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

Committee Chair: Dr. Bruce Rotter. Committee Members: Dr. William Akey, Dr. Abby Brodie, Dr. Marcia Ditmyer, Dr. Carla Evans, Dr. Chester Evans, Dr. Susan Long, Dr. Karl Self, and Dr. John Valenza. Guests (Open Session Only): Ms. Ann Lynch, director, Advocacy and Education, American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA) and Dr. Anthony Palatta, chief learning officer, American Dental Education Association (ADEA) attended the policy portion of the meeting. Staff Members: Dr. Sherin Tooks, director, and Ms. Danielle Patrick-Wade, senior project assistant, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). Ms. Peggy Soeldner, manager, Advanced Dental Education, CODA, and Ms. Cathryn Albrecht, senior associate general counsel, CODA, attended a portion of the meeting. The meeting of the Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education (PREDRC) was held on January 6-7, 2020 at the ADA Headquarters, Chicago, Illinois.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO PREDOCTORAL DENTAL AND DENTAL THERAPY EDUCATION

Informational Report on the Conduct of a Validity and Reliability Study for the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs (p. 100): The Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs were adopted by the Commission on Dental Accreditation at its August 2010 meeting for implementation July 1, 2013.

As stated in the Commission’s “Policy on Assessing the Validity and Reliability of the Accreditation Standards” (Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 100), the Commission believes that a minimum time span should elapse between the adoption of new standards or implementation of standards that have undergone a comprehensive revision and the assessment of the validity and reliability of these standards. This minimum period of time is directly related to the academic length of the accredited programs in each discipline. The Commission believes this minimum period is essential in order to allow time for programs to implement the new standards and to gain experience in each year of the curriculum.

The Commission’s policy for assessment is based on the following formula: The validity and reliability of accreditation standards will be assessed after they have been in effect for a period of time equal to the minimum academic length of the accredited program plus three years.

Thus, the validity and reliability of the new standards for a one-year program will be assessed after four years, while standards applying to programs four years in length will be assessed seven years after implementation.

Accordingly, the validity and reliability study for predoctoral dental education will be initiated in the Spring of 2020. The Committee noted that the Standards to be implemented July 1, 2020 will be circulated through the validity and reliability study in order to obtain information on the most current standards approved by the Commission. The Committee also discussed the
importance of each dental education program submitting a response to the survey. Survey results will be considered at the Summer 2020 meeting of the Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education and the Commission on Dental Accreditation.

In cooperation with the ADA’s Health Policy Institute (HPI), a timetable will be developed, surveys will be distributed to the audiences, and responses will be due to the HPI within two weeks of receipt of the survey. A sample format of the survey is presented in Appendix 2, Policy Report p. 100. Following a period of follow-up with non-respondents, the data will be tabulated and analysis completed by June 1, 2020. Commission staff will prepare a report with results of the study for consideration by the Commission at its Summer 2020 meeting.

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

**Consideration of the Use of the Term “Should” Within the Accreditation Standards (p. 101):** At its Summer 2019 meeting, the Commission directed the revision or addition, as applicable, of the definition of “Should,” within the Definition of Terms used by the Commission in the Accreditation Standards for all disciplines within the Commission’s purview, with consideration of this change in Winter 2020, and application within a time frame to correlate with other revision activities.

At this meeting, the Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education (PREDOC RC) reviewed the use of the term “Should” within the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs (Appendix 1, Policy Report 101) and the Accreditation Standards for Dental Therapy Education Programs (Appendix 2, Policy Report 101) and considered whether additional revisions to the Accreditation Standards are warranted as a result of the revised definition of the term “Should.”

The PREDOC RC noted that there are approximately 49 “should” statements in the dental education Standards and 89 “should” statements in the dental therapy education standards. The Committee further noted that most “should” statements are a reiteration of the “must” statement; however, some “should” statements may be prescriptive related to the method to comply with the Standards, while other “should” statements appear to expand the requirement of the “must” statement. The Committee also noted that the term “expects” is sometimes used in place of the word “should,” which may result in inconsistent application of the Standards when evaluating programs. Currently, the predoctoral dental education and dental therapy education program Standards state that “Should: Indicates an expectation.” The PREDOC RC also discussed the preamble of the Accreditation Standards noting this language should also be reviewed, since there are portions of the preamble that may be considered requirements rather than references. The Committee believed that a thorough review of the Standards for dental and dental therapy education programs and revision of the definition of “should” will clarify the expectations of the Commission and ensure enhanced calibration among site visitors.

The PREDOC RC believed that the results of the validity and reliability study should be considered concurrently with consideration of the Dental Education Standards to ensure a
thorough review of the Standards. Additionally, the Committee noted that the Dental Therapy Standards should be reviewed concurrent with the Dental Education Standards, since there are similarities in language within the Standards for both disciplines.

Following discussion, the PREDOC RC noted that it will further review the dental and dental therapy Accreditation Standards related to CODA’s revision of the word “Should,” along with its consideration of data obtained through the validity and reliability study of the Dental Education Standards, at the Summer 2020 meeting, with a report to the Commission at that time.

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

Consideration of Proposed Revision to Standard 2-24n of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs (p. 102): The Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education (PREDOC RC) considered the proposed deletion of Dental Standard 2-24n and insertion of a new standard related to “malocclusion and space concerns” within the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs, which was submitted by Dr. Carla Evans (Appendix 1, Policy Report, p. 102). The Committee noted that orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics is not specifically mentioned in the Accreditation Standards; however, Standard 2-24n includes requirements for the competence of graduates in malocclusion and space maintenance within the scope of general dentistry as defined by the program. The PREDOC RC believed that creation of a new Standard on one topic may necessitate specific standards for each requirement within Standard 2-24, and was not supported. Following discussion, the Committee believed that most dental education programs do not include the full scope of orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics within their definition of a general dentistry; therefore, the requirement of Standard 2-24n should be retained as written.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct that there be no revision at this time to Standard 2-24n (malocclusion and space maintenance) within the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs.

Consideration of Proposed Revision to the Self-Study Guide for Dental Education Programs (p. 103): The Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education (PREDOC RC) considered a request from the Council of Deans of the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) proposing removal of the “Table 14 Biosketch” from the Self-Study Guide for Dental Education Programs (Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 103). The Council of Deans believed that in lieu of the biosketch for each faculty, the dental education programs should provide a copy of faculty members’ Curriculum Vitae (CV) for on-site review during a CODA accreditation site visit. The PREDOC RC also reviewed portions of the Commission’s Self-Study Guide for Dental Education Programs related to Standard 3-Faculty and Staff (Appendix 2, Policy Report p. 103).

The PREDOC RC noted that the Commission established the biosketch for all disciplines under its purview to ensure consistency in the information presented to the Commission as well as to eliminate the risk of receiving an individual’s personally identifiable information (e.g., social
security number), which may appear in a curriculum vitae and is prohibited by the Commission. Additionally, it was noted that a curriculum vitae may be lengthy and difficult to review with the intent of focusing on key aspects of a faculty’s qualifications to provide instruction in an educational program.

The PREDOC RC noted that the ADEA communication suggested that CV’s be available on-site during a site visit in lieu of submission with the program’s self-study. The Committee noted that the section on “Organizing the Self-Study” within the Self-Study Guide currently provides the program with flexibility to include materials for the Commission’s site visit team to review either via the self-study document or on-site. Additionally, the “Documentation of Activities for Comprehensive Dental School Site Visits” indicates primary faculty biosketches should be included in the self-study and all others may be available on-site. The PREDOC RC further noted that a program may determine what information to include in its self-study or have available for on-site review; however reliance on the site visit team’s on-site review of a significant amount of documentation could make it difficult for a site visit team to validate compliance with Accreditation Standards during the course of an on-site evaluation, which is limited to a few days in length.

Following discussion, the PREDOC RC believed that the Commission should communicate with the ADEA Council of Deans to inform the Deans that the CODA biosketch will be retained in the Self-Study Guide to ensure consistency in the review of faculty qualifications and serve as a standardized format to reduce the potential submission of prohibited personal information. The PREDOC RC believed the Commission should also notify the ADEA Council of Deans that flexibility currently exists with regard to submission of faculty biosketches in either the self-study document submitted by the program or via on-site availability for site visit team review.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct a formal letter to the American Dental Education Association Council of Deans informing the Council that the CODA biosketch will be retained in the Self-Study Guide for Dental Education Programs and that educational programs have flexibility to submit faculty biosketches in either the self-study document submitted by the program or via on-site availability for site visit team review.

**Report of the Standing Committee on International Accreditation (p. 104/1604):** The Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education (PREDOC RC) considered the report of the Standing Committee on International Accreditation, noting that programs are at various stages in the international process.

**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 PREDOMINANT DENTAL AND DENTAL THERAPY EDUCATION

The Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education considered site visitor appointments for 2020-2021. 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,

Dr. Bruce Rotter
Chair, Review Committee on Predoctoral Dental Education