

August 5, 2025

Greetings to the WSDA House of Delegates from the University of Washington (UW) School of Dentistry! I am pleased to offer this report of our School's activities over the past year.

In November, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) conducted a site visit at the UW School of Dentistry (UWSOD), reviewing six of our programs: the predoctoral dental education program and the advanced dental education (graduate) programs in Endodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Prosthodontics, Periodontics, and Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics.

We are pleased to report that out of 91 areas of compliance, only two received recommendations in the predoctoral program. There were no recommendations for any of the graduate programs. As we address the two recommendations, all programs remain accredited, and we anticipate CODA's response to our report later this summer.

Looking ahead, three additional UWSOD graduate programs are preparing for their own CODA site visits later this year: Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Oral Medicine and General Practice Residency.

In January, our graduate programs underwent a UW Academic Program Review, administered by the UW Graduate School. This comprehensive review occurs once every ten years. The programs reviewed included the MSD programs in Endodontics, Oral Medicine, Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontics and Prosthodontics, the MS and PhD degree programs in Oral Health Sciences and the DDS-PhD dual-degree program.

The review committee offered high praise for all programs, highlighting our research productivity, positive culture and excellent research facilities as key strengths.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Sara Gordon and Dr. Doug Ramsey for their leadership in preparing the self-study materials for the CODA accreditation and the UW Graduate School review, respectively.

Infrastructure improvements have also been a major focus this year. We completed the long-awaited water pipeline replacement project in our complex early this year, an approximately 6-million-dollar project funded by the UW.

In April, we completed the Access to Education Center (B-170), a \$1.5 million, state-of-the-art simulation laboratory designed for pre-clinical activities. The facility supports the growing Shoreline Community College Dental Hygiene Program by providing 32 workstations, a conference room and a dedicated student space. This investment directly addresses the ongoing shortage of dental hygienists in Washington state, and we aim to expand the hygiene cohort to 30 students per class in the future.

Construction is nearing completion on RIDE's new simulation and teaching facility in Spokane—a major milestone in the program's expansion. This 12,500 sq. ft. space in the 60+ million-dollar GU-UW Regional Health Center will play a vital role in training future oral health

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professionals and improving access to care in rural and underserved communities. The facility will house all RIDE preclinical activities and support the program's growth from 8 to 16 students per year for two years. When fully implemented, the UWSOD RIDE program will have a total cohort of 32 students in Spokane at any given time, attending years one and two of the predoctoral program.

This summer, we are also undertaking a major renovation of the D1 (D165) simulation lab at an estimated cost of \$4.2 million, transforming it into a state-of-the-art Simulation Lab and Digital Technology Center. This exciting upgrade marks a significant leap forward for our School, enhancing the student learning experience through the integration of cutting-edge digital tools. Once complete, students will be trained to use a suite of digital technologies that support more efficient and comfortable patient care. We anticipate the lab will be fully operational by fall 2025.

In alignment with our strategic plan, we are thrilled to welcome more students into both the RIDE and International DDS (IDDS) programs. As noted above, this year, we successfully doubled the RIDE cohort and expanded the IDDS program from 15 to 20 students. These expansions reflect our commitment to increasing access to dental education and addressing workforce needs across Washington and beyond.

We are also launching a national search for a new Vice Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. With Dr. Sara Gordon's recent retirement and Dr. Sue Coldwell stepping down to focus on research and teaching, this leadership role is critical to our continued success. We encourage you to share this opportunity with colleagues who may be interested in applying. Please scan the code for the full job description.



As you may have seen in the news, the University of Washington—like many institutions—is navigating a more constrained budget environment due to shifts in state and federal funding. As a result, the UWSOD was asked to reduce its general operating budget by 5 percent, amounting to approximately \$1.2 million annually. So far, we've been able to mitigate the impact through strategic hiring pauses, reductions in planned hiring, operational efficiencies, revenue enhancements and careful resource reallocation. We remain committed to preserving the quality of our academic programs, clinical activities and student experience, but these new financial realities will make it more challenging to achieve our goals.

Despite federal cuts to scientific research funding, our UWSOD research program continues to thrive. At the recent International Association for Dental Research (IADR) conference in Barcelona, we had a strong presence, with 16 presentations from our faculty and students across symposia, oral sessions and poster presentations.

Our mission statement speaks to our aspiration to be a global leader in dental education and research. We were honored to be recognized earlier this year in the Shanghai Global Ranking of Academic Subjects, where our School ranked third in the world and second in the U.S. overall. In

the category of *world-class faculty*, UWSOD ranked second globally and first in the U.S.—a testament to the exceptional talent and dedication of our faculty.

One outstanding example is Dr. Donald Chi, Associate Dean for Research, who received several prestigious honors this year. Dr. Chi was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) from President Joe Biden, and was recently elected to the Washington State Academy of Sciences. Dr. Chi's work continues to advance oral health equity and exemplifies the leadership and impact we strive for at UWSOD.

Our admissions remain strong, with over 1,000 applications for the DDS program and more than 450 for the International DDS program this year. These numbers reflect the continued interest in our programs and the reputation we've built as a top-tier institution for dental education.

In closing, we are proud of the progress we've made this year across our academic programs, research enterprise, infrastructure and student support. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of our faculty, staff, students, and partners—and we are especially grateful for the continued collaboration and support of the WSDA. As we look to the future, we remain committed to advancing oral health through innovation, education and service to our communities.

In partnership,



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