MEMORANDUM

TO: International Postdoctoral Student Financial Aid Applicants in the College of Dental Medicine for the 2016-17 Academic Year

FROM: Ellen Spilker, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Cosigners for Outside Loans

DATE: February, 2016

Financial aid packages for international students consist only of loans from outside sources. If you will need to use these loans as part of your support for the I-20 Form, the International Affairs Office cannot certify the I-20 Form unless you provide proof from the lender of approval. Therefore you should apply as soon as 2016-17 applications are available, probably in April or early May.

Almost all private lenders to international students require co-signers; it is very important to know in advance that you have access to qualified co-signers who can help you cover the entire length of your program. As of this printing, most lenders currently will not approve loans to borrowers whose cumulative debt exceeds $225,000 to $250,000. While this is subject to change by each lender, there are no guarantees that private alternative educational loans will be available once your debt exceeds their limits.

To be qualified, a co-signer must:
1. be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
2. have established good credit
3. have sufficient income to be able to potentially repay the loan
4. have a favorable debt to income ratio

If a co-signer’s income is low and they already have a mortgage, other significant debt or other financial obligations (i.e., financially needy college aged children of their own), that person may not qualify at all or may qualify for only the first year. You must line up family members or friends with enough total co-signer capacity to co-sign for the total amount you may need to finance your entire dental education at CDM.

Loan applications are usually available on-line or by phone. Many of the programs have a “pre-approval” process. You should call lenders you are interested in to get more information. For more detailed information regarding private educational loan programs, please visit the University’s Student Financial Services Web site. Please be aware that you have the right and ability to select the education loan provider of your choice, are not required to use any suggested lenders and will suffer no penalty for choosing a lender that is not a suggested lender.

If you have any concerns with securing co-signers or with financing in general, please discuss with your financial aid officer as soon as possible.