CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY
A look back on 114 years of the OHSU School of Dentistry
Many states at the turn of the 19th century were lacking a dental school, but not Oregon. In the late 1800's, Oregon got its first—and second—dental schools, and they opened their doors during the same month.

The Oregon College of Dentistry took out papers as a private corporation on Dec. 20, 1898, the first dental school established in Oregon.1 And the six-year-old Tacoma College of Dental Surgery – and its five second-year dental students – moved to Portland from Washington in search of a “bigger city experience,” gaining Oregon articles of incorporation on March 9, 1899.2

Both dental schools officially began educating dental students and caring for patients in October of 1899.3

The Oregon College of Dentistry, located at what is today the northeast corner of S.W. Second and Morrison4 had 14 full-time faculty, seven demonstrators, 14 clinical instructors, and four students.5 The three-year curriculum of seven months each year comprised the doctor of dental medicine degree.*

Its dean was one of the school’s founders, oral surgery and orthodontia professor Herbert C. Miller, D.D.S., M.D.7 There was an immediate rivalry between the two dental schools. Both schools were privately owned and operated and both were seeking possible sponsorship by the University of Oregon.10 It was reported that some dentists not selected as faculty by the Oregon College joined the Tacoma College, causing negative feelings and a competitive atmosphere.11 Dental students at both schools also found themselves at odds and the local newspapers wrote about several incidents that occurred when boasts and jeers turned into pranks and fistfights.12

In less than a year, according to W. Claude Adams, D.D.S., M.S.D., in the History of Dentistry in Oregon, it was clear that “Portland – with a population of only 90,000 – could not support two dental schools.”

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2 Ibid., p. 106.
3 Ibid.
4 Oregonian, October 3, 1899, p. 5.
5 North Pacific College Consolidated Catalogue, 1900-01, page 16.
6 Announcement of the Oregon College of Dentistry, 1899-1900, pages 12-14.
Two Becomes One

In 1900, the two dental schools agreed to consolidate. The resulting school – North Pacific Dental College – was empowered to confer the doctor of dental medicine degree, opening its doors in the fall of 1900. Supplementary articles of incorporation were filed on April 30, 1901.

Today, North Pacific’s well-regarded descendant, Oregon Health & Science University’s School of Dentistry, is 114 years old with about 5,700 living alumni throughout the world. Fifty-one percent of alumni live and practice in Oregon contributing to the health and economy of their communities. The dental school annually educates 350 dental students and residents and provides oral care for almost 19,000 patients.

This story is about the dental school’s ability to survive … and thrive … despite decades of political and financial up- and-down. Its survival is testimony to the fierce loyalty and determination of its deans, faculty, and alumni who ensured Oregon always maintained the highest quality in dental education and patient care.

Such allegiance is once again front and center as the school stands on the cusp of a new dental facility in the OHSU/OUS Collaborative Life Sciences Building, now under construction on Portland’s South Waterfront. The new dental facility is slated to open in the summer of 2014 (see page three).

The First Year

After the 1900 merger, Dr. Cox from the Tacoma College was named the first dean. Dr. Miller from the Oregon College joined the faculty as head of oral surgery.

The new school occupied the former Tacoma College’s building which had “four laboratories, an infirmary, auditorium, and other modern facilities of the day.” According to Dr. Adams, “the catalog of 1900-01 makes special mention of the fine late-model equipment installed, including pedal-level chairs brought over from the Oregon College, which, in addition to the equipment of North Pacific College, made a very fine outfitting.”

Dr. Adams described the first floor of the dental school building as having offices, an operative clinic and extracting and impression rooms. A lecture hall for 200 with table arm chairs was on the second floor. The third floor consisted of the operative technic room and chemical laboratory for 80 students. The anatomical laboratory (dissecting room) was on the fourth floor.

An addition was built during the first year, including a freshman and junior prosthetics laboratory on the first floor, and a 100-seat amphitheatre on the second floor, according to Adams’s book.

There were 96 dental students in the entering class of 1900, which included 62 freshmen from the Tacoma College and 34 from the Oregon College. The 1900 catalog said there were two women (Lizzie Stewart and Alice Magilton) and one Japanese (Kinzo Moriyama), among the enrollees.

The dental students of 1900 came primarily from Oregon (63) and Washington (16), with seven from British Columbia, and one from as far away as New York. The entry requirement for training in dentistry was one year of high school and a certificate of entrance into the second year.

Tuition and fees were $355 for the three-year curriculum, which included a yearly $5 matriculation fee; $100 each year for a “general ticket”; a $5 dissection fee and $5 histology lab fee during the first two years; and in the final year of school, $20 to take the final exam.

Dental students were asked to bring all the extracted teeth they could find. According to the 1901-02 North Pacific Dental College catalog, “operations in the technique departments of the school require a large number of natural teeth and a sufficient supply is sometimes difficult to get. Students will therefore find it to their advantage to bring all the extracted teeth they can obtain.” Alumni and friends of the school were asked to send extracted teeth directly to the Dean. “The college will be truly grateful for such favors and will gladly pay all express charges of such packages,” said the catalog.

The 1899-1900 Catalogue and Seventh Annual Announcement of the Tacoma College of Dental Surgery indicated that “board and room near the college, in good families,” could “be obtained at from $3 to $5 per week.” Students were advised to “call upon the dean or at the

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13 Ibid., p. 109.
14 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid., p. 8.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Consolidated Catalog, 1900, p. 15-16.
26 North Pacific Dental College Catalog, 1900, p. 15-16.
28 North Pacific Dental College Catalog, 1900, p. 12.
29 North Pacific Dental College Catalog, 1901-02, p. 19.
30 Ibid.
31 Catalog and Seventh Annual Announcement of the Tacoma College of Dental Surgery, 1899-1900, p. 30.
A thorough knowledge of metallurgy was considered essential for the emerging dentist. Special attention was given to “refining and alloying gold, the making of amalgam, and other alloys.” 37 At the turn of the century, dental societies began organizing campaigns ("A Clean Tooth Never Decays") to save teeth via tooth brushing, and, though there are no early school records of patient visits, the literature indicates that people generally began seeing the dentist more regularly. 38

Dentists were now in demand for more than pain and dentures, thanks to the 1890 publication of W.D. Miller (D.D.S., M.D.)’s book “Microorganisms of the Human Mouth,” which explained how bacteria ferment sugars on the teeth to create acid that dissolves tooth enamel and encourages tooth decay. 38 At the turn of the century, dental societies began organizing campaigns (“A Clean Tooth Never Decays”) to save teeth via tooth brushing, and, though there are no early school records of patient visits, the literature indicates that people generally began seeing the dentist more regularly. 39

Like today, the early patients of the dental school were local citizens from all walks of life and patients needed to make an appointment for oral care. A photo taken outside of the building at NW 15th and Couch, said “North Pacific College Dentistry and Pharmacy, Infirmary Open to the Public Daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.” 40

Though there are no records of the cost for a tooth cleaning at the dental school, the fees at North Pacific were generally half those in the Portland area and, according to the personal daily ledger of Stafford, Ore., dentist John Pike Gage, between 1882 and 1906 a cleaning was $1 and an extraction cost fifty cents. 42

**1901-1908**

A year after the merger of North Pacific Dental College (NPDC), Dr. Miller became the second dean of the dental school, a position he held for the next 23 years. 43

In 1902, the newly merged school gained membership into the National Association of Dental Faculties (both schools had their own memberships prior to the merger), which was the national dental accrediting body (the association later merged with the American Dental Association). 44 That same fall, prospective dental students were required to have two years of high school and a certificate of entrance to a third high school year. 45

Dental fraternities were a big part of supporting dental school life through adjunct learning and scholarship, social activities, and athletic competition. 46 The dental school, medical school, and six small local college and church schools competed in football, baseball, and basketball, as members of the Metropolitan League. 47 According to Caementum, the school’s primary alumni newsletter, the medical and dental schools dominated the league and there remain several record holders from North Pacific College in various sports. 48

The hazing of first-year dental students was de rigueur, even for the women dental students, who were blindfolded and put through courage-proving "stunts." 49 Though every North Pacific catalog, beginning in 1903, stated that “students engaging in any form of hazing or initiation of underclasses” would be "suspended or expelled according to the gravity of their offenses," the practice appears to have continued underground. 50 In 1916, Dr. Adams said a dental student reported a violent initiation experience, and that is when hazing appears to have disappeared entirely, as there are no further hazing anecdotes in the literature. 51

By 1905, dental school enrollment had grown beyond the building’s capacity. Property was purchased across the Willamette River on northeast Sixth Avenue between Oregon and Pacific Streets. 52 This new site was considered the city’s “center of population” with business, shopping, and the public library within walking distance. 53 Dr. Miller said the location of the college was determined by the “necessity for abundant clinic practice in the training of dental students and where low income earning people and worthy indigent classes can reach the college at least expense and loss of time.” 54

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32 Ibid.
34 100 Years History, p. 4.
35 Ibid., p. 5.
36 Ibid.
37 Annual Announcement of Oregon College of Dentistry, 1899-1900, p. 11.
40 TIC, September 1974, p. 12.
42 Daily Ledge of John Pike Gage, Stafford, Ore., dentist, p. 5.
44 Ibid., p. 107-108.
46 Ibid., p. 151.
48 Sara Piasecki, former head of historical collections and archives, OHSU, Email, June 24, 2010.
50 North Pacific Dental College Catalog, 1903-04, p. 29.
51 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
In 1906, the academic year was lengthened to six days a week for eight months (for three years) and a high school diploma was required for entry into dental school.\(^{55}\)

A school of pharmacy was added to North Pacific in 1908, to “increase financial support and to enable the college to obtain better trained teachers in the science subjects required in both the dental and pharmaceutical professions.”\(^{56}\)

Pharmacy students were not required to study dentistry; it was the school of pharmacy instructors who taught dental students basic science.\(^{57}\)

**1910-1924**

A devastating fire in 1910 destroyed the dental school’s “Annex,” a temporary, leased laboratory and lecture space about six blocks from N.W. 15th and Couch site.\(^{58}\)

Fortunately, construction was completed that year on the new, larger dental school building and, in 1911, North Pacific moved into its new home and continued to expand its student body.\(^{59}\)

According to Dr. Adams in his book, the “new, four-story modern reinforced concrete fireproof building, designed so that every room would have sufficient outside light, provided greatly expanded facilities . . . proved adequate for the needs of the college.”

A four-year curriculum was initiated in 1917.\(^{60}\)

Though World War I brought interruptions to many dental students’ education, its aftermath resulted in many new dentists.\(^{61}\)

During World War I, North Pacific Dental College had three army units and one naval unit in the Student Training Corps.\(^{62}\)

When the war ended in late 1918, there were more than 600 students registered in classes, making NPDC one of the four largest dental schools in the country.\(^{63}\)

By 1922, there were so many applications to NPDC that the fall entering class of 1924 was limited to 100 students and the competitive application process began.\(^{64}\)

The number of dentists graduating annually from NPDC peaked in 1923 when the school boasted its largest graduating class ever, 167.\(^{65}\)

Students applying to dental school in 1924 were required to have four years of high school and one year of college.\(^{66}\)

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55 Ibid., p. 118.
56 President’s Annual Report, North Pacific College of Oregon, 1941, p. 1.
57 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
61 Ibid., p. 144.
63 Ibid.
66 Ibid., p. 118.

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Dr. Miller retired as dean that year (though he stayed on as president of the school’s board of directors) and was replaced by **Louis Fitzpatrick**, D.D.S., longtime professor of operative dentistry.\(^{67}\)

The school also was reorganized in 1924 and the name officially changed, to North Pacific College of Oregon.\(^{68}\)

**1927-1943**

The first mention of a dental hygiene program at the dental school was in 1927, when North Pacific’s 1927-28 catalog announced a dental hygiene course, the only such program in the Northwest.\(^{69}\)

Any interested student could complete one year and be qualified as a dental assistant.\(^{70}\)

If “she satisfactorily completed the second year, she was entitled to a certificate in dental hygiene.”\(^{71}\)

Over the next 20 years, 48 students graduated in dental hygiene although there was no law defining dental hygiene practice in Oregon. California and Washington offered licensure in dental hygiene and research indicates that graduates went to other states to take the licensing examination and to practice.\(^{72}\)

Two years of college with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 was required for entry into dental school by 1937.\(^{73}\)

By early 1939, about 2,500 students had graduated from the dental school, according to Dean Fitzpatrick.\(^{74}\)

With the United States’ entry into World War II, the 1942-3 dental school catalog announced a new military program. Dental students who passed the physical examination were deferred from active duty until they completed their dental education.\(^{75}\)

They received immediate appointments as
second lieutenants in the Army or a special classification in the Navy with commissions as ensigns upon graduation.\textsuperscript{76} The curriculum for these students was accelerated by instituting a year-round program, which allowed them to complete dental school in three years.\textsuperscript{77}

The war years are described as tough on the school with many of the teaching staff on active duty and one department in particular devoid of any faculty.\textsuperscript{78} According to Dr. Adams in the \textit{History of Dentistry in Oregon}, it was difficult to find qualified replacements for faculty serving overseas.\textsuperscript{79}

Added to the uncertain times of post World War II were drastically increased enrollments, thanks to the provisions of the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) signed in June of 1943.\textsuperscript{80} According to Dr. Adams, total enrollment before the ASTP was 286 and it jumped to 336 in just one year, putting further pressure on the school.\textsuperscript{81}

It was during World War II that the dental school closed its school of pharmacy.\textsuperscript{82} The President’s Annual Report indicated that the pharmacy school was costing $2,000 to $5,000 each year and, since there were an abundance of pharmacy schools in the Northwest, it was felt North Pacific should focus solely on dental education.\textsuperscript{83}

Dr. Fitzpatrick resigned as dean in 1942, after having a heart attack, and Dr. Miller stepped in until a permanent dean could be found.\textsuperscript{84}

\textbf{Dental School of the University of Oregon}

While its leadership was in transition, North Pacific Dental College received its first challenge. In 1944, a new system of accreditation was adopted by the American Dental Association (ADA)’s Council on Dental Education.\textsuperscript{85} Because the school wasn’t linked with a university, the ADA withheld accreditation of North Pacific.\textsuperscript{86} Closure was a real possibility.

It was no secret that Dr. Miller had long wished for the dental school to affiliate with the University of Oregon, having made two formal proposals to the Board of Regents.\textsuperscript{87} The Oregon State Board of Dental Examiners had twice recommended that the dental school affiliate with the University of Oregon Medical School and the NPDC alumni association and the Oregon State Dental Association had even established a committee to push for affiliation.\textsuperscript{88}

In 1944, according to Dr. Adams’ book, Dr. Miller, on behalf of the school’s Board of Trustees, offered the dental school as a gift to the State Board of Education, but the State was concerned about the school’s “many debts.”\textsuperscript{89} The debt was then paid off, but the State Board of Higher Education still wouldn’t budge.\textsuperscript{90}

Dr. Miller wrote of the calendar year July 1, 1944, to July 1, 1945, that “the students of this college will distribute more than $710,000 here in Oregon. Quite a large percent of the students are married and have from one to three children … money [which] would have gone to other states had it not been for North Pacific College and it has not cost the State of Oregon one single dollar.”\textsuperscript{91}

The Oregon State Dental Association took the dental school affiliation proposal — House Bill 313 — to the 1945 state legislature and worked hard for its passage.\textsuperscript{92} Under pressure to beat any publicity surrounding those dental schools in the United States not accredited, the Oregon House passed the bill unanimously and there was only one dissenting vote in the Oregon Senate.\textsuperscript{93} On July 1, 1945, the law incorporating the dental school as a department of the Oregon State System of Higher Education became effective.\textsuperscript{94} The school became known as the Dental School for the University of Oregon, and its alums were grandfathered in.\textsuperscript{95}

After the school was officially transferred to the state (at no cost according to the literature, despite rumors that the state paid $1 for the school) Dr. Miller resigned as dean and Ernest E. Starr, D.M.D., professor of pathology and the first president of the Delta Chapter of the national dental honor society Omicron Kappa Upsilon, was appointed interim dean.\textsuperscript{96}

When the Council on Dental Education heard about the state’s takeover of the dental school and, even more importantly from their viewpoint, the state’s intention to build a new dental school building, it granted the University of Oregon Dental School provisional accreditation.\textsuperscript{97}

\textbf{1945-1949}

The cost of tuition fees, textbooks, instruments, tools, sundry supplies, and living expenses in early 1945 was approximately $1,350 per session of eight months.\textsuperscript{98} From 300 to 600 patients were treated daily.\textsuperscript{99} Dr. Miller wrote that the “dental school was believed to be serving a larger territory than any other dental institution.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{76} Ibid.
\bibitem{77} Ibid.
\bibitem{79} Ibid.
\bibitem{81} Ibid.
\bibitem{82} President’s Annual Report, North Pacific College of Oregon, 1941, p. 1.
\bibitem{83} Ibid.
\bibitem{85} \textit{OHSU School of Dentistry 1899-1999}, p. 12.
\bibitem{86} Ibid.
\bibitem{88} Ibid.
\bibitem{89} Ibid.
\bibitem{90} Ibid.
\bibitem{91} \textit{Caementum}, Vol. 23, No. 2, July 1966, p. 6.
\bibitem{93} Ibid., p. 116.
\bibitem{94} Ibid.
\bibitem{95} Ibid.
\bibitem{96} Ibid., p. 117.
\bibitem{97} Ibid.
\bibitem{99} \textit{Oregonian}, June 17, 1945, p. 4.
\end{thebibliography}
“There are no other schools of dentistry west of Minneapolis and north of San Francisco,” he wrote on January 24, 1945. More than 75 percent of the dentists in the province of British Columbia, Canada, are graduates of this college. More than 70 percent of the dentists practicing in the states of Oregon and Washington received their training at North Pacific College. The alumni are located in practically every state in the union and in many foreign countries. By June of 1945, degrees had been conferred on more than 3,300 graduates.

In 1946, Harold J. Noyes, D.D.S., M.D., former professor and head of the department of orthodontics at Northwestern University Dental School, assumed office as the fourth Oregon dental school dean. Dr. Starr retired, donating to the School his collection of 500 dental anomalies, which remains on display at the school as one of the largest such collections in the United States today.

The following year, the Council on Dental Education made another accreditation visit to Oregon, and by 1948, with the assurance that a new building was in the works, the University of Oregon Dental School received full accreditation from the ADA.

The dental hygiene program was closed after the granting of four certificates in 1946 and five in 1947 (including the first male dental hygiene graduate, Milton Willoughby from Vancouver, Wash.).

In 1949, a bill was passed by the Oregon legislature legalizing and regulating the practice of dental hygienists in Oregon. Admission in 1949 was restricted to “only women citizens of Vancouver, Wash."

The dental hygiene program was closed after the granting of four certificates in 1946 and five in 1947 (including the first male dental hygiene graduate, Milton Willoughby from Vancouver, Wash.).

In 1949, a bill was passed by the Oregon legislature legalizing and regulating the practice of dental hygienists in Oregon. Admission in 1949 was restricted to “only women citizens of the United States between the ages of 18 and 30, except under special circumstances.” That same fall, a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation provided funding for dental hygiene faculty for a two-year curriculum leading to a certificate in dental hygiene. Earle Hussell, D.D.S., was appointed the first head of the new dental hygiene department, followed by Louise Burke (1950 to 1953), and Evelyn Hannon, R.N., R.D.H. (1953-1966). (A few years later, the upper age limit was expanded, but the “women only” restriction didn’t disappear until the 1961-62 catalog).

“When the legislature closed its doors and the smoke blew away, the Dental School had been accorded a budget of $525,281 for the 1949-1951 biennium, which we feel is an expression of confidence not only on the part of the University, the State System of Higher Education, but on the legislature as well,” wrote Dean Noyes. This amount was about 44 percent of the School’s overall budget, a figure that fluctuated over the years, but never rose more than 58 percent.

The 1950s

From the moment the dental school came under guard of the State, through the early 1950s, there were questions about the administrator of the school: the University of Oregon, or the State System of Higher Education. After many years of meetings and what is described as “friendly” legal wrangling, it was determined that the dental school “belonged” to the University of Oregon administratively-speaking, but with the autonomy to make its own decisions, separate from the U of O.

Dentists interviewed about the dental school at northeast Sixth and Oregon Streets agree that by the 1950s, the 40-year-old facility had become a liability. In 1952, the Council on Dental Education hinted at the school’s losing its recently attained accreditation if a new building were not forthcoming.

“The building was getting pretty bad,” remembered E. Robert “Bob” Quinn, D.M.D. ’55. “In the clinic, we had buckets hanging from chicken wire to catch the rain leaking from the ceiling.”

A concerted effort by the local dental community, many of them alumni, worked tirelessly to persuade the Oregon legislature to advance the dental school to the top of the
state appropriations list for a new building. Several locations were considered, including Marion County due to a law that said all state facilities built after 1907 must be located there. But, after a brief legal battle between the state Dental Association and the State Board of Education, Marquam Hill, the home of the nursing and medical schools, was chosen.

In April 1955, state funds were appropriated for a new building. The dental school's new facility was ready in June of 1956. The 10-floor, 135,000 square foot School of Dentistry building cost $2.2 million.

With the takeover by the State, accreditation by the American Dental Association, and a new building, the dental school began making progress once again in its mission of educating dental providers and caring for patients. Dean Noyes purchased equipment, made revisions to the curriculum to include more basic science and general education concepts, hired more faculty (many had been forced to retire at an earlier age under the State system), increased faculty salaries commensurate with national dental faculty salaries, placed an increased emphasis on research funding, and initiated a postgraduate education department with its own 12-chair clinic used exclusively for dental education courses and study clubs.

Once the dental school became a state institution, the percentage of Oregon residents graduating from the school increased again, to 74 percent in 1950. (A brief glimpse into the North Pacific Dental College catalogs from 1900 to 1944 indicates that Oregonians made up the majority of entering students in 1900 and in 1901, and in 1902, 50 percent of the freshmen were Oregonians. But from 1903 to 1945 – with the exception of 1905 when Oregonians were a strong majority – non-Oregonians consistently outnumbered Oregonians).

Dean Noyes strengthened the dental hygiene curriculum, and special clinical facilities were made available to dental hygiene students, enabling them to serve more patients and gain more experience. The first class to complete the new certificate in dental hygiene was graduated in June of 1956.

The school’s enrollment around this time was about 430 doctor of dental medicine and dental hygiene students, and the number of patients served in the clinic annually was between 6,500 to 8,000.

Two years of college with a minimum grade point average of 2.25 was required for dental school admission by 1958, as was a manual dexterity test – with prospective dental students adequately carving shapes into a chalk block or soap – before dental school acceptance.

The introduction in the late 1950s of Dean Noyes’ then-revolutionary concept on the structuring of the dental curriculum brought notice to the Oregon dental school. Known as the “vertical curriculum,” both basic science and clinical courses were integrated throughout the entire four years. This meant dental students were introduced into the clinic as early as the first year, rather than waiting until students reached their third and fourth years. Dr. Noyes’ vertical curriculum was widely adopted across the country and gave the Oregon dental school’s students a reputation of having unparalleled clinical expertise.

More Advances in the Early 1960s

Dental education – and dentistry – in Oregon continued to improve in the 1960s and beyond. Faculty within the dental school continued their forays into research and technology transfer. For example in 1963, Frank G. Everett, D.M.D. ’41, in the department of periodontology, and H. Cline Fixott, D.M.D. ’38, head of the oral roentgenology department, presented to the dental school the right to patent a new diagnostic x-ray grid, a much-heralded device for measuring the loss of bone in certain kinds of gum disease and for making accurate measurements in root canal treatment and root canal filling.

Also that year, the School was among the first in the nation to introduce high-speed air turbine units and hand-pieces into the regular teaching program. The instruments were developed by Operative Dentistry Chair and Professor Kenneth Cantwell, D.M.D. ’43, and Portland engineers Norm Williams and Ken Austin. The new air bearing hand-piece, by eliminating the metal-to-metal contact of a ball bearing, could turn a cutting burr a half million revolutions per minute, allowing the dentist to prepare teeth for restoration more quickly and accurately.

Four-handed dentistry – the concept of trained dental assistants taking a more active role at chair side to increase productivity and reduce strain on dentists – came into vogue in the mid to late 1960s. And conventional dental equipment began to be replaced by contoured
chairs and mobile cabinets, with the tray as a place for instrumentation.\textsuperscript{134}

To interest young people in dental careers, the school in 1966 kicked off a pilot program for high school juniors and seniors — a two week Junior Dental Institute (later renamed Dental Careers Institute, a program that ran through 2001) attended over the years by 2,100 students.\textsuperscript{135}

One area that Dean Noyes felt could play a larger role was research. By 1967, research funding at the school had jumped $200,000 to $300,000 annually from $1,800 20 years prior.\textsuperscript{136}

Dean Noyes retired in 1967. He noted that a needed improvement in dental education was students’ lack of understanding of societal responsibilities. “They don’t involve themselves sufficiently in civic activities or with social welfare or in the political arena,” he said.\textsuperscript{137}

**Federal Funding a Bust in 1967**

**Louis Terkla**, D.M.D., a 1952 graduate of the dental school, was selected as the school’s fifth dean. He initiated a comprehensive, long-range curriculum planning effort to better prepare dentists for practice and boosted graduate education and research while continually fighting a decreasing state-supported budget.\textsuperscript{138}

In 1967, the dental school applied for a four-year federal grant under the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act of 1963, as amended in 1965.\textsuperscript{139} In return for increasing the entering class size to 85 (from 80 students), the school would receive a modest formula-based sum of money to improve its educational programs.\textsuperscript{140}

“Because it was impossible to obtain adequate state funds to meet some of the school’s needs, the federal funds helped immeasurably,” said Dean Terkla, now dean emeritus.\textsuperscript{141}

When the act expired, it was extended by Congress and renamed the Health Manpower Act of 1968, but for a school to continue to receive the same funds allocated for the initial enrollment increase, it would be required to again boost the entering class size.\textsuperscript{142} The federal government refused to honor the initial agreement and cancelled the grant, so the entering class size returned to 80.\textsuperscript{143} At the time, the University of Oregon dental school was the only health professions school in the nation to drop out of the program and cut back its enrollment of dental students.\textsuperscript{144}

In 1967, **Rachel Espey-Holmes**, M.S., R.D.H. ’52 became the first (and only) alumna to head the dental hygiene program.\textsuperscript{145}

In 1969, the University of Oregon dental hygiene alumni, who had maintained their own alumni association, voted to join the U of O Alumni Association.\textsuperscript{146} Researchers at the dental school that year developed the first intra-oral fluoroscope, capable of producing a diagnostically useful image on a television screen with far less radiation exposure than conventional x-ray equipment.\textsuperscript{147}

Around this time, Dean Terkla and faculty attempted to obtain a legislative appropriation for a building addition, but funds were “never available to reach the priority number given to the project, and after several biennia of reducing the magnitude of the request, it eventually disappeared from the proposed capital construction list of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education.”\textsuperscript{148} New academic rank and tenure guidelines also were drafted, as well as standards for student scholarship and guidelines for adjudicating student conduct violations.\textsuperscript{149}

Dean Terkla said he also spent quite a bit of time addressing what he called students’ “liberated lifestyle that shunned some of the traditional conventions of proper decorum” and dress and grooming guidelines were established.\textsuperscript{150}

**Good News-Bad News in the 1970s**

According to the dental school’s centennial publication, the 1970s were good news-bad news years.

In 1970, the first of a long series of state budget crises hit the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, and Oregon’s governor issued an executive order to “unschedule” one-and-a-half percent of the school’s 1970-71 budget.\textsuperscript{151} Further budget reductions occurred in 1971, 1972, and 1973 because the state faced sudden energy cost emergencies and the need to accommodate high inflation rates, said Dean Terkla.\textsuperscript{152}

Despite the financial turmoil, the dental hygiene program was elevated to baccalaureate degree status, oral and maxillofacial surgery and general dental practice residency programs began, and an alumni giving program was established.\textsuperscript{153} The alumni giving program eventually provided funds that could not be obtained from the state for upgrading a physical plant that was rapidly becoming out of date.\textsuperscript{154}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{134} Ibid.
\bibitem{137} Ibid.
\bibitem{138} Ibid.
\bibitem{139} Ibid.
\bibitem{140} Ibid.
\bibitem{141} Ibid.
\bibitem{142} Ibid.
\bibitem{143} Ibid.
\bibitem{144} Ibid.
\bibitem{145} Email from Henry Clarke, D.M.D. ’61, April 15, 2010.
\bibitem{147} Dental Angles, September 1969, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 3.
\bibitem{149} Ibid.
\bibitem{150} Email from Louis G. Terkla, D.M.D. ’52, Dean Emeritus, May 27, 2010.
\bibitem{152} Ibid.
\bibitem{153} Ibid.
\bibitem{154} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
In 1971, the school established a minority student recruitment program with federal funds (the student body of 411 in fall 1972 included seven women, one black student, and eight “Orientals” studying to be dentists) but when the funds expired, state funds could not make up the gap and minority enrollment declined.¹⁵⁵

During the state legislative session to determine the 1973-75 biennial budget the school was successful in obtaining a substantial and “much-needed” faculty salary improvement package, funds to modernize the dental clinics, funds to support a dental auxiliary utilization program, and funds to establish a hospital dental service.¹⁵⁶ Advanced graduate programs in periodontology and endodontology were established.

In 1973, a sister school affiliation was established with Hokkaido University School of Dentistry in Sapporo, Japan, and a statewide oral biopsy and lab pathology services were initiated.¹⁵⁷

Social sensitivity also increased. A large-scale community outreach program was created to rotate students through nursing and senior homes, the School for the Blind, and local elementary schools.¹⁵⁸ A federal grant enabled the School to establish the Russell Street Dental Clinic to provide oral care to people not in the mainstream of the health care system.¹⁵⁹ The School also provided surplus older equipment to the dental clinic of the Malcolm X People’s Free Clinic in a low-income area of Portland.¹⁶⁰

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education decided on May 21, 1973, to consolidate the dental, medical, and nursing schools under a single administrator within an institution called University of Oregon Health Sciences Center.¹⁶¹ Though Dean Terkla now reported to a university president, rather than the chancellor, the dental school retained its name, University of Oregon Dental School.¹⁶²

The school’s contributions to dentistry continued. In 1975, David Mahler, Ph.D., Honorary Alumnus ‘96, professor emeritus of biomaterials and biomechanics, created a higher copper-based formula for a new, longer-lasting silver amalgam that became a model for other OHSU units to follow.¹⁶³ The Oregon legislature approved plans to remodel the outdated preclinical technique laboratories.¹⁶⁴ In 1977, the clinical faculty established a quality assurance program and a new patient records system.¹⁶⁶ Margaret “Peg” Ryan, M.S., R.D.H., Honorary Alumna, became the head of dental hygiene, bringing a national perspective to the program.¹⁶⁷

1980s and 1990s

But as it often happened at the dental school in those days, with progress came pain. In 1980, the economy in Oregon collapsed, with unemployment reaching 12 percent.¹⁶⁸ The result was a devastating reduction in the budgets of state supported and assisted agencies, including the University of Oregon Health Sciences Center and the dental school, which were asked to return hundreds of thousands of dollars in 1981 and 1982 that had previously been allocated, and to list tenured faculty eligible for contract termination if financial exigency were declared.¹⁶⁹

Drastic cuts were made everywhere, including reducing class sizes from 80 to 65 and letting go staff and non-tenured faculty.¹⁷⁰ Once again, a case was made to the legislature for why Oregon needed a dental school: “The school is the major access route for Oregon residents who wish to become dentists,” said Dean Terkla. “If the school were not here, the number of Oregon residents who could gain access to dental schools in other states would be quite small, and the state would be dependent on graduates of other schools for its supply of dentists.”¹⁷¹

Eventually, the state’s financial picture improved, saving the tenured faculty “on the list,” but there were “deep emotional wounds” from the fallout.¹⁷² Given the cutbacks and low morale at the school, Dean Terkla said it was “fascinating” when the Oregon legislature suddenly approved funding for a hospital dental service for the 1979-81 budget — something he had been trying to achieve for 14 years.¹⁷³

In 1981, the university changed its name to Oregon Health Sciences University.¹⁷⁴

Though closure of the dental school had been a possibility throughout its history, one of the most serious threats to the dental school was in 1982 when a small group of alumni “felt there were far too many dentists” and suggested that the

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.
¹⁵⁷ Ibid.
¹⁵⁸ Ibid.
¹⁵⁹ Ibid.
¹⁶⁰ Ibid.
¹⁶² Ibid.
¹⁶³ OHSU School of Dentistry 1899-1999, p. 20-21, and Smile, a special magazine from OHSU, 1999, p. 3.
¹⁶⁶ Ibid.
¹⁶⁷ Email from Henry Clarke, D.M.D. ’61, April 15, 2010.
¹⁶⁸ Ibid.
¹⁶⁹ Ibid.
¹⁷⁰ Ibid.
¹⁷³ Ibid.
¹⁷⁴ OHSU School of Dentistry 1899-1999, p. 21.
legislature close the Oregon school and contract with the University of Washington School of Dentistry, or force a 50 percent reduction in enrollment at the Oregon dental school. When the governor passed along this news, Dean Terkla and faculty met with alumni and legislators and successfully persuaded them to keep the school open.\(^{175}\)

The majority of alumni steadfastly rallied around the school and provided the approximately $700,000 spent on renovations during 1978 and 1983, including a new continuing dental education facility, new seating and carpeting in the lecture rooms, new lighting and/or ventilation in several labs, and remodel of the library, with special provisions for the rare book collection.\(^{176}\)

Dean Terkla retired in 1984, and Henry Van Hassel, D.D.S., Ph.D., Honorary Alumnus ’96, was recruited as the school’s next dean.\(^{177}\) Dr. Van Hassel, or “Hank” as he liked to be called by faculty and dental students, is described as quiet, efficient, and a fiscal conservative, who “got the School through a potentially devastating financial crisis.”\(^{178}\)

Dean van Hassel was devoted to bringing more research to OHSU and such funding at the dental school doubled during his tenure. Beginning in the mid-1990s, eight new researchers were hired and an office of research affairs was opened.\(^{179}\)

It is written that Dr. van Hassel wanted students to have a positive experience from “application to graduation” and, to that end, he developed through a federal grant an innovative “fifth-year” program designed to soften the transition from school to practice, which, though short-lived in Oregon, became a national model.\(^{180}\) He also initiated the first school-sponsored class retreat for first-year dental students, which took place at Cannon Beach, a tradition that remains today.\(^{181}\)

Postgraduate dental education for dental professionals — long a tradition at the dental school — continued to grow, with 30 active study clubs by 1987, less than 10 years after the dedication of the Kenneth Cantwell Continuing Dental Education Center.\(^{182}\) More than 3,000 participants from all of the western states and Canada attended the Center’s 60-plus seminars and conferences annually.\(^{183}\)

However, OHSU’s financial woes continued. Oregon was at the top of the list as the least-funded dental school in the United States in terms of state support per student.\(^{184}\) The passage of Measure 5 limited the state’s increases on property taxes and, consequently, funding for state entities like the dental school.\(^{185}\)

By 1995, funding from the state had dropped to 29 percent of the dental school’s total budget and cuts at the School began to deepen, including loss of the hospital dental service and the pediatric dentistry residency program.\(^{186}\)

Despite the economic gloom, the amount of student-provided patient care was consistently in the top three among the nation’s 54 dental schools, according to the school’s 1995 Annual Report. Annual funds were used for necessary upgrades of the pre-doctoral clinic, lobby, and orthodontics.\(^{187}\)

Said Moda Health Senior Vice President William Ten Pas, D.M.D. ’73 at the time: “The school … is a treasure for Oregon and most Oregonians don’t realize it. What it does for our state is turn out up-to-date, clinically excellent dental graduates … I believe very strongly that if we were ever short-sighted enough to let the School go for lack of support we would never, number one, get it back, and, number two, it would only be then that we realize how lucky we are to have it here.”\(^{188}\)

Fortunately, by 1995, the number of alumni gifts grew to 1,617 ($241,692) from 597 ($89,050) in 1990 (not including gifts from friends, corporations, and foundations).\(^{189}\) Tuition also increased. For non-resident dental students it was $17,655 annually and for Oregon residents it was $8,520.\(^{190}\) A new feature added to the annual fund in 1988 also helped — a phonathon.\(^{191}\) Twenty-six alumni volunteered to call their classmates, raising more than $50,000 for the school.\(^{192}\)

Dean van Hassel retired in 1998, with dental students ranked in the top five nationwide for the number of clinical procedures completed, and leaving the School on “steadier” financial ground.\(^{193}\)

Sharon Turner, D.D.S., J.D., became the school’s first female dean, and she concentrated on “faculty recruitment, facility improvement, and curriculum revision.”\(^{194}\) Dean Turner also expanded the School’s research programs, initiated a computerized clinic management system, opened a new patient simulation clinic and technique lab, and began conversations with OHSU administration for a new clinical building.\(^{195}\)


\(^{176}\) Ibid.

\(^{177}\) OHSU School of Dentistry 1899-1999, p. 20.


\(^{179}\) Email from Thomas Shearer, Ph.D., associate dean for research, May 3, 2010.


\(^{181}\) Ibid.

\(^{182}\) Ibid.


2000 and beyond
State budget cuts continued in the new millennium. “We faced very significant budget challenges and began planning for a budget model to allow the School to function like a private school primarily funded by tuition and clinic revenue with research grants funding the research mission,” said Dean Turner.196 Despite intense lobbying efforts from alumni, dental students, and faculty, the School in 2003 lost its hospital dental service, general practice residency program, library, and the dental hygiene program.197

“It was a very difficult time and a big blow to the dental community—especially the dental hygiene alums,” said Sherry Lemon, R.D.H., M.S., Honorary Alumnus ’03, associate professor of pediatric dental surgery at Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, who chaired the dental hygiene department from 1997 until the time it closed. “We understood that the university had to make cuts, but after all of the investment that had been put into the program, it was a very difficult decision to accept. Our program was the first, the largest, and the only baccalaureate entry dental hygiene program in Oregon at the time.”

When Dean Turner stepped down that year after being recruited as dean and professor of oral health by the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry, longtime faculty member Jack Clinton, D.M.D. ’64 was appointed dean on an interim basis and then fulltime in 2004. Dr. Clinton empowered his team to strategically refocus and strengthen the curriculum and encouraged dental students, staff, and faculty to commit to service excellence.

By 2003, yearly research topped $5 million.199 The pediatric dentistry residency program was restored in 2005.

Dr. Noyes’ 65-year-old vertical curriculum transitioned into an integrated practice group structure in 2008, with each dental student assigned to one of six group practices for the duration of their four years. Merged basic science and clinical faculty into the curriculum to boost students’ evidence-based decision making when providing patient care, thanks to a National Institutes of Health grant. A community rotation of at least two weeks was required for all graduating dental students by the fall of 2010. Several endowed lectureships and many dental student scholarships were initiated by alumni to boost leadership and professionalism and to relieve students of tuition debt. Funding was procured and the Graduate Practice Residency (GPR) program re-ignited, with plans for the first class in fall of 2015, and an Advanced Education in General Dentistry program was being developed.

Only 12 percent of the School’s annual budget (less than $2 million) in fiscal year 2010 was provided by the state. Philanthropy paid for remodel of the patient reception center and revamped clinics for pediatric dental surgery (in Doernbecher Children’s Hospital) and pediatric dentistry (Dr. and Mrs. Carl Rietman Pediatric Dentistry Clinic).

A Blue Ribbon panel was appointed to chart the future of dental education in Oregon, and recommended the School pursue a new facility in conjunction with the OHSU/OUS Collaborative Life Sciences Building on Portland’s South Waterfront. Three major gifts in July 2011 jumpstarted the new facility, with groundbreaking four months later.

“OHSU School of Dentistry has a 114-year history of educating the region’s best dentists and, thanks to the vision and generous philanthropic support of our many alumni, donors, friends, and faculty, we will continue to provide Oregon with the oral health experts that it needs to carry on this tradition,” said Dr. Clinton. “We would not have a new facility without the support of the dental community and I am so grateful and proud that in my lifetime we will see the dream of a new building realized.

Upon Dr. Clinton’s retirement to dean emeritus in late 2011, Gary Chiodo, D.M.D. ’78, F.A.C.D. became interim dean. Dr. Chiodo focused on bringing the dental school budget into the black, growing the Faculty Dental Practice, providing seed funding for faculty research, increasing community collaborations particularly with Federally Qualified Health Centers, emphasizing diversity by initiating a Diversity Committee, finalizing a partnership for continuing dental education with the Oregon Academy of General Dentistry, and ensuring the dental school be a key player in OHSU’s Interprofessional Education Initiative.

Phillip T. Marucha, D.M.D., Ph.D., became the school’s ninth dean on September 1, 2013.

*From 1840, when the first American dental school opened in Baltimore, the degree was doctor of dental surgery (D.D.S.). But North Pacific was one of four dental schools in the early 1900’s that agreed with Harvard University that dentistry should be identified as a branch of general medicine, and so granted the doctor of dental medicine (D.M.D.) degree. No difference in curriculum is indicated by the different degrees.