



The OPSA Portal for Medical and Dental Applicants Fall 2026 Admission

Being the MOST competitive applicant for medical or dental school requires:

1. Strong letters of evaluation, collected in the OPSA portal, including a letter from the Health Profession Advisory Committee.
2. Solid academic record.
3. Strong scores on the MCAT or DAT.
4. Activities that illustrate that you are a well-rounded and active student who has a passion for medicine or dentistry, who also cares about your community and who is a leader.
5. A solid and **early** application.

All students at Texas A&M University, and those who recently graduated from Texas A&M, are eligible to collect evaluation letters in the OPSA Portal. Graduate students who completed their prerequisite course work at another university should consult the premedical/pre dental advisor at that university to determine if the HPAC committee at the first university can provide a more comprehensive evaluation of them as a candidate.

The OPSA Portal

The OPSA Portal is an online service run by our staff. You may access the Portal directly once your UIN has been added by a staff member at [tx.ag/meddentportal](https://www.tamu.edu/meddentportal). After logging in, you will see two sections:

1. My Information
2. Evaluation Letters

My Information

This portion of your file is easy! When you login to the Portal, you will begin on the **Home** page. This is where the status of your file is posted and there is a box for notes from our staff.

- Go to the **My Information** page next. Some of the information on this page has been completed from official Texas A&M records.
- Confirm your **NAME and E-MAIL** are completed in this section, otherwise, you will miss important notifications and your letters of evaluation will not be processed correctly.
E-mail must be the address you will be checking regularly.
- Complete the remaining questions and hit 'save.'

ALL questions about the
OPSA Portal should be sent to

opsa-portal@tamu.edu

Evaluation Letters

Evaluations can be written by science professors, non-science professors, research supervisors, working professionals, and employers. Avoid letters from individuals who have not directly observed you in an educational, organizational, or professional situation. In addition, request evaluations from individuals who know you well enough to describe your personal characteristics and unique traits (including information about responsibility, dedication, maturity, leadership, interpersonal skills, and motivation).

- **Three letters are required. It is strongly recommended/required by many the professional schools two of the letters are written by professors who have taught you, one of whom should be a science/STEM professor. The second letter may be another science/STEM professor or a professor from another discipline.**
 - **Students applying to dental school must have a dentist write their third letter.**

***OPSA staff are not responsible for ensuring you choose the correct evaluators.

- **PLEASE NOTE:** With the exception of MD/PhD applicants, if additional letters are submitted to your file, **ONLY the first 3 letters uploaded in the OPSA Portal** will be sent to the schools. **DO NOT** ask for additional letters. If you are a MD/PhD applicant, you are allowed to submit up to 5 letters of evaluation for the purpose of applying to the PhD programs. Please consult a member of the OPSA staff for additional information if you are an MD/PhD candidate.

Requesting Letters:

- To request a letter of evaluation, you should speak directly with the potential evaluator.
- Once they agree, applicants must enter the evaluators' names and email addresses into the Portal and fill out the waiver form on-line.
 - Medical and dental schools prefer letters you have waived your right of access. Applicants who retain this right will NOT be able to view the letters in Professional School Advising.
- Immediately after you submit the information, an email is sent to that evaluator requesting the letter be completed and uploaded. An upload link is included in this email, as is your waiver form. Evaluation letters should be SIGNED by the evaluator, on letterhead and uploaded directly to OPSA Portal. Your evaluator does NOT return the waiver form to our office.
- You will be able to see if the letter has been uploaded by logging into your OPSA Portal.

Tips for requesting your letters:

1. Request letters of evaluation by February 2025. Professors have several responsibilities and appreciate advance notice.
2. Evaluators should **NOT** mention a specific program/medical or dental school when writing letters because these letters are sent to application services then to individual schools.
3. Assist your evaluators by providing them with a resume describing your achievements, activities, personal qualities, and goals. Many will also want to know why you are applying to medical or dental school.
4. Assist your evaluators by providing them with a cover letter that thanks them for their time, and gives them the deadline you desire, etc. This will help expedite delivery of the letter.
5. Instruct your evaluators that they must upload a signed letter, printed on letterhead.
6. Thank your evaluators for their assistance, either by email or in a hand-written note.
7. Keep evaluators apprised of your status, such as when you receive interviews and when you gain admission.

Completing the OPSA Portal File

Within a few days of completing your OPSA Portal File, you must log in and see that your file has been marked Complete on your **Home** Page. If all of your items have been submitted and it has been more than a week, but your file is not marked complete, please contact **opsa-portal@tamu.edu** to have a staff member check your file. Please understand that in late March and early April, hundreds of students are completing their files, so response times will be slower.

Sending your Evaluation Letter Packet to Application Services

After you have submitted and paid for your applications, you will need to notify OPISA where to send your evaluation packet. In early May, the “**Request To Send**” form hyperlink will be activated at the top of your Portal **Home** Page for TMDAS and AMCAS. In the AACOMAS and AADSAS applications, you will insert an email address for OPISA and they will contact us. We will provide this email address in **April**.

Important Notes for the OPISA Portal:

- Your Portal file must be complete before OPISA will send your letters to the application services. We will not send partial packets.
- You must have **submitted and paid** for your TMDAS application before we will send letters.
- You must have begun your AACOMAS, AADSAS or AMCAS application before we will send the letters.
- **Letters of evaluation can only be used for one year past the date on the letter.**
- Application Workshops will be scheduled in **April and May 2025**. Make plans to attend.
- Essays for applications will be reviewed late April through early June.
- Interview workshops begin **in late June**.

How to make yourself a more competitive applicant this year

It is important to look at yourself on paper to reveal any weaknesses now. If some are found, work on them in the next year or semester to create a well-rounded, solid application. Evaluate yourself in the following categories:

- Academics/Grades and MCAT/DAT scores
- Medical and dental experiences
- Non-health care community service
- Extracurricular activities
- Leadership
- Honors, awards, scholarships, recognitions
- Work experience
- Research

Admissions Tests

Dental Admissions Test (DAT) <https://www.ada.org/dat.aspx>

The DAT is given in Prometric Testing Centers, including the testing center in the General Services Complex at Texas A&M. Prometric Testing Centers located throughout the country, <http://www.prometric.com>. The test is administered Monday through Friday, and you should register 60 to 90 days in advance as your preferred date as locations fill quickly. The exam will cost ~ \$530. You must indicate which dental schools should receive your scores when you register. After you complete the exam, you will receive your unofficial scores before you leave; dental schools will receive the scores two to three weeks later. The soonest you may retest is 90 days after the first attempt.

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/>

The MCAT is computerized and there are 30 dates on which examinations will be offered throughout 2025. The exam covers applications of biology, physics, inorganic and organic chemistry, biochemistry, psychology, sociology and critical analysis and reasoning. In 2022, the MCAT fee was ~\$325; the cost goes up the closer to the test date. Medical schools consider each score, so prepare early and thoroughly the first time. **NEVER** take the actual MCAT for practice. You can schedule to retake the MCAT 48 hours after the exam you just completed, pending space availability. Please remember this is also when the fee to schedule another time to retake the MCAT can increase.

Registration for the MCAT opens mid-October

Again, there are 30 dates in 2025 for MCAT testing. (Please release your scores to the health professions advisor when you register for the test.) The test is offered at Pearson sites across the country. You may take the MCAT only three times per year, four times in consecutive years, and seven times in a lifetime.

Regardless of when you take the MCAT, ideally submit your PRIMARY applications beginning in mid-MAY and BEFORE the end of the first week of JUNE.

Texas Medical Schools	Application
Baylor College of Medicine - Houston	TMDSAS
Dell Medical School - Austin	TMDSAS
Long School of Medicine (UT) – San Antonio	TMDSAS
McGovern Medical School (UT) - Houston	TMDSAS
Paul Foster School of Medicine (TTUHSC) – El Paso	TMDSAS
Sam Houston State University – Conroe	TMDSAS
Texas A&M School of Medicine – Multiple locations	TMDSAS
TTUHSC-School of Medicine - Lubbock	TMDSAS
Texas Christian University School of Medicine – Fort Worth	AMCAS
University of Houston Medical School - Houston	TMDSAS
University of North Texas HSC- TCOM – Fort Worth	TMDSAS
University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine – San Antonio	AACOMAS
UT Medical Branch - Galveston	TMDSAS
UT Rio Grande Valley - Edinburg	TMDSAS
UT Southwestern Medical Center – Dallas	TMDSAS
UT Tyler	TMDSAS

TEXAS DENTAL SCHOOLS

Texas A&M College of Dentistry - Dallas
 UT Health/School of Dentistry - Houston
 UT Health/School of Dentistry - San Antonio
 Texas Tech HSC - El Paso

APPLICATION SERVICES

AACOMAS- Schools of Osteopathic Medicine www.aacomas.org
 AADSAS- Schools of Dentistry www.adea.org/aadsas
 AMCAS- Schools of Allopathic Medicine www.aamc.org
 TMDSAS www.tmdsas.com

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TIMELINE

For those students applying for fall 2026 admission to professional school, the following timeline can help you plan for the upcoming months:

Oct-Dec 2024	Jan-Mar 2025	April-May 2025	June -July 2025	Aug-Dec 2025	Jan-Apr 2026	July-Aug 2026
<p>Attend OPSPA Portal Workshop.</p> <p>Start OPSPA file. Portal Opens early Nov.</p> <p>Study and prepare for DAT/MCAT.</p> <p>Make excellent grades.</p> <p>Continue to shadow and volunteer.</p> <p>Work on getting to know the professors and people you want to ask to write your letters of evaluation.</p> <p>Dec-Reapplicants & Former Students can request access to the Portal.</p>	<p>Work on OPSPA file!</p> <p>Follow up on evaluation letters and file status through your online file.</p> <p>Study and prepare for DAT/MCAT.</p> <p>Make excellent grades.</p> <p>Continue to shadow and volunteer.</p>	<p><u>Attend OPSPA Application Workshop</u></p> <p>TMDSAS available online EARLY May. Study and prepare for DAT/MCAT.</p> <p>Order <i>official</i> transcripts to be sent directly to application AMCAS, AADSAS, & AACOMAS.</p> <p>Complete the online request through the OPSPA Portal to send evaluations to TMDSAS after application is submitted.</p> <p>Complete Secondary applications</p>	<p>Study and prepare for DAT.</p> <p>For MCAT it is recommended to take June test and no later for this admission cycle.</p> <p>Submit TMDSAS if you have not already done so!</p> <p>Submit AMCAS, AACOMAS or AADSAS applications.</p> <p>Complete secondary applications for out-of-state schools.</p> <p>Request OPSPA to send evaluations.</p> <p><u>Attend OPSPA Interview Workshop!</u></p>	<p>Continue to make excellent grades.</p> <p>Interviews begin in the July & continue into January/Feb.</p> <p>Complete Free Application for Federal Student Financial Aid (FAFSA) Oct.1.</p> <p>Texas dental schools acceptance letters begin December 15</p> <p>Rolling Admissions begin for TMDSAS & AMCAS medical schools – Oct 15 - Dec 31</p>	<p>Medical Match Preference Submission Deadline (February)</p> <p>TMDSAS Match Results Announced (March)</p> <p>Dental Acceptance Continues</p> <p>Complete financial aid forms if not already done.</p>	<p>Enter Professional Programs!!</p>

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