

1. Demonstrated investigation of the profession of dentistry. It is strongly suggested that candidates observe in a minimum of five different dental offices (the offices of general dentists and specialists) and acquire a minimum of 80-100 hours of dental office observation, preference is given to candidates who have worked in a dental office.
2. Evidence of social conscience and compassion (i.e., caring attitude, sensitivity to those in need, significant community activities). It is strongly suggested that this be active and ongoing participation in volunteer activities.
3. Indication of fundamental personal character (i.e., integrity, maturity, self-reliance, leadership skills).
4. Evidence of critical thinking and problem solving ability (e.g., performance in courses requiring this skill such as in laboratory segments, in formal logic or in research experiences).
5. Significant and sustained level of academic achievement based on full course loads with evidence of a broad science and liberal arts education (i.e., fine arts, business, mathematics, humanities, computer science, etc.).
6. Established effective interpersonal/communication skills (i.e., an ability to communicate orally and in writing, a capacity to listen, a personality conducive to forming personal and/or professional relationships, an involvement in a range of extracurricular activities, especially those in which significant leadership roles have been taken).
7. Demonstrated ability to balance full academic schedules with extracurricular involvement and/or employment (i.e., effective/efficient management of time).

Because the Dental School Admission Committee looks closely at information from all sources included in an applicant's file, it is in the candidate's best interest that this information is consistent among sources. This is especially true with information supplied directly by the candidate (i.e., AADSAS essay, UMKC School of Dentistry's Application Survey, interview and/or personal statement). You are strongly encouraged to review all written materials for consistency and accuracy before submission.

Finally, before developing these written materials, the candidate is strongly encouraged to honestly and critically assess himself/herself on all the qualities identified. Following this process, the candidate is urged to review drafts of these documents collectively (e.g., to check for completeness, accuracy and consistency) and to evaluate himself/herself comprehensively as if he/she were a member of the Dental Student Admission Committee. Where the candidate feels a question may arise from Committee review, the applicant is encouraged to address this in a personal statement/letter to the Committee.

## Letters of Evaluation

A minimum of three letters of recommendation or one pre-health advisory committee letter is required. If there is not a pre-health advisory committee at least one letter from a faculty member and one from a dentist is required.

## Personal Interview

A personal interview with the School of Dentistry is required as part of the selection process. The interview is by invitation only, an applicant for admission may not request it.

## **Notification of Admission**

Applications for admission are reviewed by the Dental Student Admission Committee. In accordance with the guidelines of the American Dental Education Association, no notification of the admission decision is made to a candidate before Dec. 15 of the current admissions cycle.

After a final decision is reached on an applicant, official notifications will be sent to each candidate. Accepted candidates have 30 days from the date of an acceptance letter to make a required nonrefundable \$500 deposit. If notification of acceptance is made after Feb. 1, the candidate must submit the deposit within 15 days of the date of acceptance.

Several individuals are placed on a list of alternates. In the event that a position becomes available, an applicant from this list is chosen to fill the vacancy.

Denied applicants who are interested in reapplying should make an appointment with the School of Dentistry director of admissions to discuss the reason for the denial. Advice will be offered to applicants to enhance their future applications.