

## **What are the best things about attending UT Health San Antonio Dental School?**

All of the faculty at UTHSA are truly committed to the students. They sacrifice a lot to make sure you succeed and get really valuable experiences to take with you into your dental practice. UTHSA has recently changed their curriculum (2017) to a more modern teaching model and set of topics that reflect what most of the nation is following. This new curriculum has more of a dental focus across the other disciplines, and is geared towards helping you prepare for the INDBE at the same time. Additionally, this new curriculum is meant to be more time efficient for both faculty and students in and out of the classroom.

UTHSA has had many changes in faculty and administration in recent years, and the administration has been very open to feedback and contributions about changes that can improve the student experience. In my time here, I have seen many changes that were spurred by students' concerns, ideas, and recommendations on how to make our personal and academic lives better.

In terms of dental experiences and cases you can participate in, we really believe you can't get better than San Antonio. Due to our patient population, faculty, and extensive graduate programs at the school, you are exposed to and allowed to participate in some complex and interesting cases even as a dental student. Our faculty – many of whom come from a military background – have experience in so many different disciplines that they feel comfortable working with you on cases of different specialties. With all of the graduate programs in the same building, they are able to consult with you on the treatment floor and come up with interdisciplinary treatment plans. Dental students often sit in on, or even participate in surgical procedures with these other departments.

Along with the other Texas schools, San Antonio offers one of the least expensive tuition options. For out-of-state students, there is also the ability to gain residency for tuition purposes after the first year. Though, this does require some big steps such as purchasing a home, or having a spouse work in the state for at least a year.

## **What are the worst things about attending UT Health San Antonio School of Dentistry?**

With the curriculum change, we have had a large turnover in faculty at the school. Many professors have retired, moved to other positions within the school, or moved to other dental programs. While these changes will hopefully improve the student experience in the long run, the turnover period is a bit bumpy to navigate. Faculty, administrators, and students are all working through the kinks, helping make modifications, and collectively working towards a better experience for everyone.

UTHSA medical center serves most of the region of West Texas as well as underserved populations within San Antonio. As a result, we do not lack patients who seek care at the school. However, the process of accepting patients into the school's treatment system is not efficient. Many patients wait months before they are seen for screening appointments, and many students find themselves struggling to find patients for

particular procedures. The school is currently working on developing a better system to resolve these issues, but it has not been established yet. The goal is to have a new system in action in 2020.

With the current ranking system, students are ranked individually which causes extra stress in an already competitive environment. Many students find it difficult to find balance outside of school while trying to keep up with their class rank.

**What do students need to know/what do you wish you knew before attending UT HSC San Antonio Dental School?**

No dental experience is the same! All schools do things in a different way, at different times, and with different curriculums. Find the program that is best for your personality, work ethic, and study style. UTHSCSA is a very rigorous program, but it certainly pays off in the clinical skills you graduate with.