

## Mission Statement, Objectives Revised to Strengthen Outcomes Assessment

SDMs fundamental mission remains steadfast, but its mission statement and supporting objectives were recently revised to strengthen the School's self-assessment process. The revised mission statement received the approval of the Faculty Senate in October.

"We didn't change the philosophy of the mission statement. We simply put the objectives in terms that can be measured, so we can more easily collect outcomes data for our program and for accreditation," explains Dr. Judith Buchanan, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. "For a true outcomes assessment program, you must have a mission statement with measurable objectives. You then take those objectives and decide how to measure whether you are meeting them. You systematically collect that data, analyze the data against your benchmarks, and make improvements as needed to meet your expected outcomes."

The objectives now clearly state the School's bottom-line endeavors in instruction, research, and patient care—the essence of the day-to-day operations and goals of the School for which standards can be set, maintained, and improved upon. The revised mission statement and supporting objectives follow.

### Mission of the School of Dental Medicine

In the rapidly changing world of the approaching millennium, the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine (SDM) has a significant global influence and will work to further expand this characteristic. The SDM excels in discovering new knowledge in fundamental biology and dental medicine and disseminates this knowledge through problem-based, discovery-oriented methodologies enhanced by the latest technologies. The SDM excels in instruction, research, and patient care in dental medicine and inspires, demands, and thrives on the need to continuously improve the quality of programs, produce future leaders, and be the best in all of its pursuits. The SDM's research and teaching promotes lifelong learning relevant to a dynamic society and a rapidly expanding, multidisciplinary body of knowledge. The SDM is committed to satisfying the needs of all of its constituents both within the institution and in related communities. The SDM will strengthen and appreciate the diversity of its constituents and supports free expression, reasoned discourse, and diversity in ideas. The SDM fosters the growth of humane values and develops and supports its affiliation with alumni and friends.

The specific objectives supporting the mission of the SDM are as follows:

- Recruit and admit highly qualified, diverse students into predoctoral and postdoctoral programs.
- Offer a curriculum that will prepare graduates in the knowledge, skills, and values *(continued on page 2)*

## Mock Site Visit To Be Held February 16, 17

To help gauge how well the SDM is prepared for the accreditation review of its predoctoral program, consultants will conduct a mock site visit on February 16 and 17, critiquing the same things the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CDA) will examine during its site visit in September 2000.

"The consultants will do interviews and fact-finding tours throughout the School," notes Associate Dean James Galbally. "To gain as much benefit from this process as possible, it is important for staff and faculty to treat this as though it were the actual CDA visit."

Consultants Dr. David Chambers, Associate Dean at the University of the Pacific School of Dentistry, and Dr. John Hasler, Associate Dean of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Dental School, will conduct the mock site visit. Both have extensive experience as participants in CDA reviews.

An important component of their review will involve meeting with staff and faculty to offer feedback on the School's self-study, the supporting document of the accreditation process. Drs. Chambers and Hasler will receive a draft copy of the SDM self-study a month prior to their visit. Conferences will be held to review all six areas of the self-study—institutional effectiveness, the educational program, faculty and staff, educational support services, patient care services, and research.

In addition, they will conduct student interviews, tour basic science

## **Mission Statement** *(continued from page 1)*

necessary to begin the practice of general dentistry.

- Evaluate clinical competency prior to graduation through the use of competency evaluations that correlate with the list of competency expectations approved and supported by the faculty.
- Provide acceptable dental care to our patients in a patient-oriented environment.
- Discover new knowledge in fundamental biology and dental medicine and disseminate this knowledge.
- Maintain and expand an international presence.
- Commit to strategic planning that allows adaptation to changing environments, is in concert with the University's goals, and supports continuous improvement of all programs. Sub-goals and specific objectives of our strategic planning efforts are listed in our Strategic Plan.
- Maintain a strong community presence.

## **Mock Site Visit** *(continued from page 1)*

and research clinics and facilities, and review patient charts.

A separate mock site visit will be held in March for the postdoctoral programs also undergoing accreditation.