

HERMAN OSTROW SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY

STRATEGIC VISION – DENTISTRY

2026-2031

INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Vision is aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the University of Southern California and the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry. It is guided by five strategic initiatives that define our priorities and direction for the next five years, advanced through dynamic approaches designed to achieve measurable and lasting impact. Ongoing evaluation and adaptation ensure that strategic priorities remain responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges.

The Mission of Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC is to provide education, scholarship, clinical care, and outreach that improves oral, dental, craniofacial, and general systemic health and well-being for all.

The Vision is to offer the highest quality teaching, research, clinical care, and service, centered upon our students and patients. We demonstrate empathy and respect for others and adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards.

INNOVATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE FUTURE LEADERS IN ORAL HEALTH CARE

Strategic Initiative

We will strengthen and enhance our innovative educational programs to prepare graduates to be critical thinkers, compassionate clinicians, and oral healthcare leaders. We will significantly increase philanthropic support through strategic fundraising initiatives, enabling us to develop new programs and provide even more scholarship opportunities for students. Meaningful and deep relationships with our alumni will support our ability to sustain the educational excellence and lifelong Trojan community for which USC has always been known. Building on our strong educational foundation, we will seamlessly embed artificial intelligence, machine learning, digital dentistry, and other emerging technologies within the curriculum to strengthen clinical decision-making, personalize learning, and improve patient outcomes. Through continuous curricular innovation and experiential learning opportunities, we will ensure our students are well-equipped to lead the future of the profession amid a rapidly evolving healthcare environment.

Dynamic Approach & Assessment

Innovative educational programs that prepare future leaders in oral health care are supported through an integrated approach that includes student recruitment and admissions, curricular

innovation and enhancement, academic success and assessment, educational technology integration, and the sustainability of an innovative educational program. We cultivate lifelong, mutually beneficial relationships with our alumni community, offering continuing education and a supportive professional network, with students in turn benefitting from their professional expertise and philanthropic support.

RESEARCH WITH REAL IMPACT

Strategic Initiative

Realizing the promise of scientific discoveries to improve the quality of life is one of the greatest challenges of the healthcare research community. We will significantly enhance our basic and translational research program to accelerate the discovery and application of new knowledge that improves human health. Central to this effort will be the recruitment, development, and retention of outstanding clinician scientists, as well as sustained investment in research infrastructure and support. We will foster cross-departmental and cross-school collaborations to stimulate new interdisciplinary approaches to advance prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of oral and systemic diseases. We will continue to grow our federally sponsored research programs, especially through innovative collaborations. We will develop and strengthen corporate and industry partnerships to accelerate the translation of our scientific discoveries, ensuring that they are adopted by oral healthcare providers and ultimately reach the patients who can benefit from them.

Dynamic Approach & Assessment

Research with real impact is advanced by supporting research funding and infrastructure; promoting scholarly productivity, dissemination, and clinical implementation; and supporting clinical, translational, and community-based research. We foster interdisciplinary collaboration and leverage artificial intelligence and emerging technologies to accelerate discovery, innovation, and evidence-based solutions. These efforts ensure that research discoveries are translated into clinical practice, improving patient outcomes, and advancing oral health care.

CLINICAL EXCELLENCE, PRECISION, AND INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE

Strategic Initiative

Building on our longstanding legacy of eminence, we will continue to provide the highest quality oral health care to all patients through innovative clinical programs that reflect evidence-based best practices and whole patient-centered values. By partnering with USC's medical care system to develop and implement precision oral health care approaches, we will advance integrated, comprehensive care. Together, we will foster innovation and help establish a new gold standard of patient care. These collaborations will build on Ostrow's 130 years of excellence in clinical dentistry, ensuring exceptional patient outcomes and realizing the potential of the advances in oral health care developed by our talented and innovative researchers.

Dynamic Approach & Assessment

Clinical excellence, precision, and integrated health care are advanced through the delivery of high-quality, patient-centered care; the adoption of innovative clinical practices; the strategic use of emerging technologies to enhance efficiency and decision-making; and expanded access to care that improves patient outcomes and experiences.

EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Initiative

We will invest in the long-term success of Ostrow by recruiting and retaining the highest-caliber faculty and staff who are dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care, and service. We recognize that the continued vitality of our professions depends crucially on building a collaborative community of talented people who share our commitment to fostering students, trainees, and colleagues on their journeys to personal and professional success. Through structured and individualized career development support in an environment that offers ample opportunities for advancement and encourages continuous growth, we will empower each member of our community by providing the skills, resources, and support needed to lead with integrity and impact. In so doing, we will ensure a sustainable future workforce for our professions and our school.

Dynamic Approach & Assessment

Empowering our community members and ensuring the vitality of our professions require a foundation of strong leadership and governance, faculty recruitment and retention, professional development and training, internal and external communications, and alumni and constituent relations. We recognize and cultivate the value of every community member while fostering a culture of excellence, engagement, and collaboration through leadership development, continuous learning, effective communication, and strong relationships with alumni and stakeholders.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO CARE

Strategic Initiative

We will expand the impact of our community oral healthcare programs and services to address disparities and improve access to care for underserved populations in Southern California. Through strategic collaborations with educational partners, healthcare systems, community organizations, and organized dentistry, we will strengthen service-learning, outreach, and public health initiatives. We will remain steadfast in our commitment to advancing oral health access, improving population health, and training socially responsible professionals committed to service and advocacy. By strengthening relationships with alumni, donors, and friends of the school, we will cultivate a culture of engagement and giving that reflects pride in Ostrow's mission and impact.

Dynamic Approach & Assessment

Our commitment to community impact is advanced through comprehensive community outreach and service programs that address local and regional oral health needs. By strengthening alumni and support networks, we foster lifelong engagement, mentorship, advocacy, and philanthropic support for the School's mission. Population health initiatives guide efforts to improve oral health outcomes through prevention, education, and evidence-based interventions. Expanding access to care for underserved populations remains a central priority, ensuring equitable opportunities for high-quality oral health services. Strategic community partnerships with health care providers, educational institutions, government agencies, and community organizations enhance our collective capacity to address complex health challenges. Through active public and stakeholder engagement, we build trust, promote collaboration, and strengthen the School's role as a leader in advancing oral health and community well-being.
