2020 Vision!
Strategic Plan
From the Office of the Dean

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Global Leaders in Oral Health

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM) offers one of the most forward-looking educational environments in dental medicine worldwide. This education occurs in an ethical and professional environment in which quality oral health care is provided to our patients. Since its founding in 1868, TUSDM has been committed to excellence in patient care, education, research, and community service.

TUSDM clinics offer a full array of quality general, specialty and emergency dental services. Patients receive care from faculty-supervised predoctoral and postdoctoral dental students. All of the clinics at TUSDM have electronic health records and comply with HIPAA privacy rules, which promote interdisciplinary treatment and provide more efficient patient care.

At TUSDM, research and teaching are complementary, producing professionals who possess the analytical capacity and intellectual curiosity to deal with an ever-increasing knowledge base and provide evidence-based treatment options. TUSDM is further distinguished by sending the most dental students to the National Institutes of Health Medical Research Scholars Program and for having the most student presentations at the annual meetings of the American Association for Dental Research.

TUSDM has a great commitment to the community. Students participate in externship programs in various locations throughout the country to gain additional training in patient care that benefits both the student and the underserved, and the Department of Public Health and Community Service provides comprehensive instruction and conducts research in a wide array of public health topics.

Located in the heart of the Tufts Health Sciences campus in downtown Boston, the school shares its location and resources with the Tufts University School of Medicine, the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, and the Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences.
MISSION:

Education committed to clinical excellence

We achieve our mission through:

- **Evolving comprehensive dental education** that integrates science, technology, patient needs, and lifelong learning in a world-class environment
- **Interdisciplinary, dynamic research** to improve oral care and impact overall health
- **Recruitment, development, support, and retention** of a diverse group of exceptional students, faculty, staff, and alumni
- **Civic engagement** in service to our local, regional, national, and global communities

VALUES

- **Professional excellence and integrity** in living, learning, and practicing with the highest ethical and clinical standards.
- **Commitment to advance dentistry** through the integration of education, research, and collaboration.
- **Respect** for each other’s rights, opinions, and beliefs in a diverse, culturally-sensitive and supportive environment.
- **A culture of open communication** that fosters a sense of community
Timeline of TUSDM Strategic Planning Process

November 2011-February 2012: Exploratory meetings in preparation for strategic planning process were held, beginning in November. The Dean’s Office created and implemented an assessment survey of 23 academic and administrative units at the school. The Dean’s office also secured the services of consulting firm Academy of Academic Leadership (AAL), led by principal Dr. Karl Haden.

April-July 2012: A projected timeline for planning process was introduced. Dean Thomas assembled the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (hereafter referred to as SPSC), which began a review of pertinent documents.

September-December 2012: Working Drafts 1-7 of the Strategic Plan were written and disseminated for comment. The SPSC created an initial list of strategic priorities. The consultants, Dr. Karl Haden and Mr. Josh Mintz, in partnership with the SPSC created an initial online survey as an early step to solicit feedback from the school community, which resulted in responses from 221 faculty, students, staff, and alumni. SPSC members were divided into subgroups to focus on the four strategic priorities of the strategic plan: Curriculum, People, Research and Community. Focus groups corresponding to each subgroup were created and led by the SPSC and consultants.

January-March 2013: The SPSC met in subgroups based on the strategic priorities to which they were assigned, and reviewed the survey summary report, focus group summary report, and latest draft of the strategic plan. Each subgroup made proposed changes to latest draft of the strategic plan based on this document review. The subgroups also submitted a draft of goals for their assigned priority. Drafts 7-10 of the Strategic Plan were written based on these meetings.

April-May 2013: Drafts 11 and 12 of the Strategic Plan were written. The SPSC and the Dean’s Office begin planning for the Strategic Planning Retreat in June to finalize outcomes measures and goals. The Dean’s Office created the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC) to oversee the implementation process after the strategic plan is finalized.
June-July 2013: The Strategic Planning Retreat with the SPSC and working groups took place on June 22, 2013. The retreat allowed the subgroups to meet and develop outcomes measures and objectives for each of the goals under their assigned strategic priority. After the retreat, the subgroups refined their outcomes measures and goals and submitted to consultant Dr. Karl Haden for inclusion in Draft 13 of the Strategic Plan.

July 2013-Present: Draft 13 of the Strategic Plan is edited and released to the community in a town meeting forum scheduled for early October.
Strategic Priority 1 - Curriculum

Evolving comprehensive oral health education that integrates science, technology, patient needs, and lifelong learning in a world-class environment

New research into dental education suggests that the “traditional” approach to dental education often leads to a disconnect in students’ minds between basic didactic information and the clinical experience. Course directors and lecturers are sometimes unaware of what is taught outside of their own courses or disciplines. In addition, today’s students often have different learning styles than students of a generation ago, requiring changes in how information is best communicated. In response to these challenges, the TUSDM curriculum will emphasize interprofessional education, case-based learning, evidence-based lifelong learning, vertical integration, an environment of professionalism, ethics, and humanism, and self-evaluation across the curriculum.

Goal 1.1 Maintain and improve communication between students and faculty

Outcome Measures:
- Amount of time and quality of interaction between students and professors
- Ratio of class size vs. time spent with professors
- Evaluation of student and faculty supervisor experience
- Regular student self-evaluations
- Number of students utilizing a mentor
- Class attendance
- Formative assessments

Objectives:
1.1.1 Increase smaller group learning settings between faculty and students
1.1.2 Assign faculty advisors/mentors to students or pods
1.1.3 Improve the evaluation process both for students and faculty
1.1.4 Get students and faculty to adhere to community expectations
1.1.5 Institute mandatory attendance in clinic
1.1.6 Implement honest and open student self-evaluations
1.1.7 Increase faculty availability to students
1.1.8 Utilize liaisons for each course between students and faculty

Goal 1.2 Integrate course content across disciplines

Outcome Measures:
- Student evaluations
- Peer evaluations
- Regular student self-evaluations
- Bibliographies
- Number basic science classes with clinically relevant information

Objectives:
1.2.1 Improve access to information that facilitates integration of course content
1.2.2 Identify and publicize areas where students can gain access to cross-discipline information
1.2.3 Evaluate students on their cross-disciplinary understanding on a clinical basis
1.2.4 Decrease unplanned redundancies across classes
1.2.5 Improve IT capabilities to document clinical information
1.2.6 Incorporate more clinical faculty into basic science instruction
1.2.7 Implement SPIRAL case presentations
1.2.8 Increase clinical pathological conferences (CPCs) and case-based presentations in lectures
1.2.9 Integrate practice management into curriculum

Goal 1.3 Commit to financial and logistical support of educational enhancements and advancements

Outcome Measures:
- Number of faculty presentations and publications
- Clinic and individual student productivity
- Student/faculty surveys
- Curriculum outcomes

Objectives:
1.3.1 Integrate Exam Soft software
1.3.2 Improve training for real world/practice technologies
1.3.3 Improve video capabilities in the classroom, via cameras, iPads, etc.
1.3.4 Create pilot programs for tech integrations in classrooms
1.3.5 Solicit student feedback for educational investments
1.3.6 Continue to support faculty and staff development (travel to national meetings, etc.)
1.3.7 Achieve staffing to deliver new curriculum
1.3.8 Continue improvements of 3rd and 4th floor UG clinics
1.3.9 Create scheduling coordinator position to improve clinic efficiency – create dental assisting and hygiene program
1.3.10 Utilize/implement new room booking system (EMS) across Boston campus

Goal 1.4 Adopt continuous and annual outcome measures to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum

Outcome Measures:
- Evaluate students on performance in new curriculum
- Alumni surveys
- Course evaluations
- Externship case studies
- Measure improvement from exit survey to subsequent surveys
- Measure patient outcomes using daily forms and long-term surveys
- Patient exit surveys
- Preparedness of students entering clinic

Objectives:
1.4.1 Improve preparation of students for real world experience
1.4.2 Better share student externship experiences
1.4.3 Change the curriculum assessment process, including faculty, students and use of outside experts
1.4.4 Improve communication efforts to students detailing ongoing improvements
1.4.5 Embrace an honest and open environment for student and faculty assessment
1.4.6 Emphasize end result patient outcomes and quality of care - move away from procedure-based incentives to case-based incentives
1.4.7 Improve case-based/treatment planning skill set by 3rd year
Strategic Priority 2 - Research

Interdisciplinary, dynamic research to improve oral care and impact overall health

Both students and faculty are becoming more interested in research, but barriers exist to their participation. Few faculty and students have formal training in research, and there is little time available for students and clinical faculty for research. Lastly, there are limited internal funding opportunities to support research projects for generating preliminary data (for grant submission) or to cover the costs of materials and supplies for those involved in research. TUSDM will create, optimize and promote existing and new research training in the pre- and post-doctoral programs. Similar training will be available for interested faculty. Basic science faculty will have the opportunity to apply lessons learned in translational research in the clinic. TUSDM will integrate research efforts with other schools and departments within the university.

Goal 2.1 Promote research opportunities for faculty and students

Outcome Measures:
- Survey/CE Course Evaluations and group discussions (Faculty/Students)
- Number of students/faculty who participated/completed the online research course
- Number of TUSDM students and faculty who attend research meetings, present at meetings, submit application for research funds or receive awards
- Number of research projects created annually
- Amount of research funding available
- Completion of online research certification
- Addition of research criteria into performance reviews
- Annual dissemination of the research requirements defined by the FAPTC
- Number of promoted faculty who engage in research
Objectives:

2.1.1 Create an introduction to research; offer training and mentoring to faculty and students.
2.1.2 Identify mentors and magnet investigators for all students and faculty involved in research.
2.1.3 Provide students and faculty involved in research with course credit for training in scientific writing and grant writing.
2.1.4 Leverage continuing education programs, outreach, externships, and community partnerships to collect and create data for bench, clinical, and educational research.
2.1.5 Define & communicate how research fits into the professional advancement of faculty.
2.1.6 Make research an elective or externship with credit for students.
2.1.7 Create scholarships and other incentives for faculty and students who wish to pursue research.
2.1.8 Improve writing and editing support for community members conducting and reporting on research.
2.1.9 Identify thematic research areas of strength within the school, and continue to develop these areas

Goal 2.2 Foster translational research

Outcome Measures:

- Number of translational lectures/workshops
- Attendance at lectures/workshops
- Lecture evaluation/surveys
- Number of new collaborations fostered by the lecture series or workshops
- Number of publications, grants, abstracts, presentations
- Number of dual appointments per year

Objectives:

2.2.1 Engage basic science and clinical faculty in translational research through a lecture series and collaborative workshops
2.2.2 Facilitate dual appointments for the promotion of translational research, including basic scientists incorporated within specific departments

Goal 2.3 Enhance research collaborations within TUSDM, with Tufts University, and with other entities

Outcome Measures:
- Number of presentations, abstracts, publications, and scholarly activities conducted
- Number of cross-school/department collaborations
- Number of visitors to web pages focused on research

Objectives:
  2.3.1 Identify and communicate regarding resources to support interdisciplinary research
  2.3.2 Establish programs and workshops for inter- and intra-research collaborations
  2.3.3 Develop web pages for fostering collaborations with other schools
Strategic Priority 3 - People

Recruitment, development, support, and retention of exceptional students, faculty, staff, and alumni, in order to provide optimal patient care

TUSDM is a positive place in which to work and to learn. TUSDM strives to exude a welcoming attitude and to foster collegiality, fairness and inclusion. Students, faculty and staff take pride in working at TUSDM, and diversity is celebrated on campus, though there is still room for growth and improvement. TUSDM will promote recruitment strategies and professional development that build on the School’s reputation for diversity and positivity. TUSDM will foster improved venues of communication, opportunities for personal development, and meaningful opportunities for discussion and problem solving.

Goal 3.1 Define, clarify, and communicate policies and procedures for faculty affairs

Outcome Measures:

- Measure satisfaction of faculty with survey targeted towards communication and governance
- Percentage of faculty and staff who have a Tufts email account

Objectives:

3.1.1 Create a mechanism for formal faculty representation.
3.1.2 Creation of updated Faculty Policy Manual for submission to the Provost and Board of Trustees.
3.1.3 Establish a process to update Faculty Policy Manual annually.
3.1.4 Establish a Faculty Orientation program incorporating pieces for all groups; clinical, didactic, off-site, community service partners, research, and volunteer. Work with Human Resources on benefit education.
3.1.5 Improve Faculty evaluation process with establishment of an ad-hoc committee on Faculty Evaluation. Incorporate career development into this process. Provide a mechanism to appeal faculty evaluations.
3.1.6 Ensure that everyone has a Tufts e-mail account.

Goal 3.2 Provide and promote career development opportunities

Outcome Measures:
- Professional development opportunities available to Dental School staff
- Faculty participation in December development day
- Percentage of the 2015 class that will have participated in pilot curriculum program focused on providing private practice exposure
- Evaluate the number of visits on professional development opportunities website

Objectives:
3.2.1 Build on existing Student Affairs initiatives with practice management pilot to provide opportunities for students to obtain experience in private practice. Identify leadership for this pilot initiative.
3.2.2 Through Staff Council, develop more tailored development opportunities for Dental staff. Work with managers on scheduling release time.
3.2.3 Plan Faculty Development event (full-day/half-day) during slow/closed clinic days. Develop programming for mid-career faculty. Incorporate pieces of the ADEA Leadership Seminar. Consider an annual theme.
3.2.4 Develop better defined career ladders for staff within the Dental School and across the University, incorporating TEAM goals.
3.2.5 Post all opportunities for faculty and staff development on our website.
3.2.6 Identify and communicate opportunities for faculty and staff mentoring.
3.2.7 Realize the creation of Women in Dentistry Task Force to identify faculty development opportunities and mentoring opportunities for women.
Goal 3.3 Promote and maintain cultural awareness

Outcome Measures:
- Creation of a cultural environment survey
- Participation in monthly cultural seminars
- Use the cultural environmental survey data to determine further objectives
- Number of PG students participating in book clubs

Objectives:
3.3.1 Encourage faculty and staff to participate in student organizations.
3.3.2 Devise an electronic survey on the TUSDM cultural environment. Distribute this to the TUSDM community in order to gauge opportunities and weaknesses.
3.3.3 Continue cultural competency lecture series. Incorporate new themes as a result of cultural environment survey results.
3.3.4 Broaden PG rotation experience to incorporate Tufts Dental Facility sites, in order to have PG students treat special needs patient populations.
3.3.5 Engage PG students in a voluntary book club. Promote and maintain cultural awareness by encouraging faculty to participate.
3.3.6 Create voluntary book club for 3rd and 4th year students.

Goal 3.4 Enhance patient-centered services

Outcome Measures:
- Patient retention rates
- Customer survey results (as well as online reviews)
- Length of time taken for treatment plans

Objectives:
3.4.1 Provide customer service education for faculty, staff, and students.
3.4.2 Improve tracking of patient retention.
3.4.3 Ensure that the Patients’ Bill of Rights and TUSDM standards of care are posted and distributed to patients. Distribute and reinforce documents with faculty, students, and staff.
3.4.4 Improve care completion timelines for treatment plans where appropriate.
3.4.5 Ensure HIPAA compliance and training.
3.4.6 Identify translational issues regarding patient care.
Strategic Priority 4 - Community

Civic engagement in service to our local, regional, national, and global communities

Millions of Americans lack access to basic oral health care, and oral health disparities in the United States continue to grow. In its 2011 report, *Improving Access to Oral Health Care for Vulnerable and Underserved Populations*, the Institutes of Medicine Committee on Oral Health in America noted that a successful, evidenced-based oral health system must: 1) eliminate barriers that contribute to oral health disparities; 2) prioritize disease prevention and health promotion; 3) provide oral health services in a variety of settings; 4) rely on a diverse and expanded array of providers who are competent, compensated, and authorized to provide evidence-based care; 5) include collaborative and multidisciplinary teams working across the health care system; and 6) foster continuous improvement and innovation. TUSDM has a strong commitment to develop the knowledge, skills and habits of dental professionals to be effectively engaged in their local, regional national and international communities. Community service, service-learning and other outreach programs provide an opportunity to make dental education more meaningful to students by placing it into a larger and broader real-world context, thereby increasing student learning, civic engagement of future dental professionals, and the health of society.

Goal 4.1 Measure the impact of civic engagement activities on students, faculty, staff, alumni, and communities

Outcome Measures:
- Number of alumni involved in civic engagement with TUSDM
- Number of annual awards given related to civic engagement
- Number of students, faculty and staff involved in book project
- Number of school events focused on topics of civic engagement
- Institutional time and resources directed towards civic engagement activities
• Number of public health research projects
• Percent of TUSDM coursework related to civic engagement and cultural competency

Objectives:
4.1.1 Educate TUSDM community members about community engagement opportunities.
4.1.2 Increase and expand community engagement awards and recognition for TUSDM community members, including factoring community service into promotion and tenure considerations.
4.1.3 Identify institutional resources directed towards civic engagement activities.
4.1.4 Increase number of alumni who volunteer as faculty members at TUSDM.
4.1.5 Increase number of public health research projects conducted by students/faculty.
4.1.6 Assess and enhance curriculum related to civic engagement and cultural competency.

Goal 4.2 Develop programs that define the knowledge, skills and habits required for effective civic engagement

Outcome Measures:
• Existence of a position dedicated to tracking community outreach
• Number of local community partnerships and number of outside participants involved in such partnerships.
• Number of TUSDM DMD applicants from local communities
• Number of TUSDM students involved in mentoring programs
• Number of faculty supervising community outreach activities (research, mentoring, advocacy, patient care).
• Number of public health research projects presented at international and national meetings.
• Number of connections between TUSDM coursework and community engagement initiatives.
Objectives:

4.2.1 Create connections between TUSDM curriculum and community engagement initiatives/opportunities.
4.2.2 Recruit a community liaison to coordinate and enhance community outreach activities at TUSDM.
4.2.3 Continue to develop local community partnerships (schools, etc.).
4.2.4 Increase the number of TUSDM faculty supervising community outreach activities.
4.2.5 Increase number of public health research projects presented at international and national meetings.
4.2.6 Identify themes of institutional strength related to civic engagement.

Goal 4.3 Coordinate, communicate, enhance, and integrate community service activities.

Outcome Measures:

- Inventory of current and potential civic engagement activities
- Percent of faculty, students, staff and alumni who are involved in civic engagement (beyond that required)
- Number of students involved in Honos Civicus
- Number of faculty involved in Tisch College
- Number of students going into MPH (or related) programs
- Pre and post-event surveys for students

Objectives:

4.3.1 Inventory current and potential civic engagement activities.
4.3.2 Increase percent of faculty, students, staff and alumni who engage in civic engagement (beyond that required).
4.3.3 Develop pre- and post-experiential surveys/reflections for both students and the communities that we work with.
4.3.4 Promote faculty involvement in Tisch College; increase awareness of program.
4.3.5 Encourage students and faculty to enroll in MPH (or related) Programs.

Goal 4.4 Create a TUSDM safety net option to provide essential oral health care for those in the greatest need.

Outcome Measures:
- Reduction in number of patients turned away from TUSDM for lack of funds
- Alumni involvement in providing care to underserved populations
- Number of accessible funds for supporting underserved populations
- Number of areas identified as needing significant care
- Number of training hours for students in regards to case coordination/financial resource counseling
- Number of TUSDM staff trained in case coordination and financial resource counseling
- Number of established connections to Health Safety Net

Objectives:
4.4.1 Identify a mechanism to assess alumni involvement in providing care to underserved populations.
4.4.2 Identify communities with significant need for safety net care (based on needs assessment).

4.4.3 Identify funds from a variety of sources to help support underserved care.
4.4.4 Improve TUSDM ability to provide clinical services for low-income patients.
4.4.5 Create connections to the “Health Safety Net” and similar funds.
4.4.6 Include instruction to students and staff in regards to case coordination/financial resources.
Acknowledgements

The Strategic Planning process is an endeavor that required the time, energy, expertise and feedback from dozens of members of the TUSDM community and beyond.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), which was appointed in May 2012, was charged with the information gathering, development, and writing of Vision 2020!

The members of the SPSC were: Drs. Roya Zandparsa (Chair), William Gilmore (Vice Chair), Addy Alt-Holland, Richard Doff, Kanchan Ganda, David Leader, Paul Leavis, Cheen Loo, John Morgan, Aruna Ramesh, Paul Stark, Gina Terenzi and Ms. Marilyn Peterson and Zachary Levin, D14.

The Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC), which was appointed in June 2013, served as the advisory body to the Dean on the implementation of the TUSDM Strategic Plan. It continues to ensure the coordination of TUSDM’s curriculum revision and accreditation self-study under the framework of Vision 2020! The members of the SPOC are: Dean Huw Thomas, EAD Mark Gonthier, Drs. James Hanley, Charles Rankin, Maria Papageorge, Roya Zandparsa, Aruna Ramesh, and Nadeem Karimbux.

Dr. Karl Haden from the AAL was lead consultant to the SPSC and gave comprehensive guidance to the Dean’s Office, SPSC and SPOC, including creating the plan’s timeline, structure and format.

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