THE COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

The College of Dentistry, a College within the University of Nebraska Medical Center, is located in Lincoln, Nebraska, on the east campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This location is only five minutes from the city campus and 15 minutes from the Lincoln airport. Also on the east campus are UNL's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, College of Law, the Barkley Speech-Language and Hearing Clinic, and the Nebraska Center for Virology.

The physical facility of the College of Dentistry was constructed in 1967 and is completely self-contained with regard to its curriculum. It contains its own basic science facilities and clinical areas. In addition, the College of Dentistry is equipped for distance learning and television transmission to all classrooms and laboratories for teaching purposes. Particular attention has been placed on modern laboratory and clinical equipment. The laboratories are well-designed for preclinical disciplines and the clinical areas are pleasant, modern areas in which each student has a semiprivate work area. During 1996-98, the facility was renovated and modernized and a new addition, The Center for Dental Research, was constructed to increase state-of-the-art space and resources for clinical research in dentistry.

The College of Dentistry has five specialty programs in the areas of pediatric dentistry, endodontics, periodontics, and orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics, plus a general practice residency (GPR). The residency programs in pediatric dentistry and general practice (GPR) operate in facilities at UNMC in Omaha. Courses in the College of Dentistry are open only to those students who are formally accepted by the Admissions Committee as students in the College of Dentistry.

History

The College of Dentistry in Lincoln was started as the Lincoln Dental College in 1899. It became affiliated with the University of Nebraska in 1903 when dental students were enrolled in the University for the basic science portion of the curriculum and received their clinical instruction from the Lincoln Dental College. In 1918, the College of Dentistry was formally made a unit in the University of Nebraska and was recognized as a college in the University of Nebraska by the State Legislature in 1919. The College of Dentistry has a proud history and its graduates have practiced with distinction in all areas of the United States and around the world.

Philosophy

A major goal of the College of Dentistry is to provide the physical facility and service atmosphere conducive to comprehensive patient care. The prime mission of the College of Dentistry is to prepare competent general dental practitioners and dental hygienists who can satisfactorily practice dentistry and dental hygiene in any area of the country and render patient-centered comprehensive care. Emphasis is placed on the understanding of the community, of preventive dentistry, and of all components of the therapeutic procedures constituting the professions of dentistry and dental hygiene.

Accreditation

The University of Nebraska is fully accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondaries Schools, the accrediting agency for the region in which the University is located.

The programs in dental education, endodontics, orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, general practice residency and dental hygiene are accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation [and have been granted the accreditation status of “approval without reporting requirements”]. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (312)-440-4653 or at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611.

Definition of a Graduate

The College of Dentistry strives to create a learning environment in which each graduate is instilled with the determination to provide conscientious care to patients, along with a sense of responsibility to self, the community, and the profession. The curriculum for students of both dentistry and dental hygiene provides an orderly progression of knowledge and skills, reflecting the interdependence of biological, behavioral, and clinical sciences. At the same time, the curriculum is flexible, permitting variations in background, interests, and career goals and allowing for the development of each student’s potential.

Overall, the dental program of the College focuses on three interwoven areas:

- Scientific Foundations
- Competencies for Cognitive and Psychomotor Skills, and
- Competencies for Professional and Ethical Values.

Each of these areas addresses a set of foundations or competencies upon which the College curriculum objectives are based. Therefore, upon completion of the undergraduate dental program, the student is expected to demonstrate achievement of the stated competencies in each area.

Scientific Foundations

It is acknowledged that the dental college’s basic science curriculum is essential in establishing a sound scientific basis for the practice of dentistry and is far more encompassing of modern biomedical science than is included in the clinical competency statements that follow.

Competencies for Cognitive and Psychomotor Skills

1. **Scientific Process:** The new dentist must be competent to acquire, critically appraise, communicate, and apply the clinically relevant biomedical information necessary for providing evidence-based comprehensive care to patients.

2. **Behavioral Sciences:** The new dentist must be competent to promote, improve, and maintain oral health by applying the fundamental principles of behavioral sciences and managing interpersonal communications while providing patient-centered care to a diverse population in a multicultural-work environment.

3. **Patient Assessment:** The new dentist must be competent to collect biological, psychological and social information needed to evaluate the medical and oral condition, including screening for head and neck cancer, for patients in all stages of life.

4. **Diagnosis:** The new dentist must be competent to distinguish normal from abnormal clinical states and interpret historical, clinical, and imaging data as well as apply other diagnostic tests to develop a diagnosis for patients of all ages.

5. **Treatment Planning:** The new dentist must be competent to develop, present, discuss, and obtain informed consent for individual, evidence-based treatment plans. Such treatment plans must consider the patient’s age, condition, interests, prognosis, and capabilities.
and include recognizing complexity and identifying when a referral is indicated.

6. **Definitive Treatment:** For patients in all stages of life, the new dentist must be competent to:
   a. Employ techniques to manage orofacial discomfort and attributed psychological distress during the provision of care.
   b. Prevent and/or manage the dental and medical emergency situations encountered in the practice of general dentistry.
   c. Treat and/or manage caries in the primary, mixed, and permanent dentition.
   d. Diagnose and/or manage temporomandibular disorders.
   e. Treat and/or manage developmental or acquired and functional occlusal abnormalities of the primary, mixed, or permanent dentition.
   f. Recognize and manage oral mucosal and osseous disorders.
   g. Provide pulpal therapy.
   h. Provide periodontal therapy.
   i. Treat and/or manage conditions requiring uncomplicated surgical procedures on the hard and soft tissues.
   j. Provide restorations and prostheses, including dental implant prosthodontics that are appropriate in form and function, and which satisfy the reasonable comfort and esthetic requirements of the patient.
   k. Communicate with and manage dental laboratory procedures in support of patient care.
   l. Assess the treatment needs of patients with special needs.
   m. Evaluate the outcomes of treatment, recall strategies, and prognosis.

**Competencies for Professional and Ethical Values**

1. **Practice Management:** The new dentist must be competent to develop and assess practice goals, evaluate models of health care delivery, and lead the oral health care team, including collaboration with other health care professionals.

2. **Ethics:** The new dentist must be competent to appropriately apply ethical reasoning, professional values, and legal and regulatory concepts in the provision and/or support of health care services.

3. **Oral Health Promotion:** The new dentist must be competent to provide patient education and care that emphasizes prevention of oral diseases and supports improving and maintaining oral health in patients of all stages of life.

4. **Self-improvement:** The new dentist must be competent to self-assess professional knowledge, skills, and values to support self-directed lifelong learning.

5. **Critical Thinking:** The new dentist must be competent to use critical thinking for scientific inquiry and patient care.

6. **Research:** The new dentist must be competent to recognize and apply fundamental principles of basic, clinical and translational research methodology to the comprehensive care of patients.