

Overview of Proposed Revisions and Timeline for Changes to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs

American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Annual Session 2026
ADEA Section on Academic Affairs
March 20, 2026

Goals of Today's Session

To provide an update on the past, current, and potential future timeline of the proposed revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs

To address frequently asked questions and tips for preparation for the adoption and implementation of new Accreditation Standards

To provide an overview of topics addressed in the proposed revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs

Accessing the Proposed Revisions

Where to Locate the Proposed Revisions

<https://coda.ada.org/standards>

Proposed Accreditation Standards*

Currently displaying the second iteration of Proposed revisions circulated for comment in Fall 2025.

*Note: this will eventually be removed from the CODA website as future iterations of the revisions are available

Current accreditation standards

Standards for Predoctoral Dental Education



Standards for Allied Dental Education Programs



Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs



Standards for Clinical Fellowship Training Programs



Proposed Accreditation Standards

After CODA meetings, CODA will circulate proposed revisions to various standards to CODA's communities of interest for comment. Find information on current proposed standards and CODA's upcoming hearing on the [Hearings on Standards/Comments Due](#) page.

Proposed Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs

The Predoctoral Ad Hoc Committee conducted several meetings in 2025 and will continue its work in spring 2026 to consider all received comments related to the proposed revisions, with a future report to the Review Committee and the Commission. [See proposed revisions.](#)

Understanding the Proposed Revision Document

Additions are Underlined

~~Strikethroughs~~ indicate Deletions

~~2-5-2-3~~ The dental education program **must**:

- a. establish competency statements that, at a minimum, are consistent with the Commission on Dental Accreditation Standards, and
- b. employ student ~~evaluation~~ assessment methods that measure ~~its-defined~~ the competencies defined for graduation and readiness for independent dental practice.

Intent:

~~Assessment of student performance should measure not only retention of factual knowledge, but also the development of skills, behaviors, and attitudes needed for subsequent education and practice. The education program should assess problem solving, clinical reasoning, professionalism, ethical decision making and communication skills. The evaluation of competence is an ongoing process that requires a variety of assessments performed independently by each individual student that can measure not only the acquisition of knowledge and skills but also assess the process and procedures which that will be necessary for entry level practice to begin independent dental practice.~~

Timeline of Proposed Revisions

History of Proposed Revisions to the Accreditation Standards



Summer 2021

Validity and Reliability (V&R) Study conducted by CODA in Spring 2021

Results of the V&R Study reviewed at Summer 2021 CODA meeting

Resolution by CODA for comprehensive review of the Accreditation Standards to Dental Education Programs by an Ad Hoc Committee



Summer 2022

Letter from ADEA submitted to CODA requesting representation on the work of comprehensive review

Resolution by CODA for the Ad Hoc Committee to include both ADEA and CODA representatives

Ad Hoc Committee Representation

6 CODA representatives
(former and current), including
the Ad Hoc Committee Chair

4 ADEA representatives

1 Ex-officio representative

Resolutions by CODA to retain members of the Ad Hoc Committee for
consistency

History of Proposed Revisions to the Accreditation Standards



January 2023 – June 2024

Comprehensive review conducted of the Accreditation Standards – Standard by Standard, including data from recent communications, resolutions by CODA, and the V&R Study

- 30 virtual meetings and 2 in-person meetings (in-person meetings conducted over 2 days each)



Summer 2024

Resolution by CODA for circulate the proposed revisions for 6 months for comments, comments due by December 1, 2024: 60+ comments received



December 2024 - June 2025

Comments received and reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee

Changes made to proposed revisions resulting from comments

- 11 virtual meetings and 1 full-day in-person meeting

History of Proposed Revisions to the Accreditation Standards



Summer 2025

Resolution by CODA for circulate the proposed revisions for second period of 6 months for comments, comments due by December 1, 2025: 100+ comments received

Resolution by CODA to create the site visit self-study guide to accompany the proposed revisions



December 2025 – *current*

Comments received and reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee

Changes to be made to proposed revisions resulting from comments

- 9 virtual meetings *and counting*

Progression of the Proposed Revisions Now

- **The proposed revisions are currently under review**
 - The Ad Hoc Committee currently continues its work
 - The Ad Hoc Committee is currently working on the site visit self-study guide

Proposed Revision Adoption by CODA

- **When** the proposed revisions are ready for adoption by CODA, CODA will:
 - Set an adoption date
 - Set an implementation date (typically 1 year or 1.5 years after the adoption date)

Goals & Objectives of Proposed Revisions and Accreditation Standards

Goals of the Comprehensive Review of the Accreditation Standards



Streamline understanding of Accreditation Standards



Calibration for educational programs and site visitors



Forward-thinking and allow for innovation



Reflective of education necessary for entry to the profession

Objectives of the Proposed Revisions

Streamline	Remove	Improve	Address
Combine related topics	Remove redundancies and contradictions between Standards	Improve understanding of Standards including improvement of must statements, intent statements, and examples of evidence	Address resolutions directed by CODA

Resolutions from CODA for Proposed Revisions

Expectations and oversight of sites where educational activity occurs (Summer 2021)

Revision to the terminology related to institutional accreditation in accordance with U.S. Department of Education (Winter 2021)

Use of the term “should” (Summer 2022)

Proposed revision to Standards related to patients with special needs (Summer 2021 and Winter 2022)

Consideration of sleep-related breathing disorders (Winter 2023)

Proposed revisions to Standards related to improving diversity (Winter 2023, Summer 2023, and Winter 2024)

Resolutions from CODA for Proposed Revisions

Proposed revisions to Standards related to competency of replacement of teeth and orofacial pain (Summer 2023)

Consideration of connections between Standards related to adequate patient experiences (current Standard 2-9) and clinical competencies (current Standard 2-24 a – o) (Summer 2023)

Consideration of administrative oversight at major educational activity sites (Winter 2025)

Consideration of diversity, humanistic culture, and learning environment (Winter 2025)

Consideration of proposed revisions to Standards related to replacement of missing teeth (Summer 2025 and Winter 2026)

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the proposed revision timeline taking so long?

- Comprehensive review of Standards
- Several resolutions directed by CODA to be considered
- Comprehensive proposed revisions are circulated typically for a minimum of 1 year to communities of interest
- Due to the volume of comments, time is needed after circulation to consider comments for proposed revisions

What is the timeline for adoption and implementation of the proposed revisions?

- Currently reviewing comments from second comment period
- Adoption of the Standards to be set when CODA receives the final version of the proposed revisions
- Implementation date typically set 1 or 1.5 years after adoption date

What happens when CODA sets the adoption and implementation dates?

- The time between the adoption and implementation date is necessary for programs to come to compliance with the new adopted Standards
- Documents from CODA such as the self-study guide, site visit evaluation reports, etc. will be made available
- Training sessions for site visitors and educational programs

I have a site visit in the next few years. What do I do?

- Review the CODA actions to come regarding the adoption and implementation date – be aware of these dates
- Continue preparation for site visit through preparation of your self-study – do not delay!
- Be prepared with self-study responses and documentation for each Standard
- Be prepared for reorganization of the self-study

Standard 1 Topics Overview

Standard 1 Proposed Revisions Highlights



Streamlined requirements of mission statement and outcomes assessments process



Demonstrate commitment to a humanistic learning environment



Policies and practices to prevent discrimination



Revision to terminology for institutional accreditor in accordance with USDE

Standard 2 Topics Overview

Standard 2 Proposed Revision Highlights

Clarification included for program length

Focus of Standards to assure competencies consistent with CODA Standards and employ assessment methods to measure student readiness for independent practice

Expanded requirements for curriculum management plan to demonstrate integration

Streamlined requirements for social and behavioral sciences

Clarification of stages of life for patient experiences

Expectations for management of patients with special health care needs

Clinical Curriculum Components

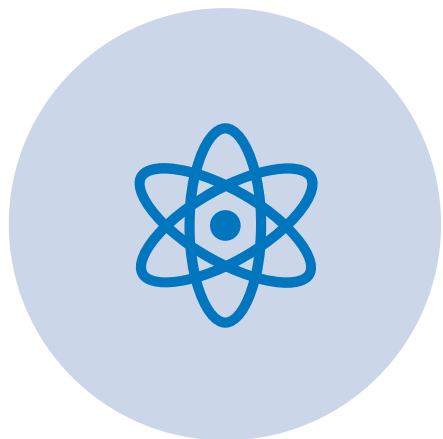
Clinical care curriculum broken into 3 separate standards:
Instruction – Patient Care Experiences – Competency Assessments

- Instruction in clinical sciences **must** be at an in-depth level ...
- Patient-based instruction and experiences **must** include direct care provided by the student ...
- Graduates **must** demonstrate competence within the scope of general dentistry...

Addresses consideration of some new topics per CODA resolutions such as sleep-related breathing disorders, orofacial pain, temporomandibular disorders, and replacement of teeth

Standard 3 Topics Overview

Standard 3 Proposed Revision Highlights



SEPARATION OF TOPICS RELATED TO
NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF FACULTY
AND QUALIFICATION OF FACULTY



INCLUSION OF FACULTY CALIBRATION



EXPECTATIONS FOR ONGOING FACULTY
DEVELOPMENT AND OBJECTIVE
MEASUREMENT OF FACULTY

Standard 4 Topics Overview

Standard 4 Proposed Revision Highlights



REORGANIZATION FOR MANDATORY HEALTH
AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS



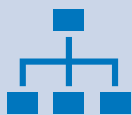
SEPARATION OF TOPICS FOR STUDENTS
AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES,
STUDENT DUE PROCESS, AND STUDENT
FINANCIAL AID, ETC.



EXPECTATION FOR ACCESS TO HEALTH
CARE SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AT ALL
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY SITES

Standard 5 Topics Overview

Standard 5 Proposed Revision Highlights



Reorganization and revision of the topics related to formal system of continuous quality improvement, access to professional services, management of emergencies, requirements for basic life or advance cardiac life support, adequate asepsis and infection control, etc.



Expectations of patients' rights document



Expectations of oversight of sites where educational activity occurs (owned/not owned by dental school used for credited experiences and/or competency)

Standard 6 Topics Overview

Standard 6 Proposed Revisions Highlights

Expectation for evidence of engagement in research by dental faculty

Tips for Preparation

Preparation for Proposed Revisions and Site Visits



Access the new documents (self-study, SVER, etc.) when available



Plan for an internal qualitative analysis of your program for when the new Standards are adopted



Plan for how your program will utilize the time prior to implementation to come to compliance with the new Standards



Continue with site visit preparation and be flexible for reorganization of your materials



Report required program changes as soon as possible to CODA, if necessary



Be aware of communications from CODA on the new Standards and future trainings

Questions?

Thank you!