

CERRITOS COLLEGE

PRE-DENTAL CAREER PATHWAY

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The requirements listed for the major are subject to change without notice. It is the student's responsibility to check for the most recent information with a Cerritos College counselor or by consulting ASSIST at www.assist.org.

NOTE: Courses listed may require prerequisite coursework.

The following curriculum does not lead to an Associate in Arts Degree in Pre-Dental. However, students may fulfill requirements for a Natural Sciences Degree by completing a minimum of 18 units of science and math courses to include at least 4 units in the Physical Sciences, at least 4 units in the Biological Sciences, and at least 3 units in a math course beyond Intermediate Algebra. Please refer to the Cerritos College catalog for more information.

Admission to dental school is highly competitive. Most schools of dentistry admissions are based primarily on the candidates' academic achievement in a college program and performance in the Dental Admissions Test (DAT). The DAT measures general academic ability, reading comprehension, vocabulary, analytical thinking, comprehensive scientific information and perceptual ability. Take the DAT at least a year prior to seeking admission to dental school. Because most of the applicants being admitted to dental schools possess a bachelor's degree, students are advised to integrate the dental school requirements into a program that will lead to a bachelor's degree in a major of their choice. However, there are Dental Schools which consider 90 semester units (60 units lower division and 30 units of upper division coursework) with a very competitive grade point average (GPA) as the minimum requirement for admission. Aside from pre-requisite courses and GPA, admissions committees review credentials such as academic qualifications, letters of recommendation, personal interviews and dental office shadowing experiences. Admission requirements can vary from school to school. It is recommended that students engage in extracurricular activities such as volunteering in a dental setting and community services. Pre-dental students should be able to demonstrate their potential for independent critical thought, leadership, concern for others, and an understanding of the dental profession. Additionally, pre-dental students should work at developing and/or improving manual dexterity and eye-hand coordination.

COMMON LOWER DIVISION PREPARATION FOR DENTAL SCHOOLS UNITS

Class	Number	Course Name	UNITS
BIOL	200	Principles of Biology	5
BIOL	200	Principles of Biology	5
CHEM	111	General Chemistry	5
CHEM	112	General Chemistry	5
CHEM	211	Organic Chemistry	5
CHEM	212	Organic Chemistry	5
ENGL	100	Freshman Composition	4
ENGL	102	Freshman Composition and Literature	3
PHYS	201	Engineering Physics	4
PHYS	202	Engineering Physics	4

NOTE: PSYC 101, General Introductory Psychology is required by many dental schools.

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ADDITIONAL SCIENCES: It is strongly suggested that students take additional courses at the university, such as Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Histology. Some of these courses may be considered additional requirements or elective coursework. **NOTE:** It is recommended to complete science courses within 5 years of admission.

MATHEMATICS: The mathematics requirement beyond Trigonometry will be determined by the major course of study the student elects to pursue. However, one semester to one year of Calculus and one course of Statistics are strongly recommended.

RECOMMENDED COURSEWORK: Lower division courses that may be taken are Business, Fine Arts, Technical Writing, Speech, Philosophy, Engineering, Social Sciences, Sociology/Anthropology, Foreign Language and Ceramics/Sculpture. For expanded information about dental school requirements, students are encouraged to consult The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) website: <http://www.ada.org/en/coda/find-a-program>. CODA contains comprehensive lists of accredited schools and programs.

OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES:

American Dental Education Association at <http://www.adea.org> or Dental Admission Test (DAT) information at <https://www.ada.org/education/testing>.

For accurate programming and more school-specific detailed information concerning the California schools of dentistry, look up the dental school website:

Loma Linda University
dentistry.llu.edu

University of California, Los Angeles
www.dentistry.ucla.edu

University of California, San Francisco
<http://dentistry.ucsf.edu/> and/or www.assist.org

University of the Pacific, San Francisco Campus
www.dental.pacific.edu/

University of Southern California
<http://dentistry.usc.edu>

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CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:

Dentists diagnose and treat problems with teeth and tissues in the mouth, along with giving advice and administering care to help prevent future problems. Most dentists are general practitioners, handling a variety of dental needs. Other dentists' practice in any of nine specialty areas.

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Orthodontist, the largest group of specialists, prevents or corrects irregularities of the teeth. The next largest group, oral and maxillofacial surgeons, operates on the mouth and jaws. The remainder may specialize as pediatric dentists (focusing on dentistry for children); periodontists (treating gums and bone supporting the teeth); prosthodontists (replacing missing teeth with permanent fixtures, such as crowns and bridges, or with removable fixtures such as dentures); endodontists (performing root canal therapy); public health dentists (promoting good dental health and preventing dental diseases within the community); oral pathologists (studying oral diseases); or oral and maxillofacial radiologists (diagnosing diseases in the head and neck through the use of imaging technologies). Employment of dentists is projected to grow **7%** from **2021-2031**. The median annual salary for dentists is **\$163,220** according to the Occupational Outlook Handbook. Earnings vary according to number of years in practice, location, hours worked, and specialty. Self-employed dentists in private practice tend to earn more than do salaried dentists, and a relatively large proportion of dentists are self-employed.