

PRE-DENTAL

QUESTION: As a pre-dental student, what did you do to build up your CV?

ANSWER: I joined both the pre-dental society and APHP and interviewed for a leadership position when given the opportunity. I also joined a lab as an undergraduate research assistant and made sure to show interest in performing my own experiments. I also worked part time consistently throughout undergrad and started shadowing my family dentist to gain some insight into the profession.

ANSWER: I started by shadowing my family dentist who just so happens to be my inspiration for choosing this career. I would go a few times a month to gain experience and knowledge. I joined APHP my Junior year and I was inspired to really be engaged and learn about the local community. I have volunteered my time to the Las Vegas and Henderson community since I was a sophomore in High School.

ANSWER: I've had medical and dental experience since high school because I attended a magnet school that allowed me opportunities to get internships at hospitals and dental clinics. But in college, I started shadowing a dentist my freshmen year. I would go once a month or every two weeks just to get experience little by little. I stopped shadowing my junior year but I didn't shadow much during the summers. I also worked a couple hours during my undergrad overall. I joined APHP and Dental Prospects my junior year as well, which was a mistake because I should've started earlier in my sophomore year. Both clubs give great opportunities to get volunteer hours and to help the community. I got a leadership position in APHP my senior year.

QUESTION: Would hospital volunteering be beneficial for a pre-dental student?

ANSWER: I have heard mixed reviews about this question. I know a student who is a scribe at a hospital to build up his CV because the dentist he shadowed told him the dental schools like to see it but I have also heard that it doesn't give you any advantage either. In my opinion, it would be nice to do it if you have time because you're competing with other students to get accepted and the better you look on paper the better your application will look compared to others. I don't think this is an acceptance determinant type of experience to have though.

ANSWER: Anything that sets you apart from another person will be beneficial to your application. Although hospital volunteering is not required to apply, or even to be competitive, it would help. If your GPA or DAT score is lacking, volunteer more.

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: If given the opportunity to go back a few years, I would have made sure to make a list and timeline of all of the “extras” I was expected to participate in in order to be seen as a competitive candidate by dental schools. It’s definitely terrifying to start your junior year and have fellow students ask which lab you’re doing your research in and which doctors you are shadowing, having no idea that these were things that you were supposed to do.

ANSWER: Unfortunately there are some things in life that you can’t control and it’s always going to be a difficult journey. I wish I could have started even earlier to prepare for whatever hardships that would come. I wish I could have learned to manage time a lot better to maximize how well I could do in classes.

ANSWER: If I could go back and start everything I needed earlier, such as pre-dental and pre-professional clubs, my life would be less stressful right now. I would talk to students more to see their opinions on classes as well instead of just listening to advisors. I would go to office hours of my favorite professors so they could get to know me better instead of rushing to get letters from professors last minute.

ANSWER: Definitely take a lighter load while studying for the DAT.

ANSWER: The only thing I would redo is get my letters taken care of earlier. Start going to office hours regularly and develop some sort of relationship with a professor.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial generally or for the DAT?

ANSWER: Biol 223 and 224 are by far the most beneficial and interesting classes you will take in undergrad in my opinion. I also think immunology is another great course.

ANSWER: BIO 196, BIO 197, CHEM 121, CHEM 122, CHEM 241, CHEM 242, CHEM 474, BIO 223. BIO 224

ANSWER: Low level BIOL classes will cover you for the most part. Definitely take OChem 2 before the DAT, as it will help tremendously.

QUESTION: What DAT tips can you give?

ANSWER: Start. Early. Do not wait last minute to start studying. The DAT is a marathon, not a sprint. If you're going to study for the DAT during the semester then you need to make sure your classes aren't the most difficult biology and chemistry courses you need. If workload is a problem then study in the summer and don't take classes over summer. Pay attention in General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry and Biol 196 the most because those will come back to haunt you if you don't know the material well.

ANSWER: I suggest you take the DAT around February, so you have enough time to retake it if necessary. You have to wait 3 months before you can take it. It's a good idea to register to take the DAT around November to take it in February. This way you have all of winter break and some of the semester to study for it. The subjects covered on the DAT include: general biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, reading comprehension, quantitative, and perceptual ability. The most difficult section for me was general chemistry. I used Kaplan, Princeton Review, and the DAT Destroyer.

ANSWER: I prepared for the DAT using the DAT Destroyer and Barron's DAT. I found the Destroyer to be the most useful for the Science and Math sections. Barron's tries to teach you to recognize patterns in order to answer questions quickly, but I did not find it quite as useful. Refresh your Algebra and Trig skills. It had been years since my last math class and it hurt me. In my experience with the DAT, the science questions are fairly easy, so I would recommend spending more of your study time on the Perceptual Ability Test section which will be tough and slap you in the face. Barron's does a fair job preparing you for the PAT portion, but not well enough. Everyone studies differently, so take this information with a grain of salt.