

# Benjamin Hammond, Penn Dental

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**DEATHS**

**PRINT**



*Benjamin Hammond*

Benjamin Franklin Hammond, PhD'62, an emeritus professor of microbiology in Penn's School of Dental Medicine and the school's former associate dean of academic affairs, died on May 14, 2022. He was 88.

Born in Austin, Texas, Dr. Hammond received his BA from the University of Kansas in 1954, then a DDS from Meharry Medical College four years later. While completing his PhD at Penn Dental (which he received in 1962), Dr. Hammond joined its faculty as an assistant instructor of microbiology. He came on board full-time in 1962 as an assistant professor, then was promoted to an associate professor in 1965 and a full professor in 1970. He earned a Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching in 1969. Dr. Hammond served a variety of governance roles at Penn, including on the Senate Advisory Committee and on several University Council committees, as well as on several ad hoc Penn-wide committees, and Penn's chapter of the American Association of University Professors. He also participated in governance at the school level, chairing a committee that in 1974 decided to establish a Penn Dental Faculty Senate. From 1972 to 1985, he chaired the department of microbiology, and in 1981, he delivered the President's Lecture, "Oral Microbial Ecology: A Sociological Approach."

In 1985, Dr. Hammond became Penn Dental Medicine's associate dean of academic affairs. He also headed the school's periodontal microbiology laboratory. He retired from Penn in 1991 and took emeritus status; he has since been lauded as a pioneering Black member of Penn Dental Medicine's faculty. "The most relevant thing a student can do is to present himself with a non-negotiable demand for excellence in scholarship," he said. "The most significant confrontation will occur when students become militant towards mediocrity." After retiring from Penn, Dr. Hammond taught at Temple University and at the Medical College of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Hammond's work was lauded in his field. He was named to the National Advisory Dental Research Council of the National Institutes of Health, was a member of the National Institutes of Health, and served as president of the American Association for Dental Research. "Until the contributions and needs of dental research are spelled out, made known, and separated from those of the other health professions, notably medicine, it is difficult to see how the true potential of dental research can be realized," he said in his 1978 AADR inaugural speech. "There are needs specific to dental research which are different from those of medicine, and I submit that the long-established policy of linking the two areas together has been to the detriment of dental research." Also in 1978, Dr. Hammond spent a year as a guest faculty member at the Faculté de Chirurgie Dentaire of University Louis Pasteur in Strasbourg, Germany. He later served guest professorships at Paul Sabatier University in Toulouse, France, and at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.