

Health | College of Dentistry *The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*

Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry
Oklahoma City, OK

THE SEARCH

The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry seeks an organized, collaborative, and forward-thinking leader to serve as the next Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, helping to shape the future of dental education in Oklahoma and beyond. Reporting directly to the Dean, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will provide strategic oversight and vision for academic initiatives, including curriculum innovation, advanced education programs, technology integration, and regulatory compliance.

As the state's only dental school, the College is deeply committed to preparing exceptional dentists and addressing the oral health needs of the state of Oklahoma. With a renewed emphasis on evidence-based education, cutting-edge research, emerging dental technologies, and patient-centered care, the College is advancing a comprehensive strategy for curriculum review and enhancement. The incoming Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will join during a period of significant growth within the broader University of Oklahoma system—an exciting opportunity for a collaborative academic leader to make a lasting impact on dental education and community health across the region.

The ideal candidate will possess strong administrative leadership skills and a deep understanding of contemporary curricular models and transformative competencies that elevate clinical education. In this role, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will work closely with Division Heads, Program Directors, Department Chairs, Course Directors, and fellow academic leaders to guide the educational progression of students across the College's diverse programs. This individual will also demonstrate expertise in leveraging educational technologies and integrating research with clinical practice throughout the curriculum. As a key representative of the College, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will engage with external stakeholders to advance its academic mission.

The College of Dentistry is entering a transformative era, guided by strategic planning, collaborative innovation, and ambitious goals in clinical expansion, research, and curriculum development. With a growing focus on serving Oklahoma's rural communities, embracing innovative technologies, and fostering a values-based culture rooted in achievement, access, opportunity, compassion, and respect,

the College is well-positioned to build on its strengths and advance the future of dental education and patient care, both locally and nationally.

The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will play a central role in this continued evolution, partnering with faculty, staff, and leadership to sustain momentum around academic excellence while thoughtfully assessing, refining, and strengthening existing programs and processes. This position offers a meaningful opportunity for a collaborative and forward-thinking leader to help shape the next phase of the College's success through continuous improvement, shared governance, and a commitment to excellence.

The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in the search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Founded in 1890, the [University of Oklahoma](#) (OU) in Norman, Oklahoma, is the state's premier institution of higher education and a leading research university. It spans three campuses and boasts a student body of 32,000 enrolled in more than 170 academic programs. With a significant commitment to research, OU expends \$416.6 million annually on research initiatives, driving a \$2.05 billion enterprise focused on transforming lives through scholarship and impactful research across Oklahoma.

ABOUT OU HEALTH CAMPUS

Located in Oklahoma City, the [OU Health Campus](#) is one of the nation's few academic health centers with seven professional colleges onsite, including [Medicine](#), [Allied Health](#), [Dentistry](#), [Nursing](#), [Pharmacy](#), [Public Health](#), and [Graduate Studies](#). With an annual budget of \$900 million, the OU Health Campus employs over 800 full-time faculty and 4,000 staff. It educates and trains nearly 4,000 students and 1,000 residents, post-docs, and fellows across more than 70 undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

With the largest portfolio of National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding in the state, OU grew its NIH research portfolio to \$75.2 million. The latest Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research rankings place the OU Health Campus at 102 in the nation for funding from the National Institutes of Health, a 27-spot climb from previous rankings. Further underscoring its commitment to growth and innovation, OU launched [Project 200](#), an ambitious initiative to recruit 200 leading research and clinical faculty members, expanding interdisciplinary collaboration and strengthening the institution's research enterprise. OU Health Campus ambitiously aims to rank in the top 75 by 2030.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

[The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry](#), established in 1971, is the state's only dental school and a cornerstone institution for oral health education, research, and clinical service. The College was founded

to address a growing need for dental professionals across Oklahoma and admitted its first class of dental hygiene students in 1973, followed by the first cohort of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) students in 1976. That same year, the Dental Clinical Sciences Building was completed, becoming the central hub for academic, clinical, and research activity. The College is located on the University of Oklahoma Health Campus (OU Health Campus) in Oklahoma City, a major academic health center that fosters interdisciplinary collaboration across medicine, pharmacy, nursing, and allied health disciplines.

The College currently enrolls approximately 264 dental students and 100 dental hygiene students, supported by 72 full-time and 83 part-time faculty members, 130 staff, and 31 residents and 19 postgraduate students. Clinical education is a core strength of the College. These services are provided predominantly through the main clinic located in the Dental Clinical Sciences Building, a state-of-the-art facility, equipped with 180 chairs for predoctoral students, 48 chairs for graduate and postgraduate programs, and 12 chairs for allied dental programs. A new facility was opened in Tulsa in 2022 which provides clinical training to seven third-year and seven fourth-year students. Additionally, 44 chairs are available in extramural facilities. The college also features 140 laboratory workstations, which support both preclinical and clinical patient care, simulation labs, specialty suites, and classrooms designed to enhance hands-on learning and advanced dental education. The College also operates a faculty practice, [OU Health Dentistry](#), offering comprehensive care from faculty clinicians, as well as community outreach programs, including mobile dental units and special care services for underserved populations.

The [2025–2030 Strategic Plan](#) is intentionally aspirational, positioning the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry as the premier source for dental education and lifelong professional training in Oklahoma. It aims to enhance educational programs and strengthen the College's reputation by advancing research-driven, state-of-the-art clinical care that improves health outcomes. While embracing today's challenges, the plan prioritizes strategies that align with Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) standards and expand community outreach. It also reaffirms the College's founding mission—to serve underserved rural areas—while focusing on transforming the health of Oklahomans and the future of dentistry through science, technology, and research.

Academic Programs

[The Doctoral of Dental Surgery \(DDS\) Program](#) is a 4-year degree program. OU is dedicated to educational excellence, teaching, and guiding the next generation of practitioners. Currently, the program has a class size of 60 with planned incremental increases in enrollment.

[The Advanced Standing Program for International Dentists \(ASPID\)](#) offers qualified graduates of international dental programs the opportunity to earn a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree in just 2½ years. Open to U.S. permanent residents and naturalized citizens, the program begins with a semester-long multidisciplinary course to build clinical and technical proficiency, followed by integration into the final two years of the traditional DDS curriculum. Upon successful completion, graduates are eligible for U.S. dental licensure examinations.

[The University of Oklahoma Dental Hygiene Program](#) prepares students for rewarding careers in dental hygiene through a comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes collaborative, real-world clinical experience. Students complete a minimum of 60 hours of prerequisite coursework followed by two years of specialized dental hygiene training. Graduates earn a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene and become eligible for licensure as registered dental hygienists, equipped with the skills to provide high-quality patient care in diverse clinical settings.

[The Advanced Education in General Dentistry \(AEGD\) Program](#) is a one-year residency that enhances clinical, communication, and practice management skills for general dentists. Residents gain experience in complex case management, four-handed dentistry, and community service, with a focus on quality care and underserved populations. Graduates are well-prepared for private practice and leadership roles in dentistry.

[The Graduate Orthodontics Program](#) is a 30-month, graduate-level curriculum that awards a Master of Science in Orthodontics and a certificate to practice orthodontics. Established in 1981, the program equips dentists to treat a wide range of dentofacial issues through diverse treatment methods, guided by experienced faculty. Students complete a master's thesis and receive hands-on training in a dedicated clinic space, with individualized workstations and shared office areas.

[The Graduate Periodontics Program](#) is a three-year Master of Science degree designed to prepare future leaders in the field. Students receive comprehensive training in clinical periodontics, basic sciences, and research methodology, while gaining hands-on experience with patient populations. The program fosters interdisciplinary collaboration across the College and Health Campus, including opportunities to mentor pre-doctoral students and engage with peers in other specialties.

[The Pediatric Dentistry Residency Program](#) is a 24-month training opportunity for four residents annually, offering comprehensive clinical experience at Oklahoma Children's Hospital, OU Health, and its dental clinic. Residents work with board-certified faculty and engage in interdisciplinary care for medically complex and underserved pediatric populations. A community rotation at Variety Care Straka Terrace adds public health exposure. Graduates earn a certificate in Pediatric Dentistry and are eligible for board certification, prepared to lead in clinical practice, academia, and public service.

[The Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Residency Program](#) is a four-year residency that provides comprehensive postgraduate residency training encompassing the full scope of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery. The program also offers a one-year fellowship in Cleft Lip and Palate/Craniofacial Surgery, a one-year Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Internship, and a one-week Oral & Maxillofacial Externship.

Leadership

[Dr. Paul M. Mullasseril, DDS, MS](#), has served as Dean of the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry since 2021. Originally from Mumbai, he earned his dental degree from the University of Bombay and completed advanced training in prosthodontics at OU, followed by a fellowship in maxillofacial prosthetics at MD Anderson Cancer Center. Since joining the OU faculty in 1998, Dr. Mullasseril has held several

leadership roles, including Chair of Restorative Dentistry and Assistant Dean for Clinical and Preclinical Education. He holds the Connie and Herbert T. Shillingburg Professorship of Fixed Prosthodontics and is a nationally recognized educator in prosthodontics and implant dentistry. A U.S. Army Reserve veteran and former president of the Oklahoma Dental Association, he has been a strong advocate for oral health policy and community outreach.

ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is the senior educational officer and is responsible for overseeing the planning, development, and management of the predoctoral dental education program leading to the DDS degree, ensuring academic excellence and alignment with accreditation standards. In addition, this position is responsible for implementing academic policies related to the DDS and Dental Hygiene curriculum and instruction, student evaluation, advancement, and graduation.

Reporting directly to the Dean and serving as a member of the College's senior leadership team, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs provides strategic direction for curriculum innovation - assessment, evaluation, advancement, and continuous quality improvement. This role is instrumental in maintaining strong, supportive relationships with other administrators, faculty, staff, and students to facilitate a humanistic learning environment for the student body, provide focus, and ensure educational compliance with accreditation standards. The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs plays a vital role in shaping and driving the strategic vision for dental education, in alignment with the dean, the college, the health campus, and the university.

Key Responsibilities:

- Academic Leadership - Provide leadership for and coordination of all academic programs offered by the college, including strategic planning, resource allocation, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement.
- Academic Operations - Provide leadership for and coordination of the operational function of the college's academic mission, ensuring a culture of excellence, hospitality, collegiality, and collaboration.
- Curriculum Innovation & Quality Improvement - Drive continuous assessment and enhancement of the DDS and Dental Hygiene curricula, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and accreditation standards.
- Faculty Development - Collaborate with the dean, department heads, and directors to develop and support the enhancement of the faculty.
- Assurance of Learning - Provide leadership, coordination, and assurance of all learning activities within the college. Continually updating, implementing, and enforcing the policies and procedures in the Student Handbook and serving as an advocate for student learning.
- Accreditation & External Engagement - Implement and assess the strategic plan to ensure alignment with the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Standards for the college's predoctoral programs and represent the college at events and activities to further the college's mission.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Provide collaborative, forward-thinking, and organized leadership to the Office of Academic Affairs

As a senior leader at the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry, the state's only dental school and a vital part of the OU Health Campus and broader OU system, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will have a unique opportunity to shape the future of dental education in Oklahoma. This role requires a dynamic and collaborative leader who can work effectively across a wide range of stakeholders, including the College's senior leadership team, the university-wide academic affairs community, the curriculum committee, and other key governance groups. A central focus of this position is building a strong, collegial partnership with the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to the College's educational mission. In alignment with the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan—particularly the pillar to “Cultivate the Next Generation of Healthcare Professionals through Integration of Education, Research, and Patient Care”—the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will help drive innovation, organization, and excellence in academic affairs. This is a compelling opportunity to lead with vision, foster meaningful collaboration, and contribute to a culture of academic distinction.

Build a culture of compliance around continuous quality and improvement of dental academic programs and courses

As the College of Dentistry looks ahead to its next CODA accreditation cycle in 2030, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will serve as a key leader in fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement and compliance across all academic programs. This role presents a valuable opportunity to build meaningful partnerships across the College, engaging leaders, faculty, staff, and students in constructive dialogue around accreditation standards and best practices. By assessing current protocols, refining institutional policies, and enhancing performance metrics, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will help ensure sustained alignment with CODA requirements. Rather than viewing compliance as a checklist, this position will champion a proactive, collaborative approach that embeds standards into daily operations and cultivates a shared commitment to excellence. Through thoughtful leadership and strategic implementation of current recommendations, the Assistant/Associate Dean will position the College for long-term success and readiness for future accreditation milestones.

Lead, develop, and retain a high-performing team that will support and shape the college's future academics

The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will have an important opportunity to lead, develop, and strengthen a high-performing academic support team that contributes meaningfully to the future of dental education at the OU College of Dentistry. Working closely with academic support professionals, this leader will foster a collaborative culture focused on enhancing curriculum delivery, advancing academic affairs processes, and supporting the effective integration of educational technologies, including platforms such as Canvas.

Through thoughtful leadership and partnership with faculty and staff, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will help optimize the use of centralized academic resources and cross-functional collaboration to enhance faculty effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Central to this role will be the strengthening of the knowledge base, systems, and infrastructure that support the College's ongoing commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Maintain and advance the College's academic excellence through curriculum development and innovative educational offerings

The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will guide the evolution of the curriculum through thoughtful development, rigorous assessment, and innovative educational offerings that reflect the dynamic needs of dental education. With education as a core pillar of the College's mission, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will have the opportunity to improve foundational processes and procedures, support college-wide research initiatives, and promote patient-centered curriculum. A key responsibility will be chairing and managing the Curriculum Committee, where this individual will lead collaborative efforts to review existing programs, incorporate feedback, and champion forward-thinking changes that prepare students for the future of dentistry.

In addition, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will serve as a catalyst for faculty growth and engagement. This role offers a unique opportunity to build meaningful partnerships across departments, mentor faculty in their academic and professional development, and foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. By supporting faculty in integrating emerging technologies and pedagogical strategies, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will help drive the College's educational mission forward, ensuring that both educators and students thrive in a dynamic, collaborative, and outcome-oriented environment.

Develop partnerships across the University of Oklahoma Health Campus (OU Health Campus), the broader university, and beyond to raise the college's opportunities and visibility

As a senior leader within the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will have a unique opportunity to elevate the College's visibility and impact by cultivating strategic partnerships across the OU Health Campus, the broader OU system, and external academic and professional communities. This role is central to advancing collaborative innovation in dental education and contributing to the university's broader mission of academic excellence. The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will work closely with academic affairs leaders across the OU system to develop and implement forward-thinking tools and strategies—such as the current rollout of Simple Syllabus—to enhance curriculum delivery and integration. Within the OU Health Campus, which recently invested in a 14,200-square-foot state-of-the-art simulation center in Oklahoma City and renovated a 25,000-square-foot space in its Research Park to accommodate the expanding student body and enhance experiential learning, the environment is primed for growth and innovation. This position offers a compelling opportunity to lead with vision, build impactful partnerships, and help position the College as a driving force in shaping the future of academic excellence across the university and beyond.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Candidates must have a DDS, DMD, or PhD degree and a proven record of educational and academic experience commensurate with an appointment as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor at the University of Oklahoma. Successful candidates will be able to play a major administrative and strategic leadership role in a large, complex, public research university.

Successful candidates will also have a broad set of skills and assets deemed important for success. While perhaps no candidate will possess all the following traits, the successful candidate will bring many of these personal attributes, professional experiences, and demonstrated strengths:

Minimum Qualifications:

- At least 5 years of experience in dental education at the institutional level.
- At least 5 years of administrative experience, including current or previous experience in a leadership role.
- Experience in curricular design, didactic, and clinical assessment methodology.
- Demonstrated experience working with effective teams to identify and resolve academic problems.
- Demonstrated experience in supervising the work of others in a dental education setting.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Dental education experience in the development, implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of an institutional education program leading to the dental degree.
- Experience with the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) and preparation for CODA accreditation.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City, the capital and most populous city of Oklahoma, offers a compelling combination of affordability, economic opportunity, and community-centered living. With a low cost of living and strong industry growth in energy, aerospace, and healthcare, the city continues to attract professionals and families alike. Its revitalized downtown features a vibrant mix of dining, entertainment, and cultural venues, all while maintaining a welcoming, small-town atmosphere. In 2025, [U.S. News & World Report](#) recognized Oklahoma City as the **#1 Best Big City to Live In**, **#5 Best Place to Live in Oklahoma**, and **#96 Best Place to Live in the United States**, underscoring its growing appeal as a dynamic and livable urban center.

To explore Oklahoma City, please visit: <https://www.okcchamber.com/>

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website:

[Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Listing](#)

Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Jay Torio, Partner
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Isaacson, Miller

The University, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, gender identity/expression (consistent with applicable law), age (40 or older), religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, housing, financial aid, and educational services

Why You Belong at the University of Oklahoma:

The University of Oklahoma values our community's unique talents, perspectives, and experiences. At OU, we aspire to harness our innovation, creativity, and collaboration for the advancement of people everywhere. You Belong Here!

Mission of the University of Oklahoma:

The Mission of the University of Oklahoma is to provide the best possible educational experience for our students through excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, and service to the state and society.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by the University of Oklahoma. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by the University of Oklahoma would supersede any conflicting information in this document.