

**REPORT ON DENTAL EDUCATION:
A REPORT TO THE ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
IN RESPONSE TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 334
PHASE II**

Submitted for: Information.

Summary: House Resolution 334 called for the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) to embark on a study to address the four issues facing dental education in the state of Illinois: (1) recruitment and retention of qualified faculty for all state oral health care programs; (2) current technology required for both the physical and equipment needs for all state programs; (3) retention of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIUE) and University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) graduates in the state of Illinois; and (4) the role research should play in the mission of Illinois dental schools.

Phase I of the report (forwarded to the General Assembly on October 29, 2001) focused on dental education programs. Phase II addresses recruitment and retention of qualified faculty and adequacy of facilities and equipment in 'other' dental health care programs, i.e., dental assisting, dental hygiene, and dental laboratory technology programs.

Action Requested: None.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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House Resolution (HR) 334

House Resolution 334 instructed the Illinois Board of Higher Education to report to the General Assembly on the status of (1) recruitment and retention of qualified faculty for all state oral health care programs; (2) current technology required for both the physical and equipment needs for all state programs; (3) retention of Southern Illinois University and University of Illinois at Chicago graduates in the state of Illinois; and (4) the role research should play in the mission of Illinois dental schools.

Phase I of this report, forwarded to the General Assembly on October 29, 2001, was a response to the resolution as it pertains to programs of dental medicine. This phase of the report focuses on dental hygiene, dental assisting, and dental laboratory technology programs, and examines points one and two, above, as they relate to these professions. Points three and four only relate to programs preparing dentists. To respond to these questions posed in the Resolution, the Board of Higher Education conducted a survey of higher education programs in dental hygiene, dental assisting, and dental laboratory technology.

The Illinois Department of Professional Regulation (DPR) licenses dental hygienists, but not dental assistants or dental laboratory technicians. Of the 12 DPR-approved programs in dental hygiene in Illinois, 11 are offered by community colleges, and one is offered by Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.¹

Eight community colleges are authorized to offer dental assisting programs, though only six do so at present. Of the remaining two, Black Hawk College provides its students access to a program at Scott Community College in Iowa, and Illinois Central College is not currently offering its program due to lack of student demand.

Schools under the Private Business and Vocational Schools Act (administered by the State Board of Education) also offer dental assisting programs but not dental hygiene programs. Since these schools are not degree-granting institutions, they do not fall under the authorities of the Board of Higher Education. The State Board of Education indicates that there are eight such schools in Illinois.

¹ Of the remaining college districts, the majority has, or is seeking, cooperative agreements with districts offering the program that allow students access to the program without financial penalty.

Only Triton College and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale offer dental laboratory technology programs.² The Appendix details all the allied dental health programs offered by higher education institutions.

Response of Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, and Dental Laboratory Technology Programs to Questions Posed in HR 334

Each dental assisting, dental hygiene, and dental laboratory technician program was asked to respond to two questions posed in HR 334. Below are the questions and responses of each type of program. The questions and answers are presented below.

“Do you have difficulty attracting and retaining qualified faculty to your program?”

Programs	Yes	No	Uncertain
Dental Assisting (6)	3	3	
Dental Hygiene (12)	3	6	3
Dental Lab Technology (2)	1	1	

Of institutions indicating difficulty in attracting and retaining faculty, both dental assisting and dental hygiene programs suggest that salaries are not competitive to attract qualified faculty to teaching, even on a part-time basis.

“Are the physical and equipment facilities sufficient to meet programmatic needs?”

Programs	Yes	No
Dental Assisting (6)	4	2
Dental Hygiene (12)	7	5
Dental Lab Technology (2)	1	1

Of institutions indicating dissatisfaction with physical facilities or equipment, three reasons were commonly cited: equipment is out-dated; laboratories are not convenient to students and faculty; and more attractive reception areas and faculty offices are needed.

Summary

From the responses given to the survey, it appears that most institutions offering dental hygiene, dental assisting, and dental laboratory technology programs do not have significant difficulties in attracting and retaining faculty, nor do they indicate that their programs were hampered due to physical facilities or equipment.

² Illinois Board of Higher Education and Illinois Community College Board Program Inventories.

APPENDIX

Higher Education Institutions Offering Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, and Dental Laboratory Technology Programs

Dental Assisting³

Black Hawk College (offered at Scott Community College, Iowa, through cooperative agreement)
City Colleges of Chicago—Wilbur Wright College
Elgin Community College
Illinois Central College (not currently offered due to lack of student demand)
Illinois Valley College
Kaskaskia College
Lewis and Clark Community College
John A. Logan College

Dental Hygiene⁴

City Colleges of Chicago—Kennedy-King College
College of Lake County
William Rainey Harper College
Illinois Central College
John A. Logan College
Lake Land College
Lewis and Clark Community College
Parkland College
Prairie State College
Rock Valley College
Carl Sandburg College
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Dental Laboratory Technology⁵

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Triton College—due to declining enrollments, the college is considering discontinuing this program.

³ All dental assisting programs are certificate programs, i.e., less than two years of study.

⁴ All dental hygiene programs lead to associate degrees with the exception of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, which offers a baccalaureate degree.

⁵ Southern Illinois University at Carbondale offers an associate degree program; Triton offers a certificate program.

