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University of Hawaiʻi Community College System

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SUBJECT: Maui College Dental Hygiene Program  
Response to UH Community College Organizational and Resource Plan #3

The UH Maui College Dental Hygiene Associate in Science Program is a two-year program that prepares students to become oral health care professionals whose work will positively impact the oral health status of the Maui County and the neighbor islands.

Program Overview
The Dental Hygiene Program trains students upon graduation to practice their discipline at industry ready standards as licensed professionals. This career is highly sought after because of high wages, job availability, and career advancement. Qualified Hawaiʻi residents have priority, there are many benefits to having a student/graduate who will serve in the communities in which they live and work. They understand the diversity of each community and can adapt best practices specific to the needs of the population.

Meeting Industry Standards
The Dental Hygiene program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education. Students earn an Associate in Science (AS) Degree in Dental Hygiene upon completion of the program.

The UHMC Dental Hygiene Program utilizes the following to maintain industry standards: Dental Advisory Committee, employer surveys, formal and informal discussions with dentists and focus groups with graduates of the program. For example, a few years ago through these facilitated discussion and feedback groups, the program was approached to include the use of laser therapy for treatment of periodontal disease. Laser therapy is now a permanent part of the program's curriculum.
**Enrollment**
The Dental Hygiene Program admits one class every other academic year. Since the beginning of the program in 2008 through May 2017, there have been 10 students admitted and enrolled every other year. Beginning in the f2017, that number increased to 15 students every other year due to an increased number of dentists seeking employment of dental hygienists. Since 2008 and as of May 2021, UH Maui College will have graduated a total of 70 DH AAS students.

**Effectiveness**
The UH Maui College DH program is effective. DH students are required to maintain a 2.0 in didactic course work and 3.0 in clinical skills GPA throughout their time in the program. Dental hygiene students who have completed the curriculum and graduated, earn an AS in DH which is the terminal degree. One hundred percent of student graduates are successful with external examinations and 100% are able to secure positions for which they received training. For the last thirteen years, all dental hygiene graduates have been placed and all graduates are currently employed. Their salary is sufficient to support themselves and or their families. All dental hygiene students, to date, are retained until graduation as well as employed in our community. According to the UHCC ARPD Workforce analytics, the median yearly earnings of UH Maui College DH graduates are $50,881 one year from graduation, $58,442 two years from graduation, and $60,810 three years from graduation.

**Program Efficiency**
The UH Maui College program has one full-time faculty and hires several lecturers who are required to teach specialty areas such as Oral Histology & Embryology, General & Oral Pathology and Dental Materials. The overall lecturer costs for the past three semesters have been covered by grant funding. Additional workload and costs include overseeing the clinic and partnering to offer non-credit Dental Assisting courses as needed.

The dental hygiene program relies on grants to facilitate the no-fee for service clinic. The Hawaii Dental Association Foundation (HDAF) awarded a $100,000 grant for AY 2020-2021. To date the (HDAF) has awarded $234,000 to help support the dental hygiene program students as well as to serve the many Community needs, especially for the poor, underserved, unsheltered populations. In addition, professional fees paid by each student, $500.00 per semester is used for student supplies; PPE, instruments etc.

**Next Steps**
The DH program will continue to regularly assess the effectiveness of the program. It is prudent for the program to evaluate the process of curriculum design and review maintenance of the current curriculum to continue to be in alignment with changing industry standards.