GRADUATION POLICIES

Graduation Requirements and Honors

Successful and timely completion of all courses and the requirements therein must be accomplished before a student will be approved for graduation from the School of Dentistry. Students must complete the curriculum within 6 years (including summer sessions) in residence or be subject to dismissal. Students in a dual degree program may request from the Dean a waiver of the 6-year requirement.

Criteria for Graduation

1. The student must have completed all required courses and selective courses in which he/she enrolled and have no outstanding I, X, or F grades.
2. D grades indicate poor performance and are not acceptable for clinical disciplines.
3. The student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.000.
4. The student must be formally recommended for the degree by the ULSD Faculty Assembly and by the Dean, and must be approved for the degree by the Board of Trustees.

National Board Dental Examinations

National Board Dental Examinations serve as comprehensive examinations of a student’s knowledge in dentistry and the basic sciences and cognitive skills to safely practice entry-level dentistry. Passing the NBDE (currently Parts I and II) is a requirement for dental licensure by all licensing boards in the United States. It is the responsibility of each student to direct and manage his or her learning to prepare for the examinations, with guidance and assistance from the school.

Beginning with the Class of 2021, the University of Louisville School of Dentistry will require that students successfully complete the NBDE and/or INBDE prior to graduation.

Part I

The NBDE Part I is a comprehensive examination and consists of 400 exam items. For each discipline, approximately 80 percent of the items are intermingled, discipline-based; approximately 20 percent are interdisciplinary testlet-based items. A testlet consists of a patient scenario/history and a set of items from the various disciplines that are associated with the scenario. A student in a dental education program accredited by CODA is eligible for examination when the dean of the dental school (or designee) verifies that the student is prepared in all NBDE Part II disciplines. Students typically challenge this exam in the fall of the D4 year.

The exam items that comprise the discipline-based component are derived from the following disciplines:

- Endodontics
- Operative Dentistry
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery / Pain Control
- Oral Diagnosis
- Orthodontics / Pediatric Dentistry
- Patient Management
- Periodontics
- Pharmacology
- Prosthodontics
- Oral Pathology

The case-based component of the NBDE Part II presents events dealing with actual patients. The patient cases are developed to include the following approximate distribution: Adults (70 percent), Children (30 percent). A minimum of 15 percent of Component B exam questions will address the medical management of compromised adults and children. A compromised patient is defined as a person whose health status requires modification of standard treatment.

Each case presentation in the examination consists of:

1. Synopsis of a patient’s health and social histories,
2. Patient dental charting,
3. Diagnostic radiographs, and

Each case contains from 10 to 15 questions about various aspects of this patient’s dental care. These questions, totaling 100 for all the cases, might derive from any of the basic sciences and clinical disciplines, including Patient Management. The proportion stemming from any particular discipline depends upon the nature of the case itself. For example, the case of an elderly adult might be based upon Maxillofacial Surgery / Pain Control, Prosthodontics, and Operative Dentistry; whereas, a child’s case might derive from Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, and Patient Management.

In responding to case-based items, the candidate must:

1. Interpret the findings and information provided.
2. Identify the problems and make diagnoses.
3. Select materials, technique, and armamentarium.
5. Evaluate progress and complications.

It is the student’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with the requirements of clinical licensing examinations and state dental boards.

Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE)

The Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE) is a new examination for dental candidates, scheduled to replace the current
National Board Dental Examination Part I and Part II examinations starting in August 2020. The INBDE is designed to assist state boards of dentistry in making decisions about candidates for dental licensure. By integrating content covering the basic, behavioral, and clinical sciences, the INBDE simulates the decision making required for the safe practice of dentistry.

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE) has developed a new examination because of changes in educational curricula and new accreditation standards that took effect in 2013, requiring the integration of basic sciences with behavioral and clinical science instruction. In reviewing content, the Joint Commission considered the state boards’ perspective. The new test relies less on rote knowledge and information recall than the current NBDE examinations do, and instead it emphasizes the decision-making process relevant to the safe practice of dentistry, through the integration of the basic sciences and dental and clinical science.

NBDE Part I administration is scheduled to cease on July 31, 2020, and NBDE Part II administration is expected to cease on July 31, 2022. Students who enroll in dental school in 2019 or later could be eligible to take the INBDE instead of the NBDE Part I, and since the NBDE Part II will not be available after July 31, 2022, students might be required to take the INBDE for certification, depending on the timing of their testing. After students take the INBDE, they will no longer be allowed to take the NBDE Part I or Part II. Each student must qualify to take the National Board Examinations.

The INBDE’s retest policy will be the same as the Five Years/Five Attempts retest policy of the NBDE Part I and Part II. During the transition period when students will have the option of taking the NBDE Part II or the INBDE to fulfill the written examination requirement for licensure, the retest policies will remain in effect for both examinations. Students who have had five unsuccessful attempts on the NBDE Part II will still be permitted five attempts on the INBDE. After students have successfully completed the NBDE Part I and Part II or the INBDE with passing scores, they are no longer eligible to take any of the National Board Dental Examinations. If students take only the INBDE, the Five Year/Five Attempts retest policy applies.

Graduation with Honors

Students who graduate with grade point averages of at least 3.70 will be designated as follows:

- **cum laude**: 3.700 or higher
- **magna cum laude**: 3.800 or higher
- **summa cum laude**: 3.900 or higher

International College of Dentists Award

This award is presented to the graduating dental student who has shown the greatest amount of professional growth during the undergraduate dental program.