

## **New Chicago Clinic Has Students in Mind**

*By Herb Whiteley*

“Students need to be in an environment working with real general practitioners, as opposed to academicians or specialists, to get a more realistic view of what they’ll be doing in practice,” says Dr. Tom Graves, associate professor of small animal medicine and director of curriculum and instruction in the clinical medicine department.

That is one of the main reasons the College is opening a primary care clinic within our new Chicago Center for Veterinary Medicine, at 2242 West Harrison. To prepare students well for careers as small animal practitioners, we need to engage them in both the clinical and the business aspects of a busy primary care practice.

Dr. Rosemary LoGiudice, interim director of the Chicago Center, says her goal will be to give students “real-world experience, a taste of client relations, and involvement in day-to-day routine procedures at a veterinary practice” while providing mentoring to the students.

Because there will be variation in students’ background and interests, the educational experience will be tailored to the needs of each student.

“In the first week of their rotation, students will shadow a clinician,” says Dr. LoGiudice. “In the second week, they’ll gain hands-on experience with procedures as appropriate.”

For example, students might conduct a physical examination, carry out in-house laboratory tests, dispense medications, or assist with basic surgical procedures, depending on their skills. All student work will be under the direct supervision of a clinician.

Dr. Graves envisions offering a rotation at the Chicago clinic that focuses on practice management, covering such activities as inventory management, scheduling, and personnel issues.

Dr. LoGiudice says good client communications will be one of the most important aspects of the clinic and educational goals for students.

“Client relations make or break a practice,” says Dr. LoGiudice. “Students need to understand that the client has a choice whether to use our service.

If you have any questions about the Chicago Center, feel free to contact me at [dean@vetmed.illinois.edu](mailto:dean@vetmed.illinois.edu) or check our Web site: [vetmed.illinois.edu/chicago/](http://vetmed.illinois.edu/chicago/).