

SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT PLAN
April 2003

DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE (DVM) PROGRAM

Admissions Process Assessment. The faculty Admissions Committee and Curriculum Committee meet annually to assess the admission process and its success in meeting the goals of the admitting a diverse student body that is academically qualified to succeed in the curriculum and has the potential to meet the diverse needs of society. Data from student outcomes assessment is used to evaluate the parameters used in the admission process. In addition, the application process is reviewed for its effectiveness through the review of questionnaires from applicants and the assessment by the staff that supports the admissions process. Changes to the process are made annually based upon this feedback.

Educational Outcomes Assessment The SVM assesses the outcomes of the professional program in a variety of ways. The following are examples of the methods used to assess educational outcomes:

- a) Student performance on course exams.
- b) Use of case studies to assess knowledge, problem solving, critical thinking.
- c) Use of team projects to assess communication skills, teamwork, cooperative problem solving.
- d) Oral presentations to assess knowledge, thought processes, communication skills.
- e) Laboratory exercises and assessments.
- f) Teaching of team-building skills in new student orientation, assessments on building team skills in Principles of Veterinary Anatomy.
- g) Pass rate on the North American Veterinary Licensing Exam (NAVLE).
- h) Review of feedback on student performance from professionals who work with students on externships and preceptorships.
- i) Questionnaire feedback from 4th year students after they have taken the NAVLE.
- j) Questionnaire feedback from graduates on the curriculum.
- k) Feedback from the Ambulatory practices on the quality of the student preparation.
- l) Student feedback on the Curriculum Committee and Faculty-Student Liaison Committee.
- m) 4th year evaluations of student performance by faculty – feedback to the curriculum committee on student preparation for the 4th year.
- n) Effective policies on assessment in the 4th year that result in the identification of students who have educational weaknesses and mechanisms to remediate those weaknesses.
- o) Course evaluations from students.
- p) Peer review of teaching.

The SVM professional curriculum has made significant changes over time as a result of the above feedback. Examples of changes that have resulted from the above feedback process are:

- a) Addition of more clinical exposure early in the curriculum. – the addition of a required experience in the teaching hospital in years 1-2, required work with teaching animals,

- and teaming of year 2 students with year 3 students in surgery laboratory.
- b) Change in the content of the Pharmacology course to add more clinical material.
 - c) Addition of more case-based learning
 - d) Addition of more cooperative learning/team based learning in the courses.
 - e) Change in the structure of the clinical year
 - f) Use of the Myers-Briggs Personality Assessment to support the development of positive team activities.
 - g) Change in the teaching of Biochemistry and Nutrition
 - h) Development of a student assessment tool to be used by all clinical rotations in evaluating the student, including assessment of communication skills, problem-solving skills and critical thinking skills.
 - i) Addition of a required ethics course
 - j) Addition of a required course titled: Professional Skills in Veterinary Medicine.
 - k) Addition of an elective course titled: Developing Clinical Communication and Listening Skills.

Assessment of Student Progress At the new student orientation, students are provided a copy of the “Academic Standards and Associated Procedures” document as a part of the Student Handbook and the expectations of the SVM are discussed. In summary, to proceed successfully through the professional curriculum, the students must achieve, at a minimum, the following:

- a) A cumulative GPA at the completion of all first year courses of at least 2.20.
- b) A cumulative GPA at the completion of each subsequent semester (semesters 3-6) of at least 2.40.
- c) A cumulative GPA at the completion of all first, second, third and fourth year course of at least 2.40.
- d) No grades of F in any required course or rotation.
- e) No more than one grade of D in any 4th year rotation. A student who receives a grade of D in a rotation must repeat that rotation and receive a satisfactory grade.
- f) Attendance to the School’s “Code of Student Ethics and conduct” or other applicable rules and laws.

Student academic assessment is evaluated in a number of ways, summarized below:

- a) Academic and non-academic performance in individual courses
- b) GPA in each semester
- c) Cumulative GPA
- d) Evaluations in clinical rotations – faculty evaluate both academic and nonacademic factors during the clinical rotations. Student evaluations include depth of knowledge, communication skills, client relations, medical record keeping, problem solving and critical thinking skills, and interpersonal skills.

The faculty Educational Policy Committee (EPC) evaluates the progress of all students after each semester of the professional program. Students who have failed to achieve the academic and nonacademic standards are not allowed to continue in the program but they may appeal to the EPC to remain in the program. EPC decisions to allow students to continue are based upon potential to succeed in the program, extenuating circumstance that lead to the academic

problems, previous academic record and other information provided by the student. Students are provided advising and counseling by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, faculty advisors, the EPC members, and other campus resources (Student Counseling Center, University Health Service). In addition, tutor support is provided to students who feel they need that kind of academic support. The goal of the SVM is to help students identify the issues that are causing the problems and help them become successful in the program. Students who are provided the opportunity to return to the program are monitored during subsequent semesters to encourage a successful outcome.

At the beginning of each 4th year rotation the students are provided a rotation orientation that describes the expectations of the students in that rotation. It is expected that the students and faculty will meet during the rotation to discuss how the student is progressing. Students receive written performance evaluations after every rotation. Fourth year students who receive an unsatisfactory evaluation meet with the associate dean and their faculty advisors to discuss the performance that led to the unsatisfactory performance evaluation. To continue in the program, the student must appeal to the EPC. In the case of an appeal to continue, the EPC meets with the student to evaluate the potential for success in the program and to evaluate whether remedial work would be required, should the student be provided the opportunity to continue in the program.

Students, who receive the grade of D in a rotation, while allowed to continue in the program, meet with the associate dean to discuss the reasons for the poor evaluation and to plan how to resolve the identified weaknesses. The rotation must be repeated. Should the student receive a second grade of D in a rotation, the student is not allowed to continue in the program and is required to appeal to the EPC to continue.

Academic Assessment Plans for 2003-2004

Many of the above assessment activities are continuing year to year. In addition, the School has a grant from Pfizer to sponsor a faculty retreat on the subject of student outcomes assessment. The retreat will serve to provide continuing education for the faculty in methods of student outcomes assessment and to foster cooperative efforts in developing educational assessment tools that will broaden our ability to meet our curricular goals. Included among the information used to continue to refine our instructional program, we will regularly seek input from outside the School, including information from national science and veterinary medical resources and information from employers of our graduates.

The Curriculum Committee, charged with overseeing the assessment of the academic programs, has been working on an assessment plan that can be considered by the faculty at a faculty retreat. The committee is focusing on updating the curricular goals, developing methods to assess how we are achieving those goals, and identifying the methods and timing of assessment tools that will support the continuing improvement of the curriculum. The committee is designing an annual assessment of the curriculum that will provide a mechanism for tracking how the use of assessment information in making changes in the curriculum.