

POSTGRADUATE DENTAL COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN

2023–2027



DENTAL
Postgraduate Dental College



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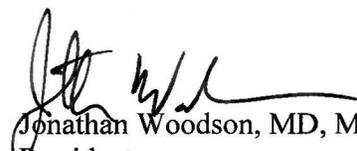
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The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is a national treasure, providing the highest quality education, research and leadership across the Military Health System (MHS) and to those who defend the nation. Key to the accomplishment of our mission - as well as that of the entire MHS – is a nested set of strategic plans that flow from USU’s vital role in the National Security and Defense Strategies. The USU Strategic Plan (2021-2025) provides the framework in which each of our schools, colleges, institutes, centers and programs fulfills its own mission and executes its supporting strategic plan.

USU’s Postgraduate Dental College (PDC) is a crucial element within the University and across the entire MHS, advancing the quality and performance of the education of dental professionals who serve the American Warfighter and our family of beneficiaries around the world. The PDC Strategic Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap to guide PDC into a future in which the demands on all elements of USU will increase as the nation executes its National Security Strategy.

I extend my appreciation for the imagination, innovation and plain hard work that the entire PDC strategic planning team has devoted to the attached Strategic Plan. Our challenge is to now execute the plan, adapting specific initiatives to the emerging realities of our operational environment while always retaining a focus on the USU and PDC missions, visions and our responsibilities to those Americans who volunteer to go in harm’s way in defense of the nation.


Jonathan Woodson, MD, MSS, FASC
President

1. **Purpose:** The Postgraduate Dental College (PDC or College) Strategic Plan defines priorities and initiatives aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Uniformed Services University (USU or University).
2. **References:**
 - a. Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Strategic Plan 2021-2025 – October 2021 (including all accompanying references)
 - b. Postgraduate Dental College Strategic Framework 2019-2023 – revised January 2021
 - c. Tri-Service Center for Oral Health Studies (TSCOHS) Strategic Plan 2019-2023 – November 2019
3. **Background:** The PDC must continue to support the Military Health System (MHS) to optimize Medically-Ready and Ready Medical forces. Therefore, the PDC Strategic Plan must remain flexible and adaptable to accommodate a constantly changing environment. The following are significant points for consideration.
 - a. Oral health is a vital and integral component of overall health. As such, dental care remains one of the most requested services during soft power health engagements, and remains a key component of these initiatives to protect US national interests.
 - b. PDC education, in partnership with Services' Graduate Dental Education (GDE), uses dental faculty mentors in military settings to better educate readiness-focused, master clinicians with an emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving. This model optimizes the development of mission-focused dental leaders.
 - c. Advanced dental education programs embedded within military medical and dental treatment facilities provide readiness-focused training environments that directly support the DoD's Medically-Ready and Ready-Medical Forces, a model that does not exist in civilian academics.
 - d. Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including increased use of distance learning platforms and hybrid teaching methodologies, have resulted in significant lessons learned to enhance the design of PDC programs.
 - e. The increasing military capabilities of our adversaries could result in conflict and may increase the demand for warfighter dental health and deployed dental assets.
 - f. Realignment, standardization, and consolidation of the GDE enterprise are intended to drive innovation and efficiency.
 - g. The PDC is impacted by changing requirements imposed by accreditation agencies, the Services, and other governmental organizations, as well as evolving strategies for integration of new technologies.

- h. Maintaining the vitality of the GDE platform will become increasingly important to meet DoD healthcare requirements. This is a critical consideration as competition increases for limited training positions in military and civilian dental residency programs.
4. **Assumptions:** The following assumptions are considered necessary for the execution of this strategic plan.
 - a. USU will experience a constrained resource environment requiring offsets and internal sourcing.
 - b. External agencies (e.g., Health Affairs, Defense Health Agency, accrediting bodies) may mandate consolidation and standardization of GDE training platforms among the military Services.
 - c. Manpower reductions may drive a change in PDC education requirements.
 - d. USU and DoD IT policy requirements will present challenges to PDC operations.
 5. **Mission:** The mission of the PDC is to enhance the education, training, and development of military dentists to meet the advanced dental education and treatment needs of the DoD.

The PDC directly supports the readiness of America's Warfighter and the healthcare needs of the DoD community by partnering with the Services to educate dentists suited for military practice. The PDC:

- a. confers Master of Science (MS) in Oral Biology degrees through oversight of curriculum and research efforts.
 - b. prepares graduates as competent problem solvers, innovators, and critical thinkers.
 - c. awards USU faculty appointments and provides accreditation-required faculty development training.
 - d. maintains an exceptional and outcomes-focused MS GDE portfolio consisting of 19 military residency programs encompassing 7 disciplines.
 - e. provides academic support to a network of 26 military dental Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY-1) certificate programs, facilitating unique standardization, collaboration, and research opportunities.
 - f. aligns with TSCOHS to support dental public health research and education.
6. **Vision:** By 2027, the PDC will be recognized as our nation's premier academic, research, and leadership institution for advanced dental education.
 7. **Values:**
 - a. **Compassion and Caring.** The PDC fosters an atmosphere of compassion, caring, mutual respect, courtesy, and pride in all activities.
 - b. **Ethics and Integrity.** The PDC promotes moral and professional principles that govern the conduct of health professionals and military and health organizations.
 - c. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).** The PDC and component Dental Schools promote and defend: diversity of thought, people, and environment; equality of opportunity, responsibility, and resource distribution; and a sense of community which values all individuals.

- d. Excellence in Scholarship. The PDC is committed to rigorous standards of scholarship and academic freedom as fundamental to the advancement of knowledge.
 - e. Spirit of Innovation. PDC students, faculty, and staff will pursue and creatively apply groundbreaking knowledge in support of the health and readiness of the Services and the nation.
 - f. Selfless Service. PDC personnel will provide leadership and expertise to promote service before self.
8. **Mission Domains:** USU's Mission Domains provide strategic themes and reflect the major vectors the PDC will follow throughout the period of this strategic plan. While listed separately, these domains are interwoven and mutually supportive.
- a. Education: The PDC supports education and training to provide outstanding dentists and military leaders to satisfy the needs of the DoD. The PDC supports curricula that are:
 - i. Integrated, enhancing collaboration with all USU schools and colleges.
 - ii. Requirements-based, to meet accreditation standards and Service specific requirements.
 - iii. State-of-the-art, leveraging advanced educational methodologies with proven health education systems.
 - iv. Competitive and stimulating, to draw the best and brightest to the PDC.
 - v. Warfighter-focused, to develop mission ready dental officers.
 - vi. Sustained, promoting lifelong learning.
 - b. Research and Scholarship: PDC research and scholarship efforts support resident research endeavors that are aligned with operational knowledge and capability gaps. Research is conducted at multiple locations, and supported by the TSCOHS. Research includes:
 - i. Basic research, gaining a better understanding of a subject, phenomenon, or basic law of nature. This type of research is focused on the advancement of knowledge rather than solving a specific problem.
 - ii. Translational research, converting/applying basic research into results that directly benefit humans. It is commonly termed “bench to bedside” research.
 - iii. Clinical research, assessing the safety and effectiveness of advances in patient care.
 - iv. Systems and operations research, exploring problem-solving and decision-making

efforts with significant ramifications in the management of organizations.

- v. Population Health Research, examining factors that influence the health of large groups sharing defined characteristics.
 - vi. Health Policy Research, understanding how policies, practices, and regulations influence collective health goals.
 - vii. Military Readiness and Operations Research, addressing challenges experienced by the Combatant Commands, component commands, and units in the field.
- c. Leadership and Leader Development: PDC faculty, staff and students are health professionals, providing sought-after leadership.
- i. Leadership. PDC provides thoughtful, objective leadership and support in shaping policies, processes, and procedures in the DoD, MHS, and broader professional arenas.
 - ii. Leader Development. The schools of the PDC provide an environment that supports development of essential skills and abilities necessary to become outstanding leaders.
9. **Domain Critical Tasks/Objectives/Measures of Performance**: The PDC provides rigorous, standards-based, outcomes-oriented performance assessments across our three mission domains. 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.

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**: PDC initiatives are integrated with other USU schools/colleges when possible, and designed to satisfy academic accreditation standards. Faculty development and health professions education are intended to maximize opportunities for faculty both within University programs and through nationally recognized civilian organizations.

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

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

Objective 2: Ensure postgraduate dental programs satisfy Service needs and requirements.

Measures 2-6:

Program Fill Rate (Target: $\geq 95\%$ of all affiliated Service training slots)

Graduation Rate (Target: $\geq 95\%$ graduation rate for all PDC programs)

Board Certification Rate (Target: $\geq 90\%$ written board certification pass rate)

Graduates' Satisfaction with Competency Level (Target: $\geq 90\%$ of graduates satisfied that their training prepared them for job requirements 1 year following graduation)

Gaining Commander/Supervisor Satisfaction Rate (Target: $\geq 90\%$ satisfaction with graduates' preparation)

Initiative 1: Provide academic expertise to the development of standardized readiness, ethics & professionalism, and interprofessional curricula for the Services.

b. Research and Scholarship:

Objective 1: Engage in innovative research and scholarship to enhance the body of professional knowledge.

Measure 1: Number of student and faculty publications in peer reviewed professional journals (Target: ≥ 20 manuscripts accepted for publication on an annual basis)

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

Measure 2: Percentage of active/ongoing PDC research projects associated with established knowledge and capability gaps (Target: $\geq 90\%$ of ongoing research projects on an annual basis)

Measure 3: Percentage of PDC-funded research projects directly linked to established knowledge and capability gaps (Target: 100% of PDC-funded research projects on an annual basis)

Objective 3: 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: Advance research and scholarship efforts in collaboration with the TSCOHS.

Initiative 2: Promote integrated research efforts within and across the Services to facilitate meaningful investigations addressing critical topics and needs, including the study of health disparities in the US military.

c. Leadership and Leader Development

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

Measure 1: 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: $\geq 30\%$).

Objective 2: Provide support to the Joint Staff, COCOMs, component commands, and other elements of the uniformed services as indicated.

Measure 2: 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 to include DHA/SG Staff, Commander, Corps Chief, etc. (Target: ≥ 25 academic/leadership positions on an annual basis)

Objective 3: Enhance PDC leadership development.

Initiative 1: Ensure leadership curriculum is incorporated into all PDC programs and is focused on the development of military unique requirements.

Initiative 2: Develop collaborative opportunities within the General Ronald H. Griffith Institute for Military Medical Professionalism.

10. Resource Requirements:

- a. **Personnel:** No imminent need for an increase in personnel is anticipated. PDC must remain responsive to changes in the DoD graduate dental education demand signal.
- b. **Additional Resources:** The PDC is adequately resourced at this time. 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	USU SMOP
Education and Training	Accreditation Rate	Program Directors	Sept	PDC Admin Assistant	CODA Website; PDC Accreditation Schedule	9.a.ii
	Fill Rate	Service Deans	Sept	Executive Dean PDC	Annual Education Announcements; Enrollment Data	9.a.1
	Graduation Rate	Executive Dean	Sept	PDC Research Data Analyst	BoR Annual Report for Nov/Dec	9.a.1
	Board Certification Rate	Program Directors	Sept	Executive Dean PDC	Annual Report from Deans	9.a.iii
	Graduate Competency Satisfaction Rate	PDC Graduates	Sept	PDC Research Data Analyst	1-Yr Post Graduation Survey	9.a.iii
	Supervisor Satisfaction Rate	Graduates' Supervisors	Sept	PDC Research Data Analyst	1-Yr Post Graduation Survey	9.a.iii 9.c.ii
Research and Scholarship	Publications	Program Directors	Sept	PDC Research Data Analyst	Accomplishments Survey	9.b.iv
	GAP Linkage	USUHS Form 3202D	Sept	Associate Dean for Research	Operational Gap Analysis (Research Focus)	9.b.i
	PDC-funded Research - GAP Linkage	Funding Documents - USUHS Form 3202D	Sept	Associate Dean for Research	Operational Gap Analysis (Research Focus)	9.b.i
Leadership and Leader Development	O-6 Promotion	Service Deans or POCs	Sept	Executive Dean	Service Promotion Lists	9.c.i.a
	Leadership Positions	Service Deans	Sept	Executive Dean	PDC Org Chart; Accomplishments Survey	9.a.iv 9.c.i.a