Dental Hygiene

Program Strengths and Accomplishments
The Dental Hygiene program provides high-quality instruction as evidenced by outstanding student success, program completion and job placement rates. Program graduates are commonly offered positions prior to the completion of the program. A true strength of the program is the commitment to community projects and the promotion of community health. Program emphasis upon optimal patient care has established an outstanding reputation in the field of dental care. Students engage in dental research and have been recognized both locally and nationally for the quality of their reports and for the significance of their findings. The completion of the accreditation self study was a significant achievement this academic year and places the program ideally for the completion of the accreditation process in the 2008-2009 academic year. The program continues to maintain high standards, outstanding facilities, high student demand and outstanding student outcomes.

Other Issues Facing the Department
Dental Hygiene is a high cost program. Due to accreditation and industry standards, teacher to student ratios are low. The low ratio provides for intensive faculty involvement and outstanding program outcomes. The downside is that program enrollment does not generate sufficient state apportionment to cover program costs. Program currency has been maintained by utilizing College one-time funds, state capitol outlay dollars and grants. As community diversity continues to increase, the challenges of language barriers and student preparation are becoming increasingly apparent. The Department continues to study the English Placement Exam as a predictor of student success in the Dental Hygiene program. Though Dental Hygiene program facilities have undergone a significant recent remodel, the need to “value engineer” resulted in the elimination of replacement and refurbishment for the front reception area.

Goals/Action Plans for the Next Three Years
- Acquire an Automatic Defibrillator for the Dental Clinic.
- Successful completion of the accreditation study and site visit.
- Establish and offer a required Introduction to Dental Hygiene course.
- Increase 10 month administrative support position to 11 months.
- Depending upon availability of District funds:
  - Add a 10 month staff position;
  - Add a sterilization manager;
  - Provide an additional 100% faculty position.
- Purchase and install new front reception desk
- Purchase and install new walls for clinic cubicles and new cabinet lamination.
- Purchase new head & neck and other dental hygiene videos and slides
- Purchase TV, DVD player and oral health DVDs for the reception room
- Acquire at least 3 state of the art piezoelectric scalers and tips