

# American College of Dentists American Society for Dental Ethics

## Integration Document

### Background

The American Society for Dental Ethics (ASDE) was established in 2004 to succeed PEDNET (Professional Ethics in Dentistry Network, formally founded in 1987). ASDE has a membership of about 80 dental ethicists, educators and professionals. The group has one general meeting each year (at the American Dental Education Association annual session), a summer board meeting, and regularly sponsors a LeaderSkills program for the ACD Annual Meeting and Convocation, often in conjunction with the ADA Council on Ethics Bylaws and Judicial Affairs. Its individual members also participate in and help coordinate a number of other organized society meetings each year (ACD included). Members pay annual individual dues of \$95 plus \$20 for the JACD, \$115 total. Institutional membership is possible and encouraged with dues of \$495 per year. It is the mission of the Society to support ethics, and the particular role of professional ethics in dentistry, as an integral value of the dental health care professions, through ethics exploration, education, scholarship and application. The members of the Society are dedicated to the ongoing exploration and study of ethical issues, education in and about moral/ethical reasoning and application of ethical processes to promote professional responsibility and conduct for the dental professions. Through its work, the Society seeks to enhance oral health care for the public.

The American College of Dentists (ACD) is a 7,400 member, non-profit professional organization. It was founded in 1920 to address serious problems facing dentistry. Its mission is to advance excellence, ethics, professionalism, and leadership in dentistry. Membership is selective and by invitation. Throughout its history, the ACD has undertaken and supported numerous initiatives to improve the profession and oral health care. The ACD has a number of projects currently underway or planned. It is not a political organization, but it has long been regarded as the “Conscience of Dentistry.” The ACD is composed of 50 geographically based Sections within 8 Regencies. It holds its Annual Meeting and Convocation in the fall, normally on the Wednesday and Thursday immediately preceding the American Dental Association Annual Session. There are two board meetings, spring and fall.

### Purpose

Dental ethics is a comparatively small field, and a coordinated voice would be an advantage for two different organizations having complementary missions. The purpose of this document is to provisionally define and codify the integration of ACD and ASDE.

### Provisions and Considerations

#### ASDE

- ASDE will be a unique, non-geographically based Section of the ACD dedicated to the exploration, education, and practical application of dental ethics. The official name will be the “American Society for Dental Ethics Section of the American College of Dentists” or “ASDE” or “ASDE Section” for short. When referring to ASDE as a Section, the preferred term is “ASDE Section.”
- ASDE will retain its name, board membership, bylaws, and control over its budget. ASDE bylaws will be consistent with ACD guidelines for Section bylaws.
- ASDE will remain independent in its decision making within the bounds of ACD mission, policies, guidance, and bylaws.
- Organizationally, the ASDE Section will not be under a Regent as it will have a liaison to the ACD Board of Regents, and thus be directly represented at that body. The organizational status of the ASDE Section will be equivalent to other ACD Sections except for its means of representation to the Board of Regents.
- ASDE will have access to administrative support from the ACD Executive Office in Gaithersburg, Maryland, but ASDE can conduct its own administrative staff functions, if desired. Administrative support by the ACD will be similar to support given to any other Section of the ACD.
- ASDE will no longer be charged for the *Issues in Dental Ethics* section of JACD (\$1,600 annually).

- ASDE will maintain editorial control of the *Issues in Dental Ethics* section of JACD consistent with the current agreement in effect between ACD and ASDE.
- ASDE will set and retain control of its dues consistent with overall ACD policy. ACD Section dues cannot normally exceed 70% of ACD annual dues (national), which are currently \$175. Future increases in the amount charged for institutional membership dues would need approval by the ACD Board of Regents; that type of dues is not covered by ACD policy.
- ASDE will have appropriate access to financial resources of the ACD Foundation (e.g., Ethics Summit Fund). ASDE requests for funding will follow established procedures, including approval by the ACD Foundation Board of Directors where applicable.
- ASDE could strengthen its position and name recognition and likely increase its membership.
- ASDE could have the ACD name (and name recognition) behind its efforts.
- ASDE will be directly credited on national ACD projects where involved (e.g., [www.dentaethics.org](http://www.dentaethics.org))
- ACD may consider a one-time financial supplement to the ASDE treasury.
- ASDE may be able to assume the role of the ACD Ethics Committee, at least in part.

## **ACD**

- ACD will have access to the expertise and scholarly material of dental ethicists and dental ethics educators who are members of ASDE.
- ACD will be able to offer its members (and other organizations) ethics workshops and other dental ethics training led by ASDE members.

## **ACD and ASDE**

- ASDE and ACD could both benefit by having—and being—an integrated voice for professional ethics in dentistry.
- ASDE and ACD can better coordinate their activities with other dental and ethics organizations such as the ADA, ADEA, AGD, ethics organizations, specific ethics institutes, and other public groups.
- An Associate Member category should improve awareness and publicity, and hopefully stimulate interest in both ASDE and ACD.

## **Ex Officio ASDE Liaison to the ACD Board of Regents**

- A trial period will be needed before the bylaws of either organization can be changed and the integration formalized. During the trial period, and thereafter should integration be completed, a member of ASDE, appointed by the ASDE Board, will serve as an ex officio liaison to the ACD Board of Regents without voting rights. ASDE will cover expenses of the liaison to the Board of Regents meetings.
- The ex-officio liaison to the Board must be a regular or Honorary Fellow of the ACD in good standing. For purposes of this document, regular Fellows are those Fellows in Active, Life, and Retired ACD membership categories.
- The ex officio liaison to the Board will serve a term of 2 years. The liaison can serve an additional contiguous term of 2 years.

## **General Statement**

- Historically—as well as through current policy—the ACD grants considerable freedom to each Section for the conduct of its business and work. There is no tradition for the micromanagement of Section business by Regents or the ACD Board of Regents. There is no expectation that this will change with ASDE. With its status as a unique, non-geographically based Section of ACD and with the oftentimes national scope of its projects, there will be a need for good communications between ACD and ASDE so messages and public interaction are consistent and non-contradictory. ASDE (as a Section of ACD) will technically be subject to the overall ACD mission, policy, and guidance in all matters, including those mentioned herein.

## **ACD Associate Member Category (proposed) and Dues**

- Non-dentist members of ASDE are not eligible for Fellowship in the ACD under current membership guidelines. Outstanding non-dentist members could be nominated for Honorary Fellowship in the ACD; the number of Honorary Fellowships awarded each year is limited. Some ASDE dentist-members are undoubtedly eligible for Fellowship, but have not been nominated. A new ACD Associate Member category would encompass all current ASDE members who are not regular or Honorary Fellows of ACD.
- Associate Members would have all rights and privileges of regular ACD Fellows except that they could not vote, hold office, nominate individuals for Fellowship, or submit nominations for ACD awards.
- Associate Members will pay Section dues to ASDE and annual dues to the ACD. The annual dues will be largely nominal covering the JACD subscription, the ACD newsletter, and a modest fee to cover administrative expenses related to Associate Members. The total annual dues to ACD are projected initially to be \$40, i.e., JACD (\$20), ACD newsletter (\$10), and administrative expense (\$10). Section dues for ASDE (\$95) would be the current ASDE dues (\$115) minus the JACD subscription (\$20); the subscription is already covered under annual dues. The ACD Executive Office will continue to receive all income from JACD subscriptions.
- Consequently, there will be two bylines on dues invoices to Associate Members: (1) Annual Dues subtotal (to ACD) of \$40, which covers the JACD subscription (\$20), ACD newsletter (\$10), and administrative expense (\$10); and (2) Section Dues subtotal (to ASDE) of \$95, i.e., the current ASDE dues of \$115 less the \$20 for the JACD subscription.
- ACD Fellows can currently belong to multiple Sections by paying the Section dues of their primary Section and the Section dues of the additional Section(s) to which they wish to belong. At least initially, Associate Members will *only* be able to belong to the ASDE Section.
- A special pin for Associate Members presently has low interest, but this issue could be re-visited if interest levels change.
- The Associate Member category will require a bylaws change by the ACD to become a reality. As such, exploration of this new category during the trial period will be limited to actions that do not conflict with existing ACD bylaws—possibly through the creation of a reversible, provisional Associate Member category.
- ACD Honorary Fellows do not currently pay any dues, annual or Section. However, this policy would probably need to change so that the ASDE Section could collect Section dues from its members who are Honorary Fellows. (This policy change, if needed, would be limited to Honorary Fellows in the ASDE Section.) Another option would be to institute “voluntary” Section dues for Honorary Fellows throughout the ACD; Honorary Fellows in the ASDE Section would be strongly encouraged to pay the voluntary Section dues.
- Regular ACD Fellows belonging to the ASDE Section would pay annual dues to the ACD of \$175 and Section dues to ASDE of \$95 (the JACD subscription is already covered under the ACD annual dues).

### **Trial Period**

- ACD and ASDE will enter a 1-2 year trial period of integration beginning May 1, 2008. At the end of that period, if all parties are satisfied with the outcome and relationship, the ACD and ASDE will vote to change their respective bylaws and take other measures as necessary to make the relationship permanent.
- It is understood by both ACD and ASDE that unforeseen issues may arise during the trial period and necessitate changes prior to formal adoption by the respective organizations.

### **Timeline**

**March 28-29, 2008**—ACD to review and approve the provisional agreement to codify integration of ASDE and ACD

**March/April 2008**—ASDE to review and approve the provisional agreement to codify integration of ASDE and ACD

**May 1, 2008**—Trial period of integration begins

**October 13-14, 2008**—ASDE liaison attends ACD Board meeting in ex officio capacity.

**March/April 2009**—(1) ASDE liaison attends ACD Board meeting in ex officio capacity; (2) Trial period of integration ends (alternatively, this could extend one more year to Spring 2010, if either party desired more time to evaluate the relationship); (3) Boards of ACD and ASDE review the integration progress to date, and if satisfactory, take appropriate steps to make the relationship permanent. In the case of the ACD, this would involve a bylaws change to the general membership during the summer of 2009 (bylaws changes must be initiated 90 days before the fall Annual Meeting & Convocation).

**September 27-28, 2009**—(1) Results of vote to ACD general membership on bylaws change; (2) Integration complete

We the undersigned official representatives of the ACD and ASDE agree to the provisions and considerations contained herein, and we further agree to enter into the aforesaid trial period of integration.

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John M. Scarola  
President, American College of Dentists

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Date

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President, American Society for Dental Ethics

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Date