



This is the Author's version of the paper published as:

**Title:** The effects of context on the marginalisation of dental students in a shared medical and dental curriculum

**Author:** S. Hyde, R. Ajjawi and C. Roberts

**Author Address:** shyde@csu.edu.au

rajjaw@med.usyd.edu.au

croberts@med.usyd.edu.au

**Conference Name:** Association for Health Professional Education (ANZAME) conference: Linking Leaders with Learners

**Title of Conference:** Association for Health Professional Education (ANZAME) conference: Linking Leaders with Learners

**Year of Conference:** 2007

**Conference Location:** Canberra, Australia

**Pages:** 41

**URL:** <http://www.conlog.com.au/anzame/>

**Keywords:** curriculum, shared learning

**Abstract:** The Graduate entry Medical and Dental Programs at the University of Sydney share the majority of their curricula content in the first and second years and use a problem-based learning (PBL) approach. Students from both professional cohorts attend joint lectures and laboratory sessions together on the main campus. Although both groups complete the same PBL cases, this occurs on different campuses and the groups are physically segregated for this part of the course. Anecdotal and program evaluation results have indicated negative attitudes and stereotyping between the students and staff from each group. A qualitative study was undertaken to investigate these reports. Semi-structured interviews, and one focus group, were conducted with 38 students and staff in both Faculties. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and an iterative process of interpretation and analysis was used to group data into themes and sub-themes. Dental students described a sense of feeling "marginalised" and of being "second class citizens". Medical students and staff regularly questioned the relevance of the medical content for the dental students' professional careers. Organisational factors such as student numbers, orientation, admission processes and geographical location of the two schools propagated negative attitudes and professional stereotyping of students. This is despite many medical and dental students being class mates and friends in their previous degrees. Findings from this study provide evidence for the negative effects of the physical and organisational context for the socialisation of dental students. Strategies for reducing the marginalisation of dental students in this setting include improved communication between Faculties, common orientation activities, stronger social networks and physical reorganisation.

**CSU Research Output**

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

CSU Research Output

<http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au>

Small Group Presentation

Theme: Learners

Title: The effects of context on the marginalisation of dental students in a shared medical and dental curriculum.

Rola Ajjawi\*<sup>1</sup>, Sarah Hyde<sup>1</sup> and Chris Roberts<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centre for Innovation in Professional health Education and Research (CIPHER)  
Faculty of Medicine  
Edward Ford Building (A27)  
University of Sydney  
NSW 2006 Australia

\* Presenter

The Graduate entry Medical and Dental Programs at the University of Sydney share the majority of their curricula content in the first and second years and use a problem-based learning (PBL) approach. Students from both professional cohorts attend joint lectures and laboratory sessions together on the main campus. Although both groups complete the same PBL cases, this occurs on different campuses and the groups are physically segregated for this part of the course. Anecdotal and program evaluation results have indicated negative attitudes and stereotyping between the students and staff from each group. A qualitative study was undertaken to investigate these reports. Semi-structured interviews, and one focus group, were conducted with 38 students and staff in both Faculties. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and an iterative process of interpretation and analysis was used to group data into themes and sub-themes. Dental students described a sense of feeling “marginalised” and of being “second class citizens”. Medical students and staff regularly questioned the relevance of the medical content for the dental students’ professional careers. Organisational factors such as student numbers, orientation, admission processes and geographical location of the two schools propagated negative attitudes and professional stereotyping of students. This is despite many medical and dental students being class mates and friends in their previous degrees. Findings from this study provide evidence for the negative effects of the physical and organisational context for the socialisation of dental students. Strategies for reducing the marginalisation of dental students in this setting include improved communication between Faculties, common orientation activities, stronger social networks and physical reorganisation.