To: UF College of Dentistry,

Congratulations to our predoctoral students, residents and fellows as they prepare to graduate from their respective programs on May 18 and look to the next phase in their lives, careers and, for some, additional education. While they prepare for next steps, UFCD is also embarking on several key areas of activity. Among the most active of our college’s shared governance committees are those focusing on the DMD curriculum and student performance. Thus, two newly formed working groups are focusing on enhancing psychomotor skills building in the D.M.D. curriculum and strengthening UFCD’s Student Performance Evaluation Committee (SPEC).

Enhancing Psychomotor Skills-Building in the DMD Curriculum

Becoming a skilled clinician and a compassionate health care provider requires mastering many skills, knowledge, and experiences. Acquiring psychomotor skills is both a critical and challenging part of the dental curriculum – the learning curve is steep, and there is great variability in how students acquire and progress through the courses requiring perceptual-motor function. In an effort to continue to improve this part of the D.M.D. curriculum, a Psychomotor Skills-Building Working Group met for the first time on April 9. I have asked the working group to evaluate seven specific preclinical psychomotor stream of courses in the D.M.D. curriculum, or more if they see fit, and identify ways to improve our efforts to enhance our teaching in this area. The group will make recommendations that will eventually go to the UFCD Curriculum Committee for action.

SPEC Plus

April 4 marked the first meeting of what we are calling the “SPEC Plus” Working Group. This group is tasked with reviewing the current process and procedures for SPEC and making recommendations to me and the associate dean for education for enhancing the SPEC process; clarifying procedures; and

continued
improving the overall process. As stated in our college’s constitution and bylaws, the SPEC is responsible for making independent decisions regarding individual student’s academic status. The working group will also review, clarify and update procedures including the roles and responsibilities of the student, SPEC and administration and will dovetail its work with the full SPEC that consists of six full-time faculty and three predoctoral students.

**Spotlight on Dental Education**
On April 10, we honored many people - from faculty to students to teaching assistants and two committees that keep our educational wheels turning. The Spotlight on Dental Education event, now in its second year, underscores and celebrates the education part of our mission and their many accomplishments. Read more about the ceremony and our honorees [here](#). Our college’s innovation in this area has not gone unnoticed - I am proud to add that there is interest from other colleges at the UF Academic Health Center in learning more about what we have in place to recognize our talented teaching faculty.

**43rd Annual Commencement**
I hope that many of you will join us for commencement on May 18 at 2 p.m. at the UF Center for the Performing Arts. Please note the time change from previous ceremonies. Commencement is a special time and the ceremony is both uplifting and an opportunity to reflect on both great beginnings and a history of proud accomplishments at UFCD over the years. The Gator Dentist community once again will gain talented, caring and skilled graduates. For me, commencement instills pride and renewed commitment to our mission, and a realization of the many people who have been so dedicated to oral health education for so many years.

Regards,
*Dean Isabel Garcia*
Because Every Picture Tells a Story

The University of Florida College of Dentistry has had a busy month! Visit our photo galleries on Facebook for all of the moments captured as the semester comes to a close.

Facebook Galleries:
- Acid Etch
- Bicuspid Ball
- Senior Banquet
- Spotlight on Dental Education
- DMD Awards
Super Sealant Saturday
Heroes in Action

UFCD students continued the college’s tradition of serving children in Gainesville and the surrounding communities with the fourth annual Super Sealant Saturday on April 7. While this year’s theme was Super Mario Bros., faculty, students, staff and residents donned superhero capes (rightfully so!) while treating over 100 children to dental care free of charge, plus face painting, meeting the tooth fairy and more! Congratulations to everyone on another exciting Super Sealant Saturday.

Awards
Award for Excellence in Research
>> Megan Menashe
>> Gavin Golas << 2018 AADR Student Research Day Award winner
>> Aravindraja Chairmandurai
>> Kyulim Lee
>> Mahmoud Mona

Poster Category
>> James Jang
>> Natalie Atyeo
>> Mahmoud Mona

Oral Competition
First Place
>> John Calise Ph.D./Post-Doc/Graduate
>> Demyana Azer M.S./Resident
>> Blake Crosby D.M.D. << 2018 DENTSPLY Award Recipient

Second Place
>> David Brice Ph.D./Post-Doc/Graduate
>> Joshua Cline M.S./Resident
>> Victor Chan D.M.D.

A special thank you to all faculty, staff, students and residents for a successful 2018 Spring Synergy.

Drs. Casey Lynn, Aaron Scheps Earn AAPD Richard C. Pugh Award

Two of the 17 recipients of the 2017 American Board of Pediatric Dentistry Richard C. Pugh Achievement Award are UF College of Dentistry pediatric dentistry residency program graduates. Dr. Casey Lynn completed his residency at the NCEF Pediatric Dental Center in Naples; Dr. Aaron Scheps completed his in Gainesville. The Pugh Award honors the top three percent of the scores in the annual Qualifying Examination of the ABPD across the United States. Well done, and congratulations!

Mark Your Calendars

The college’s online calendar includes a lot of important dates and information for upcoming events, professional development opportunities and more. To add an event, email Karen Rhodenizer.

- May 18: Commencement
- May 19: Running for a Mission 5K
- June 16: Class of 2020 Professional Coating
- June 21-23: Florida Dental Convention
- July 14: Class of 2021 Professional Coating