

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

Admissions Policy

The admissions policy of UTSD includes a wide variety of criteria, including qualitative and quantitative information, in evaluating applicants individually and making decisions on acceptance into the D.D.S. degree program. The admissions processes for the undergraduate Dental Hygiene certificate, Baccalaureate (B.S.), degree-completion programs, Master of Science in Dental Hygiene (MSDH), and graduate Advanced Education Programs utilize a mix of cognitive and non-cognitive consideration factors that are similar to the Dental Education Program. The Dental Admissions Committee gives individual consideration to applicants. The Admissions Committee considers the application in its entirety and gives importance to the following factors:

1. Intellectual capacity, based on consideration of undergraduate and graduate records; academic progression/regression; standardized test scores; academic awards and honors; a history of research accomplishments; degree of difficulty of the undergraduate educational program; pre-professional evaluations; personal interview; and any other data submitted.
2. Interpersonal and communication skills, based on consideration of community or charitable service, extracurricular activities and organizations, leadership positions, employment history, recognition for humanitarian service, awareness and direct knowledge of cultural elements as they may have an impact on healthcare, expression of future goals in the written essay; statements made on the application or in the personal interview; and any other relevant considerations the student's pre-professional advisors may present;
3. Knowledge of the profession, based on consideration of an understanding of factors that have an impact on access to care, along with the social and financial implications; consideration of the impact of lifelong learning; and demonstrated significant effort in seeking knowledge regarding the practice of dentistry or participation in oral health promotion activities.
4. Potential for service to the State of Texas, based on consideration of the applicant's goals for the future; size and location of hometown and whether the applicant resides in a Health Professions Shortage Area; potential for future provision of health services to underserved areas or needed specialties; race/ethnicity as it relates to service to underserved and underrepresented populations; linguistic skills appropriate to the Health Professions Shortage Area the applicant wishes to serve;
5. Motivation, based on consideration of success in overcoming adverse personal, economic, or educational conditions; employment during undergraduate education; participation in activities requiring time management skills; experience in health-related activities; and heavier than normal academic course loads (≥ 18 hours/semester).
6. Integrity, based on consideration of professional evaluations; any academic integrity violation; commission of a crime; any other relevant background relating either positively or negatively to the applicant's standard of integrity; and
7. Essential skills, based on consideration of psychomotor skills (fine motor dexterity and coordination) and observational skills (vision, hearing, and tactile abilities) sufficient to master the clinical

procedures essential to treating oral disease, with or without reasonable accommodation.

An interview is required before the Dental Admissions Committee will make a final determination regarding any applicant. Interviews are arranged by invitation only and are conducted both for the Committee's informational purposes and to provide the applicant with information about dentistry and the School of Dentistry program. The interview is a substantive step in the admissions process and will be used to investigate the criteria noted above further. An Admissions Committee member or designee conducts all interviews. The interviewing committee member scores interview candidates, which further contributes to the overall evaluation of the applicant.

The selection of the entering class is based upon the total evaluation conducted by the Dental Admissions Committee incorporating the criteria listed above.

Student Conduct and Discipline

Students are responsible for knowing and observing University regulations concerning student conduct and discipline, including those outlined in UTHealth Houston Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOOP) Policy 186, Student Conduct and Discipline (<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/policy.htm?id=1448220>). The University of Texas School of Dentistry at Houston Student Guide to Academic Studies also outlines rules specific to student conduct and discipline, distributed during orientation and at the beginning of each semester.

Student Grievances Procedures

Grade Grievance Procedure

If a student disputes the grade received on a course examination, it is the student's responsibility to arrange an appointment to discuss the grievance with the appropriate faculty member. The faculty member retains the primary responsibility for student evaluation and assignment of grades. A faculty member's judgment in such cases is final unless there is substantial evidence of discrimination, differential treatment, or error. If the student feels that the grade grievance has not been adequately addressed after meeting with the appropriate faculty member, the student may appeal the grievance in writing to the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs within seven working days. The Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs will review the case and submit a written recommendation to the Dean within fourteen working days. The Dean will respond in writing to the student's grievance within five working days. In academic issues, the dean's determination is final and not subject to further appeal.

Nonacademic Grievance Procedure

Students enrolled in UTSD should report abuse or mistreatment to the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean will meet with the student to discuss the incident or behavior and the options for action.

University policies and procedures concerning misconduct by faculty and staff, including sexual and physical abuse and harassment, are outlined in the UTHealth Houston HOOP 59, Sexual Misconduct (<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/policy.htm?id=1447966>), and HOOP 183, Nondiscrimination, Anti-Harassment and Equal Opportunity (<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/policy.htm?id=1448214>). The Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs will advise and assist the student in following the institution's applicable procedures.

Student Health Insurance Program

The University of Texas System Board of Regents mandates that all students in the UT System obtain health insurance. More information regarding student health insurance can be found in the UTHHealth Houston General Information Catalog (<https://catalog.uth.edu/general-information/student-services/student-health-insurance/>) or at Auxiliary Enterprises Student Insurance (<http://www.uth.edu/auxiliary-enterprises/insurance/>).

Criminal Background Checks

An offer of admission to any program at UTSD is expressly contingent upon the successful completion and review of a criminal background check, which is required before matriculation. The criminal background check will, among other things, serve to verify the information provided in the application. Individuals who do not permit the conduct of the criminal background check as required will be subject to withdrawal of the offer of admission to School programs.

Dental and Dental Hygiene Licensure Eligibility

According to State law and the Texas Board of Dental Examiners, a person applying for initial licensure to practice Dentistry and Dental Hygiene in the State of Texas may be ineligible for licensure due to a previous conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.

For more information contact the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners by email: information@tsbde.texas.gov or by phone: (512) 463-6400.

Disability Accommodations

UTHHealth Houston is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to all members of the University community and to individuals who access services or programs of the University who have or had an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Reasonable accommodation may be provided to an individual with a disability to enable the individual to participate in University academic programs, services, and activities, so long as it does not create undue hardship or fundamentally alter the essential elements of a program or position.

Students seeking disability-related accommodation must contact University Relations & Equal Opportunity (UREO) to initiate the accommodation process. Accommodation requests are considered on a case-by-case basis considering the student's individual limitations, accommodation needs, and the operational realities of the university. If the requestor is determined to be a qualified individual, the requestor, the designated Section 504 Coordinator and applicable faculty will engage in an interactive process facilitated by UREO to determine if it is possible to grant reasonable accommodation.

Accommodations are not retroactive, and require advance notice to implement. To allow adequate time to evaluate the required documentation, engage in the interactive process, and make arrangements for any accommodation to be provided, requestors are strongly urged to contact UREO as soon as possible.

The school is not required to grant accommodations that constitute a fundamental alteration of the program or course. Specifically, the school does not have to modify a requirement, including attendance, that is essential to the educational purpose or objective of a program or class. Decisions regarding essential requirements of a course or program

will be made by a group of people who are trained, knowledgeable, and experienced in the area through a careful, thoughtful, and rational review of the academic program and its requirements. Decision-makers will consider a series of alternatives for the essential requirements, as well as whether the essential requirement(s) in question can be modified for a specific student with a disability.

For additional information on the disability accommodation process, please see HOOP Policy 101, Disability and Pregnancy Accommodation (<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/policy.htm?id=1448050>).

A list of UTHHealth Houston 504 Coordinator's by school can be found here (<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/section-504-coordinators.htm>).