**Notice of Intent**

**International Dental Degree Program (IDDP)**

**College of Dentistry**

The College of Dentistry, University of Saskatchewan is proposing a new program, the International Dental Degree Program (IDDP).

The IDDP program is designed to identify applicants who are citizens or residents of Canada that have completed a degree in dentistry from an international program that is not accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC). These applicants are not eligible for licensure as dentists in Canada. The IDDP program will select applicants that demonstrate a level of preclinical knowledge and aptitude that is at minimum comparable to that of dental students who have completed their 2nd year of study and can enter the College of Dentistry 3rd year of study and complete Y3 and Y4, the clinical component of dental education. Successful completion of the program will allow the granting of a DMD degree and provide eligibility to sit the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) examination, successful completion of which is required for licensure in Canada. It is the College’s intention to implement the IDDP program and to then develop and propose a research-based PhD program to run in conjunction with the IDDP program. The PhD program will be submitted as a separate Notice of Intent after the approval of the IDDP program.

**What is the motivation for proposing this program at this time? What elements of the University and/or society support and/or require this program?**

The College of Dentistry, under the guidance of Dean Dr. Doug Brothwell, has developed the *College Strategic Plan 2025.* The SWOT analysis portion of the strategic plan identifies some weaknesses at the College: little research activity, no graduate programs and no “focus” outside the undergraduate program. The Education Plan portion of the Strategic Plan identifies a combined PhD/IDDP program, which will address these issues. Once established, the IDDP program will preferentially accept applicants who enter a research-based PhD program under development by Dr. Petros Papagerakis, Associate Dean, Research, providing a pathway for granting both PhD and DMD degrees. The PhD program will increase the research activities at the College, provide opportunities for publication and provide a graduate level educational component to the College curriculum.

The Government of Canada, through its Pan Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Credentials has described the need to take “concerted action on the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications in order to create an environment where immigrants are able to apply their talents” (A Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, 2009). The Canadian Dental Association has identified the integration of internationally trained dentists as “megatrend” in the profession (Environmental Scanning Report, Megatrends in Dentistry 2013, 2013). The profession of Dentistry has responded to the need for recognition of foreign credentials through the NDEB establishing two pathways, the degree completion pathway and the equivalency process. Following completion of the examination, Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK), applicants can either apply for a degree completion program at a Canadian dental faculty or continue an examination-based equivalency program. Successful completion of either pathway allows the applicant to sit the NDEB examination to receive NDEB certification.

The Executive Director of the NDEB, Dr. Marie Dagenais, has confirmed that the degree completion program is the preferred method of credentialing graduates of non-accredited programs. A letter of support for the program from Dr. Dagenais is included with this notice. There are currently 7 programs offered at dental schools in Canada. This is a decrease from 8 in the recent past as the University of British Columbia has stopped accepting applications for its degree completion program. The equivalency process does not have a clinical component, is being overwhelmed with applications and has a much lower rate of successful NDEB certification than the degree completion programs. There are also many applicants to the equivalency program who have completed the process yet have been unable to be successful with the NDEB examination. These applicants have no remaining opportunity for credentialing other than the degree completion programs. The University of Saskatchewan has the capacity to accept 3 students per year into a degree completion program and to use the program to fill additional vacancies that may occur in Y3 replacing students admitted to the regular DMD program not successfully completing Y2.

**What is the anticipated student demand for the program? Does the program meet a perceived need, particularly within a national or international context? What is the projected student enrolment in the program initially and over time, and on what evidence is the projection based?**

It is anticipated the demand for the program will be high. There are many residents and citizens of Canada with non-recognized credentials in Dentistry. The NDEB currently has 6669 active applicants to the equivalency process with 1083 new applicants to date in 2018. This demonstrates the high level of interest from foreign trained dentists to have their credentials recognized. The degree completion programs in Canada have a much higher rate of applicants being successful in attaining their NDEB certification than those in the equivalency process and are the preferred route for recognizing foreign credentials. The Government of Canada is committed to continuing its immigration policies which will require ongoing attention to the recognition of foreign credentials.

The College of Dentistry anticipates an enrollment of a minimum of 3 IDDP students per year. This number may be higher if there are vacancies in the regular entry program due to attrition. The high demand for credential recognition, high applicant rates for existing degree completion programs and the closure of the UBC degree completion program suggest that the IDDP program will receive a high number of applicants.

The College of Dentistry anticipates using selection criteria consistent with the guidelines of the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC). The CDAC is the national body that accredits dental schools in Canada. Selection criteria will include completion of the Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK) examination administered by NDEB with a qualifying minimum score, demonstrable proficiency in English language consistent with the policies of the University of Saskatchewan, an assessment of clinical knowledge and skill administered by the College of Dentistry to ensure applicants meet the standards expected of the completion of Y2 and an interview.

**The university has articulated new strategies for internationalization, Indigenization, and interdisciplinarity in its strategic and visionary planning. How does this proposal fit with the priorities of the current college or school plan, the *University Plan 2025,* and the university’s *Vision, Mission and Values*? If the program was not envisioned during the college/school strategic planning process, what circumstances have provided the impetus to offer the program at this time? Are there measurable benefits to offering the program at this time?**

The College of Dentistry has completed its *Strategic Plan 2025*, which will become a component of the *University Plan 2025.* The Strategic Plan clearly identifies the IDDP program as part of the educational plan for the College.

The Mission of the University of Saskatchewan addresses the desire to build a rich cultural community and promote diversity. The ability of immigrants to have their credentials recognized, enter and participate in professional practice helps fulfill that initiative. The Principle of promoting diversity, equality and human dignity as well as the values of fairness, integrity and respect are integral to the development of this program. The increase in number of students receiving clinical experience at the College of Dentistry will also enhance the outreach clinical programs as the College develops the Special Care Dentistry (SCD) Clinic Network described in the Strategic Plan, to deliver care to Indigenous communities, geriatric and developmentally disadvantaged patients. The SCD Clinic Network will permit the College of Dentistry to make meaningful contribution to address access to care barriers in target populations in the province of Saskatchewan.

**What is the relationship of the proposed program to other programs offered by the college or school and to programs offered elsewhere (interactions, similarities, differences, relative priorities)? What effect will the proposed program have on other similar or related programs, and, in particular, on student enrolment in these programs? Is there justification to proceed regardless of any perceived duplication? Will a program be deleted as a result of offering the new program?**

The IDDP program will be offered as an additional stream for application and completion of the DMD program currently offered. Successful entrants will complete Y3 and Y4 studies along with entrants to the regular program. It will not restrict acceptance into the existing program and will result in more graduates of the DMD program. The addition of the PhD component in conjunction with the IDDP will provide a pathway for dentists to pursue a career in academia and research in oral health care. The combination of these two programs will address a chronic shortage of dental educators and research activity both at the U of S and other universities. Students accepted to the IDDP program will complete an 8-week preparatory review of preclinical education prior to the start of Y3. The College of Dentistry has the capacity to offer the IDDP program with the addition to the faculty complement of a 0.5 FTE faculty position to direct the program and one clinical instructor to support the clinical experience. This will ensure adequate faculty to deliver the program while providing mentorship and support to the IDDP students. There will be a requirement for the use of classroom space during the preparatory phase. There should be no additional requirements for classroom or laboratory space and no requirement for additional university resources to deliver this program.

**Please describe the resources available and committed to the program, both in terms of one-time costs and ongoing operating costs. What tuition will be assessed for the program and what is the rationale for the tuition proposed? Does the college or school possess the resources required to implement and support the program (faculty teaching and supervision, administrative and other support, student funding, classroom space, infrastructure)? Will additional university resources be required, for example, library or laboratory resources, IT support? Has the Provost or the Institutional Planning and Assessment Office been involved in any discussions related to resources? Please attach a letter of support outlining the resource commitments that have been made to the new program.**

Resources currently committed to the program include the development of a one-year 0.5 FTE equivalent contract position for program development. Ongoing support of the program will require an addition to the faculty complement of a 0.5 FTE faculty position to oversee the program and one clinical instructor position.

The proposed tuition for the program with be 150% of the current yearly tuition for regular admission in the College of Dentistry. The tuition for the regular applicants to the College of Dentistry in 2019 will be $35,667 and the proposed tuition for the IDDP program will be $53,501. The difference in tuitions reflects the higher cost of clinical as opposed to preclinical education, the loss of tuition by offering a placement in a 2-year rather than 4-year program, the additional cost of the preparatory program and administrative costs of the program. Existing degree completion programs in Canada outside Quebec charge tuitions averaging 196% of their regular admission programs. The goal of the College is to establish a fair tuition while ensuring the College has adequate financial resources to deliver the program.

As part of the strategic planning process, there have been ongoing consultations with the Provost and senior leadership about the proposed program(s) and its inclusion in the *Strategic Plan 2025.* There will be no additional requirements for university resources as the program will be self-sufficient through tuition fees.

**Please describe the risks, assumptions, or constraints associated with initiating this new program at this time. Has a risk analysis of this program been conducted, relative to the probable success of the program and those factors that impact on the likelihood of success? What risks are associated with not proceeding with the program at this time?**

 A preliminary risk analysis of the College of Dentistry and the IDDP program identified several threats. The College has little ongoing research, no graduate programs and operates on a very limited budget. These threats create risk because of their possible impact on the College in terms of operations, sustainability, financing and reputation. The addition of the IDDP program in conjunction with the research-based PhD program does not create any additional risk to the College while lessening the risk resulting from current threats. There are risks to the College of Dentistry from not proceeding with the IDDP program including reputational and sustainability risks to the College. The College has always enjoyed a good reputation for undergraduate education however with no graduate program and little research it’s sustainability may be questioned.

**What is the anticipated start date of the program? What considerations apply to the start date, including changes within the Student Information System?**

The anticipated start date of the program is June 17, 2019. The date allows for the delivery of an 8-week preparatory course prior to the start of the regular academic year for Y3 Dentistry. Approval of the program by the Academic Program Committee followed by the University Council must occur in November 2018 to permit the program accepting applicants in 2019.

# References

(2009). *A Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications.* Gatineau, PQ: Government of Canada.

(2013). *Environmental Scanning Report, Megatrends in Dentistry 2013.* Ottawa, ON: Canadian Dental Association.