

Office of the President
September 11, 2020

Members, Board of Trustees:

APPOINTMENT OF THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Dr. Jeffrey P. Okeson as Dean of the College of Dentistry, effective July 1, 2020.

Background: In the Spring of 2020, Provost David Blackwell commenced a search for a permanent Dean of the College of Dentistry. A search committee composed of administrators, a dean, faculty, staff, and students conducted the search to identify qualified candidates for the position. Dr. Okeson emerged as the preferred candidate.

Okeson has been a full-time faculty member at the University of Kentucky (UK) for 45 years. He has served in various leadership roles within the College of Dentistry, including chief of the Division of Orofacial Pain and the director of the UK Orofacial Pain Clinic, which he founded in 1977; chair of the Department of Oral Health Science; and interim dean since September 2019.

As a world-renowned specialist in orofacial pain, Okeson has more than 240 publications in the area of occlusion, temporomandibular joint disorders (TMD) and orofacial pain in various national and international journals, and he has written two textbooks on TMD and orofacial pain, which have been translated into 12 different languages. Okeson was named the International Dentist of the Year by the Academy of Dentistry International in recognition of his worldwide efforts in these fields. He has lectured in every U.S. state and 59 foreign countries.

During his tenure at UK, he has received numerous awards. He has been honored with UK's campus-wide Great Teacher Award, the Provost's Distinguished Service Professorship and received the first-ever Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Dentistry. He has been inducted into the University of Kentucky Hall of Distinguished Alumni and recognized as the most outstanding professor in the state of Kentucky with the Acorn Award.

Okeson is a graduate of the UK College of Dentistry. He completed a general practice residency at the United States Public Health Service in Phoenix, Arizona.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____