



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Jeff Jessee, Dean of the College of Health and Vice Provost of Health Programs

Cc: Carri Shamburger, Committee Chair & Assistant Professor of Dental Hygiene
Laura Stoddard, Term Assistant Professor of Dental Assisting

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: Dental Hygiene BS

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): The Dental Hygiene BS is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association (CODA).

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role:

The Dental Hygiene BS prepares students to become registered dental hygienists. The registered dental hygienist is a licensed oral health educator and clinical operator who, as part of the dental team, uses preventive, educational and therapeutic methods to help individuals and groups attain and maintain optimum oral health. Program graduates are clinically and academically ready to take the National and Western Regional Examining Boards (WREB) for licensure. Employment growth for dental hygienists is expected to be robust (+23.9%), with a moderate number of annual openings (+57). The Dental Hygiene BS makes a significant contribution to the College of Health's mission to advance the health and wellbeing of people and communities. There is a marked demand for dental hygienists in Alaska. This is the only dental hygiene program in the state of Alaska. The Dental Hygiene BS enrolled its first cohort in spring 2019. The BS was recently developed to replace the Dental Hygiene AAS (admissions to the AAS are suspended).

Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity:

The Dental Hygiene BS program serves as both an entry-level program and as a degree completion program for graduates from the Dental Hygiene AAS programs at UAA and UAF. Because the BS program admitted its first cohort in spring 2019, program demand, efficiency, and productivity statistics should include both the AAS and BS in Dental Hygiene. During the review period, the number of majors averaged 33.8 per year (23.9 in the AAS and 9.9 in the BS). The program graduated an average of 20.2 students per year (12.4 in the AAS and 7.8 in the BS). The program is expensive, in part because of the low student-to-faculty ratios that are required for accreditation. On average, instructional costs were 70% higher than full tuition revenues. The program generates additional revenue from its Dental Clinic and from offering continuing education courses. Course fees cover the costs of materials. Now that the

transition of the Dental Hygiene program from the AAS degree to the BS degree is complete, program demand is expected to increase and become stable.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success:

The Dental Hygiene BS is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association (CODA). To become licensed as a dental hygienist in the State of Alaska, students must graduate from a CODA-accredited dental hygiene program. The curriculum was completely revised when the program transitioned to the baccalaureate level. Program faculty regularly seek input from students and from a community-based advisory committee. Together, they identify key recommendations for program improvement. The program maintains a strong focus on academic assessment and improvement. Overall, the program does an excellent job preparing students for the national board examinations. Recent outcomes show that all students (100%) passed the didactic national board exam, and all students (100%) passed the clinical board exams required for dental hygiene licensure.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks offers two Dental Hygiene courses, but does not offer a degree in Dental Hygiene. These courses are offered as demand warrants, and they have not been offered recently. UAA is the only university in Alaska to offer a degree in Dental Hygiene. For students in Alaska, UAA offers the only path available to become a licensed dental hygienist.

Commendations and Recommendations:

The Dental Hygiene BS provides the only educational option in Alaska to become a licensed dental hygienist. The program is strong, and student outcomes are very good. The need for dental hygienist education extends beyond Anchorage. The program could be enhanced, in partnership with other universities, to offer educational opportunities throughout the state of Alaska. The program could also be enhanced to provide additional continuing education courses. This will become particularly important if the scope of practice for dental hygienists is expanded. For now, the program should be continued, but the program should develop specific plans for enhancement. The program should work with its partners at other MAUs and community campuses and with its industry partners to develop plans for enhancement.

Decision:

Continuation.