



**JOINT EXAMINATION COMMITTEE AND
DENTAL ASSISTING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, November 6, 2014

Sportsmen's Lodge Events Center, Waterfalls Room
12833 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604

MEMBERS PRESENT

MEMBERS ABSENT

EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

Chair - Stephen Casagrande, DDS
Vice Chair - Steven Morrow, DDS
Yvette Chappell-Ingram, Public Member
Judith Forsythe, RDA
Ross Lai, DDS
Huong Le, DDS, MA
Debra Woo, DDS

DENTAL ASSISTING COUNCIL

Chair - Teresa Lua, RDAEF
Vice Chair - Anne Contreras, RDA
Pamela Davis-Washington, RDA
Judith Forsythe, RDA
Tamara McNealy, RDA
Emma Ramos, RDA
Bruce Whitcher, DDS

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of Quorum

Dr. Casagrande, Chair called the Examination Committee to order at 2:18 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum established. Teresa Lua, Chair, called the Dental Assisting Council to order at 2:19 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum established.

2. Dental Assisting Program Examination Statistics

Ms. Wallace reviewed the Dental Assisting Program statistics at the end of the meeting.

3. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Registered Dental Assistant Practical Examination

Sarah Wallace, Assistant Executive Officer gave an overview of the issues regarding the Registered Dental Assistant Practical Examination including candidate responsibilities, equipment rentals, occupational analysis, and exam validation. She introduced Eric Wong, DDS, MAGD who is contracted as a subject matter expert (SME) for the calibration of examiners at the Registered Dental Assistant Practical

Examination. There was discussion regarding examination costs. Dr. Casagrande requested a total breakdown of cost including cost of the course, cost of the exam, cost of the equipment rental and all other related costs including travel if necessary, to take the Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) Practical Examination. There was discussion regarding the failure rate for the RDA Practical Exam. Dr. Wong believes that the results may be starting to correlate with the written examination. Dr. Wong commented that prior to the examiner calibration by dentists; dental assistants were calibrating the examiners and were not as adherent to the criteria that is clearly outlined in regulation. The criterion is now being used without subjectivity. Contacts and margins are often open and occlusion is poor. Dr. Lori Gagliardi, Pasadena City College commented that the candidates are only given two sentences describing the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work yet the Examiners have 30 pages of criteria in their calibration training. Dr. Wong clarified that the 30-page examiner manual consists mostly of logistical information that is relevant to proctors and examiners, their expectations, travel, set-up of exams; it is not 30 pages of grading criteria. Ms. Wallace stated that the Dental Board is looking for a way to include more criteria for the program directors without compromising the integrity of the examination. Dr. Wong commented that grading is being regulated better now than in the past and the grading process is becoming more refined. Gina Macias, Program Director at Heald College in Modesto commented that schools must submit their grading criteria when applying for program approval. Candidates should be given the criteria by which they will be graded on the practical examination. There was discussion about different areas that could be addressed for change. Claudia Pohl, Citrus College, commented that she feels that the lack of communication between the Board and the educators about the changes, contributed to the decline in the pass rate. Pam Baldwin, RDA4U & Butte County ROP, commented that as of 2009 there were no supervising dentists for calibration of the examiners until 2014 when Dr. Wong came on board to supervise the calibration of examiners at each examination. He enforced the criteria that was always in place but had lapsed with no supervision since 2009. Lidia Hulshof, MUC College, commented on the critiquing that the students who did not pass received from the examiners. There was discussion regarding the criteria for grading. There was further discussion regarding the manufacturers of the typodonts. Melodi Randolph, Program Coordinator for Sacramento City College, commented on the detriment of getting rid of the RDA practical examination. There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of the RDA Practical examination. Karen Fischer, Executive Officer of the Dental Board invited all dental assisting program educators to submit their comments, suggestions and concerns to the Dental Board for review and consideration. Kathy Johnson, Director of Allan Hancock College, commented that she has been the Director for 15 years and that until recently her students had a 98.7% pass rate. The pass rate fell to 85% in 2013 so they did everything in their power to address the falling pass rate then in 2014 the pass rate fell even lower to 70%. She commented that the educators have not changed nor has the curriculum. Gina Macias, Heald College, commented that a Portfolio type pathway for RDA's would be a good idea especially since their procedures are all reversible. Spencer Walker, Senior Legal Counsel, commented that a statutory change would be required in order to introduce that pathway for RDA's. Dr. Lori Gagliardi, California Association of Dental Assisting Teachers (CADAT), commented that they have put a list together of their concerns which includes: the lack

of exam sites, lack of available seating space for the candidates at the examination, the method by which examination applications are processed, the need to assemble a committee of educators and Board staff to produce a candidate handbook which includes examination criteria, grading criteria, candidate preparation criteria, equipment requirements for all practical exam kit renters, and establish the examiner calibration criteria. Dr. Gagliardi commented that CADAT does not believe an Occupational Analysis will do anything to address the exam issues. She asked if standards for the examiners, calibration guidelines, examiner qualifications, grading criteria and the examiner selection process are a part of the Occupational Analysis along with the criteria for the equipment use and availability, and the lack of time money, resources and staff. Dr. Casagrande requested that Dr. Gagliardi send a copy of these concerns to the committee for review. Denise Romero, Pasadena City College Educator and former Dental Assisting Council member, commented that she commends the Board for their efforts to improve the quality of the RDA practical examination but as an educator it would have been helpful to know how much the grading criteria was changing in order to better prepare her students. She hopes that there will be better communication between the Board and the educators in the future. Zena Delling, Outsource Educator and kit renter, commented that she would like the Board to consider, when looking at new exam sites, ensuring adequate security for the rented kits and equipment. She stated that the kits she rents are worth \$1,500 each and so she brings approximately \$65,000 worth of equipment to each exam. Ms. Delling also stated that the putty and other materials are affected by climate which could affect a candidate's final exam product. There was discussion about liability, cement set-up rates and typodont occlusion. Kim Hartsock, Educator in Riverside, echoed the concerns expressed before of the plummeting passing rates. She expressed her appreciation to the Board for addressing these issues. Dr. Casagrande, with the approval of Teresa Lua, Dental Assisting Council Chair, appointed a subcommittee of Judith Forsythe and Tamara McNealy to work with Sarah Wallace and staff on these issues. Dr. Gagliardi asked about current applicants with graduation dates after the application deadline. Ms. Wallace stated that she would review these applications. Ms. Wallace reviewed the statistics provided. Ms. Forsythe commented that the Board and Council are trying to be as transparent as possible and will continue to strive to improve communications.

4. **Public Comment of Items Not on the Agenda**

There was no further public comment.

5. **Future Agenda Items**

There were no requests for future agenda items.

6. **Committee/Council Comments for Items Not on the Agenda**

There were no further comments from the Council or Committee members.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:48pm.