

Introduction

In 1402 AH (1982 G) the Board of the College of Dentistry decided to offer graduate education in seven specialties of dentistry leading to higher academic degrees of the University. The decision of the College was a response to the fourth Five-year Development Plan of the Kingdom as it pertained to health care needs and delivery in the Kingdom.

By the beginning of 1410 AH, the Prosthodontics Master's degree program had been approved by the College of Graduate Studies of the University. Students were admitted and they commenced their studies at the beginning of 1989-1990 G (1410-1411 AH) session.

Beginning in 1991, a newly created Postgraduate Dental Education Council in the College of Dentistry was charged with the responsibility of overseeing all the specialty training programs. In January 1995, this Council was expanded and renamed the Joint Council for Postgraduate Dental Education in the College.

The College has assumed the leadership role in formulating an appropriate approach to graduate dental training in the Kingdom. By designing a graduate study structure which combines a higher degree and a professional certificate of clinical proficiency, the College expects that those who avail themselves of the opportunity of the training will be able to work competently and efficiently wherever they elect to be.

Objective of the Program

The goals of advanced dental education in the College are:

- a. **KNOWLEDGE** that graduate students must possess from structured didactic instructions, seminars, tutorials and laboratory exercises based on and delivered through clearly stated course and instructional objectives.
- b. **SKILLS** that the students must acquire in their chosen specialties as an attestation to their clinical competence to diagnose, treat and manage patients with oral and dental diseases.
- c. **ATTITUDE** which the students must cultivate and sustain in order to usefully apply their knowledge and skills for the improvement of the oral and dental health of their patients.

Specialty Programs

The College of Dentistry currently offers training in the following specialties which were identified in line with world-wide trends in the recognition of dental specialties.

1. Diagnostic Oral Sciences
2. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
3. Dental Public Health
4. Orthodontics
5. Pediatric Dentistry
6. Periodontics
7. Prosthodontics
8. Endodontics
9. Restorative Dentistry

Admission Requirements

Postgraduate dental education in the College is open to applicants who hold the bachelor of dental surgery (BDS) degree of King Saud University or its equivalent and who must have spent at least one year in clinical dentistry after the mandatory internship year. All applicants must normally have attained in their undergraduate studies a minimum grade point average (GPA) of B (ie. "Very Good"). A student with a GPA of less than "Very Good" in the undergraduate studies or the internship year may under exceptional circumstances be conditionally accepted into the program. There is presently no provision for part-time in the program.

Curriculum

The new curriculum plan for Postgraduate Dental Education was approved by the University in October 1991. With the introduction of the yearly system of instructions in the University, vis-à-vis the College of Dentistry, the format of the curriculum was annualized although a few courses in all the specialties are still programmed to last only a half year.

The biomedical and biodental courses (8 credits), the Specialty Courses (20 credits) and Research/Thesis (6 credits) are registered with the College of Graduate Studies. These credits are earned towards the Master's degree award. The Advanced Specialty Courses (10 to 14 credits) which are graded pass/fail are also registered with the College of Graduate Studies. As Pass/Fail courses, they do not carry A,B,C grades and are therefore not included in the computation of the Master's degree grade point average (GPA). Satisfactory performance at the levels required in the Specialty and Advanced Specialty Courses determine recommendation for the award of Certificate of clinical competence in the specialty.

To achieve the goals or broad objectives, the curriculum design had the previously mentioned components of core, specialty and advanced specialty courses as well as Research and Thesis. The minimum time it will take a student to finish the program is three academic sessions inclusive of two four-week summer clinical sessions.

These credit requirements of the College of Graduate Studies and the College of Dentistry are the basis for the combined award of a Master's degree in Dentistry by the University and a Certificate of Clinical Competency by the College of Dentistry. The present design therefore obviously does not permit an independent pursuit of either the Master's degree or the Certificate.

Courses- Description: