

REPORT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON DENTAL ASSISTING EDUCATION TO THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION

Committee Chair: Ms. Martha McCaslin. Committee Members: Ms. Julie Bera, Ms. Kimberly Bland, Ms. Christy Ross, Dr. Preeti Sahasi (attended virtually), Dr. Debra Schneider, and Ms. Diana Williams. Ms. Melissa Siegel was unable to attend the meeting. Guests (Open Session Only, Virtual): Ms. Rebecca Stolberg, vice president, Allied Dental Education and Faculty Development, American Dental Education Association (ADEA), attended the policy portion of the meeting. Commission Staff: Ms. Jamie Asher Hernandez, manager, Allied Dental Education, Ms. Katie Navickas, manager, Allied Dental Education, and Mr. Daniel Sloyan, coordinator, Allied Dental Education, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). Dr. Sherin Tooks, senior director, CODA, and Ms. Zaira Limon Perez, senior project assistant, Allied Dental Education, CODA, attended a portion of the meeting. The meeting of the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) was held on July 13-14, 2023 at the American Dental Association Headquarters Building, Chicago, Illinois.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO DENTAL ASSISTING EDUCATION

Informational Report on Frequency of Citings of Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (p. 300)

The Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) considered the annual report of the frequency of citings of Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs and noted the most frequently cited areas of non-compliance for site visits conducted between July 1, 2020 through October 31, 2022.

The data indicates that a total of 361 citings of non-compliance were made. Of these, 39 (10.8%) were related to Standard 1–Institutional Effectiveness; 247 (68.42%) were related to Standard 2–Educational Programs; 33 (9.14%) were related to Standard 3–Administration, Faculty and Staff; 26 (7.2%) were related to Standard 4–Educational Support Services; 15 (4.16%) were related to Standard 5–Health and Safety Provisions; and 1 (0.28%) was related to Standard 6–Patient Care Services.

Analysis of the data indicates the most frequently cited areas of non-compliance are within Standard 2-Educational Programs. Standard 2-7, e, requiring written documentation of each course in the curriculum be provided to students at the start of each course and include specific criteria for final course grade calculation, was cited most frequently and represents 4.9% (12) of all Standard 2 citations. Second most cited is Standard 2-9, o, related to the skills/functions that students demonstrate knowledge of, in a laboratory/preclinical setting prior to performing these skills/functions in a clinical setting, to include identify and respond to dental and medical emergencies, was cited 10 times (4.05%). The subset of citations within Standard 1–Institutional Effectiveness were most frequent in Standard 1-7 (11) related to the dentists and dental assistants being equally represented on the advisory committee, and represent 28.2% all of Standard 1–Institutional Effectiveness citations.

Recommendation: This report is informational in nature and no action is required.

Consideration of Proposed Revisions to Standard 3-6 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (p. 301): At its Winter 2023 meeting, the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) and Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) reviewed the August 11, 2022 request from Ms. Marcy Owens, dental assisting program director, Tennessee College of Applied Technology at Knoxville, to consider a proposed revision to Standard 3-6 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs.

The proposed revision suggested that Dental Assisting Standard 3-6 be revised or repealed to eliminate the baccalaureate degree requirement for faculty providing didactic instruction. If not repealed, Ms. Owens believed Standard 3-6 should be revised to require that dental assisting faculty have three (3) years of chairside experience in the dental assisting field, a current state professional license as either a Dental Assistant, Dentist, or Dental Hygienist, and that dental assistants and dental hygienists teaching in dental assisting programs hold the Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) credential through the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB).

At its Winter 2023 meeting, the DA RC reviewed the proposed revisions to Dental Assisting Standard 3-6 and engaged in a discussion related to faculty qualifications. The DA RC determined that Standard 3-6 warranted revision to require that faculty providing didactic instruction obtain a baccalaureate degree within two (2) years of the date of initial hire as a didactic faculty. The DA RC believed that there should be a defined period to obtain the degree, rather than an open-ended deadline to ensure that faculty obtain degrees within a reasonable timeframe. For example, a faculty who is initially hired as a clinical instructor and subsequently becomes a didactic instructor must obtain the baccalaureate degree within two (2) years of the date of initial re-assignment as a didactic instructor. Likewise, a faculty who is initially hired as a didactic instructor must have earned the baccalaureate degree within two (2) years of hire; further, if this faculty leaves and returns to a teaching position in the institution later, the faculty must earn the baccalaureate degree within two (2) years from their initial appointment date as a didactic faculty at that institution. Following discussion, the DA RC recommended the proposed revision to Standard 3-6 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (**Appendix 1, Policy Report 301**) be circulated to the communities of interest for six (6) months, for review and comment, with a Hearing conducted in conjunction with the March 2023 American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Annual Session, with comments reviewed at the Commission's Summer 2023 meetings. At its Winter 2023 meeting, the Commission concurred with the DA RC recommendation and directed circulation of the proposed revision to Dental Assisting Standard 3-6 for a period of six (6) months.

As directed by the Commission, the proposed revision to Standard 3-6 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (**Appendix 1, Policy Report 301**) was circulated for comment through June 1, 2023. No (0) comments were received at the Spring 2023 Virtual Hearing on Standards (**Appendix 2, Policy Report 301**). Additionally, the Commission office received 46 written comments prior to the June 1, 2023 deadline via the Comment Portal (**Appendix 3, Policy Report 301**). One (1) comment was incorrectly submitted through a different Standards Comment Portal but was included in **Appendix 3, Policy Report**

301. In addition, there were two (2) comments received in the Commission office via email, and the senders were informed they must use the Comment Portal; therefore, those comments were resubmitted via the Comment Portal subsequent to the June 1, 2023 deadline (**Appendix 4, Policy Report 301**). There were also two (2) written comments received via the Comment Portal after the June 1, 2023 deadline (**Appendix 4, Policy Report 301**).

The DA RC reviewed and discussed the comments received, including those comments that were submitted after the June 1, 2023 deadline. The Committee noted that some institutions require a degree as part of the institution's own faculty hiring process, and many institutions require a degree at least one level higher than the degree to be awarded to the students by the program. As such, the DA RC believed that faculty should hold a degree when providing didactic instruction. The Committee reviewed and discussed the written comments noting concern with the proposed revision to Standard 3-6, noting the concerns focused on either the length of time for a baccalaureate degree or the need to hold a degree at all. The Committee believed that there should be a level of standard for faculty members who teach in a CODA-accredited dental assisting education program. Additionally, the Committee noted that the mentoring process of new faculty who do not have a degree is extensive, time consuming, and takes faculty away from other faculty responsibilities and their own teaching.

Following lengthy discussion, the Committee confirmed that a degree requirement is necessary; however, following consideration of the comments received, the DA RC believed the number of years to achieve the baccalaureate degree for a didactic instructor could be altered to provide faculty additional time to achieve the degree. Therefore, the Committee proposed to change the time frame for achieving the baccalaureate degree from the proposed two (2) years to three (3) years. The Committee felt the change in the timeframe of achieving the degree to three (3) years will encourage applicants to pursue the degree and potentially teach at the same time. It was also noted that this revision would provide faculty transitioning into a program administrator role the ability to achieve the baccalaureate degree requirement for dental assisting program administrators, which could promote faculty career laddering and address the concern of faculty shortages.

In conclusion, the DA RC recommended that the Commission adopt the proposed revision to Dental Assisting Standard 3-6 (**Appendix 1**), with immediate implementation. The DA RC believed that given the feedback and positive impact on programs, there is no implementation period needed.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt and direct immediate implementation of the proposed revision to Standard 3-6 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (**Appendix 1**) and all related documents.

NEW BUSINESS

Review of the Criteria for Selection of Dental Assisting Site Visitors: The DA RC discussed the criteria for selection of dental assisting site visitors. The Committee discussed whether to change the criteria, “equivalent of three (3) years full-time dental assisting teaching experience.” After much discussion about the number of years of teaching experience and whether the experience should be full-time and part-time, the Committee believed the criteria is appropriate as written. The DA RC believed that Commission site visitors need to have adequate teaching experience in order to understand dental assisting education and assess other programs based on CODA’s Standards. No changes were made to the criteria for selection of dental assisting site visitors at this time. The Committee determined that the criteria would be reviewed again at the next DA RC meeting in Winter 2024.

Recommendation: This report is informational in nature and no action is required.

Consideration of Proposed Revision to Standard 2-7 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs: The DA RC discussed revision to Dental Assisting Standard 2-7 as the term “competency statement” within the Standard (2-7, e) appeared confusing to programs and site visitors. It was noted that inclusion of course objectives and competency statements on the same line was confusing. After discussion about the definitions of competency statements, course objectives and course competencies, it was determined that the term “competency statements” should be removed from Dental Assisting Standard 2-7, e and “course competencies” should be added as a separate item from course objectives, for clarity, as noted below (Underline indicates Addition; Strikethrough indicates Deletion). Due to the clarifying nature of the change, the DA RC believed this change did not warrant public comment and could be adopted with immediate implementation.

- 2-7 **Written documentation of each course in the curriculum must be provided to students at the start of each course and include:**
- a. The course title, number, description, faculty presenting course and contact information
 - b. Course objectives ~~including competency statements~~
 - c. Course competencies
 - ed. Content outline including topics to be presented
 - de. Course schedule including learning and evaluation mechanisms for didactic, laboratory, and clinical learning experiences
 - ef. Specific criteria for final course grade calculation

Examples of evidence to demonstrate compliance may include:

- Course syllabus
- Rubrics for grade calculation
- Institutional grading policies
- ~~Competencies~~

- Course schedules to include activities, assignments, and evaluations for each date the course meets.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt and direct immediate implementation of the proposed revisions, noted above, to Standard 2-7 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs and all related documents.

Discussion Related to the Decline (Closure, Discontinuance, Teach-Out) in CODA-Accredited Dental Assisting Programs: The DA RC discussed the decline in CODA-accredited dental assisting programs due to program closure, program discontinuance, and teach-out. At the Summer 2022 DA RC meeting, the Committee recommended to the Commission on Dental Accreditation to direct the Standing Committee on Documentation and Policy Reviews to review and revise, as needed, the policy and procedure for reporting program closure/discontinuance/teach-out reports to provide the Commission with information as to the reasons why dental assisting programs discontinue CODA-accreditation. Since revision of the policy, the Commission has collected information from CODA-accredited dental assisting programs that have reported closure/discontinuance/teach-out. The DA RC discussed the information, noting programs have found it difficult to hire faculty with the current faculty requirements in the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs; many states do not require graduation from a CODA-accredited dental assisting program to practice as a dental assistant; institutions can operate non-CODA-accredited dental assisting programs; and institutions find it costly to operate a CODA-accredited dental assisting program.

After lengthy discussion, the DA RC believed that an Ad Hoc Committee should be formed and include members of the DA RC and CODA Commissioners who are dentists and dental educators to further review the issue of CODA-accredited dental assisting program voluntary discontinuance of accreditation. The DA RC also believed that requesting data from other dental associations could be helpful to study this topic.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee of available members of the Dental Assisting Review Committee and Commissioners who are dentists and dental educators to further study the trend of voluntary withdrawal of CODA accreditation by CODA-accredited dental assisting education programs, with a report for further consideration by the Dental Assisting Review Committee and Commission in Winter 2024.

Consideration of Standard 2-1 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs: The DA RC discussed Dental Assisting Standard 2-1 related to the requirement for a high-school diploma or its equivalent for admission into a CODA-accredited dental assisting education program. The Committee believed that, in the past, high school students were able to enroll in CODA-accredited dental assisting programs and receive a certificate of completion from the CODA-accredited dental assisting program upon graduation

from high school. The DA RC discussed the rationale for the requirement of a high-school diploma or its equivalent and determined the need for more data regarding how changing this standard may impact dental assisting programs. The DA RC noted that in some states students cannot perform dental assisting skills and functions until they reach a certain age, which is often post-secondary. Additionally, the DA RC noted that CODA-accredited dental assisting programs may admit students through advanced standing policies and procedures when those students have completed equivalent didactic, laboratory and/or preclinical content prior to admission to the CODA-accredited program. Further, CODA-accredited programs must remain at the post-secondary level of instruction due to CODA's scope of recognition by the United States Department of Education as an accrediting agency. Following discussion, the DA RC believed there should be no change at this time related to Standard 2-1 Admissions and that this Standard should be further reviewed at the next DA RC meeting in Winter 2024.

Recommendation: This report is informational in nature and no action is required.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATING TO MORE THAN ONE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Matters related to more than one review committee are included in a separate report.

CONSIDERATION OF SITE VISITOR APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION IN THE AREA OF DENTAL ASSISTING EDUCATION

Due to an ongoing need for additional site visitors, the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education considered site visitor appointments for 2023-2024. The Committee's recommendations on the appointments of individuals are included in a separate report.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO ACCREDITATION STATUS

Matters related to accreditation status of programs are included in a separate report.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Martha McCaslin
Chair, Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education

Commission on Dental Accreditation

At its Winter 2023 meeting, the Commission directed that the proposed revisions to Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs be distributed to the appropriate communities of interest for review and comment, with comment due June 1, 2023, for review at the Summer 2023 Commission meeting.

This document represents the proposed revisions based upon review of comment received from communities of interest from February 10, 2023 to June 1, 2023.

This document will be considered by the Commission in Summer 2023.

Additions are Underlined
~~Strikethroughs~~ indicate Deletions

Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs

1
2 **STANDARD 3 – ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY AND STAFF**
3

4
5 **Faculty**
6

7
8 **3-6 Faculty providing didactic instruction must have earned at least a**
9 **baccalaureate degree within three years of the date of initial hire as a didactic**
10 **faculty.**
11

12 **Intent:**

13 **Military program faculty with a rank of staff sergeant, E5, or non-commissioned*
14 *officer are exempt.*
15

16 **Examples of evidence to demonstrate compliance may include:**

- 17 • Transcript(s)
18