The Start

The Pathways Program at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry (UMSoD) is a student-led approach to learning addressing the future of dental education through 4 foundational goals: 1) engaging students in a specific area of their own interest, 2) allowing students to take an active role in determining the content of their curriculum, 3) promoting student proficiency in articulating learning experiences, and 4) developing students’ professional identity.

New Direction

• Core Themed Electives
  All DDS students participate in the Core Program, offering a selection of themed electives to create a personalized path for professional development.

• Honors
  DDS students can self-select to become an honors student in the Program, where they complete a Capstone Project.

• Immersion
  Those students who choose to take an honors path will be offered an immersion program by their faculty mentor in the Summer between D1 and D2 Year.

• Inclusion
  Themed electives can extend enrichment of curriculum for the UMSoD Hygiene Program and the UMSoD Internationally Trained Dentists Program, maximizing use of effort and resources used.

ASK, LISTEN, DREAM!

The program “Your Voice on Pathways” was created to obtain feedback from both students and faculty. This feedback drove planning for program restructure and new direction designed to better accomplish the Pathways Program’s 4 foundational goals.

SUSTAINABLE?

Analysis of faculty loads for teaching and mentoring determined a 23% reduction in faculty time and a 45% reduction in capstone project funding after restructure of the program.

Assessment of gains will be tracked and student achievement of foundational goals will be compared to prior cohorts through documented student reflections.

The Destination

The Enhancement of Pathways involved significant changes including:
1) a collaborative themed elective system spanning across 4 years of the pre-doctoral program,
2) Interprofessional Education electives,
3) a self-selected honors program and
4) emphasis for personalized professional development beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year.