



2026 AADOCR Meeting Within a Meeting: 2026 IADR/AADOCR/CADR General Session & Exhibition San Diego, CA, USA

Making Our Voice Heard: Dental Education and Research in the Current Environment

Session 1: Reimagining Oral Health through Research, Innovation and Policy

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m. PDT (UTC-7)

This first session begins with a 10-15 minute presentation from each speaker, followed by a panel discussion. The goal is set the tone of the Meeting Within a Meeting, outlining a shared vision for collaboration across academia, industry, non-profit, and government sectors to advance oral health equity, innovation, and sustainability.

Objectives:

- Redefine leadership in oral health innovation, digital health and emerging technologies
- Develop legislative and policy strategies to expand oral health benefits integrating oral health into overall health
- Craft a shared agenda for sustainability
- Shared and collaborative research agenda between industry, non-profits, and academia
- Identify sustainable funding models to leverage public, private and philanthropic investments

Speakers:

1. **Michael Reddy**, Dean, University of California San Francisco, School of Dentistry
2. **Natalia Chalmers**, Chief Dental Officer and head of Clinical Innovations, Overjet
Previously, Chief Dental Officer, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
3. **Eric Tranby**, Senior Director, Analytics and Data Insights, CareQuest
4. **Maria Ryan**, Vice President and Chief Dental Officer, Colgate-Palmolive

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the leadership qualities we most need today? How do we develop leaders who are fluent across clinical care, data science, public health and policy?
 2. Could we align academic priorities with payer and industry insights? And how?
 3. How do we collaborate across sectors? Are there any misalignments among academia, payers, industry and policy?
 4. What does a sustained collaborative look like?
 5. How to Medicare/Medicaid reforms impact dental education and research? And how should dental education evolve in response to expanding Medicare benefits?
 6. If oral health were fully integrated into overall health, what would change in education, financing and care delivery?
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Day 2: What are the Current Barriers in Dental Education, Research, and Health Systems in 2026?

Thursday, March 26, 2026
8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. PDT (UTC-7)

Objectives:

- Analyze the impact of the Reconciliation Act, White House Executive Orders (EO), and other administrative actions on dental education and research.
- Identify economic and structural challenges in dental academia and research
- Understand the role of academic freedom and tenure in the current environment
- Explore curricular and research innovations in the context of academic freedom
- Discuss how DEI commitments can be reframed when the political climate treat them as liabilities

Speakers:

1. **Yehuda Sugarman**, Director, Government Affairs, American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
2. **Academic Freedom Expert**
3. **Sharukh Khajotia**, Senior Associate Dean for Research and Innovation, University of Oklahoma, College of Dentistry
4. **Simone Duarte**, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and EDI, Professor, Department of Restorative Dentistry, University at Buffalo

Discussion Questions:

1. How has Reconciliation, E.O.'s, and other actions reshaped dental education and research financing?
2. How do student loan caps affect research-focused and underrepresented students?
3. What solutions exist for immigration-related workforce attrition?
4. Are tenure protections sufficient in the current climate?
5. Where is the line between institutional risk management and infringement of academic freedom?
6. New barriers for international dental and PhD students, postdoctoral fellows, and early stage faculty
7. How can institutions support early-career and international researchers under current constraints?
8. How to navigate the current landscape and honor the values of diversity?

Day 3: Pathways Forward – Academic Career and Research Career Viability: How do we Sustain the Dental School Models

Friday, March 27, 2026

8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. PDT (UTC-7)

Opening Remarks and University Leadership

Panel 1: Sustainable Academic Models: Leadership Finance and Accreditation (45 minutes)

Facilitator: **Judith Albino**, President Emerita of the University of Colorado and Professor Emerita in both the Schools of Public Health and Dental Medicine at the University of Colorado Anschutz (invited)

Panelists:

- **Marcelo Araujo**, Dean, University at Buffalo, School of Dental Medicine
- **Keith Mays**, Dean, University of Minnesota, School of Dentistry
- **William Giannobile**, Dean, Harvard School of Dental Medicine
- **Nico Geurs**, Dean, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, School of Dentistry
- **Eunice Stephens**, Chief of Staff, University of California, San Francisco

Panel 2: Transforming Research and Academic Careers: The Future of Dental School Models (45 minutes)

Facilitator: Christopher H. Fox, CEO, IADR/AADOCR

Panelists:

- **Paul Kresbach**, Dean, University of California, Los Angeles
- **Michael Reddy**, Dean, School of Dentistry, University of California San Francisco,
- **Jacques Nör**, Dean, School of Dentistry, University of Michigan (invited)
- **Luciana Shaddox**, Associate Dean of Research, University of Kentucky
- **Brenda Heaton**, Associate Dean of Research, University of Utah

Discussion Questions:

1. What reforms are needed to restore academic career viability?
2. Assuming lean research funding through at least FY2028, how do we position our research workforce for recovery?
3. Is tenure here to stay? What does it mean for the future of academic freedom?
4. How do we build a sustainable and equitable loan system to afford graduate school?
5. What are our research and training priorities for the next five years?
6. How do we break silos and collaborate with national organizations in the education and research spaces?