

POSTGRADUATE DENTAL COLLEGE

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



2019-2023

January 2021

(Last Revised)

This is a living document which undergoes timely and periodic review and revision

1. **Purpose:** The Postgraduate Dental College (PDC) Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap that guides priorities and initiatives that are in support of and in alignment with the Strategic Plan of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU or University). This emphasis will serve as a pathway to achieve the PDC vision and best accomplish our mission, while concurrently contributing to the overall University mission.

2. **References:**

A. Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Strategic Plan 2019-2023 – August 2019 (including all accompanying references).

B. Postgraduate Dental College Strategic Framework 2017-2021 – February 2018.

3. **Background:** The PDC continues to evolve and mature since it was established in 2010. Our Strategic Plan must retain flexibility and rapid adaptability in response to our constantly changing environment. Significant points for consideration include:

A. PDC education, in partnership with Services' Graduate Dental Education (GDE), uses senior officer dental faculty mentors in a military setting to educate better, readiness-focused, master clinicians with an emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving.

B. The increasing military capabilities of our adversaries could result in future conflicts and may increase the demand for warfighter dental health and deployed dental assets.

C. Oral health is commonly accepted as a vital and integral component of overall health. As such, dental care remains one of the most sought after services by indigenous populations during soft power health engagements and should remain a key component of these initiatives for the purpose of advancing and protecting US vital national interests.

D. Ongoing and expanding momentum to achieve greater efficiencies through realignments, standardization and consolidation within the GDE enterprise and in medical research, as evidenced by the NDAA19/20 requirements.

E. Changing requirements, including the possibility of downsizing, and the impact on GDE and research efforts.

F. Changing requirements imposed by accreditation agencies, the Services, and other governmental organizations that impact the PDC. Categorically, these changes will most likely involve: 1) information technology that includes challenges with security and universal connectivity; 2) acquisition, maintenance and currency of dental-specific technology; 3) improved process development and modification regarding academic support to meet the needs of students and faculty at our remote locations; 4) Organizational changes within the Services that may impact the administration of our education functions.

4. **Assumptions:** For planning purposes, assumptions are suppositions about the future that should be considered before the PDC makes key decisions on strategic objectives, specific initiatives and associated courses of action. Assumptions should be both likely to be true and necessary for the execution of the plan.

A. USU will confront a constrained resource "zero growth" environment, with real potential for modest reductions in programmed funding. As such, new funding for strategic opportunities will most likely require offsets and internal USU sourcing.

B. Military GDE will face funding challenges and incentives to consolidate and standardize training platforms among the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

C. Significant manpower reductions will be imposed on the Services' military medical and dental organizations, reducing or eliminating selected health-related military occupational specialties and changing associated USU education requirements.

D. USU and DoD will not adequately resolve IT policy issues that impact USU education and training, and research operations.

E. The Office of Academic Support will be functional, and the Registrar Concept of Operations (ConOps) will be completed by mid- 2020. Associated Registrar ConOps initiatives will reach Full Operational Capability (FOC) by the end of 2020, taking into account challenges resulting from the unique mission and distribution of residency training locations within the PDC.

F. There will be continued Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff and Congressional interest in MHS research relevant to warfighter preparedness and operational readiness.

G. USU and all DoD organizations will be required to continually find ways to become increasingly self-sufficient.

5. **Mission:** The mission of PDC is to support the readiness of America's Warfighter as well as the health and well-being of the military community by partnering with the Military Services to educate dental specialists that are ideally suited for practice in the Military and Public Health Systems in support of the National Security and National Defense Strategies of the United States. The PDC: 1) awards a Master of Science degree through oversight of curriculum and research that is aligned with knowledge and capability gaps relevant to readiness and the MHS; 2) prepares graduates as competent problem solvers and critical thinkers; 3) provides accreditation-required faculty development training to military faculty who also hold USU faculty appointments; and 4) facilitates joint curricula and educational opportunities for 7 geographically separated locations within 21 military Graduate Dental Education (GDE) residency programs.

6. **Vision:** By the end of CY 2023, the PDC will be recognized as the pre-eminent national educational institution for training uniformed service dentist leaders who are prepared for careers of service to the nation. The PDC will be a focal point for the uniformed services in postgraduate dental education, research and scholarship, and leadership and leader development, in support of dental health and readiness that directly impacts the survivability and lethality of the US Warfighter and improved health for the DoD community. Each PDC graduate will be a health professional and leader prepared with an outstanding graduate dental education, inter-professional health training, leadership training, and a deep and abiding commitment to selfless service, the uniformed services ethos, and the security of the United States.

7. Mission Domains/Strategic Themes: USU's Mission Domains are our strategic themes and reflect the major vectors that the Postgraduate Dental College will follow throughout the period of this strategic plan. While listed separately, these domains are interwoven and mutually supporting.

A. Education: The PDC educates and trains outstanding dentists and military leaders to satisfy the needs of the DoD, the MHS, the Public Health Service (PHS) and the Warfighter in support of operational readiness worldwide. We design, sustain, modify, and collaboratively coordinate curricula at military training locations, which are:

- a. Integrated, enhancing course work that facilitates a rigorous exchange in and among the four primary academic schools: the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Nursing, the Postgraduate Dental College, and the College of Allied Health Sciences.
- b. State-of-the-art, leveraging and developing advanced educational methodologies including distributed-learning, integrated teaching, simulations and simulators - blended with proven health education systems.
- c. Competitive and stimulating, drawing from the best and brightest to the Services' Postgraduate Dental Schools to prepare for military dental careers in the service of our nation.
- d. Warfighter-focused, educating and developing outstanding leaders who are superbly trained dentists and dental specialists in the Uniformed Services.
- e. Lifelong, delivering full lifecycle learning.

B. Research and Scholarship: PDC research and scholarship are requirements-driven, innovative and directly relevant to DoD, the American Warfighter and the Uniformed Services community and are central to the other mission domains. Such efforts are focused upon:

- a. Basic Research, developing new knowledge.
- b. Translational/Applied Research, applying basic sciences to practical applications of interest to the DoD and PHS.
- c. Clinical Research, generating and applying new knowledge to populations/individuals.
- d. Systems and Operations Research, generating and applying new knowledge to the MHS, the PHS and to the warfighter worldwide.
- e. Population Health Research, improving the overall health and health outcomes of service members, their families and other priority populations.
- f. Health Policy Research, the development, application and evaluation of knowledge around which effective policy can be based.
- g. Support to Military Readiness and Operations, bringing selected research initiatives directly to the Combatant Commands (COCOMs), component commands and units in the field.

C. Leadership and Leader Development: PDC faculty, staff and students are health professionals, providing sought-after leadership throughout the Uniformed Services and across the U.S. Government in support of National Security.

a. Leadership. PDC provides thoughtful, objective leadership and support in the shaping of DoD and MHS policies, processes and procedures. PDC leaders are active participants in discussions, fora and analyses that shape the ability of the MHS to enhance the readiness of the force and support the dental health of the American Warfighter.

b. Leader Development. PDC graduates and faculty are developed to serve as leaders in the MHS and PHS. The schools of the PDC are unique among institutions offering postgraduate dental education in that they integrate leadership responsibilities so that our students develop and our faculty enhance the skills and abilities necessary to become outstanding leaders at all levels of our nation's Uniformed Services.

Across our three mission domains, the PDC provides rigorous, standards-based, outcomes-oriented performance assessments. These assessments provide measures by which the PDC continuously evaluates its programs and, in turn, serve as the basis for future sustainment, improvement and adaptation.

8. Domain Critical Tasks/Objectives/Measures of Performance: To realize our vision and accomplish our mission, the PDC must meet a number of objectives in each of our mission domains/themes:

A. Education and Training: Education initiatives in the PDC are designed to be integrated with other USU colleges whenever possible, incorporate state-of-the-art educational technologies when advantageous, be stimulating, pertinent, and war-fighter focused while stimulating lifelong learning. Faculty development and health professions education are key and essential to the PDC. Our academic environment will focus on maximizing opportunity for faculty both within University programs and through nationally recognized civilian organizations.

Objective 1: Ensure that all Service-affiliated education programs meet or exceed University and Program accreditation requirements.

Measure 1: Accreditation Rate (Target: 100% CODA accreditation without reporting requirements for all PDC programs).

Objective 2: Ensure that Service-developed curricula meet operational and education requirements.

Measures 1-4:

Program Fill-Rate (Target: ≥95% of all affiliated Service training slots).

Graduation Rate (Target: ≥95% graduation rate for all PDC programs).

Board Certification Rate (Target: ≥90% written board certification pass rate).

Gaining Commander/Supervisor Satisfaction Rate (Target: ≥90% satisfaction with knowledge, skill, and attitudes of PDC program graduates).

B. Research and Scholarship:

Objective 1: Conduct innovative research and scholarship in basic, materials, translational, clinical, systems and operations, population health, and health policy relevant to the MHS, DoD and the uniformed services.

Measure1: Number of student and faculty publications in peer reviewed professional journals. (Target: ≥10 manuscripts accepted for publication on an annual basis)

Initiative 1: Develop a standardized comprehensive research platform which promotes a common terminology, structured approach, and enhanced understanding.

Objective 2: Align PDC research and scholarship portfolio with DoD requirements and priorities.

Measure1: Percentage of active/ongoing PDC research projects associated with established operational gaps. (Target: ≥90% of ongoing research projects linked established operational gaps on an annual basis).

Measure2: Percentage of PDC-funded research projects directly linked to established operational gaps. (Target: 100% of PDC-funded research projects directly linked to published operational gaps on an annual basis).

Objective 3: Advance research and scholarship in collaboration with MTFs, DoD and other federal and non-federal activities. In support of this objective, the PDC continually seeks meaningful collaborative research relationships involving university, corporate, or governmental research entities.

Objective 4: Improve mechanisms for dental research and scholarly collaboration, especially with MTFs, enhanced Multi-Service Markets (eMSMs) and the entire Military Health System.

Objective 5: Become widely accepted as a resource for critical information, thoughtful analysis, and valuable insight to current and future military and public dental health leaders and practitioners.

Initiative 1: Promote horizontally and vertically integrated research efforts within and across services to facilitate meaningful investigations addressing critical topics and/or needs.

C. Leadership and Leader Development

Objective 1: Provide sought-after leadership and service throughout the uniformed services and across U.S. Government in support of national security.

Objective 2: Expand USU's support to the uniformed services and operational forces around the world, including USU's relevance to the Joint Staff, COCOMs, component commands, and other elements of the uniformed services by providing dental and scientific advice and products to units in the field.

Measure 1: Number of PDC graduates or current/former faculty serving in academic or military leadership positions. Academic leadership positions defined as earning SOM Academic Leadership Certificate, enrolled in or earning Health Professions Education Certificates or Degrees, Chairing USU institutional-level Committees or serving as Program Director, Department Chair/Head, Associate Dean, Dean. Military leadership positions defined as Surgeon General

Consultant or Senior Staff Positions (DHA or SG Staff, Commander, Corps Chief, other). (Target: ≥ 25 academic/leadership positions within 10 years PDC establishment).

Measure 2: Of military dental officers selected annually for promotion to the rank of O-6, the number of PDC students, alumni, or faculty selected. (Expressed as a fraction and percentage of the total numbers selected. Target: $\geq 30\%$).

Measure 3: Graduates' retention in military service at the first decision point; *i.e.*, when graduates are first eligible to separate from active service following completion of active duty obligation. (Target: $\geq 40\%$).

9. Resource Requirements:

A. **Personnel:** Upon establishment in 2010, the PDC operated with only two billeted personnel, those being the Executive Dean and the PDC Administrative Officer. In 2017, in response to mission growth, the PDC added the position of Associate Dean for Dental Research to directly support the core mission. With program growth came an increased number of non-billeted faculty spread over the geographically disbursed PDC locations. As a result, an Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs was hired in 2018. In 2019, the need for quantifying value through outcomes based education research, resulted in the addition of a contract position for a Research Data Analyst. This team, with support from the Office of the Senior Vice-President (VP), his Assistant VP, and support from the administrative and professional components of the USU main campus, meet the current tactical, operational, and strategic needs of the PDC. No imminent need for an increase in personnel is anticipated.

B. **Additional Resources:** The PDC is adequately resourced at this time. Administrative resources are obtained through the USU Southern Region office. Primary resources fund travel in support of MS degree related research, degree conferral at Services' graduation ceremonies, faculty development, staff development, mission-related visits to the main campus, and as funds permit, periodic guest lecturer expenses in support of faculty development training. In the event that authorities and responsibilities for graduate dental education research migrate to USU/PDC, additional resources must be considered.

PDC Metrics Table

	Metric	Source	Timing	POC	Document
Education and Training	Accreditation	PDs	Feb/Sept	Steve H	CODA Website; PDC Accreditation Schedule
	Fill-Rate	Service Deans	May	Luis	Annual Education Announcements/ Enrollment
	Grad Rate	Executive Dean	Sept	Luis	BOR Reports for May Aug Nov
	Board Cert	PDs, Service Dean POC	Sept	Luis	Annual Report from Deans
	Survey(s)	PDC	Sept	Luis	Joint Survey under development
Research and Scholarship	Publications	PDs, Service Dean POC	Sept	Luis	Annual Report from Deans/Pub Med?
	GAP Linkage	3202D	July	Associate Dean for Research	Current Operational Gap Analysis (Research Focus)
	PDC-funded Research/GAP Linkage	3202D/Funding Documents	July	Associate Dean for Research	Current Operational Gap Analysis (Research Focus)
Leadership and Leader Development	Leadership positions	Service Deans	Jan – Academic; Sept - Mil	Executive Dean	PDC Org Chart; Annual Report from Deans
	O-6 Promotion	Service Deans or POCs	Jan	Executive Dean	Service Promotion Lists
	Retention at 1st Decision	Under Development	Sept	Luis	Under Development