

Chapter Nineteen

Kenneth A. Malament

The Future of the Academy

The Academy continues to grow steadily by attracting young prosthodontists from all over the world who understand and embrace its mission and, in the process, expand and share their knowledge for the betterment of the Academy, its fellows, and the dental community. An individual fellow is the product of their mentors, their dreams, and their commitment to teach. Those mentors inspired us to be better than we ever could imagine and have given us lasting careers. Our fellowship has taught and motivated hundreds of our colleagues and students to treat patients with outstanding care and kindness. Yes, there have been giant intellectual—or perhaps better said, ego-driven—battles over theory and technique, but in the end, we always return to our Academy’s roots. Within our fellowship, we are lifelong friends.

The Academy of Prosthodontics membership has now expanded to 155 fellows, consisting of national and international educators, researchers, and clinicians. Dr. Alfred Gysi was the Academy’s first international Honorary fellow, while today there are seventeen Academy fellows from countries outside North America, and we have held meetings internationally. Membership is by invitation, and Academy fellows are predominantly prosthodontists but also include those who have had formal training in oral and maxillofacial surgery, periodontics, endodontics, and research along with engineering, psychology, business, and law. This diversity with a common core of prosthodontic education creates both a unique knowledge base and a promising opportunity for the future. Importantly, the number of fellows who are women has grown significantly over the years, and they have and will continue to make important contributions. The Academy has enjoyed one hundred years of fellowship and scholarship by being “*the mentors to emerging prosthodontic leaders.*”

To make an informed prediction as to what the future holds for the Academy of Prosthodontics, one has to first review who we are and the important contributions we have made in our first one hundred years.



▲ Kenneth A. Malament,
President, 2019



▲ Academy fellows and a guest from outside of North America. Seated: Irena Sailer, Frauke Müller, and Susanne Scherrer. Standing: Alex Schaer, Jorge Strub, Christoph Hammerle, Carlo Marinello, Jean Francois-Roulet, Martin Schimmel (guest), and Hans Peter Weber.

The Academy of Prosthodontics remains the oldest prosthodontic organization in existence and continues to advance the discipline and support the specialty. With great debate and insight, the AP fellowship researched and developed the materials, instrumentation, philosophies, and techniques used in restorative dentistry. The Academy's first major interest was to better treat the fully and partially edentulous patient. Years led to extensive debate over articulator theory and the different aspects of dental occlusion, first for the edentulous patient and then for the simple and complex fixed reconstructive patient. It was required to understand the engineering and dental technology needed to develop the best functional, esthetic, and long-lasting dental materials with which to restore patients. For complete dentures, rubber-based dental materials were the first materials studied and used. For fixed prosthodontics and the dentate patient, gold and acrylic were used, and further development led to metal ceramic restorations and then bi-layered and monolithic ceramic materials. Adhesive dentistry and composite resins have been researched and presented to the fellowship. The Academy extensively studied the best treatment options for the periodontally compromised patient,



▲ Academy fellows. Seated: Jane Brewer, Rhonda Jacob, Lisa Lang, Leslie Laing, and Mijin Choi. Standing: Frauke Müller, Susanne Scherrer, Caroline Nguyen, Danielle Layton, Francine Albert, Carol Lefebvre, Effrat Habsha, Jennifer Priebe, and Irena Sailer.

joining restorations together either by splinting or with attachments. Osseointegrated implant therapy has changed prosthodontic treatment completely, but with all the advanced security in building restorations on implants, experience recognizes the difficulties and changes in the foundations and prostheses that can happen long term. Fellows in the Academy had the vision and determination to advance the requirement that implant surgery with grafting and implant placement should be and is today an important part of graduate prosthodontic education. Many of our fellows brought this issue to dentistry's governing bodies, and implant surgery and examination by the American Board of Prosthodontics is at the highest level.

Advances in computer science have led to the curriculum and practice of digital dentistry and CAD/CAM technology. Many fellows have written the manuals, texts, and the standards for the teaching of CAD/CAM practice, and the materials used to create restorations. Our fellowship has been and will be extensively involved in the development of the "future best practices."

With these new areas of prosthodontic treatment and methods, there was the need to have a better understanding of the literature. The Academy fellowship learned and promoted critical thinking and evidenced-based practice theory. Every few years, an Academy committee studies and may make changes to the Glossary of Prosthodontic Terms. Our fellowship has and will continue be the editors and reviewers for science-based journals in prosthodontics. In the academic world, many of our fellows teach. They are department chairpersons, chairpersons of graduate prosthodontic programs, and many have served as deans in our dental schools. Many of the specialty and disciplinary organizations have had members of our fellowship as leaders and presidents. Some of our fellowship have served on the boards of directors of major universities. The American Board of Prosthodontics was established through the Academy, and over the years it has been sponsored by the Federation of Prosthodontic Organizations to, now, the American College of Prosthodontists. Most of the examining directors and presidents of the board have been fellows of the Academy. They effect the standard of care in prosthodontics and in dentistry.

The Academy has an active Outreach Program providing expert care to populations in need, and our programs have expanded from national to international support. The Academy has been recognized by a President of the United States for the outstanding service we provide and is supported by industry.

The Academy fellowship is always expanding its interests and studying cutting-edge therapies.

Our Academy represents a dynamic specialty that has seen significant growth over the last hundred years, and our responsibility has always been to give back. We will, in the future, continue to be leaders in all areas of prosthodontic academic and patient care.

This Academy and our fellowship are truly “treasures.”

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President of the Academy of Prosthodontics
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