
Western U's Student Veterinary News

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Word from the Dean

The new school year has started here at WesternU, and the freshman convocation, white coat ceremonies and other rituals of the new year are ones that those of us in the College of Veterinary Medicine are watching closely as we continue to plan for the advent of veterinary students in the fall of 2003. The excitement of the new school year has been tempered this week with the horrible suffering and loss of life in New York and Washington D.C. Our sympathy and love go out to all who have been touched by this tragedy.

Curriculum development is proceeding. The week of August 20 we welcomed Dr. Steven Waldhalm, from the College of Veterinary Medicine at Mississippi State University, a nationally renowned scholar of Problem-Based learning, to assist us in our curriculum development framework for PBL. By the time first faculty come on board in the fall of 2002 we expect to have a strong faculty development program in place, and a commitment to a year of case writing and planning for lectures, laboratories and service learning. Every case is expected to have learning issues related to animal nutrition and practice management, so that these important disciplines will thread through all four years of the curriculum.

Construction of the Veterinary Sciences Center (a building renovation) and a new building to be constructed adjacent to it is expected to begin early in Winter 2002. A new building next to the Veterinary Sciences Center will house our Companion Animal Primary Care Clinic, the psychomotor proficiency facility, faculty offices and a few research laboratories as well as student housing on upper floors. We are working with architects and planners now to optimize the quality of the design of these spaces for our program.

GOOD JOB to Dr. Lara Rasmussen and Dr. Gary Johnston for their hard work at the Homeless Health Fair on August 15, 2001, where they cared for more than 50 animals owned by homeless persons in Pomona. Their services (under a hot sun in a church parking lot) included general physical exams, vaccinations, parasite testing, and provision of free food and grooming materials. A local mobile groomer gave every animal a bath and summer clip. Animals provide companionship and protection to homeless people, and they are warmly cherished. (See "Health fair looks after homeless, pets" in *LA Times Inland Valley Edition*, 9 August 2001.)

On August 30, 2001, we hosted a visit by members of the California Veterinary Medical Association Board of Governors and CVMA staff. We discussed CVMA programs for our veterinary students and faculty and participated in roundtable discussions on admissions and the role of third year practices in our curriculum. Thank you to Dr. Dick Schumacher, Executive Director of the CVMA, for arranging this visit. (And a big CONGRATULATIONS to Dr. Schumacher for being recognized as the veterinary organization director of the year at the annual AVMA meeting in Boston.)

--Shirley D. Johnston, DVM, PhD †

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *Does WesternU limit the number of out-of-state students it accepts?*

No. We draw from a pool of national and international applicants. We have no quota on or a limit to the number of students we will accept nationally. We will accept up to 6% international students. There are *no state residency requirements* for admission.

2. *When will you seat your first class?*

Fall 2003

3. *How many students will be in the first class?*

77, then over the following few years entering class size will increase and plateau at 100.

4. *Can I get an application now?*

Applications will be available from VMCAS and WesternU Summer 2002.

5. *What does it mean that WesternU has a Reverence for Life Philosophy?*

Our reverence for life philosophy extends to humans and animals. It "governs" how we interact with each other. With reference to humans, we treat each other with respect and kindness in our daily interactions and professional endeavors. With reference to animals, we treat all animals with respect, not just those deemed valuable (owned or "worth" a lot of money.) Our curriculum will thus employ a non-detrimental use policy with regard to animals. Cadavers we use will be obtained through our Willed Body Program (animals who have died or been euthanized due to natural causes.) Live animal use will either not harm the animal (pet/animal volunteers) or directly benefit the animal (needed treatments, etc.)

6. *Does it matter that I'm older than your average student?*

No, Western University College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) will support the admissions of qualified candidates irrespective of their age. The veterinary medical profession continues to see many career-change graduates who flourish in their new career.

Are you interested in attending WesternU-CVM?

Come visit campus for a tour.

Current WesternU students from the various disciplines are available Tuesday – Friday to take you on a walking tour of campus, show you existing facilities, and tell you about campus life. For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Michelle Emmert, University Recruiter, via e-mail at memmert@westernu.edu or by phone at (909) 469-5543. You can also check out the tour schedule on the WesternU Web site at: http://westernu.edu/admissions/adm_tour.html

Pre-Vet Student Information Sessions

WesternU-CVM faculty provide information sessions to all interested pre-veterinary students. Following a campus tour, you will receive a verbal and visual overview of the program, curriculum, admissions requirements, etc. Faculty are available to answer all questions you may have.

****Contact Michelle Emmert, University Recruiter (909 469-5543 or memmert@westernu.edu) to sign-up. Special dates for Pre-Vet Clubs available too.****

FAQS CONTINUED...

7. *Is it advisable to work while I take classes?*

We recommend that you do not work during school as WesternU has a rigorous VetMed curriculum. While you will have only 20 hours of scheduled time per week, you will also have an equivalent amount of self-scheduled/self-directed time. You should expect to dedicate a minimum of 40 hours per week to class time and studies. **See page** <http://www.westernu.edu/vetmed/ctc.htm> The program does not include summer participation.

8. *Can I have courses in progress during the application process? How many?*

See page <http://www.westernu.edu/vetmed/admissions.htm>

9. *Are classes taken the summer before matriculation OK?*

See page <http://www.westernu.edu/vetmed/admissions.htm>

CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

THE FOLLOWING FOUR FACILITIES ARE CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT...

VETERINARY SCIENCES CENTER

The Veterinary Sciences Center (VSC) will house 30 Problem-Based Learning (PBL) rooms, faculty offices, and the Anatomy and Surgery Center. The PBL rooms will be designated for each group of seven students and a faculty facilitator during thrice weekly meetings. Students will have access to their PBL rooms throughout the days and evenings. Each room will have data ports for each student, a reference library, X-ray viewers, dry-erase boards, and video playback equipment. Students will meet in these rooms to research learning issues, develop concept maps for basic science concepts, prepare case documents, role-play professional interactions, etc.

PSYCHOMOTOR PROFICIENCY FACILITY

The PsychoMotor Proficiency Facility will be a dynamic, innovative learning center with extensive student accessibility (open 18-24 hours/day.) The colloquial name will be the **Town PuMP** relying on the historical connotation of the central, daily meeting place for a community. The goal will be to create an exciting, fun, interactive, comfortable, yet demanding and intellectually stimulating environment. In keeping with our goal of learner-centered learning, the skills curriculum will be largely self-directed. Given that these skills are mandatory for livestock, small animals, equine and avian/exotics, there will be an academic infrastructure and established expectations within which students make choices on how they learn these required skills. All students will be subject to confirmation of mastery of requisite skills.

The goal of the Town PuMP is to provide the environment and the minimum standards for skills acquisition, to work beyond these minimums to fulfill individual student objectives, and to develop skills that are routine for students, not just known to students. The methods of the Town PuMP will be to provide a variety of opportunities and unlimited access to many resources. We will promote and support a motivated, self-directed learning environment. We will expect for students to be comfortable with equipment, familiar with anatomy, confident in their ability to perform technical skills, and well able to teach themselves novel technical skills as they progress through their careers.

PRIMARY CARE COMPANION ANIMAL CLINIC

The Primary Care Companion Animal Clinic will be a closely supervised clinical experience with *contract clients (students/staff/faculty)* enrolled in a fee for service clinic operated by the college; each 1st and 2nd year students will see the same patients 4 times/year for routine physical examination, wellness care and non-routine visits as needed. This facility will be a full-service, primary care veterinary clinic. Veterinary management software will be in place to accommodate patient care, invoicing, inventory, laboratory and client communication needs. For each patient visit, students will maintain a problem-oriented medical record under the supervision of the attending clinician, and will prepare estimates, invoices and client education materials where appropriate.

Student group assignments will mimic PBL groups to facilitate extension of the cooperative learning strategy employed in PBL. Students will participate in the care of the client and patient to the fullest extent appropriate. The attending clinician(s) will be supervising all students closely and will determine when or if a student is in need of assistance or substitution. The overriding instructional philosophy will be repetition and progression from basic/minor procedures to complex/major procedures. The close physical proximity to the Town PuMP will allow students the impromptu opportunity to refresh themselves on a procedure or practice a novel technique prior to proceeding in the clinic. It is expected that the students will participate in, assist with, or observe the variety of small animal cases (diagnosis and treatment thereof) that is seen in most general small animal veterinary practices.

ANATOMY AND SURGERY CENTER

The Anatomy and Surgery Center (ASC) will be a state-of-the-art laboratory with a multi-disciplinary integration. Anatomy, as it relates to surgery and medical imaging and pathology, etc., will be learned in scheduled and unscheduled 1st & 2nd year student experiences. All cadaver-based exercises will be supplied through our Willd Body Program.

PBL-correlated exercises will stem from the medical problem under study in the PBL module and will involve recommendations regarding what to study in the ASC (prosections; dissections; pathology, histopathology, microbiology samples; radiology and ultrasonography materials; surgery and clinical skills procedures, etc.)

The ASC will be closely associated with the Town PuMP experiences as the next logical step in learning complex clinical skills (i.e. fracture management exercises in Town PuMP with recommendations for anatomic study of soft tissues of limb and cadaver surgical approaches to long bones.)

HELPING HANDS

By Robert Mason, DVM (Adjunct Associate Professor WesternU-CVM)

Every year for the last eighteen years, the Veterinary Christian Foundation has been traveling into the Grand Canyon to offer their services to the 500 animals cared for by the tribe of Hava Supai Indians that inhabit this territory. The Supai Village is the headquarters of the tribe and consists of a post office, a general store, an elementary school, a café, a guest lodge and a church. There is also a campground near by adjacent to the beautiful, blue-green stream that eventually feeds into the Colorado River. "Hava Supai" means People of the blue-green waters.

The Hava Supai existence is a simple one. They guide visitors via horseback to their village and campground and use mules to haul gear. The village abounds with children, free roaming dogs and cats, and is surrounded by awesome cliffs of red rock. From the rim of the canyon, it is a rugged eight-mile hike to the canyon floor.

I was fortunate to have been able to join the team of eighteen veterinarians and ten veterinary technicians who made the journey in November 2000. During the week-long experience we vaccinated and dewormed hundreds of dogs, cats, horses and mules, spayed/neutered dogs and cats, and castrated stud colts. There were also various minor ailments and injuries addressed by this veterinary medical team. It was a tremendous experience made more incredible by the helicopter ride to the canyon rim at week's end.

I feel truly blessed to have been able to help in this small way to provide modern medical and surgical treatments to the animals of a people whose history dates back thousands of years.



VETERINARIANS WAITING FOR PEACE

Dr. Ashley Robinson, Associate Dean for Preclinical Affairs recently spent 10 days in Palestine as a consultant to CARE INTERNATIONAL reviewing progress on a U.S. AID veterinary project. This project is designed to foster cooperation between the veterinary services of Jordan, Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority. The focus of the project is to improve control and prevention of major animal diseases in the region such as foot & mouth disease and also zoonotic infections such as brucellosis acquired from sheep and goats directly or indirectly via milk and cheese (See: www.move-in.org for further details.) Unfortunately since the Intifada ("Uprising") started in October last year progress has been impeded. One reason is that Palestinian veterinarians and their staff are restricted in their movements, especially to farms. One stock inspector was recently killed while vaccinating cattle, several have been injured and others have been arrested. The future of the project is bleak unless a political solution can be negotiated in the near future.

Dr. Robinson also paid a short visit to the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Several veterinarians work there in the Department of Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response, primarily on veterinary public health issues. They work in areas involving zoonotic diseases, food related risks (including transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (Mad Cow Disease)), antimicrobial resistance, xenotransplantation, and bioterrorism (see www.who.int/emc/diseases/zoo for details.) Preparations are being made to hold an electronic conference later this year on the *Veterinary Public Health Needs of Developing Countries* which Dr. Robinson has been asked to convene.

Events: Past and Future

14-18 July 2001

Boston, MA

Annual AVMA Convention

WesternU-CVM faculty, staff & consultants hosted an information booth in the exhibit hall. We received a wonderful reception & were able to introduce many people to our curricular plan.

14 July 2001

Boston, MA

Association for Women Veterinarians Annual Meeting

Dr. Shirley Johnston was inducted as AWV President. The AWV mission is to support veterinary medicine by providing leadership in women's issues. It was founded in 1947 and membership is open to both men and women veterinarians. Congratulations, Dean Johnston!

1 August 2001

WesternU Campus, Pomona, CA

Student Information Session

Faculty introduced pre-veterinary students to the WesternU-CVM details, progress and recruitment timeline. For information on upcoming dates, contact Michelle Emmert at (909) 469-5543 or memmert@westernu.edu.

15 August 2001

Pomona, CA

2nd Annual Health Fair for the Homeless

WesternU-CVM faculty provided basic veterinary care to the pets of area homeless humans. Assisted by pre-vet student volunteers and many corporate donations, we are making a positive impact on our local human and animal communities. ****THANKS TO IDEXX, HESKA, MERIAL, BAYER, KAL KAN, IAMS CO. & THE INLAND VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY VET CARE CENTER!**



****GRAND OPENING****

Western University of Health Sciences Library & Learning Resources Center

On 16 August 2001 the new Library & Learning Resources Center was dedicated. The old GTE switching station was beautifully renovated to create this new five floor facility housing the university medical library, the Tessier Learning Center, a computer-research laboratory and the Department of Informational and Instructional Technology.



PRE-RENOVATION



COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

WESTERN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

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www.westernu.edu/cvm

****We will frequently update our website as things continue to develop with the College of Veterinary Medicine.****



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