

Pre- Dental Scheduling and Timelines

Scheduling of Dental School Prerequisites

Pre-dental students should complete the core science pre-requisites before taking the DAT. This can be accomplished in different ways, with the two most popular schedules shown in Table 1. These plans chart the minimum science coursework for students on a pre-dental track over the four years that students are expected to be at Mercer University.

Pre-dental students must check the admission requirements of the individual dental schools to which they are likely to apply and to adjust their personal plans accordingly. Mercer University advisors recommend that during their first year, students create a personalized plan that includes the requirements of their major(s) and minor(s) and the admission requirements of their target schools, and takes into account the student’s initial math placement.

A student’s scheduling of these courses depends on factors such as a student’s initial mathematics placement and the availability of required courses for the student’s academic major. When arranging their course schedules, pre-health students are advised to plan ahead and review the published lists of Mercer University course offerings. This is important because not all of the required courses for a student’s major and/or the pre-health track will be offered every semester, and a one-semester delay due to complications involving prerequisites could turn into a one-year delay in applying to professional school.

Math Placement. To enroll in chemistry and physics course sequences, a student must demonstrate a minimum mathematics competency that is equivalent to pre-calculus (MAT 133) or above; this competency may be demonstrated through credit (college, AP, or CLEP) for MAT 133 or its equivalent, or through a score of 15 or higher on the math placement test. Information about the math placement test can be found online here: <https://liberalarts.mercer.edu/academic-programs/majors-and-minors/mathematics/student-resources/>. Regarding the CLEP exam for pre-calculus: **A student who scores 50% or higher on the CLEP pre-calculus exam may submit his or her test official transcript to the Mercer registrar and receive MAT 133 credit.** Information about the CLEP pre-calculus exam can be found here: <http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/precalculus>.

Course Loads. The dental school curriculum is quite rigorous, so admissions committees will look to an applicant’s ability to carry a full academic load as s/he completes the undergraduate studies as an indicator of how well he or she might handle the professional school curriculum. Unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent him/her from doing so (e.g., employment, family circumstances), a pre-dental student is expected to take 15 to 17 hours each semester.

AP, IB, and CLEP Credit to Fulfill Science Pre-requisites. An increasing number of medical schools do not accept AP, IB, or CLEP credit to fulfill the core science pre-requisites. Because some dental schools feel the same way, students should check their preferred dental programs for their policies on AP/ IB/ CLEP credit. In many cases, it is in the student’s best interest to decline AP, IB, or CLEP credit for general chemistry, general biology, and physics, and take the actual college courses instead.

Table 1. Scheduling of Science Prerequisites

A. Math Index Below 980

| Year | Fall | Spring | |
|------|---|---|---|
| 1 | MAT 095 or 133 | MAT 133 or math for major | Volunteer or Shadowing Experience or Independent Research |
| 2 | CHM 111 BIO 171 Declare Major | CHM 112 BIO 172 | Volunteer or Shadowing Experience or Independent Research |
| 3 | BIO 260 or 280 as required by major CHM 221 PHY 141 | BIO 260 or 280 as required by major CHM 222 PHY 142 If no gap year desired: Prepare for DAT and AADSAS | BMB 465 (if offered) If competitive and no gap year desired: Take DAT; Submit AADSAS |
| 4 | Apply for May graduation if degree requirements on track | If gap year desired: Prepare for DAT and AADSAS | Take DAT; Submit AADSAS? |

B. Math Index 980+

| Year | Fall | Spring | Summer |
|------|--|--|---|
| 1 | CHM 111 BIO 171 | CHM 112 BIO 172 | Volunteer or Shadowing Experience or Independent Research Experience |
| 2 | CHM 221 BIO 260 or 280 as required by major <i>Declare Major</i> | CHM 222 BIO 260 or 280 as required by major | Volunteer or Shadowing Experience or Independent Research Experience |
| 3 | PHY 141 BMB 465 or other BIO | PHY 142 BMB 465 or other BIO <i>If no gap year desired: Prepare for DAT and AADSAS</i> | Volunteer or Shadowing Experience or Independent Research Experience <i>If competitive and no gap year desired: Take DAT; Submit AADSAS</i> |
| 4 | <i>Apply for May graduation</i> | <i>If gap year desired: Prepare for DAT and AADSAS</i> | Take DAT; Submit AADSAS? |

