

ACFD/CDA Admissions Conference 2026

Friday, March 20, 2026 | 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
McGill University Faculty Club, 3450 McTavish St., Montréal

Join us for a full-day conference focused on new approaches in recruitment and selection for health professional programs. The event will feature presentations, discussions and breakout sessions with the following goals:

- To promote discussion and facilitate learning on new approaches used in recruitment and selection for health professional programs
- To provide material and opportunities for reflection to support the development of calls for research proposals in recruitment and selection for dental programs

Audience: Academics, staff, and students involved in admissions, selection, teaching & learning, and evaluation for dental/oral health programs.

Time	Session	Speakers
7:45- 8:30 AM	Breakfast	
8:30 – 8:35 AM	Welcome, introduction & context	Ben Davis , Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry (ACFD) Dean Smith , Canadian Dental Association (CDA)
8:35 – 9:15 AM	Section 1: Setting the Scene	Aïda Bangoura & Anna Karwowska , Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada Rassim Amrani , McGill University Manahil Ali Saeed Ali , McGill University Zacharia Ben Salem , Université de Montréal
9:15 – 10:00 AM	Section 2: Problem Areas in Recruitment and Selection	Félix Girard , Université de Montréal Raquel Chisholm , Emond Harnden Law Kelly Dore , Acuity Insights
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Open discussion	
10:15 – 10:45 AM	Coffee break	

10:45 – 11:45 AM	Section 3: Evidence to Support Recruitment & Selection	Steve Patterson , University of Alberta HsingChi von Bergmann , University of British Columbia David Waldschmidt , American Dental Association Susie Goolsby , Oregon Health and Science University
11:45 AM – 12:15 PM	Discussion	
12:15 – 1:00 PM	Lunch	
1:00 – 2:00 PM	Section 4: Innovations & Ideas in Recruitment & Selection	Helen Crompton , Research Institute for Digital Innovation in Learning Sara Goulet , University of Manitoba Elham Emami , McGill University Paul Major , University of Alberta
2:00 – 2:30 PM	Discussion	
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Coffee break	
3:00 – 3:45 PM	Breakout Groups	Moderators: Paul Allison , ACFD Ben Davis , ACFD Isabelle Gingras , CDA Sierra Bellows , CDA
3:45 – 4:15 PM	Plenary Discussion	Moderators: Paul Allison , ACFD Ben Davis , ACFD Isabelle Gingras , CDA Sierra Bellows , CDA
4:15 – 4:30 PM	Closing remarks	Ben Davis & Dean Smith

Speakers (In Order of Appearance)



Dr. Ben Davis is Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University. He has held positions as Chair of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Sciences, Division Head of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, and Zone Chief of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at the Nova Scotia Provincial Health Authority. He is the past Examiner in Chief at the Royal College of Dentists of Canada and past Chief Examiner for his specialty. He is also Past President of the Canadian Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and the former Chair of the Foundation for Continuing Education and Research. Professor Davis obtained his D.D.S degree from the University of Western in 1992 and his Diploma in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Anaesthesia from the University of Toronto in 1997. Dr. Davis undertook a surgical fellowship at Dalhousie between 1997-1998. Dr. Davis joined Dalhousie as faculty in 1998.



Dean Smith is the Head of Operations at the Canadian Dental Association, responsible for providing enterprise-level leadership across organizational strategy, operational governance, and performance management. He plays a key role in supporting the Association's executive leadership and Board by ensuring strategic priorities are translated into effective plans, well-governed processes, and measurable outcomes. In his role, Dean oversees core operational functions and works across the organization to strengthen planning, risk management, and decision-making frameworks. He partners closely with senior leaders to optimize resource allocation, enhance organizational effectiveness, and ensure the sustainable delivery of programs and services aligned with the Association's mandate.



Aïda Bangoura (she/her/elle) is the Social Accountability Manager at the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC), where she supports national initiatives advancing equity and social accountability in medical education. She works closely with faculties, committees, and partners across the country to strengthen inclusive policies and practices, including in admissions.

With a background in health sciences, accreditation, and project management, Aïda has contributed to initiatives related to equity, anti-racism, Indigenous and Black health, Francophone health, and planetary health. She is committed to fostering inclusive learning environments and expanding pathways into the health professions for underrepresented communities.



Dr. Anna Karwowska is the Vice-President, Education at the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC). In this role she has the privilege of being involved in medical education across the continuum, at the national level. Dr. Karwowska received her medical degree from McGill University. She completed her training in Pediatrics and a fellowship in Pediatric Emergency Medicine at the University of Calgary. Her clinical practice is in Child Maltreatment Pediatrics at the

Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and she is an Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa.

Dr. Karwowska has extensive experience as a leader and collaborator in the academic medicine setting, with medical education and community partners. She is a strong advocate for learners, teachers and educators along the medical education continuum.



Rassim Amrani is a Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) student at McGill University. He completed a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Biological Sciences at *Université de Montréal* and earned a Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Experimental Surgery from McGill University prior to entering dentistry, developing a strong foundation in research and evidence-based health care. Rassim currently serves as the elected Class President for the D.M.D. Class of 2028, working closely with faculty and student leadership to strengthen communication, advocate for student needs, and support initiatives that enhance both the academic and community experience within the program.”



Dr. Manahil Ali is a second-year Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) student at McGill University whose journey to Canadian dentistry spans three continents. She first trained and practiced as a dentist in Sudan, then earned a PhD in dental Science from Osaka University in Japan, where she published her research in a high-impact journal. She later became the youngest assistant professor at the University of Khartoum before continuing her professional journey in Canada. Today, she will share her unique path and experiences transitioning into the McGill D.M.D. Program.



Zacharia Ben Salem Before entering the DMD program, I completed a Bachelor's in Biopharmaceutical Sciences at UdeM. During that time, I served as President of the student association and gained a deep appreciation for healthcare development. Beyond the classroom, I co-founded a tutoring company and completed a few internships to better understand the world of scientific research. I really like how straightforward UdeM's admission process is. Focusing on GPA and the CASPer test gives applicants a clear roadmap to put their heads down and work. However, I feel this academic-heavy focus misses important qualitative factors. High grades show stamina, but they don't necessarily prove manual dexterity or genuine passion. Adding a CV or mandatory shadowing hours would be a great way to ensure applicants truly understand the profession before diving in.



Raquel Chisholm advises employers at both the Ontario and Federal jurisdictions in all areas of labour and employment law, with a particular focus on human rights, disability management, and pay equity. Raquel provides a wide variety of services including drafting employment contracts, management training, legal opinions, collective bargaining, and policy writing. She represents clients at labour arbitrations, as well as human rights hearings before the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (“HRTO”) and the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Raquel also advises clients during investigations by the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Raquel has a great wealth of experience in the area of pay equity. Knowledge and experience in both the provincial and federal sectors, she has aided clients with pay equity audits, conducted

seminars for employers, negotiated pay equity plans, responded to and settled pay equity complaints, and assisted clients with addressing and managing their pay equity obligations both in achieving and maintaining pay equity



Dr. Kelly Dore is a PhD researcher with training in Medical Education and Cognitive Psychology, specializing in assessments and Health Professions education. She is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Education & Innovation at McMaster University, and an Advisor at the McMaster Heersink School for Innovation. Over her academic career, Dr. Dore served as the Inaugural Director of the Master of Science in Health Science Education program. She has received multiple research grants from the Medical Council of Canada, the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME – Stemmler Grant), and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC). She has published and presented internationally on the topics of Admissions, Assessment, and Accreditation.

In 2015, Dr. Dore co-founded **Acuity Insights**, where she helped develop the Casper test, among other assessment products. At Acuity, she currently serves as Vice President of Science and Innovation. Kelly has collaborated with hundreds of higher education programs across North America and globally, working to advance insights and reshape the way applicant, program, and student success are understood and measured.



Dr. Steven Patterson is a Full Professor in the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Alberta (DDS 1986) and later completed graduate work in public health, receiving his M.P.H. degree from the University of Washington (1996). Dr. Patterson has also completed a certificate program in Addictions Studies through the Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta (2001). Dr. Patterson is an Associate Dental Public Health Officer in the province of Alberta and a Consultant Supervising Dentist for Indigenous Services Canada, Alberta Region. On a national front he has served on the executive of the Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry including two years as President. At the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry, he has been the Co-Chair of both the Dental/Dental Hygiene Admissions Committee for the past 6 years and also of the Admissions Task Force that oversaw the complete review and revision of the dental/dental hygiene admissions processes in the School.



Dr. HsingChi von Bergmann is a Professor at the Faculty of Dentistry, University of British Columbia (UBC), where she leads research at the Health Sciences Professional-Education Research Lab. She holds a PhD and MSc in Science Education from the University of Southern California and a BSc in Physics from Tunghai University, Taiwan. Her academic career spans multiple institutions across North America, including the University of Calgary and Michigan State University. Dr. von Bergmann's interdisciplinary work focuses on dental education, competency-based assessment, and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in health professions education. She has secured over 55 research grants totaling more than \$2 millions and published extensively in top-tier journals. A frequent keynote speaker internationally, she has significantly contributed to advancing educational practices in science and health sciences education.



Dr. David M. Waldschmidt is the Senior Director of the ADA's Department of Testing Services and the Director of the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations. He has served in leadership roles in the professional testing industry for over 25 years, including current service on the Board of Directors of the Association of Test Publishers (ATP). David has authored professional papers, presented at numerous professional meetings, and presented to numerous state regulatory boards throughout the US. He holds a Masters and Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from Michigan State University and the Illinois Institute of Technology, respectively.



Dr. Susie Goolsby is the Associate Dean of Student Admissions at the OHSU School of Dentistry. A graduate of Hampton University, Virginia Commonwealth University (DDS, M.S. in Health Administration), and the AEGD program at Howard University, she began her career in clinical dentistry in Louisiana before joining the VCU School of Dentistry in 2009. At VCU, she served as faculty, Director of Student Recruitment and Pathway Programs, and a predoctoral group director, while leading key initiatives in admissions, student success, and diversity. Since joining OHSU in 2022, she has transformed admissions processes, expanded pathway programs, launched the school's first residential summer pre-dental immersive, and secured major funding to support access and diversity. A leader in dental education nationally, she is an ADEA Leadership Institute Fellow, former Vice President of the CAMBRA Coalition, and Chair-elect of the 2025 ADEA Annual Session Planning Committee.



Dr. Helen Crompton is the Executive Director of the Research Institute for digital Innovation in Learning (RIDIL) at ODUGlobal and a Professor of Instructional Technology at Old Dominion University. With a Ph.D. in Mathematics Education and Technology in Education, she focuses her research on the effective integration of technology, such as artificial intelligence, mobile devices, and virtual/mixed/augmented reality. Dr. Crompton is on Stanford's list of the top 2% of scientists in the world.



Dr. Sara Goulet, Red River Metis, is a dedicated physician and advocate for Indigenous communities, with a strong background in healthcare and education. She has been a fly-in physician in northern Manitoba for over 20 years, working with First Nations and Inuit communities and is the fly-in Lead for Ongomiizwin Health Services. Dr. Goulet is also the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education Admissions and chair of the Indigenous Admissions committee at the Max Rady College of Medicine, where she works to increase the number of Indigenous applicants and students. Her efforts have led to a record number of Indigenous students entering the Medical program at the University of Manitoba.



Dr. Elham Emami is a clinician–scientist, Full Professor, and Dean of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Oral Health Sciences at McGill University. She has a MSc in Prosthodontics and a PhD in Biomedical Science and postdoctoral fellowships in Dental Public Health and Cancer Epidemiology. Dr. Emami has held numerous leadership roles, including service on the CIHR Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis Advisory Board and as past president of the IADR e-Oral Health Network. She is the Dentistry Discipline Director on the Board of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS). She also serves as a research expert for the Quebec government’s *Commissaire à la santé et au bien-être* (2025–2028) and has served on the boards of several educational and non-profit organizations. Dr. Emami is the recipient of numerous distinctions, including CIHR Clinician-Scientist Awards I and II. She is a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, the Académie dentaire du Québec, the American College of Dentists, and the Pierre Fauchard Academy. In 2024, she also received the *Prix Mérite* from the Conseil interprofessionnel du Québec, awarded by the Ordre des dentistes du Québec.



Dr. Paul W. Major, DDS, MSc, FRCD(C), is Professor and Chair of the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry and Senior Associate Dean of Dental Affairs in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Alberta. A graduate of the University of Alberta (DDS with Distinction, MSc in Clinical Sciences, Diploma in Orthodontics), Dr. Major is a Fellow of the Royal College of Dentists of Canada and a practicing orthodontist in Edmonton. He has served as President of both the Canadian Association of Orthodontists and the Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry, and has held numerous national leadership roles advancing dental education in Canada. An internationally recognized scholar with over 300 peer-reviewed publications and an h-index of 60, his research focuses on orthodontic biomechanics, craniofacial imaging, and the development of advanced ultrasound applications in dentistry through interdisciplinary engineering collaborations. Dr. Major is the recipient of the 2025 Alberta Dental Association Lifetime Achievement Award, among many other honors recognizing his leadership, mentorship, and contributions to the profession.