

What are the best things about attending NYU College of Dentistry?

NYU's greatest strength lies in the large scope of both clinical and research opportunities provided to students. NYU's clinical experience is nothing short of intensive and extensive; first year students spend a minimum of three days each week in lab performing various preparations and restorations. Students are also concurrently attending lectures each week involving the nature of these preparations, restorations, as well as tooth anatomy and development. It is a rigorous introduction into operative dentistry as well as the oral cavity. While at times this amount of operative experience can be overwhelming, it is an invaluable experience. The sheer amount of exposure and practice you receive is impressive and you will feel confident in your understanding of every type of preparation and restoration taught to you within your first year.

The research opportunities at NYU are equally varied and extensive. There are many different labs in a variety of fields. Whether it be biomaterials, oral cancer, bodily fluid analysis, or HIV/AIDS, the research topics extend well beyond the initial scope of dentistry. That being said, there are also a plethora of strict dental research opportunities to pursue as well. There is truly an option for whatever type of research you wish to be involved in. The school's student body size is also a unique trait (NYU is the largest dental school in the country in terms of number of students enrolled). Having such a large student body can be both an advantage and disadvantage. It serves as an advantage in that there is a tremendous amount of differing experiences and backgrounds that the school draws from. Not only does this make the student body a great resource to itself and to patients but it also gives the school a great social atmosphere, whether it be through official school clubs or after-hours social interactions. There are more people than you could possibly meet in an orientation week and you will continue to make friends throughout your schooling.

What are the worst things about attending NYU College of Dentistry?

The worst thing about NYU is its administrative and didactic disorganization. This disorganization has become increasingly frustrating in recent years. Most professors at the school, especially within the basic science departments, are incredibly focused on their personal research projects. It quickly becomes apparent that, for many, teaching is a requirement rather than the passing of knowledge to future colleagues. Thus faculty investment at times can be lacking and their participation in the course outside of mandatory lecture hours can be frustrating. The clinical professors show a far greater passion for education but this dichotomy can make the basic sciences faculty seem even worse. This leads to material covered on exams coming across as arbitrary, as the

professors do not clearly convey core concepts in lecture. Faculty also tend to meander from large concept to large concept.

NYU's class size, while positive in some respects, is the most complained about aspect of the program. The school's preclinical areas are only large enough for one-quarter of the incoming class at a time. While this is not an issue during normal lab hours it becomes a big issue once practical examinations begin, as half the class takes the exam one day and the other half on the next. Thus it can be quite difficult to find any space to work in the days before practical exams. You are left with very little recourse if you are unable to find room to work; you can either attend lab on your own time to practice (by coming in well ahead of the exam) or you can limit yourself to only the class sessions in the days before (meaning you will only have a matter of a few hours to practice the preparation or restoration before being tested on it). Because most students want/need to practice for more than the allotted sessions' time, you are left in a frustrating position.

The class size can also present unique frustrations in the didactic portion of your education. Many professors are overwhelmed by the size of the student body (rightly so), leading to some dismissive interactions between students and professors, as students badger them over exam questions or menial distinctions from lecture. Unfortunately, this means that some valid concerns and pertinent questions will go unaddressed unless you are zealous in tracking down professors outside of lecture.

Lastly the size of the student body can be frustrating in that building a rapport with faculty can be difficult (if not impossible) as there are just too many students per class. Some students may not see this as an issue, but plenty of students come from smaller and more intimate undergraduate environments, so it can be an overwhelming change of pace to no longer be known by name by your instructors.

What do students need to know/what do you wish you knew before attending NYU College of Dentistry?

The most important things that can be conveyed about NYU are the rigorous clinical education as well as the self-driven nature of the program. NYU will offer you whatever you seek, but what you receive at the end of the day will be proportional to the amount of effort you put into your education. This is a double-edged sword: if you seek the bare minimum, you can pass and receive your degree with less effort and toil than others and move forward with your career while not necessarily becoming the professional you could have been. At the same time you can pour every fiber of your being into your education and become second to none. NYU will test the limits of your willpower, often

pushing you past your limits; it will offer you every opportunity if you wish to take it, but at the end of the day you need to be prepared for you, and you alone, to be the sole motivator in your work. While you are surrounded by an intelligent and diverse student body full of great individuals, the clinician and professional you become will be entirely centered on how hard you push yourself. While other schools may offer you better interactions and more guidance than NYU, there is a certain advantage to the individualism of its education. You truly have the greatest say in what professional you will become and what you will take from your education. If you push yourself, you will realize your clinical preparedness and didactic education is truly extensive, especially your clinical preparedness. You will often feel other school's offer kinder treatment to their student body or healthier communication, but ultimately your education will end in four years. While you may not have the fondest memories, there is an undoubtable grit the school will instill in you as you succeed. NYU is a great place and you can take from it varying levels of preparedness and education but it is not for the faint of heart. It demands a level of maturity not everyone is ready for; no one will hold your hand and none are coddled but if you want to become an excellent dentist NYU is one of the finest places to do it.