University of Michigan Dental Hygiene Program

Mission Statement

The mission of the Dental Hygiene Program is to promote optimal oral health in a culturally sensitive manner through education, research, and service. To achieve its mission, the Dental Hygiene program will:

Educate dental hygienists in the current theory and practice of the profession so they may provide the best standard of care to all segments of the population;

Conduct research related to oral health and dental hygiene;

Serve the University and profession by disseminating knowledge and establishing linkages to promote oral health and dental hygiene;

Foster diversity in education, patient care, research and health policy.

Program Philosophy

The dental hygiene curriculum provides a broad based education in the social, behavioral, and biological sciences, which prepares the graduate for the practice of contemporary dental hygiene and for leadership roles in oral health care of the future. The dental hygiene program at the University of Michigan is unique in that it is structured to confer the baccalaureate degree to all students at the completion of the dental hygiene curriculum. Graduates are prepared not only for the traditional dental hygiene responsibilities as clinician and health educator, but also for the roles as consumer advocate, change agent, researcher, and health care manager/administrator.

Goals of the Dental Hygiene Program

Goal #1: Develop the basis for ethical and professional behavior and service.

Goal #2: Develop the knowledge and skills necessary to provide comprehensive oral health care for diverse populations in all ages and stages of life.

Goal #3: Foster in students an appreciation for the scientific method and life long learning.

Goal #4: Provide students experiences in community health care settings.

Values

As members of the dental hygiene program, students, faculty and staff support the following values:

- Respect each other
- Accept and value our differences
- Exhibit honesty in all interactions
- Support one another
- Promote and practice openness
- Exhibit the highest degree of professionalism
- Foster collaboration
- Promote excellence
- Assume responsibility for our actions

COMPETENCIES FOR THE NEW DENTAL HYGIENE GRADUATE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

INTRODUCTION

Competencies for the New Dental Hygiene Graduate define and organize the skills, understanding, and professional values of an individual ready for beginning dental hygiene (DH) practice in a variety of settings. These competencies take into consideration that the DH program at the University of Michigan is unique in that it is structured to confer the baccalaureate degree to all students at the completion of the dental hygiene curriculum. Graduates are prepared not only for the traditional DH duties as clinician and health educator but also for roles as consumer advocate, change agent, researcher, and health care manager/administrator.

By defining the competencies of the new graduate, the DH program will have a basis with which to (1) review, redefine, and restructure the DH curriculum; (2) review and improve student evaluation processes and promotion criteria; and (3) establish and apply measures to assess the effectiveness of the DH program.

What are Competencies?

Competencies describe the skills, understanding, and professional values of an individual ready for beginning dental hygiene practice. They are stated in terms of what a student must be able to do to be considered competent by the profession after the completion of the DH curriculum. As used in this document, the term "competency" does not imply marginal performance; it implies performance at a clinically acceptable level.

How are They Organized?

The competencies are organized into four areas reflecting the goals of the DH program. With each goal there are major competencies. Each competency has foundation knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are not defined in this document but are found in individual courses.

Goals and Competencies

Goal #1: Develop the basis for ethical and professional behavior and service.

Competency 1-1

The graduating student provides dental hygiene care using the highest professional knowledge and ethical principles.

Competency 1-2

The graduating student practices within the context of the appropriate state Dental Practice Act.

Competency 1-3

The graduating student advances the profession of dental hygiene through participation and affiliation with professional and community organizations.

Goal #2: Develop the knowledge and skills necessary to provide comprehensive oral health care for diverse populations in all ages and stages of life.

Competency 2-1

The graduating student demonstrates and applies knowledge of psychosocial, biomedical, dental and dental hygiene sciences.

Competency 2-2

The graduating student identifies individual risk factors and develops educational strategies that promote patient self-care in disease prevention and health promotion.

Competency 2-3

The graduating student uses the dental hygiene process of care to formulate a comprehensive care plan based on assessment data and in collaboration with other health care professionals as appropriate.

Competency 2-4

The graduating student provides each patient with preventive and therapeutic dental hygiene care to assist the patient in attaining and maintaining oral health.

Competency 2-5

The graduating student demonstrates effective interpersonal skills to establish rapport with patients and provide dental hygiene care.

Goal #3: Foster in students an appreciation for the scientific method and life long learning.

Competency 3-1

The graduating student uses self-assessment skills to prepare for and engage in life-long learning.

Competency 3-2

The graduating student uses the scientific method to evaluate scientific literature and uses an evidence-based approach to patient care.

Goal #4: Provide students experiences in community health care settings.

Competency 4-1

The graduating student assesses, plans, implements, and evaluates community-based oral health programs including health promotion and disease prevention activities.

Competency 4-2

The graduating student provides oral health care to a diverse patient population in community-based settings.