



Teaching Academy  
Consortium of West Region CVM

**Title:** Using lessons from COVID to help transition students onto clinical rotations

**Authors:** Naomi Hoyer, DVM, DAVDC, Colorado State University, CO

**Institution:** Colorado State University

**Abstract:**

At Colorado State University, on the Dentistry and Oral Surgery Service, our students' clinical years have historically been observational for 3rd year students and participatory for 4th year students. 3rd year students rotated through our service for a week and spent four hours per day observing surgeries and appointments. 3rd year students reported that the rotation didn't result in effective learning. From the department's perspective, we did not see any increase in dentistry knowledge of students who had been with us as 3rd years. The role of the 4th year students includes performing physical exams, obtaining and interpreting dental radiographs, performing anesthetized oral exams, performing regional anesthesia and dentistry patient management. COVID-related reductions in the number of people allowed in our space meant transitioning the 3rd year students to a virtual rotation in order to prioritize 4th year student learning.

For the 3rd years, a week-long, case-based virtual rotation with a hybrid of synchronous faculty instruction and small group learning was created to replace the observational 3rd year rotation. The 15 students on the rotation each week would meet with a faculty member in the dentistry department for an hour each day, then complete sample case evaluations and an activity in a small group. The rotation was very well-received and the active learning opportunities meant that the 3rd year students had a more streamlined transition to their 4th year rotation. The success of the virtual rotation caused our service to re-evaluate the previous role of the 3rd year students. We developed a new 3rd year rotation which is a combination of synchronous faculty instruction, in-clinic responsibilities and small group work. This presentation will highlight the lessons learned from the pre-COVID rotation and illustrate how the changes mandated by COVID allowed us to improve the 3rd year student experience.