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# CODA Communicator

Summer/Fall 2020

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**CODA**\*

*Commission on Dental Accreditation*

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# An Introduction from the Chair

During the Commission on Dental Accreditation's Winter Meeting, held in person in Chicago last January, CODA members received training on how to participate in a virtual teleconference. At the time, it was considered a tool to be used occasionally, when the opportunity arose to reduce travel time and expense.

Little did we know that soon afterward, the Commission, its staff, and its communities of interest would be conducting business almost *exclusively* remotely.

We have heard often that the Coronavirus pandemic has changed the way organizations conduct their business, and CODA is no exception. Staff and review committees have met virtually to process thousands of reports from CODA-accredited programs related to their response to the pandemic and their work to maintain the quality and efficacy of their educational programs. The Commission itself has conducted four official meetings virtually, including its 2020 Summer Meeting, and deliberated on many accreditation actions and policy decisions via videoconference.

In its Open Session on August 7, 2020, the Commission considered the impact of COVID-19 on the operations of programs and the Commission alike, and took multiple actions, including but not limited to:

- Affirming its intent to extend the current flexibility in the Accreditation Standards related to Interruption of Education (i.e., Class of 2020 flexibility) to the Class of 2021; however, the Commission also directed special meetings of all 14 Review Committees and the Commission in Fall 2020 to consider any necessary changes to the current flexibility guidelines for the Class of 2021. The Commission's final decision on this matter will be made by mid-October.
- Extending the current flexibility for temporary use of distance education through December 31, 2020, with no further reporting required by programs.
- Directing development of an electronic system to accept applications for accreditation and other types of program reports. Materials will be accepted solely by this electronic method, upon development of the electronic system. Upon implementation of the electronic

document submission system, the Commission's acceptance of applications for accreditation will be resumed.

- Directing that Hearings on Standards be conducted virtually at CODA's discretion, and the Winter 2021 Commission meetings be virtual.
- Directing that CODA pursue alternative site visit methods, as needed to employ in 2021.
- Directing establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to investigate and develop policies and procedures for alternative site visit methods, with a report for consideration by CODA in Winter 2021. The Ad Hoc Committee will obtain input from the Commission's 14 Review Committees related to elements of a site visit that may be conducted virtually versus elements that must be reviewed on-site.

For details on these and other Commission actions related to the pandemic, please refer to the [COVID-19 Update](#) page on the CODA website. Accreditation actions and other CODA decisions are also listed in the Unofficial Report of Major Actions, which can be found on the Commission's [Post Meeting Actions](#) webpage.

Finally, as I conclude my term as Chair, I would like to extend my thanks to the Commission and its staff for their support during my term and for their tremendous efforts to advance the Commission's mission even in the face of the pandemic. I also offer my congratulations to Dr. Jeffery L. Hicks as he becomes the 2020-2021 Chair for the Commission, and wish him all the best in his new role.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Arthur C. Jee**  
Chair, Commission on  
Dental Accreditation



# Summer 2020 Commission Meeting Highlights

*This year's Summer 2020 Meeting was held virtually on August 6-7, 2020. The [Unofficial Report of Major Actions](#) provides a summative review of the major activities during this meeting.*

## Major Actions of Interest to All Accredited Programs

During the Summer 2020 Meeting, the Commission reviewed accreditation reports and took 277 accreditation actions on dental, advanced dental, and allied dental education programs, and recorded four (4) mail ballots dental assisting, oral and maxillofacial surgery (residency), and general practice residency education programs.

[Accreditation Status Actions](#) can be found on the Commission's website.

Four (4) dental assisting, one (1) endodontics and one (1) general practice residency programs received a formal warning that accreditation will be withdrawn in February 2021 unless the requested information, demonstrating compliance with the accreditation standards or Commission policy, is submitted prior to that time.

The Commission affirmed the reported voluntary discontinuance effective date or planned closure date of one (1) dental assisting, one (1) dental hygiene, one (1) endodontics, one (1) oral and maxillofacial surgery (clinical fellowship-oncology), and one (1) oral and maxillofacial surgery (residency) programs, at the request of their respective sponsoring institutions.



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# Additional Commission Actions of General Interest

## CODA Accredits Dental Therapy Program

At its August 6, 2020 Closed Session, the Commission on Dental Accreditation granted an accreditation status to a Dental Therapy education program.

The program, sponsored by Ilisagvik College, Utqiagvik (Barrow), Alaska, was granted the status of “[approval with reporting requirements](#),” the first time a Dental Therapy education program has received accreditation from the Commission. Students who are enrolled in the program at the time accreditation is granted (August 6, 2020), and who successfully complete the program, will be considered graduates of a CODA-accredited program. Students who graduated from the program prior to the granting of accreditation will not be considered graduates of a CODA-accredited program.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation’s mission is to serve the public and profession by developing and implementing accreditation standards that promote and monitor the continuous quality and improvement of dental education programs. The scope of dental therapy practice and licensure authority resides within the jurisdiction of each state licensing agency.

For additional information on CODA’s accreditation application process, visit the Commission’s [Accreditation Application Process](#) webpage. Questions may be directed to Dr. Sherin Tookss, director, Commission on Dental Accreditation at [tookss@ada.org](mailto:tookss@ada.org).

## CODA Begins Development of Web-Based Public Comment Submission Process for Proposed Accreditation Standards Revisions

After discussion, CODA directed that the policies on Reporting Program Changes in Accredited Programs, the Policy on Enrollment Increases in Advanced Dental Education Programs, the Guidelines for Requesting an Increase in Enrollment in a Predoctoral Dental Education Program, and all related documents, be revised to prohibit requests

for *retroactive permanent* increases in enrollment. When updated, these policies will be available on the CODA website at the [Program Changes](#) page and the [Enrollment Increases](#) page.

## Finances

The Commission directed that in 2021 the annual \$100 per program Administrative Fund fee be waived for all Commission-accredited dental and dental related education programs. You can find more details regarding Commission fees on the CODA website’s [Fees page](#).

## 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

CODA directed the initiation of the Commission’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan development, including hiring a facilitator, preparing the draft strategic plan, and engaging in a closed session Mega Issue Discussion in Summer 2021 to finalize the Plan. Details regarding the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan will be published as the Plan is developed.



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# Upcoming Commission Hearings, Events and Meetings

Proposed Standards Circulated for Public Comment are due December 1, 2020 or June 1, 2021, as applicable. Read [Hearings on Standards/Comments Due](#) for the list of standards open for comment and their respective due dates for submission of comments.



## 2020 American Dental Association (ADA) Annual Meeting Hearing on Standards

The Commission will conduct a virtual hearing on accreditation standards during the 2020 American Dental Association (ADA) Annual Meeting in October 2020.

**When available**, the agenda and other information will be posted to the [Hearings on Standards/Comments Due page](#) of the CODA website.

## Winter 2021 Commission on Dental Accreditation Meetings:

- **Review Committee Meetings – January 11-15, 2021 (held virtually)**
- **Commission Meeting – February 11, 2021 (Closed Session) and February 12, 2021 (Open Session) (both Sessions to be held virtually)**

For a more comprehensive list of all upcoming meeting dates, read [Review Committee and CODA Meeting Dates](#).

## *CODA Maintains Operations during Coronavirus Pandemic*

*During the COVID-19 pandemic, Commission staff maintained critical accreditation operations remotely, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.*

*While site visits since mid-March 2020 were postponed, the accreditation duties of the Commission did not cease. CODA staff met the challenge by hosting multiple meetings and public hearings remotely:*

- 39 virtual Review Committee meetings
- Four virtual Commission meetings
- Five virtual webinars (with a grand total of more than 1,200 attendees)
- Three virtual public Hearings on Standards (with a grand total of more than 600 attendees)
- 32 announcements and guidance documents distributed digitally
- Two days of virtual site visitor training
- Countless staff meetings via Skype and Zoom

*It is advisable that the Commission's Communities of Interest continue to contact the Commission office and its staff by email.*

*In addition, please do not send postal mail to the CODA office.*

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# CODA Extra

## URGENT: Call for Public Member Nominations to CODA Review Committee Positions

The Commission on Dental Accreditation requests nominations to fill vacancies on Review Committees. **The Commission has an immediate need for nominations of members of the public.** This call is for vacancies beginning in October 2020. The Commission provides comprehensive training to all its volunteers, so that they will be ready to serve when their volunteer term begins. In addition, CODA staff is available for support throughout the process.

Visit the [Call for Nominations webpage](#) for more information. **Take note: nominations for members of the public must be submitted on the "Review Committee Public Nomination Form."**

Please complete the Review Committee Public Nomination Form and submit it to [hooperm@ada.org](mailto:hooperm@ada.org) no later than **September 14, 2020.**

## Second Phase of Electronic Accreditation Tool Initiated

CODA staff and the ADA's Enterprise Solutions team continue to develop an electronic accreditation system for the use of CODA staff, volunteers and programs.

The teams have created and implemented a back-end database related to Phase I, which replaced the former internal database. They have now moved into Phase II, building an electronic accreditation platform to serve as an external web-based portal. Programs will use this portal to submit reports, self-studies, applications, and more.

IT and CODA staff have begun training sessions to start building documents and information into the system. CODA staff hopes to proceed with this project through 2020 and into 2021. CODA staff and volunteers expect to begin testing the web-based system once sufficient infrastructure is in place to do so. Watch this newsletter and notices on the CODA website for continuing updates and a call for Beta testers.

## ADA Health Policy Institute Conducting Annual Surveys

On behalf of the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), the American Dental Association Health Policy Institute (HPI) is conducting the 2020-21 annual surveys of accredited dental education programs. Program directors have been sent an email from [educationsurveys@ada.org](mailto:educationsurveys@ada.org) with the link to this year's survey.

The Annual Survey distribution timeline is as follows:

### Survey of Advanced Dental Education

- Launch Date: August 18, 2020
- Due Date: September 25, 2020

### Survey of Dental Education (Predoctoral programs)

- Expected Launch Date: Week of August 24, 2020
- Due Date: varies depending on survey; Critical Sheet due September 9, 2020

### Survey of Allied Dental Education

- Expected Launch Date: Week of August 31, 2020
- Due Date: October 9, 2020

As noted in the CODA Policy and Procedure Manual, these online surveys must be completed on an annual basis by each dental education program accredited by CODA, including newly accredited programs.

The annual collection and review of data enables CODA to continually monitor educational programs in accordance with good accreditation practice and the requirements of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you are the director of an accredited program but did not receive the HPI email with the link to this year's survey, or if you need further support, email HPI at [educationsurveys@ada.org](mailto:educationsurveys@ada.org) for prompt assistance; **please do NOT contact CODA.**

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# Deadlines for Program Reports

## Deadlines for many Program Change Reports are December 1.

Please refer to the [Program Changes and Other Report Guidelines](#) page for details. The Commission expects programs to adhere to published deadlines. These deadlines allow sufficient time for the appropriate Review Committees and the Commission to review the report and determine whether the change could impact the program's potential ability to comply with the accreditation standards. You may also contact Commission staff with specific questions about reports and deadlines.

**NOTE: Program reports and documentation must not include Patient Protected Health Information (PHI) or Personally Identifiable Information (PII). A \$4,000 administrative fee will be assessed if a program submits documentation that does not comply with the CODA policy on privacy and data security. A resubmission that continues to contain PHI or PII will be assessed an additional \$4,000 fee.**

Review the [Policy on Privacy and Data Security Summary for Institutions/Programs](#) on CODA's website. Programs are also reminded that they must comply with CODA's [Electronic Submission Guidelines](#). It is advisable that you continue to contact the Commission office and its staff by email; please do not send postal mail to the Commission office.

Anytime	Applications for programs pursuing CODA accreditation. The first opportunity for the Commission to consider the program, provided that the application is in order, could be approximately 12 to 18 months following the application submission date.
November 15, 2020	Deadline for Progress Reports related to Site Visits.
December 1, 2020	Deadline for Initial Response to Site Visit Reports.
December 1, 2020	Deadline for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Change Report</li> <li>• Request for Enrollment Increase Report</li> <li>• Sites Where Educational Activity Occurs Report</li> <li>• Teach-Out Report</li> <li>• Other reports for Commission review in Summer 2020</li> </ul>
To Be Determined in Fall 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As necessary and directed by CODA, additional deadlines will be published related to COVID-19 follow-up (see elsewhere in this newsletter)</li> </ul>

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# Staff Contact Information

## CODA Director

[Dr. Sherin Tooks](#), director  
CODA Operations  
International Accreditation Program

## Operations

[Ms. Marjorie Hooper](#), operations coordinator

## Allied Dental Education

[Ms. Michelle Smith](#), manager  
Dental assisting education  
Dental laboratory technology education

## Open, manager

Dental hygiene education

## Advanced Dental Education

[Ms. Jennifer Snow](#), manager  
Endodontics  
Oral and maxillofacial surgery  
Orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics  
Periodontics

## Open, manager

Dental public health  
Oral and maxillofacial pathology  
Oral and maxillofacial radiology  
Pediatric dentistry  
Prosthodontics  
Site visits

## Advanced Dental Education

[Ms. Peggy Soeldner](#), manager  
Advanced education in general dentistry  
General practice residency  
Dental anesthesiology  
Oral medicine  
Orofacial pain

## Predoctoral Dental Education

Open, manager  
Predoctoral dental education  
Dental therapy

## Communication and Technology Strategies

[Mr. Gregg Marquardt](#), manager

## Site Visit Coordination

[Ms. Bernadette Molina](#), coordinator

## *Please do not call or mail the Commission Office*

*Commission staff are maintaining critical accreditation operations remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.*

*It is advisable that the Commission's Communities of Interest continue to contact the Commission office and its staff primarily by email.*

*In addition, please do not send postal mail to the CODA office.*



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