



**Pre-Health Advising**  
*Pre-Professional Advising Office*  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

# **Applicant Orientation**

**(for students planning to apply to dental or optometry school)**

**Lise Kalla**

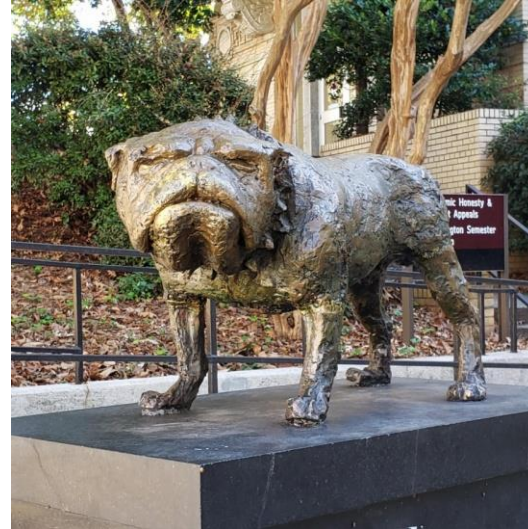
Pre-Dent/Optomtery Advisor | Pre-Professional Advising Office

*Office of the Vice President for Instruction*



# About the Pre-Health Advising Office

- Advising UGA students and alumni interested in healthcare careers
  - Medicine, dentistry, vet, optometry, allied-health (GC, PT, OT, AA), physician's associate and nursing
- Located at 130 Memorial Hall
  - **Website:** [ppao.uga.edu](http://ppao.uga.edu)
  - **Email:** [pemed@uga.edu](mailto:pemed@uga.edu)
  - **Phone:** 706-542-0444
- Visit our [website](#):
  - Join our [Pre-Health UGA listserv](#)
  - Monitor our [Pre-Health Event Calendar](#) for upcoming meetings/workshops/events
  - Make an appointment with a [Pre-Health Advisor](#)
  - Check out our [Study Abroad programs](#)



# Meet Your Advisor!



Click on my picture to  
read my bio!

Hi! My name is Lise Kalla. I am your pre-dental and pre-optometry advisor. I am here to guide you in building your credentials so that you will succeed in your professional school application.

I encourage you to meet with me at the end of the fall semester before you apply to get you ready for the application process.

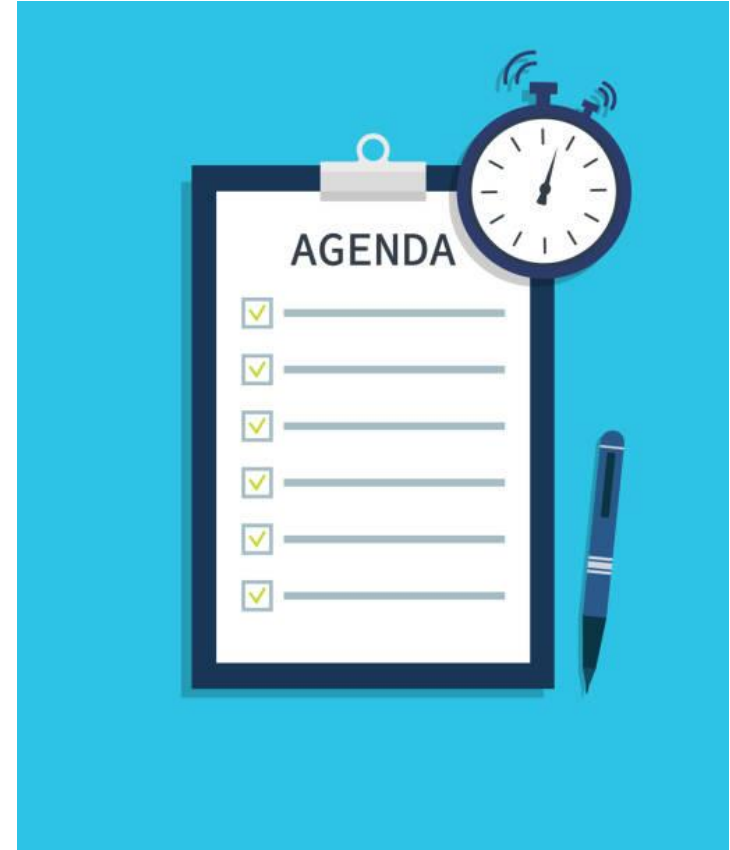
I am happy to assist with all elements of your application.

Make an appointment in SAGE.



# Orientation Overview

- Are You Ready?
  - Choosing a Gap Year
- Important Application Dates
- Application Tips
- Pre-Application Tasks
  - Target Programs
  - DAT/OAT
  - Personal Statement
  - Letters of Evaluation
  - Organization of Experiences
- Application Walkthroughs
- Secondary Applications
- Interviews
- Re-Applying
- Timeline Tables



# Am I Ready?

How do you stack up as a competitive applicant?

	Dental School	Optometry School
GPA		
Admission Test	AA/TS/PA = 20+ with no section score below 19	AA/TS = 340+
Shadowing/Experience	100 hours with 2-3 general dentists; 300 for DCG	75 - 100 hours with 2-3 general optometrists
Involvement with Leadership	3 organizations in college	3 organizations in college
Volunteering	200 hours with two organizations – direct service	75-100 hours with two organizations – direct service



# Choosing a Gap Year

- Delaying application cycle until graduation year or beyond
- Need to build credentials
  - GPA – time to take more BCP courses in curriculum
    - Special masters/Post-Baccalaureate
  - Leadership/Involvement – take advantage of senior-year experiences
  - Community service – here and at home
  - Shadowing/experience in your future profession
- Not ready for DAT/OAT
  - Required for complete application
  - Competitive score is needed
  - Acceptable for 2 years
- Professional schools DO NOT frown on gap years!
  - Your commitment to the profession
  - Self-awareness of need to improve
  - Respect for admissions process by putting best self forward



# Important Application Dates

## For the 2022-2023 application cycle:

- [ADEA AADSAS](#) (Dental Schools)
  - Mid-May: Application Opens
  - Early June: Submission Begins
  - December 15 – Offers of Acceptance
- [TMDSAS](#) (Texas Medical and Dental Schools – UTH accepts AADSAS )
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in May: Application Opens
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in May: Submission Begins
  - December 15 – Offers of Acceptance
- [OptomCAS](#) (Optometry Schools)
  - June 30: Application Opens and Submission Begins
  - Rolling Admission



# Application Tips

- Review the application guides!
  - [ADEA AADSAS Quick Guide](#)
  - [OptomCAS Quick Start Guide and FAQs](#)
- Submit application as early as possible!
  - Verification may take 4-6 weeks
  - More than 70% successful applicants submit within first 1-2 months of the cycle
- Submit before DAT/OAT if taking later in summer!
  - Make progress on application while studying
  - Email programs with your unofficial scores and update application
- Meet program deadlines!
  - Count back 4-6 weeks from program deadline to allow for application verification
- Turn in secondary applications within 2 weeks!





# Pre-Application Tasks – Before Cycle Begins

- Choose your target schools
- Take the DAT/OAT
- Develop your personal statement
- Get commitment from letter writers
- Organize your experience information
  - [UGA Pre-Professional Planner](#) for iPhone OR
  - [Experience Section Worksheet](#)
- Refine your experience descriptions



# Choosing Your Target Programs

- Selecting your...
  - [Dental School](#)
  - [Optometry School](#)
- Factors
  - Location
  - Instructional environment
  - Clinical experience
  - Student support
  - Cost
- How many?
  - Dental average 7-10
  - Optometry average 5-7

Mix public and private schools!  
Include that "reach" school!



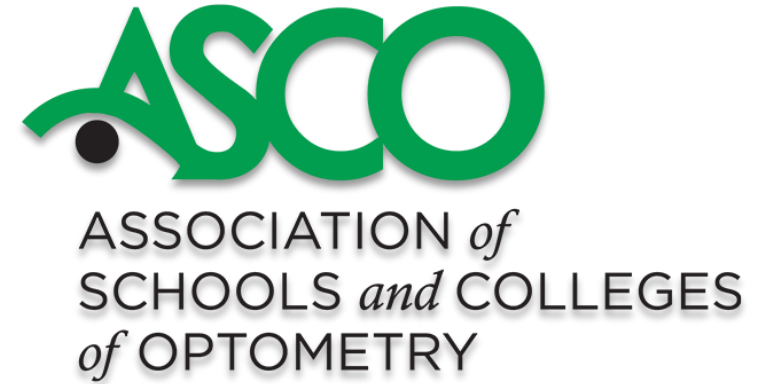
# DAT – Dental Admission Test

- Take no later than early summer of application cycle
  - Offered nearly year-round.
  - Must wait 60 days before you can retake.
- Courses you need before exam:
  - BIOL 1107 & 1108
  - CHEM 1211 & 1212
  - CHEM 2211 & 2212
  - **Recommended:** GENE 3200, STAT 2000/BIOS 2010, MATH 2250, VPHY 3100/CBIO 3710/PMCY 3000 and Art Courses
- DAT scores range 1-30
  - Goal: Academic Average/Total Science/Perceptual Ability = 20+
  - DCG's competitive applicants score around an AA: 22 and PAT: 21
- You can study for the DAT on your own or take a DAT prep-course
  - Follow a study plan and take several practice tests!



# OAT – Optometry Admission Test

- Take the OAT no later than August of the year you plan to apply
  - Offered nearly year-round
  - Must wait 60 days before you can retake
- Courses you need before exam:
  - BIOL 1107 & 1108
  - CHEM 1211 & 1212
  - CHEM 2211
  - PHYS 1111 & 1112
  - BCMB 3100
  - STAT 2000 or BIOS 2010
  - **Recommended:** GENE 3200, VPHY 3100/CBIO 3710/PMCY 3000, MIBO 3500/L MATH 2250
- DAT scores range 200 - 400
  - Goal: Academic Average/Total Science = 340+
- You can study for the OAT on your own or take an OAT prep-course
  - Follow a study plan and take several practice tests!



# Personal Statement

- Dental Application: most successful statements answer the questions of why do you want to be a dentist, what events solidified this decision, what skills/interests/experiences do you have that connect with dentistry, what characteristics do you want to portray as a dentist.
- Optometry School Essay Prompt: *“Please describe what inspires your decision for becoming an optometrist, including your preparation for training in this profession, your aptitude and motivation, the basis for your interest in optometry, and your future career goals.”*
- 4500 characters
- Utilize Career Center and Writing Center
- Allow 2-3 months and many drafts for completion
- Watch for our personal statement workshop in February!



# Letters of Evaluation

- Very important to admissions committees!
- Select references who know you well and will say great things about your motivation, abilities and dependability
- General Rule: two upper-level professors of science courses required or recommended by your target programs, one general dentist/optometrist you shadowed, one other professional reference (professor, another doctor, or supervisor of an experience)
  - Check target program sites for specific requirements
  - UGA does NOT provide committee or composite letters
  - Up to 4 letters on application
- Interfolio - letter collection portal available for pre-dental applicants
  - Can collect letters in spring before application opens
- OptomCAS applicants will request letters from the application when it opens



# Organizing Experiences

- [UGA Pre-Professional Planner](#)
  - iPhone app (Android TBA)
  - Prompts with experience categories for your application
  - Identifies skills
  - Journal feature
  - Downloads to Excel spreadsheet
    - Paste information into application
- Compose experience descriptions in a document
  - 600 characters with spaces
- Watch for my experience description workshop in May!



# Application Cycle

- ADEA AADSAS
  - Opens May 15
  - Majority of successful applicants submit in June or July
  - Interview invitations typically August – November
  - Offers of acceptance December 15
  - Waiting list offers on rolling basis until filled
  - Most programs filled by March
- OptomCAS
  - Opens June 30
  - Majority of successful applicants submit before September
  - Interview invitations begin in August
  - Offers of acceptance on a rolling basis until filled

Be mindful of program deadlines!





# Application Walkthrough

- Updated first few days of new application cycle
  - @ 100 slides of step-by-step instructions
- [ADEA AADSAS Application Walkthrough](#)
- [OptomCAS Application Walkthrough](#)



# Secondary Applications

- Sent after you submit application
  - Additional essays and questions specific to that school
  - Some schools screen applicants first (minimum GPA/DAT/OAT)
- TIP: Google secondary prompts from previous year and work on those while your primary application is being verified
- Submit secondary applications within 2 weeks of receipt!
- Avoid repeating content from primary application essays



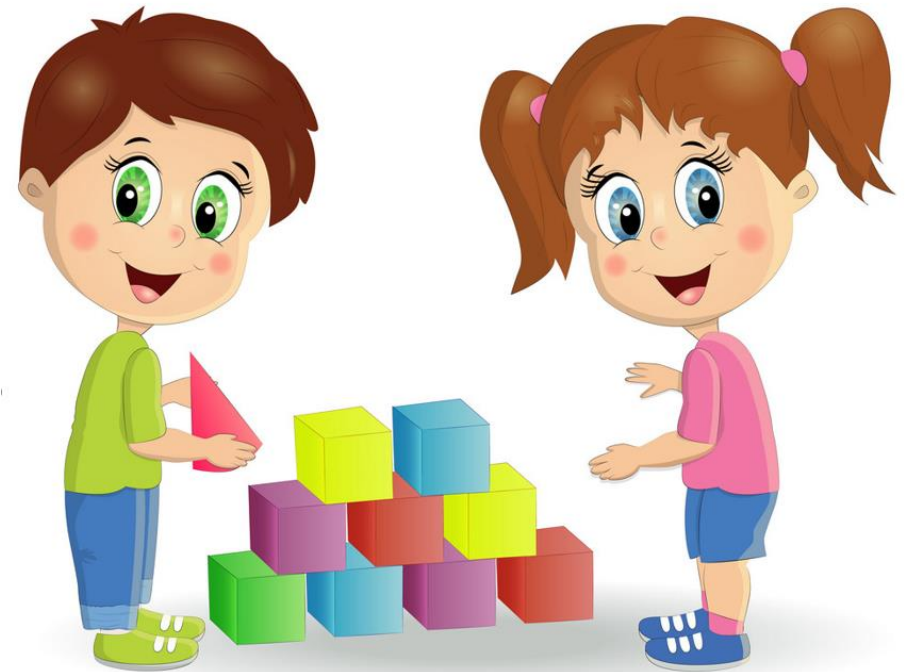
# Interviews

- Interview season begins in August/September and will continue into the Spring
- An invitation to interview typically means your “numbers” are good
- Interviewers are trying to find out who you are
  - No right/wrong answers—more about how you answer and interpersonal communication skills
- Tips:
  - Know your application inside and out
  - Dress conservatively (no tattoos, minimal jewelry, beards trimmed, comfy shoes)
  - Interview begins the minute you step on campus
  - Send thank-you notes within 2-weeks of interview (email or hand-written)
- Career Center conducts mock interviews
  - Schedule early!
  - Prepare before you are invited!



# Re-Applying

- It's *okay* not to get in the first time!
- Build a more competitive application
  - Pro-actively continue volunteering, leadership, and shadowing/experience
  - Improve science/BCP GPA
    - Take additional courses or complete a graduate degree
  - Re-take the DAT/OAT



# Dental School Application Timeline

## Junior Year

<b>Fall</b>	Shadow/Volunteer/Write Personal Statement/Study for DAT
<b>Jan/May</b>	Register for DENTPIN Study for DAT
<b>Feb/March/April</b>	Ask for Letters of Evaluation (give letter-writers at least 1-month to compose and upload into Interfolio)
<b>March/April/May</b>	Take DAT

## Summer

<b>June</b>	Complete and submit AADSAS (submit as early as possible)
<b>June/July</b>	Prepare for Secondary Applications (look online for previous year's questions)
<b>July/August</b>	Complete Secondary Applications (within 2 weeks of receiving each application)

## Senior Year

<b>Fall</b>	Interview Shadow/Volunteer
<b>Spring</b>	Graduate



# Optometry School Application Timeline

## Junior Year

<b>Fall</b>	Shadow/Volunteer/Write Personal Statement/Study for OAT
<b>Jan/May</b>	Register for OATPIN Study for OAT
<b>By May</b>	Secure commitment for Letters of Evaluation

## Summer

<b>By July</b>	Take OAT
<b>July</b>	Complete and submit OptomCAS (submit as early as possible)
<b>July/August</b>	Prepare for Secondary Applications (look online for previous year's questions)
<b>July/August</b>	Complete Secondary Applications (within 2 weeks of receiving each application)

## Senior Year

<b>Fall</b>	Interview Shadow/Volunteer
<b>Spring</b>	Graduate



# Questions?

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Make an appointment on SAGE

