Introduction

We, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Dentistry, begin a new era with a new building, a new name, a new curriculum, and a renewed commitment to becoming a leading dental education institution. Our school’s distinguishing characteristics are clinical excellence, innovation and discovery; a team-oriented culture; and the drive to be the best. These and other attributes provide numerous opportunities for the school to improve the lives and health of humankind. This Strategic Plan presents our goals and strategies for realizing our school’s vision and mission over the next five years.

Vision Statement

To be a leader in dental education by enriching the lives and health of our community and the world through patient care and research — our foundation in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Mission Statement

To advance human health by providing high-quality education, patient care, and research in oral health for Texas, the nation and the world.

Core Values

Professionalism at the School of Dentistry will be based on adherence to the following Core Values in pursuit of our Mission, Goals and Objectives:

1. **Excellence** – the pursuit of exceptional achievement with measurable results, in all we do;
2. **Integrity** – honesty and adherence to the highest standards of ethics and professional conduct of our profession;
3. **Respect** – valuing every individual through actions that evidence trust in an environment that fosters esteem and fairness;
4. **Responsibility** – acceptance of the opportunities and consequences created by our actions and decisions;
5. **Innovation** – being creative and open-minded; thinking boldly; embracing change and risk-taking;
6. **Collaboration** – relying on teamwork; always seeking partnerships with others to accomplish shared goals;
7. **Leadership** – serving as models and mentors for others; inspiring the best to shape the future.
Strategic Directions

The Strategic Directions of the School of Dentistry are founded upon our primary responsibilities as a premier dental educational institution and summarize our major initiatives for the next five years. They include:

1. **Education** – provide predoctoral, dental hygiene, advanced and continuing education programs that are innovative, fully integrated and supported by all available technologies;
2. **Patient Care** – provide high-quality patient care;
3. **Research** – conduct collaborative investigation, emphasizing biomedical science, clinical and translational research, educational and behavioral research, biomaterials/biomimetics, biotechnology and informatics;
4. **Technology** – develop and apply leading-edge clinical technology, instructional technology and informatics;
5. **Culture and Environment** – foster a diverse, inclusive and culturally-sensitive setting that emphasizes ethics, professionalism, core values and self-assessment.

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**Strategic Direction 1: Education**

We will provide innovative curricula in biomedical sciences, preclinical instruction, behavioral sciences, clinical dentistry, simulation, dental practice, and individual study. We will modernize our curriculum through the use of teaching and learning technologies, scientific evidence and research, simulation and integration of basic, preclinical, didactic and clinical curricula.

**Goal 1A: Modernize the didactic, preclinical and clinical curricula**

**Objective 1A-1:** Increase innovation and effectiveness in teaching and learning

- **Strategy 1:** Develop joint DDS/DH preclinical, didactic, behavioral science and clinical courses and learning opportunities
- **Strategy 2:** Expand use of behavioral sciences, ethics and informatics
- **Strategy 3:** Develop inter-professional clinical education programs with UTHouston medical and nursing schools

**Objective 1A-2:** Incorporate clinical simulation and virtual patients into the curricula

- **Strategy 1:** Develop virtual patients within the electronic patient record (EPR)
- **Strategy 2:** Create and implement a new curriculum in simulation for all years of the DDS & DH curricula, and in continuing education programs

**Objective 1A-3:** Expand the application of evidence-based and critical-thinking learning models in all curricula
Strategy 1: Create formal mechanisms to teach critical thinking and apply evidence-based dentistry in the clinical setting, such as simulation and modified, practice-based research networks

Goal 1B: Transform the basic science curriculum

Objective 1B-1: Re-establish an organizational unit of biomedical sciences within the School of Dentistry

Strategy 1: Return a core of basic science faculty positions from the Medical School and name interim leadership

Objective 1B-2: Transform the basic science curriculum to one that is integrated, systems-based and clinically relevant

Strategy 1: Redesign basic sciences prerequisites, organization, and course content
Strategy 2: Develop cooperative teaching collaborations with other UTHouston institutions and other schools in Texas and the U.S.

Goal 1C: Expand training opportunities for pre- and postdoctoral students

Objective 1C-1: Develop new programs in dental public health

Strategy 1: Re-establish a residency in Dental Public Health
Strategy 2: Create a new joint degree program in DDS/MPH

Objective 1C-2: Expand the Dental Hygiene degree completion program

Strategy 1: Admit non-graduates of the UT School of Dentistry to the DH degree completion program

Strategic Direction 2: Patient Care

We will provide high-quality, comprehensive dental care to patients and the community by means of integrated clinical and simulated instruction.

Goal 2A: Provide high-quality, comprehensive and episodic dental care to our patients and the community

Objective 2A-1: Increase student experiences in clinical education and patient care

Strategy 1: Reconfigure the curriculum to allow earlier entry of DDS students in clinic
Strategy 2: Expand the base of patients with needs that more closely match the priorities for clinical education
Objective 2A-2: Increase community-based patient care

- **Strategy 1:** Expand service learning experiences for DDS and DH students
- **Strategy 2:** Replace the current mobile dental van through a collaboration with the Ronald McDonald House
- **Strategy 3:** Develop other mobile oral health care systems (such as, portable chairs and delivery systems) and student/faculty experiences in providing care to those who have difficulty accessing care, especially geriatric patients

**Goal 2B: Redevelop the clinical teaching model**

**Objective 2B-1:** Redesign the clinical education program to become more practice-based and vertically integrated

- **Strategy 1:** Organize DDS and DH students into vertical groups led by a group director and attending faculty, and supported by appropriate staff
- **Strategy 2:** Develop opportunities for DDS and DH students to work collaboratively as members of the oral healthcare team

**Objective 2B-2:** Develop alternative systems for measuring students' clinical performance and competency (in both clinical and simulation settings)

- **Strategy 1:** Expand use of student portfolios, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) and other innovative assessment tools

**Goal 2C: Expand the use of diagnostic, preventive and treatment technologies**

**Objective 2C-1:** Expand the use of diagnostic and other personalized electronic tools

- **Strategy 1:** Implement use of diagnostic codes and image tagging in the EPR
- **Strategy 2:** Develop smart tools within the EPR, such as personalized patient education, informed consents and prescription writers

**Objective 2C-2:** Implement new clinical technologies in DDS and DH preclinical and clinical settings

- **Strategy 1:** Integrate cone beam CT, digital impression systems, dental lasers, CAD/CAM restoration fabrication, and other emerging clinical technologies into direct patient care

**Objective 2C-3:** Increase emphasis on prevention and oral health promotion

- **Strategy 1:** Implement preclinical and clinical course content in Caries Management by Risk Assessment (CAMBRA) in the DDS and DH curricula
Strategic Direction 3: Research

We will seek to become a top-tier dental research institution by conducting collaborative research that can positively impact patient care, education and society. Our research efforts will be focused on chronic & infectious disease, personalized medicine & dentistry, new technologies and health & education.

Goal 3A: Expand research infrastructure

Objective 3A-1: Appoint new leadership and increase the number of investigators

Strategy 1: Recruit a permanent Associate Dean for Research and Director of Clinical Research

Strategy 2: Design and construct space for the Houston Center for Biomaterials and Biomimetics (HCBB) and appoint a permanent director

Strategy 3: Recruit new basic and clinical scientists to research concepts with high translational potential

Objective 3A-2: Expand research facilities and support resources

Strategy 1: Acquire adequate, functional and versatile research space for the School of Dentistry in the UT Research Park

Strategy 2: Add support, training and resources in statistical design and analysis, grant-writing and research development

Goal 3B: Create new investigative and educational opportunities in research for faculty and students

Objective 3B-1: Increase basic science, clinical, behavioral and educational research productivity

Strategy 1: Expand activity with UTHealth Center for Clinical & Translational Sciences

Strategy 3: Establish a Center for Educational Research

Strategy 4: Expand student research programs as the basis for evidence-based dental practice

Objective 3B-2: Develop new collaborative opportunities with other organizations from UTHealth, the Texas Medical Center, and beyond

Strategy 1: Expand personalized medicine & dentistry research in genomics and proteomics in collaboration with UTHealth Medical School/IMM

Strategy 2: Expand collaborative research in public health, especially for women, children and the aged
**Strategic Direction 4: Technology**

We will create a technologically rich environment for teaching, patient care, and research through the enhancement, development and application of technology and informatics.

**Goal 4A: Expand the use of technology in education**

- **Objective 4A-1:** Increase use of technology for classroom and distance learning
  - **Strategy 1:** Increase use of hand-held digital devices, online testing, audience response systems and other emerging technologies
  - **Strategy 2:** Increase use of learning management systems (LMS), online, lecture capture, Web 2.0, social networking, and distance and “multi-modal” education in all DDS, DH, advanced education and continuing education programs
  - **Strategy 3:** Create new courses and programs in informatics for all DDS, DH, advanced education and continuing education curricula

**Goal 4B: Expand the use of technology in patient care**

- **Objective 4B-1:** Apply resources in informatics to improve the quality of patient care
  - **Strategy 1:** Establish ongoing clinical outcomes studies from the EPR
  - **Strategy 2:** Create protocols to develop and evaluate new technologies for use in patient care
  - **Strategy 3:** Expand remote access to the EPR by faculty and patients

- **Objective 4B-2:** Further develop collaborations for technology and informatics
  - **Strategy 1:** Expand use of and collaboration with data repositories

**Goal 4C: Expand the use of technology in research**

- **Objective 4C-1:** Support faculty in the use of new-existing technologies and informatics
  - **Strategy 1:** Develop new training programs in technology in support of faculty research
  - **Strategy 2:** Create new investigative opportunities for faculty and students in informatics
**Strategic Direction 5: Culture and Environment**

We will continually strive for a humanistic environment focused on a culture of improving health, valuing individuals and optimizing opportunities for development and personal growth of dental professionals.

**Goal 5A: Foster a commitment to improving the health of the people of Texas**

- **Objective 5A-1:** Recruit and retain an outstanding and diverse faculty, staff and student body
  - **Strategy 1:** Recruit and retain a faculty that is inclusive and ethnically and culturally diverse
  - **Strategy 2:** Expand DDS enrollment and corresponding faculty and staff positions
  - **Strategy 3:** Enhance student recruitment and retention programs to increase the diversity of students

- **Objective 5A-2:** Expand and enhance relationships with the school’s alumni and with organized dentistry
  - **Strategy 1:** Develop and foster a joint communication, planning and philanthropic relationship with the school’s alumni
  - **Strategy 2:** Develop cooperative continuing education and student partnership programs with the school’s alumni associations and organized dentistry

**Goal 5B: Foster an environment that emphasizes ethics, core values, diversity and inclusion while optimizing opportunities for personal development and growth**

- **Objective 5B-1:** Increase opportunities to demonstrate inclusiveness in teaching and learning, patient care, curricular planning, school climate, admissions, and recruitment and retention
  - **Strategy 1:** Conduct a cultural audit of the school’s community to identify opportunities to expand and support cultural diversity and inclusion
  - **Strategy 2:** Incorporate learning opportunities in cultural competence and diversity into the curriculum to increase our ability to work with diverse colleagues, students, staff and patients

- **Objective 5B-2:** Increase the emphasis on and develop new models to teach and reinforce ethics and professionalism
  - **Strategy 1:** Integrate new models for teaching ethics, such as integrated lectures, case studies, simulation and Grand Rounds
  - **Strategy 2:** Reinforce the practice of ethics and core values, especially through campus-wide ethics programs
Objective 5B-3: Develop and implement strategies to generate student interest in careers in research and academic dentistry

Strategy 1: Increase opportunities for student participation in research and teaching, such as through the development of targeted scholarships and awards

Goal 5C: Continually measure and improve our performance against educational and professional standards to reflect a “culture of assessment”

Objective 5C-1: Maintain accreditation status

Strategy 1: Prepare for and successfully complete CODA Self-Study and Accreditation Review

Objective 5C-2: Promote and demonstrate excellence in student performance

Strategy 1: Increase the use and application of outcomes-based measures and educational research

Strategy 2: Develop new benchmarks and protocols for ongoing internal assessment of programs

Objective 5C-3: Increase and enhance programs in faculty development

Strategy 1: Develop innovative faculty development programs which incorporate distance learning and online course and meeting attendance

Strategy 2: Provide financial support for faculty to attend extramural development programs

Goal 5D: Enhance existing financial condition and develop new revenue resources

Objective 5D-1: Increase faculty salaries to the 75th percentile of national values for state-supported institutions

Strategy 1: Pursue tuition increases to augment funding for increasing faculty salaries

Strategy 2: Develop a protocol to increase salaries for faculty who are promoted in rank and awarded tenure

Objective 5D-2: Increase philanthropy in scholarships, endowments and community outreach

Strategy 1: Establish endowed professorships in Biomaterials, Ethics, Geriatric Dentistry, Informatics, Innovation, Hospital Dentistry, Special Care and other critical areas

Strategy 2: Establish endowed lectureships/programs in Biomaterials, Ethics, Informatics, Innovation in Educational Research and other critical areas
**Strategy 3:** Increase scholarships, especially those for the underserved and ethnically underrepresented populations

**Objective 5D-3:** Increase revenue generated by faculty practice

**Strategy 1:** Enhance visibility, recognition and patient pool for faculty practice

**Strategy 2:** Expand existing facilities and develop new community-based sites and other opportunities for faculty to practice