

What are the best things about attending Colorado School of Dental Medicine?

The biggest strength of CU is the clinical experience and opportunity. After working in the clinic (seeing patients) for about 90% of your week as a 3rd year, 4th year students participate in ACTS rotations. Students work in off-campus clinics throughout the state for three-week blocks throughout the year. Upperclassmen rave about this opportunity because it gives them autonomy while working in an operating dental office.

The school seems to take the time and effort in selecting a class that is diverse in age, ethnicity and personality. The school prides itself on inclusion and does a fantastic job at making students feel welcomed and part of the CU family.

This may not be applicable for upcoming students taking the integrated board exam, but many students love that the curriculum consolidates all the necessary classroom time into the first year because as a second-year student, we start to see patients in the clinic. With the school's emphasis on getting you ready to succeed in the clinic and having the ACTS rotation, rarely do students feel the need to do a GPR or AEGD to improve their hand skills.

The Anschutz Medical Campus is beautiful. It's about 14 years old. The campus as a whole always seems to be doing activities during the sunny days (by the way, Colorado is one of the sunniest states in America). The Dental School is very technologically advanced including a dental drilling simulation, virtual reality for anatomy, and an IPAD for all students with various tools and apps that help in specific classes. Parking is no problem, even the cheapest lot (\$14 per month) is within a 5-minute walk. There are two brand new "expensive" apartments on campus that most students live (1 bed 1 bath = \$1400). It's easy and convenient.

Although students are very competitive with themselves and highly motivated, every one of my classmates is overly willing to share notes, give tips and work together to succeed. I have never once, felt that a student was not willing to work together to succeed. I think it goes back to my point above that the school takes the time to hand pick students that they know will fit the culture and identity that is established here.

As an in-state resident, this school is one of the most cost-effective schools in the country. As an in-state student, you are cutting your dental school cost in half by attending Colorado.

Having a class of 80 students really allows a strong relationship with faculty and other students, especially upperclassmen. Having the smaller class size allows 1st years to get to know 2nd & 3rd year students, giving them more opportunities to assist and learn in the clinic.

What are the worst things about attending Colorado School of Dental Medicine?

A downside for most students at CU is that dental students have to schedule and manage their own patients. The school provides the name and contact information but

it's the responsibility of the student to get the patient in the chair. In other words, there is no front desk staff. You could also see this as an advantage because it gives you the opportunity to develop patient rapport; however, most students view this process as a nuisance.

The school has plenty of clinical space and enough patients; however, students in the clinic complain that the school is short on faculty. This is a problem because students cannot schedule appointments with their patients if there is not a covering faculty at their bay during the appointment time. I have heard stories that it's a race: as soon as Axiom allows, students hurry to schedule patients at the bay that has a faculty member.

In some of our general science courses, we have medical school faculty who teach our course. This means that some classes have a different professor at every lecture teaching a different topic. It makes it difficult for the students to follow the direction of the course due to the variety of teaching styles and slide presentations. It also makes the tests hard to prepare for because sometimes we don't know if it's the course director (who hasn't attended 1 lecture) writing the tests or if it's the individual professor who writes questions for their portion.

Grading lab projects and simulation lab work can be VERY inconsistent between faculty. This makes it very difficult to earn an A in certain lab courses. At times it is out of the student's control and the student's fate is in the hands of faculty that each grade the same work differently.

What do students need to know/What do you wish you knew before attending Colorado School of Dental Medicine

The school actually doesn't favor in-state applicants as much as I thought. The trend seems to be shifting closer to an even split of in-state versus out of state students. If you are an out-of-state student, do not hesitate to apply to CU if you are interested in CU. Out-of-state tuition is often cheaper at CU than some private schools. Colorado is a beautiful state with great people and the school will help you succeed.

Once you are admitted in the school, they want to keep you here. The school will do whatever it takes to make sure that you proceed through the curriculum, including personal counseling and private tutors.

Get to know the admissions director and students at the school if you want to have a better shot at getting in. The school starts recruiting early and often. Try to attend any pre-dental events, campus tours, or other opportunities to meet people from the school. They take mental notes of the students that want to attend their school.

The school obviously values a strong GPA, but based on my interview experience at other schools, I found that Colorado puts a larger emphasis on what you have done outside of school (eg, your personality) than they do on your sheer numbers. In my opinion, I think the school would rather have someone with an "OK" GPA and DAT

score with a killer application and interview than a 3.9 - 4.0 student who hasn't done much else and interviewed poorly.

In my experience with other students if you want to specialize, you certainly can. Although the school is not known for specializing, curriculum is grade-based (ranking) and students that succeed in their classes, can typically specialize in the field that they have worked for.