



MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION Conducted by Video Conference

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020 (CLOSED SESSION)

Call to Order: The Chair, Dr. Arthur Chen-Shu Jee, called a special meeting of the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) to order at 1:00 P.M. Central Time on Thursday, April 2, 2020, via video conferencing, in closed session for the purpose of discussing the impact of COVID-19 on dental and dental-related education programs.

Roll Call: Dr. John Agar, Dr. Joel Berg, Dr. Linda Casser, Dr. Eladio DeLeon, Dr. Scott DeVito, Dr. Steven Friedrichsen, Dr. Christopher Hasty, Dr. Kevin Haubrick, Dr. Monica Hebl, Dr. John Hellstein, Dr. Jeffery Hicks (vice chair), Dr. Adolphus Jackson, Dr. Arthur Chen-Shu Jee (chair), Dr. Bradford Johnson, Dr. Susan Kass, Dr. James Katancik, Dr. Barbara Krieg-Menning, Dr. Steven Levy, Dr. Sanjay Mallya, Mr. Charles McClemens, Dr. William Nelson, Dr. Marsha Pyle, Dr. Bruce Rotter, Dr. Timmothy Schwartz, Dr. Marybeth Shaffer, Ms. Ambika Srivastava, Dr. Alan Stein, Ms. Deanna Stentiford, Dr. Marshall Titus, and Dr. Lawrence Wolinsky.

Trustee Liaison: Dr. Roy Thompson, Sixth District Trustee, Board of Trustees Liaison to CODA, American Dental Association (ADA).

CODA Staff: Dr. Sherin Tooks, *ex-officio*, CODA director, Mr. Gregg Marquardt, Ms. Michelle Smith, Ms. Jennifer Snow, and Ms. Peggy Soeldner. Ms. Cathryn Albrecht, senior associate general counsel, CODA was also in attendance.

Adoption of the Agenda: The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

Policy Reminder of Confidentiality: Dr. Jee read the Commission's Reminder of Confidentiality and reminded Commission members of their fiduciary responsibility.

Consideration of CODA's Ongoing Operations in Response to the COVID-19 Impact on Dental and Dental Related Educational Programs:

Interruption of Education and Temporary Use of Distance Education: The Commission initiated its meeting with an extensive discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on dental and dental-related education programs accredited by the Commission. The Commission's discussion focused on several topics including curriculum requirements; competency requirements and assessment; United States Department of Education (USDE) Guidance and Potential Flexibility, as could be applied to CODA's Accreditation Standards and accreditation process; program length and/or program component length; and the CODA requirements, mechanics and timing of interruption of



education reports. The Commission determined that it would limit its focus on interruption of education related to the impact of COVID-19 to the Class of 2020.

The Commission noted that dental and dental-related education programs implemented innovative approaches to maintain the quality of dental education for students, residents, and fellows, including but not limited to the use of distance education, enhanced simulation activities, and other valid and reliable educational modalities. The Commission affirmed the expectation that all CODA-accredited dental and dental-related education programs have an obligation and responsibility to ensure the competence of the program's graduates, including the Class of 2020, in accordance with the requirements of CODA's Accreditation Standards, policies, and procedures. The Commission believed that every educational program under CODA's purview must submit a report on interruption of education using the newly developed Guidelines for Reporting an Interruption of Education During COVID-19 (**Appendix 1**). Further, CODA believed that each discipline-specific Review Committee should consider and make recommendations to the Commission on areas of potential temporary flexibility that may be applied to the Class of 2020, for consideration at the next CODA special closed meeting.

Commission Actions: The Commission on Dental Accreditation directs that all CODA-accredited programs must submit a report on the use of distance education to confirm either no changes, no use, or to provide information on *temporary* use of distance education and compliance with student/resident/fellow identity verification, in response to COVID-19.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation further directs each discipline-specific Review Committee to consider the potential, *temporary flexibility* to discipline-specific Accreditation Standards for the Class of 2020 that may be applied related to:

- 1) Alternative Assessment Methods (for example, patient vs. simulation);
- 2) Modification/Reduction of Curriculum Content or Curriculum Requirements (for example, modification/reduction of program-dictated requirements, CODA competency requirements, and/or CODA quantitative numbers-based requirements); and
- 3) Program Length or Program Component Length (for example, rotations, services, etc.), with a report to the Commission on specific Accreditation Standards that may be *temporarily flexible* to address circumstances surrounding Class of 2020 student/resident/fellow completion of educational programs due to COVID-19, for consideration by the Commission at its next closed session meeting.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation further directs the adoption and immediate implementation of the Guidelines for Reporting an Interruption of Education During COVID-19 (**Appendix 1**).

Site Visits for Spring 2020, Virtual Visits, and Extension of Accreditation: The Commission considered upcoming site visits for 2020, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission noted that some visits in early 2020 were conducted; however, as the pandemic spread and as



travel warnings and restrictions were imposed, the Commission began to cancel site visits. As such, the Commission's ability to conduct on-site evaluations was impacted beginning in early March 2020. Discussion included the potential cancellation of all 2020 site visits; how to manage canceled visits; the impact on programs related to preparation of a self-study if CODA rescheduled regular (re-accreditation) site visits from 2020 to 2021; and the extension of accreditation in light of canceled site visits. The Commission additionally considered the impact of rescheduling site visits to programs already in the process of applying for accreditation, as well as the scheduled special (focused) site visits and pre-graduation site visits in 2020. The Commission concluded that all remaining site visits in 2020 will be canceled; however, programs that were site visited in early 2020 would proceed as usual to be reviewed at the Summer 2020 Commission meeting. Additionally, programs that did not have a site visit in 2020 would be refunded the doubled annual accreditation fee for this year, and would be reissued the fee in the year of their site visit. Finally, all regular (re-accreditation) site visits would be moved forward by one year (e.g., 2020 moved to 2021) for all programs excluding the programs already site visited in spring 2020.

Following discussion of site visits to programs already in the process of applying for accreditation, as well as the scheduled special (focused) site visits and pre-graduation site visits in 2020, the Commission concluded that these visits would be postponed until the earliest opportunity to conduct the visit.

The Commission also discussed the potential use of virtual site visits (in part or in total) to conduct accreditation reviews, noting a number of concerns related to virtual visits, including confidentiality, privacy issues related to personally identifiable information, infrastructure needs to support the scope of site visits, availability of volunteers, and other issues. The Commission determined that it would not proceed with virtual site visits at this time.

Commission Actions: The Commission on Dental Accreditation directs that all postponed and remaining site visits through 2020 be canceled and rescheduled in 2021. The Commission further directs that programs that submitted a site visit fee (doubling of annual fee) in 2020 and did not undergo a "regular/reaccreditation" site visit receive a refund on the fee, and be reassessed the fee in the year that the site visit will occur.

Related to "regular/reaccreditation" site visits: The Commission further directs that the next "regular/reaccreditation" site visit of every CODA-accredited program, excluding the programs already site visited in spring 2020, be shifted forward by one (1) year. The Commission further directs that each "regular/reaccreditation" site visit in subsequent years also be shifted forward by one year.

The Commission further directs that the current status of CODA accreditation held by the educational programs be retained, pending the conduct of the program's rescheduled "regular/reaccreditation" site visit, so long as the program continues to fully comply with the Commission's Accreditation Standards, policies and procedures during the interim period.



Related to “special focused” site visits: The Commission further directs that special focused site visits be postponed until the earliest opportunity to conduct the visit.

The Commission further directs that a CODA-accredited dental and dental-related education program scheduled for a special focused site visit in 2020 that has been postponed, will retain the current status of CODA accreditation held by the program, pending the conduct of the program’s special focused site visit, so long as the program continues to fully comply with the Commission’s Accreditation Standards, policies and procedures during the interim period.

The Commission further directs that any program scheduled for a special focused site visit as a result of a potential or identified area(s) of non-compliance must submit a report to the Commission on the area of potential concern, for consideration at the Commission’s Summer 2020 meeting.

Related to application site visits: The Commission further directs that previously scheduled site visits to programs applying for initial (first time) accreditation be postponed until the earliest opportunity to conduct the visit.

Related to virtual site visits: The Commission further directs that virtual site visits will not be used at this time.

Managing Ongoing Commission Work During COVID-19: Beyond consideration of the impact on accreditation site visits, the Commission’s review of the COVID-19 impact on the ongoing operations of the Commission was presented but not considered at this meeting.

Unsolicited Communications Sent to CODA Office: In consideration of the COVID-19 impact to dental and dental-related education programs and students, residents, and fellows, and to contextualize the impact of the pandemic on dental education, the Commission was provided several unsolicited communications that had been received in the Commission office from various communities of interest including students, dental organizations, and dental programs.

Commission Action: Informational in nature, no action taken.

New Business: There was no new business discussed at the meeting.

Adjournment: The Commission adjourned the closed session at 5:00 P.M.

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