

JOSIP JURAJ STROSSMAYER UNIVERSITY OF OSIJEK
FACULTY OF DENTAL MEDICINE AND HEALTH



Development Strategy of the
Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek
2021–2030

Osijek, December 2021

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The Development Strategy of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek at Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek for the period 2021–2030 was prepared by the Faculty Board; members of the Committee for Academic and Student Affairs; members of the Science Committee; the Commission for Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Higher Education; and the teaching and scientific staff of the Faculty, under the leadership of the Dean, Prof. Primarius Aleksandar Včev, MD, PhD.

The document was adopted in the academic year 2021/2022, at a session of the Faculty Council held on 22 December 2021.

1. Word from the Dean

The Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek at Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek is the youngest faculty in the field of biomedicine and health in Croatia. It was established by decision of the Senate of Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek on 25 April 2017. The Faculty continues the tradition of biomedical and health studies in Osijek, which dates back to 1979, when Osijek became the site of a branch programme in medicine of the University of Zagreb School of Medicine.

The Faculty currently offers the following study programmes:

1. Integrated undergraduate and graduate university study programme in Dental Medicine
2. Undergraduate and graduate university study programme in Nursing
3. Undergraduate and graduate university study programme in Physiotherapy
4. Undergraduate university study programme in Dental Hygiene
5. Postgraduate specialist study programme in Neurology (in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine in Osijek)
6. Postgraduate specialist study programme in Psychiatry (in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine in Osijek)
7. Postgraduate specialist study programme in Ophthalmology with Optometry (in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine in Osijek)

The study programmes are now well-established educational frameworks that provide training and produce a highly qualified workforce, which is urgently needed in Slavonia, Baranja, and western Srijem. The Faculty continues to develop in line with contemporary needs.

In 2017, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek transferred a building of approximately 1,400 square meters, located on the university campus at Cara Hadrijana 10E, to the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek. This building accommodates the management board, administrative offices, clinical skills laboratories, and staff offices. On 20 October 2017, Goran Marić, PhD, acting on behalf of the Ministry of State Property, granted the Faculty a building of 2,988 square meters at Crkvena 21, Osijek, for teaching purposes.

The Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek has a large number of teaching sites and partner institutions, including: Istrian Health Centres; Identalia Polyclinic, Zagreb; Srebrnjak

Children's Hospital, Zagreb; St Catherine's Special Hospital; Našice General Hospital; Virovitica–Podravina County Health Centre; Croatian Red Cross, City Society of the Red Cross, Osijek; Osijek Health Centre; Krapina–Zagorje County Health Centre; Magdalena Clinic for Cardiovascular Diseases; Sveti Duh Clinical Hospital; St John Psychiatric Hospital, Zagreb; Dr Josip Benčević General Hospital, Slavonski Brod; Clinical Hospital Centre, Osijek; Brod–Posavina County Public Health Institute; Ars Salutaris Polyclinic, Zagreb; Seifert Dental Medicine d.o.o., Zagreb; Thalassoterapia – Special Hospital for Medical Rehabilitation of Heart, Lung, and Rheumatic Diseases, Opatija; Ivaniš Polyclinic, Rijeka; Ćosić Polyclinic d.o.o., Slavonski Brod; Zabok General Hospital and Croatian Veterans' Hospital; Faculty of Medicine, Osijek; Nova Gradiška General Hospital; Požega–Slavonia County Health Centre; Dr Andrija Štampar Health Centre, Nova Gradiška; Vinkovci General County Hospital; Vukovar General County Hospital; Županja Health Centre; Vukovar Health Centre; Beli Manastir Health Centre; Pregrada Secondary School; Bagatin Polyclinic, Zagreb; Faculty of Veterinary Medicine – University of Zagreb; Cvetko Home Healthcare, Patient Rehabilitation, and Physiotherapy Institution; Mala Terezija Rehabilitation Centre; Bidružica Home for Adults; Home for the Elderly and Infirm, Osijek; Home for the Elderly and Infirm, Varaždin; Belona Home Healthcare Institution; Andreja Zrinščak Private Healthcare Practice; Ćorluka Healthcare Institution; Jadranka Plužarić Healthcare Institution; Ljubica Mlinac Healthcare Institution; Hippocrates Healthcare Institution; Mira Fernbach Home Healthcare Institution; Spomenka Kurina Home Healthcare Institution; Special Hospital for Medical Rehabilitation, Lipik; Faculty of Health Studies, University of Rijeka; Srčana Polyclinic for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Rehabilitation, Zagreb; RHEA d.o.o., Split; Požega General County Hospital; St Raphael Special Hospital for Psychiatry and Palliative Care, Strmac; Pakrac General County Hospital and Croatian Veterans' Hospital; Saša Đukić, Doctor of Dental Medicine, Dental Practice; Brod–Posavina County Emergency Medical Service; Čandrić–Bitunjac Neurology Polyclinic j.d.o.o.; Radiochirurgia Polyclinic for General Surgery, Radiotherapy and Oncology, and Radiology, Zagreb; Lege Artis Polyclinic d.o.o.; Gostović Dental Polyclinic j.d.o.o.; Karlovac General Hospital; Čes Dental Medicine Centre; Kristina Halbauer, DMD, MSc, Dental Practice; Stjepanka Lešić, DMD, PhD, Dental Practice; Lovran College, Adult Education Institution; Našice Health Centre; Slavonski Brod Health Centre; Murska Sobota General Hospital; Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad; Dr Radivoj Simonović General Hospital, Sombor, Republic of Serbia; Botiss Biomaterials GmbH, Zossen, Federal Republic of Germany; Faculty of Health Studies, University of Sarajevo; University of Health Studies, Slovenj Gradec; University of Maribor; University of Ljubljana.

The Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek seeks to expand the number of its partner institutions both within and beyond the Republic of Croatia, thereby providing students with access to a broader range of specialised clinical programmes. It ensures the development of excellent professional competencies and the ethical dimensions of learning, while students are expected to continually acquire new knowledge and skills, enabling them to pursue their vocation as highly skilled, ethical, and honourable professionals. Ultimately, the vocation of our alumni extends beyond a mere occupation; all who study at our Faculty will, upon graduation, assume a profound moral responsibility to practice their profession with integrity and honour.



Dean

Prof. Primarius Aleksandar Včev, MD, PhD

2. Introduction

The Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek was established as an independent legal entity and commenced operations in the academic year 2017/2018, following its separation from the Faculty of Medicine in Osijek, where it had previously delivered the undergraduate university study programmes in Physiotherapy and Dental Hygiene, the undergraduate and graduate university study programmes in Nursing, and the integrated undergraduate and graduate university study programme in Dental Medicine. The undergraduate university study programme in Dental Hygiene was the first of its kind in the Republic of Croatia.

3. Organisation and Activities

The Statute of the Faculty entered into force on 29 December 2017. It constitutes the fundamental document regulating:

- the establishment, activities, and operations of the Faculty;
- the authority and decision-making processes of the Faculty's governing bodies;
- the establishment, organisation, and delivery of university study programmes;
- the organisation and delivery of professional study programmes;
- the status of students;
- the status of teaching and scientific staff, associates, and other employees; and
- other matters of relevance to the Faculty.

The activities of the Faculty are:

- higher education;
- the establishment and delivery of undergraduate, integrated undergraduate and graduate, graduate, and postgraduate university study programmes, including postgraduate university and postgraduate specialist programmes, as well as professional study programmes, in accordance with the law;
- research and experimental development in the scientific fields of biomedicine and health, natural sciences, and interdisciplinary scientific areas;
- scientific research in the field of biomedicine and health within the relevant scientific disciplines, subject to conditions set out in special regulations;

- the establishment and delivery of diverse forms of professional and scientific development activities to keep abreast of new professional and scientific advances;
- the establishment and delivery of professional services and participation in the delivery of health protection programmes;
- publishing, library, and information technology activities to support teaching, scientific, and professional work;
- the establishment and delivery of lifelong learning programmes, with the consent of the Senate of the University;
- the organisation and delivery of national and international counselling and professional events to enhance the knowledge of students, healthcare professionals, and other interested parties; and
- expert assessment, evaluation, and professional opinions in the field of biomedicine and health.

The Faculty may also carry out other activities to a lesser extent, without registration in the court register, provided that they support the Faculty's registered activities and contribute to the effective use of its facilities, human resources, and equipment.

The organisational units of the Faculty are scientific and teaching units, including institutes, departments, laboratories, the Clinical Skills Laboratory, the Secretary's Office, and the Library, as well as units responsible for carrying out healthcare activities for teaching purposes.

Departments of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek are:

- Department of Anatomy, Histology, Embryology, Pathological Anatomy, and Pathological Histology
- Department of Biology and Chemistry
- Department of Biophysics and Radiology
- Department of Pharmacology and Biochemistry
- Department of Pathophysiology, Physiology and Immunology
- Department of Clinical Medicine
- Department of Psychiatry
- Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery
- Department of Surgery

- Department of Paediatrics and Gynaecology with Obstetrics
- Department of Dental Medicine 1
- Department of Dental Medicine 2
- Department of Public Health, Humanities, and Social Sciences in Biomedicine
- Department of Nursing and Palliative Medicine
- Department of Ophthalmology and Optometry, Otorhinolaryngology, and Anaesthesiology with Reanimatology
- Department of Information Technology, Statistics, and Foreign Languages

Institutes of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek are:

- Institute for Dental Medicine
- Institute for Integrative Medicine
- Institute for Biology
- Institute for Integrative Psychiatry
- ‘Prof. dr. sc. Radivoje Radić’ Institute for Nursing
- Institute of Psychotherapy and Early Intervention
- Institute of Integrative Gynaecology, Obstetrics, and Minimally Invasive Gynaecological Surgery

The bodies of the Faculty are the Dean and the Faculty Council.

The Dean represents and acts on behalf of the Faculty, serving as its head and principal officer. The Dean’s rights and obligations are defined in the Statutes of the University and the Faculty.

The Dean is assisted in his work by four Vice Deans:

- Vice Dean for Academic and Student Affairs
- Vice Dean for Science and Postgraduate Studies
- Vice Dean for Inter-Institutional Cooperation and Development
- Vice Dean for Cooperation with Teaching Sites

Faculty Council

The Faculty Council is a professional body that makes decisions on academic, scientific, and professional matters.

It is typically composed of the heads of departments, who represent the teaching staff holding scientific and teaching ranks of tenured full professor, full professor, associate professor, and assistant professor; three representatives of the teaching staff holding teaching ranks; three representatives of associates holding associate ranks employed by the Faculty; one representative of other employees under contract with the Faculty; and student representatives, who constitute at least 15 per cent of the total membership of the Faculty Council.

Standing and Interim Bodies of the Faculty Council

The Faculty Council may appoint standing and interim committees and commissions in accordance with its Statute, the University Statute, or other by-laws.

The Faculty Council currently has the following standing commissions and committees:

- Science Committee
- Committee for Academic and Student Affairs
- Committee for Final and Graduate Theses
- Ethics Committee
- Human Resources Development Commission
- Commission for the Award of the Doctoral Degree in Science
- Commission for Forensic Medicine Expert Assessments
- Publishing Commission
- Commission for Assessment of Eligibility for Academic Appointment
- Commission for Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Higher Education

Institute

An institute is an organisational unit of the Faculty responsible for carrying out teaching, scientific, and professional activities. Institutes may include two or more departments, as well as laboratories as subordinate organisational units. The names of the institutes, departments, and laboratories are defined in the Decision on the Organisation of the Faculty.

Department

A department is a core organisational unit of the Faculty responsible for carrying out scientific, teaching, and professional activities. Departments are generally established to cover several related subjects.

Laboratories

Laboratories are established to carry out scientific and professional research and projects, as well as to deliver hands-on teaching activities.

Clinical Skills Laboratory

The Clinical Skills Laboratory is an organisational unit of the Faculty responsible for coordinating the teaching of specific medical knowledge and skills essential for the training of doctors of dental medicine, dental hygienists, nurses, physiotherapists, and other healthcare professionals, which cannot be fully mastered during clinical teaching.

Library

The Library is an organisational unit of the Faculty responsible for carrying out library and information activities, as well as tasks related to teaching, scientific research, and professional needs of the Faculty. The Faculty's library system and its library and information services form part of the university library system.

Secretary's Office

The Secretary's Office is an organisational unit responsible for carrying out legal, professional, administrative, financial, and accounting activities to support and ensure quality; activities related to student matters; technical and auxiliary activities at the Faculty; and other tasks necessary for the effective functioning of the Faculty, as set out in the Faculty's Statute and other by-laws.

Dean

The Dean represents and acts on behalf of the Faculty, serving as its head and principal officer. The Dean's rights and obligations are defined in the Statutes of the University and the Faculty. The Dean is responsible for ensuring the lawfulness of the Faculty's operations and for implementing the Statute and decisions of the university governing bodies at the Faculty.

Vice Deans

The Dean is assisted in his work by the Vice Deans and the Secretary. The Faculty has four (4) Vice Deans:

- Vice Dean for Academic and Student Affairs
- Vice Dean for Science and Postgraduate Studies

- Vice Dean for Inter-Institutional Cooperation and Development
- Vice Dean for Cooperation with Teaching Sites

The Vice Deans are accountable for their work to the Faculty Council and the Dean.

Secretary

The Secretary is the head of the Faculty's Secretary's Office and is responsible for implementing organisational, professional, administrative, legal, technical, and other general functions within the Faculty. The Secretary ensures the effective operation of the Office, covering legal affairs, human resources, professional and administrative services, financial and accounting matters, quality assurance and enhancement in higher education, student affairs, and technical and support services, together with any additional duties set out in the Statute, laws, other regulations, and the Faculty's by-laws.

Head of Department

The Head of Department represents the department and is responsible for managing its work.

Head of Institute

The Head of Institute represents the institute and is responsible for managing its work.

4. Mission and Vision of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek

Mission

The mission of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek is to provide education and training for future doctors of dental medicine, dental hygienists, nurses, physiotherapists, and other healthcare professionals, as well as for teachers and scientists; to foster scientific research; and to conduct research. The Faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and research, particularly in the field of biomedicine and health, grounded in modern pedagogical approaches, compassion, and strict ethical standards. It systematically encourages both future and practising healthcare professionals to embrace lifelong learning and to contribute to the development and application of evidence-based medicine. Biomedical research, combined with the education and training of teaching and scientific staff, generates new

knowledge that underpins efforts to protect health and to advance the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease in the community.

Vision

The Faculty aspires to be a modern institution of high-quality standards, on a par with its counterparts within the European area of education and knowledge, and a place where satisfied and highly motivated students and teaching staff work in a forward-looking environment, open to international cooperation and the appreciation of diversity.

The Faculty seeks to become recognised for its scientific research achievements, the effective transfer of knowledge and skills, excellent conditions for work and daily life, and its openness to new ideas, initiatives, and aspirations.

The Faculty is committed to fostering a variety of forms of cooperation with higher education institutions both nationally and internationally, seeking to establish partnerships with other faculties and medical institutions in order to enable students and teaching staff to engage in special forms of professional development and academic advancement in science.

Opening the Faculty to international students and enabling our own students to study at other institutions requires greater mobility for students and teaching staff, instruction in English and other foreign languages, and the preparation of teaching materials in these languages.

The plan is to continue the digitalisation of all teaching facilities within the Faculty, thereby enabling broader use of information technology.

5. Conducting a SWOT Analysis for the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek

The SWOT analysis was conducted during the process of establishing the Faculty and also served as the basis for this Strategy. Its purpose was to identify the internal and external factors that influence the achievement of objectives and inform the setting of new ones.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
1. Realisation of the Faculty's Mission: Fostering Collaboration between the Academic and Healthcare Systems			
The second academic institution in the field of biomedicine and health in Eastern Croatia	Gaps in the national strategy for science and higher education in Croatia	Strengthening the Faculty's role in shaping the national science and higher education strategy	The national strategy for healthcare, science, and higher education is insufficiently developed
Building on the legacy of the Faculty of Medicine in Osijek, we continue to educate healthcare professionals and scientists in biomedicine and health	Gaps in the national healthcare development strategy	Strengthening the Faculty's role in healthcare development and policy planning	Prolonged economic crisis in Croatia
Actively participating in European academic networks for healthcare professionals	Ongoing cuts in funding for science and higher education, including reductions in state support for students in publicly funded programmes	Establishment of new study programmes	Out-migration of healthcare professionals and teaching staff from Eastern Croatia
Education of professionals in high-demand fields both nationally and within the EU	The Faculty is unable to recruit doctors of dental and family medicine because of existing concession agreements with HZZO ¹	Enhancing the Faculty's recognisability in the scientific field of biomedicine and health and increasing participation in international science	Inconsistencies in healthcare legislation relative to higher education and science
Most Faculty teaching staff actively participate in professional associations and regulatory bodies (HLK, HKMS, HKZR, HKDM, HKF) ² in biomedicine and health, positively influencing the development of professions in the field	Because most teaching staff are geographically distant from professional association headquarters, their active involvement in governance is limited	Better networking of the Faculty with healthcare institutions in Eastern Croatia to enhance scientific research	Lack of approval for new positions funded by the Ministry of Science and Education

¹ Croatian Health Insurance Institute

² Croatian Medical Chamber, Croatian Chamber of Nurses, Croatian Chamber of Health Workers, Croatian Dental Chamber, Croatian Council of Physiotherapists

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
1. Realisation of the Faculty's Mission: Fostering Collaboration between the Academic and Healthcare Systems			
Our teaching staff participate in international institutions and associations	Limited support for staff participation in collaborations with international institutions and professional associations	Better networking of the Faculty with international institutions and the industry	A high number of simultaneous activities reduces the quality of output
By participating in local and regional self-government and state bodies, our teaching staff actively contribute to national development	The Faculty has limited ability to influence local authorities in carrying out its planned regional development programmes	Formation of centres of excellence in partner institutions	Reliance on the staff and technical facilities of partner institutions
Establishment of a centre for prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation in Orahovica	The centre's early development phase is limited by a shortage of resident specialists	Establishing the necessary conditions to offer dental medicine, nursing, and physiotherapy programmes in a foreign language	Economic non-viability of the centre and limited local authority support
Establishment of a Polyclinic for Dental Medicine	-	Employment of new assistants and staff development	-
Increased enrolment quotas in biomedicine and health in line with the signed programme agreement between the University of Osijek and the Ministry of Science and Education	Insufficient teaching staff and inadequate infrastructure to meet prescribed teaching standards	Hiring new teaching staff and upgrading teaching facilities	Lack of support from the Ministry of Science and Education and insufficient cooperation with teaching sites
The Faculty plays a key role in the scientific and professional development of healthcare staff in Eastern Croatia, contributing to improved healthcare quality	-	-	-
Impact in the Danube regions	-	-	-
Promotion of public health awareness through lectures,	-	-	-

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
1. Realisation of the Faculty's Mission: Fostering Collaboration between the Academic and Healthcare Systems			
workshops, and community activities			

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
2. Management and Quality Assurance System			
Active participation of the Faculty's teaching staff in university bodies	Limited institutional influence of the Faculty on the management of clinical and other teaching healthcare institutions	Creating a system of incentives and sanctions based on the quality of teaching	Inadequate funding
Implemented ISO quality assurance system	Insufficiently developed measures for rewards and sanctions	Strengthened two-way quality assurance communication through reports and evaluation meetings	Changes in legislation and its integration into the existing system
The Faculty maintains a high-quality system of organisation and management	Dependence on financial support from the University and the Ministry of Science and Education	Greater autonomy achieved by generating a portion of the Faculty's resources through market-driven activities	Changes in the policy of the Croatian Government and the line ministry
Systematic quality-related data collection and quality promotion	-	-	-
Ongoing monitoring and improvement of the quality of scientific activities	-	-	-
Ensuring alignment and cooperation with the University Centre for Quality Assurance	-	-	-
A comprehensive system for tracking scientific work conducted alongside teaching activities	-	-	-

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
3. Study Programmes, Learning Organisation, and Learning Outcomes			
Developed study programmes	The inability to recruit new teaching staff hinders the expansion of enrolment quotas required by labour market demand	Development of lifelong learning programmes and specialist postgraduate study programmes	Inadequate funding
Active role of the Faculty in creating new specialist training programmes and postgraduate specialist study programmes	Limited use of existing opportunities for outbound mobility of teaching staff and students	Development of continuous professional development for healthcare professionals	Prolonged economic crisis
Learning outcomes fully implemented	Inbound mobility of teaching staff and students for stays longer than one month is very low	The Faculty plays an active role in developing manuals for specialisation programmes and in their implementation	Insufficient funding for outbound mobility
Labour market appeal of study programmes	Inadequate equipment in some hands-on teaching laboratories	Better use of existing financial and programme resources for mobility – Erasmus and Erasmus+	Changes in EU regulations regarding regulated professions
Clearly defined course- and program-level assessment systems	Complexity of assessment systems	Access to funding for inbound mobility; provision of accommodation for incoming scientists and teachers	Demographic decline in Eastern Croatia
–	–	–	Misalignment of Croatian legal regulations governing healthcare professions with EU directives and defined occupations in the European labour market

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
4. Teaching (Methods of Instruction and Assessment) and Teaching Staff			
Sufficient number of qualified and experienced teaching staff	Lack of material resources for improving teaching	Further development of a comprehensive information system to manage the entire teaching process	Inadequate state funding
Defined criteria for academic promotion	Lack of opportunities for independent student work within the teaching process	Improved communication and information sharing among students, teaching staff, and administrative personnel via mobile multimedia applications	Emigration of teaching staff from Croatia
Access to and use of clinical skills laboratories	The quality of hands-on clinical training varies across some teaching sites	Enhancing and standardizing the evaluation of hands-on knowledge and skills in clinical courses	The Faculty teaching staff have unresolved overlapping employment arrangements with healthcare institutions
Experience in using telemedicine in teaching	Incomplete online availability of peer-reviewed teaching materials	Introduction of OSCE ³	–
Use of ISVU ⁴ system and active use of the data repository	–	Implementation of independent student work within the teaching process	–
–	–	Implementation of supplementary training programmes to enhance teaching skills	–

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
5. Students and Student Support			
Enrolment of top-performing students from the national matriculation exams	Underdeveloped teaching mentorship system	Improved networking through the Alumni Club for former and current students	Continuous decline in student living standards due to prolonged economic crisis

³ Objective Structured Clinical Examination

⁴ Higher Education Institutions Information System

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
5. Students and Student Support			
High student progression rates across all study programmes	Certain textbooks do not match the students' level of understanding	Potential to expand collaboration with industry and healthcare institutions to better guide students' professional development	Unfair competition from short weekend programmes in neighbouring non-EU countries recognised by the Ministry of Science and Education
Active student participation in decisions affecting them	Insufficient number of scholarships for financially disadvantaged students	Enhanced student information flow through multimedia applications on mobile platforms	Insufficient co-funding of teaching processes from the state budget
Student associations engage voluntarily in promoting community health and participating in humanitarian initiatives	–	Faculty students engage in the student radio and University newsletter to improve communication and raise awareness of programmes in biomedicine and health	Declining student numbers due to demographic trends
Ongoing expansion of the faculty's own publishing efforts	The extent of publishing activities is determined by the availability of the Faculty's own funds for printing	Supplying Faculty-produced teaching materials and promoting the Faculty's study programmes	–
Active student participation in international associations and institutions in the field of biomedicine and health	–	Promotion of international student exchange	–
Ongoing professional and material support for students' sports, artistic, and publishing activities	–	–	–

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
6. Scientific Research			
Extensive experience of staff in leading scientific research and professional projects	Inability to recruit new early-career scientists	Infrastructure expansion as part of the development of the university campus	Insufficient funding from the state budget

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
6. Scientific Research			
Participation of our assistants in scientific research laboratories of our visiting faculty in the EU	Lack of funds for mandatory placements of early-career researchers in prestigious international institutions	Access to European research and mobility funds for teaching staff	Misalignment of legal regulations governing the training of scientific and teaching staff from healthcare institutions abroad
Active participation of students in the Faculty's scientific activities (projects) and in science popularisation (e.g. Science Festival, Brain Week)	Inadequate equipment in scientific research laboratories due to insufficient state funding	Applications for international bilateral and inter-institutional research projects	Limited access to information for scientific research staff due to reduced funding for available databases
Staff scientists	Lack of postgraduate doctoral programmes	Staffing of the Office for Science	Lack of financial resources for scientific research
Potential for interdisciplinary research	Insufficient staffing of scientists for conducting interdisciplinary projects	Postgraduate doctoral programmes designed to train future scientists and support the development of the institution's scientific and teaching staff within its field of operation	Lack of financial resources
Scientific research and collaboration with industry	–	–	–

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
7. International Cooperation			
International cooperation of the Faculty with institutions in neighbouring countries	Limited international mobility of teaching staff and students due to lack of financial support	Development of information support systems	Lack of state funding for international cooperation

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
7. International Cooperation			
Joint collaboration agreements with EU higher education institutions	Language barriers and the specific demands of clinical teaching, particularly patient communication, limit student mobility	Establishment of study programmes in foreign languages	Limited administrative capacity to support international students, as staff have limited foreign language skills
Guest professors from distinguished universities and scientific research institutions	No study programmes offered in foreign languages	Dedicated office for international cooperation	Limited personnel resources hinder the administration of international scientific projects
Potential for international student admissions via cooperation	–	Development of a student–mentor system to support incoming students	Lack of financial resources limits the Faculty’s ability to pre-finance international scientific projects that require upfront funding
–	–	Submission of international scientific project applications	–

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
8. Information Systems and Public Engagement			
Wireless internet access throughout the Faculty	Insufficient number of computers consistently available to students	Further development of a comprehensive information system to manage the entire teaching process	Insufficient state funding for IT equipment
Connection of the Faculty with its teaching sites via the CARNET ⁵ network	Reduced access to databases funded by the Ministry of Science and Education	Increase in the number of computers available for student use	Obsolescence of IT equipment
An organised IT service at the Faculty capable of addressing technical and software issues	–	Teaching materials available on departmental websites	System identity protection

⁵ Croatian Academic and Research Network

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
8. Information Systems and Public Engagement			
Lecture rooms equipped with IT infrastructure	–	Increase in the number of websites for the Faculty's organisational units	Limited oversight of copyright-related legal regulations
Use of the ISVU system	–	Creation of a committee responsible for website content management and public relations	–
A comprehensive system for coordinating and managing the teaching process	–	–	–

6. Defining the Principal Development Priorities of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek

The Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek is the only higher education university institution in Eastern Croatia offering study programmes in Dental Medicine, Dental Hygiene, Nursing, and Physiotherapy. It serves as the central hub for around one million inhabitants in this region, as well as in the neighbouring countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. As a young but highly active constituent of the University of Osijek, the Faculty recognises its role in the development of higher education and its impact on the healthcare of the population it serves. We define our development priorities in line with our institutional potential:

- **Fostering Collaboration between the Academic and Healthcare Systems:** To achieve this development priority, we plan to intensify networking with potential partner healthcare and professional institutions, as well as strengthen connections with local and regional self-government.
- **Management and Quality Assurance System:** This priority is fundamental to ensuring the highest standards in teaching, scientific research, and service-oriented activities, which must be fully integrated across all our operations. It includes the introduction of

certification based on established standards for higher education institutions and laboratories.

- **Development of the Faculty's Resources:** The Faculty operates in two buildings in Osijek, located at Cara Hadrijana 10E, covering 1,414.48 square meters, and Crkvena 21, covering 2,988 square meters.
- **Study Programmes, Learning Organisation, and Learning Outcomes:** We aim for the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek to be recognised as a desirable place to study, providing education for healthcare professionals with well-defined academic profiles that meet labour market needs in Croatia, the region, and across Europe. This is achieved through high-quality teaching across all three cycles of education: undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate, as well as through lifelong learning programmes that respond to the evolving needs of healthcare systems both nationally and in neighbouring countries.
- **Enhancement of Existing and Introduction of New Teaching Methods and Assessment Approaches, and Improvement of Instruction:** Special emphasis is placed on enhancing the competencies of teaching staff and improving their methodical and didactic knowledge and skills, alongside the development of new, structured, and standardised assessment methods aligned with learning outcomes.
- **Students and Student Support:** To enhance both inbound and outbound mobility, promote independence in applying skills and knowledge, and foster active engagement in scientific research, the Faculty involves students from all programmes in scientific research activities and encourages them to participate as equal contributors in the educational process and in quality assurance of teaching and scientific research. Students regularly take part in international and national student congresses to present their work and in initiatives such as the Science Festival, which has promoted science in Osijek since its inception. The Faculty provides financial support for students' scientific research activities and for presenting their work at national and international events. We recognise the importance of self-organisation through student associations and their role in promoting health, science, and international mobility.
- **Scientific Research and International Cooperation:** We aim to integrate the activities of our core and clinical departments through translational medicine and to apply the results of

these activities in public health and healthcare. Our objectives include enhancing the Faculty's international visibility and reputation, increasing the intensity of international cooperation and mobility, and advancing applied research with greater engagement of students from all study programmes.

7. Strategic Goals and Organisational Development Plan of the Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek in the Period 2021–2030

1. Collaboration between the Academic and Healthcare Systems

- Intensifying the Faculty's role in the development of the national science and higher education strategy
- Strengthening the Faculty's role in the development of healthcare and health policy planning
- Establishing centres of excellence with partner institutions
- Developing and enhancing cooperation with local government and self-government, civil society organisations, and other educational institutions

2. Management and Quality Assurance System

- Monitoring and improving the quality management system in accordance with ISO 9001:2015 standards

3. Development of the Faculty's Resources

- Improving the physical and technical conditions for study, including:
 - Establishing and developing the Slavonia Centre of Dental Medicine as a healthcare institution providing specialist dental services at the highest specialist level, in cooperation with the Osijek–Baranja County and the Osijek Health Centre
 - Establishing a laboratory for biomaterials research focused on regeneration in dental medicine

- Establishing a mobile dental unit to provide care for people with physical disabilities
- Establishing the Centre for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment, and Rehabilitation
- Improving working conditions for teaching staff
- Enhancing human, organisational, and financial resources
- Establishing the institute, a hands-on training facility, and skills laboratories
- Establishing the office in accordance with the Faculty's Regulation on the Organisation of Posts
- Expanding the library collection
- Continually rationalising operations, implementing realistic planning, executing all capital investments, and ensuring their responsible implementation
- Cooperation with industry partners to design innovative solutions essential for general and oral health

4. Study Programmes, Learning Organisation, and Learning Outcomes

- Establishing new study programmes
- Developing specialist postgraduate study programmes essential for specialisation
- Developing continuous professional training programmes for healthcare professionals
- Enhancing the mobility of teaching staff and students within the EU and internationally

5. Enhancement of Existing and Introduction of New Teaching Methods and Assessment Approaches, and Improvement of Instruction

- Continuously updating the system for monitoring the delivery of instruction through the introduction of a comprehensive information system (EVNAS)
- Enhancing communication with students, teaching, and administrative staff through multimedia applications on mobile platforms
- Improving and standardising the assessment of hands-on skills and knowledge in clinical subjects
- Implementing OSCE examinations
- Promoting independent student work and practice as part of the teaching process

- Providing additional training to enhance teaching delivery and raise teaching staff competencies
- Continuously adapting student-centred learning in alignment with labour market needs
- Regularly monitoring and adjusting realistic and implementable learning outcomes through close cooperation between teaching staff and students
- Achieving content-based horizontal and vertical integration of teaching material across various courses and departments of the Faculty

6. Students and Student Support

- Strengthening cooperation with economic, healthcare, and professional institutions, as well as public bodies, to provide improved professional guidance for students
- Encouraging student participation in professional meetings, congresses, and sports activities by improving information flow and promoting biomedicine and health programmes
- Promoting hands-on learning through the upgrading of laboratories for all study programmes and the involvement of external lecturers
- Enhancing communication with students via multimedia applications on mobile platforms
- Developing a student–mentor system to support inbound students
- Improving accessibility of student services for part-time students
- Expanding library access for students
- Encouraging student entrepreneurship, popularising science, and improving public engagement through media outreach
- Recognising and rewarding outstanding students to set an example for others
- Integrating distinguished practitioners and guest professors into teaching
- Strengthening networks through the Alumni Club of former and current students

7. Scientific Research and International Cooperation

- Building infrastructure, optimising the use of existing capacities, and formalising the Faculty’s research groups

- Providing continuous administrative, technical, and financial support for the submission of national and international scientific research projects
- Promoting inclusivity, rather than exclusivity, in international cooperation by establishing an interdisciplinary and international research network at the level of the Faculty, teaching sites, and the University
- Supporting the scientific and professional development of early-career scientists
- Developing study programmes informed by scientific research projects and activities, raising the Faculty's international profile in science and higher education
- Identifying additional funding sources for scientific research projects
- Defining criteria to encourage and reward scientific excellence and innovative research, with particular emphasis on promoting applied and translational research
- *SEEMEDJ* magazine: efforts to expand database inclusion; promotes international research visibility and institutional reputation

Key Performance Indicators for the Faculty's Development Strategy

- Number of students enrolled in undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate study programmes offered by the Faculty
- Mobility of students, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff
- High student progression and completion rates
- Positive student feedback on Faculty performance, based on student surveys
- Number of newly accredited study programmes
- Degree of internationalisation of study programmes
- Number of accredited lifelong learning programmes
- Number of science and professional events organised or co-organised by the Faculty
- Number and quality of annually published scientific and professional papers
- Number of successfully defended doctoral dissertations
- Number of submitted and accepted scientific projects
- Proportion of own income in the Faculty's total budget
- Investing in the development of teaching and scientific infrastructure, as well as human resources
- Number of professional and business collaborations realised with external stakeholders