

University of Maryland Dental School  
Global Maryland Program

22 August 2008

Memorandum for Undergraduate Dental Students

Subject: Participation in Foreign Dental Externships and Other Dental Missions in Foreign Countries

1. The Dental School recognizes the value of student participation in dental missions that introduce you to the challenges of global oral health and may serve the oral health needs of underserved populations in the United States and in many developing nations. Some offer professional and cultural enrichment only, while others involve direct patient care. Many opportunities are available to students for participation in such ventures, both in exchange programs formally established with dental schools of foreign countries, and by humanitarian organizations organized by area dental practitioners. Some fulfill academic requirements and are accomplished in curricular time. Others are voluntary and accomplished in students' vacation periods or other free time.
2. While the Dental School appreciates and encourages increasing student interest in global oral health, and student participation in related activities, the requirements of the undergraduate curriculum must be the first priority if the Dental School is to graduate competent practitioners able to respond to the opportunities and challenges of the future, both at home and abroad.
3. In accordance with Dental School policies, please be informed that students cannot be permitted to be absent from their academic responsibilities for the purpose of participation in dental missions in the United States and foreign countries, unless it is in fulfillment of an academic requirement.

Michael M. Belenky. DDS, MPH  
Clinical Associate Professor  
Director, Global Outreach