

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY COMPETENCIES AND COMPETENCY EXAMINATIONS

As stated in its mission, the Dental School seeks to graduate exceptional oral health care professionals. Competency, the ability to demonstrate skill, knowledge, and attitude derived from specialized training and experience, is at the core of exceptional professionals. It relates to the treatment of the child, adolescent, adult, geriatric, and medically-compromised patient. At this Dental School, pre-doctoral dental students must demonstrate competency prior to graduation and entry into dental practice.

The following competency statements have been developed by the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry. Together, they reflect the desired synthesis of educational outcomes of the biomedical, behavioral, and clinical curriculum of this Dental School. Prior to graduation, each student will have acquired knowledge, skills and values necessary to:

1. CRITICAL THINKING

- 1a. Evaluate and assess emerging trends, technologies, and products in health care; and integrate best research outcomes with clinical expertise and patient values for evidence-based practice.
- 1b. Utilize critical thinking and scientific knowledge in decision making processes involved in patient care.

2. PROFESSIONALISM

- 2a. Utilize and apply ethical and legal reasoning in the provision of dental care.
- 2b. Practice within the scope of competency and know how to refer to professional colleagues indicated.

3. COMMUNICATION & INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- 3a. Communicate effectively with other professionals regarding the care of patients.
- 3b. Utilize principles of behavioral sciences for maintaining patient's oral health.
- 3c. Communicate with a diverse population of patients.

4. HEALTH PROMOTION

- 4a. Evaluate effectiveness of prevention, maintenance, and reparative therapies through assessment of treatment outcomes.
- 4b. Provide appropriate prevention, intervention, and educational strategies.
- 4c. Understand the values and challenges of contributing to the improvement of oral health beyond those served in traditional practice settings.

5. PRACTICE MANAGEMENT & INFORMATICS

- 5a. Evaluate and apply contemporary and emerging information including clinical and practice management technology resources.
- 5b. Utilize basic principles of practice management and have the skills to function as the leader of an oral health team.
- 5c. Evaluate different models of oral health care management and delivery.
- 5d. Apply principles of risk management, including informed consent and appropriate record keeping in patient care.
- 5e. Comply with state and federal regulations related to OSHA and HIPAA, catastrophe preparedness, patient confidentiality, infection control, hazard communications, radiation safety, and medical waste disposal.
- 5f. Apply quality assurance, assessment, and improvement concepts.
Measured = chart audits

6. PATIENT CARE: ASSESSMENT, DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT PLANNING

- 6a. Assess a patient's medical, psychological, and social history as it relates to dental treatment.
- 6b. Secure a dental history that includes chief complaint, patient expectations, and past dental history.
- 6c. Order, obtain, and interpret appropriate radiographic/digital images.
- 6d. Formulate and present to a patient a primary treatment plan, and alternative plans or referral, based on relevant findings and individual patient considerations.
- 6e. Use knowledge of the basic and clinical sciences to evaluate the form and function of the oral and craniofacial complex and its interaction with other systems of the body in health and disease.

7. PATIENT CARE: ESTABLISHMENT & MAINTENANCE OF ORAL HEALTH

- 7a. Manage acute pain and dental anxiety.
- 7b. In non-surgical patients, prevent, diagnose, and treat periodontal diseases ranging from gingivitis to moderate periodontitis.
- 7c. Develop and implement interceptive strategies to prevent and diagnose dental caries in individual patients and restore oral health.
- 7d. Restore missing or defective tooth structure to proper form, function, and esthetics, and promote soft and hard tissue health.
- 7e. Replace missing teeth and surrounding oral tissues to proper form, function, and esthetics, and promote soft and hard tissue health.
- 7f. Prevent, diagnose, manage and treat pulpal disease, and related periradicular pathology and restore oral health.
- 7g. Manage odontogenic infections.
- 7h. Prevent, recognize, and manage medical emergencies that occur in the dental practice.

- 7i. Differentiate normal from altered oral soft tissues and determine the need for additional diagnostic information.
- 7j. Perform minor alveolar and mucogingival surgery.
- 7k. Perform an exam of the hard and soft tissues of the head and neck.
- 7l. Diagnose and manage temporomandibular disorders.
- 7m. Prevent, diagnose and manage developmental or acquired occlusal abnormalities and restore oral health.
- 7n. Recognize and refer patient abuse and/or neglect.
- 7o. Recognize and refer substance abuse.
- 7p. Evaluate outcomes of comprehensive dental care.
- 7q. Provide care for a diverse population of patients including infants, children, adolescents, adults, and geriatric and special needs patients.

The educational opportunities and guided experiences of the pre-doctoral dental education program at the University of Maryland are designed to prepare the new graduate for entry into the profession of dentistry. Prior to graduation, pre-doctoral dental students are expected to demonstrate that they have attained competence. The Dental School employs specific exams to assure students meet the expectations articulated in the Maryland Competency Statements described above.

Competency exams are a formal didactic and/or practical examination, the requirements of which are standardized across the population of students being assessed. A competency exam assesses the knowledge, and/or skills, and/or values required to achieve a goal (or a set of goals) relative to the profession of dentistry and/or delivering oral health care. Each is graded according to written protocols. All competency exams must be successfully challenged prior to graduation. A competency exam may be any of the following:

- Case based report - standardized
- Demonstration - clinical performance
- Demonstration - simulated patient/typodont/laboratory
- Exam - oral case-based
- Exam - written (responding to e-files)
- Exam - written (case-based)
- Exam - written (testing didactic material)
- Presentation - oral
- Review of literature
- Review of patient clinical records

Students are apprised of competency exams and their requirements in one or more ways:

- Course syllabi contain descriptions of competency exams included in the course
- Faculty discuss with students competency exams on the first day of class
- Clinic Manual contains descriptions of the competencies

- GP managers distribute information about clinical competency examinations and grading to their students
- Each GP maintains clinical competency evaluation forms

The Competency Exam Manual is a compilation of the reference documents developed for each competency exam. It lists prerequisites, grading protocols, remediation, and other pertinent information. The Competency Exam Manual is located on Blackboard, the campus e-learning software platform.

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