Message from Dean Herbert Whiteley
University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine

Joint Degree Reestablishes the Importance of the DVM in Human Health

Dr. Jack Herrmann recalls being inspired by lectures he heard as an Illinois veterinary student back in the 1970s. Lectures by a veterinary epidemiologist who worked for the Air Force and by a veterinarian who worked for the Illinois Department of Public Health illustrated the fundamental importance of veterinarians in human health—and contributed to Dr. Herrmann’s decision to pursue a master’s degree in public health more than 20 years after finishing his DVM.

“Veterinary medicine has its foundations in livestock health, a large part of which dealt with protecting human health,” says Dr. Herrmann, who joined the College’s Farm Animal Reproduction, Medicine, and Surgery section last fall as a clinical assistant professor. “Today we seem to have conceded this role, and an artificial gap has opened between human and veterinary medicine.”

A new joint degree program spearheaded by Dr. Herrmann will help bridge that gap. It allows current veterinary students at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine in Urbana to apply to the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago to complete both the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree and the Master’s in Public Health degree in 5 years.

The new program expands career opportunities for veterinary graduates and prepares professionals to meet urgent societal needs, including those relating to the control of emerging zoonotic diseases such as Asian bird flu, SARS, and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies.

Students will take some public health courses on-line while attending veterinary school in Urbana, will spend at least one semester in residence at UIC, and will complete a field practicum and “capstone” experience in a public health setting.
According to Dr. Herrmann, demand for the combined DVM/MPH credentials is very high in federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration. Professionals with these degrees might assess and manage public health risks, set import/export policy, administer programs in food safety, and investigate or set policy for public health issues related to infectious disease.

It is not about meat inspection, Dr. Herrmann is quick to emphasize.

Dr. Herrmann completed his DVM at Illinois in 1978 and his MPH degree at the University of Illinois-Chicago School of Public Health in 2003. In between he ran a mixed-animal private veterinary practice with offices in Cedarville and Freeport, Ill., and became boarded in theriogenology.

After finishing his MPH, Dr. Herrmann spent a year in Washington, D.C., serving as a AVMA Congressional Science Fellow. He advised the offices of Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) on issues of public health, veterinary and human medicine, health care, and the environment.

Dr. Herrmann thrived in the Washington scene, where impromptu conversations with legislators in coffee shops near the Hill sometimes proved decisive in getting good policy enacted.

“I love being the liaison between two groups and getting people to know each other,” he says. As a practitioner, he made a point of gently educating the physicians in his local community about public health and veterinary medical issues.

At Illinois he is the faculty adviser to two dozen veterinary students involved in the public health club. He’s working to bring his enthusiasm for this aspect of the veterinary field to more future practitioners.

Please contact Dr. Herrmann at 217/333-2000 or the Office of Academic and Student Affairs at 217/265-0380 if you’d like to learn more about the joint degree program. As always, feel free to contact me with your comments at dean@cvm.uiuc.edu. --Herb
Handy Contact Reference list for the Veterinary Teaching Hospital
To make it easier to reach the experts at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, we're listing the names of the lead clinicians in each section, along with the names of the veterinary technicians who serve as coordinators to provide referring veterinarians with estimates, procedural questions, or other technical issues. We encourage your calls for consultations or to refer cases.

Anesthesiology
Dr. William J. Tranquilli

Equine Medicine
Dr. Thomas E. Goetz

Farm Animal Reproduction Medicine Surgery
Dr. Dawn E. Morin

Imaging/Radiation Therapy
Dr. Stephen K. Kneller

Small Animal Medicine
Dr. Steven L. Marks; Misty Ewing, coordinator

Small Animal Surgery
Dr. Sandra Manfra Marretta; Jackie Fitzgerald, coordinator, soft tissue surgery; Jeanne Vitoux, coordinator, dentistry; Kim Knap, coordinator, companion animal rehabilitation; Carrie Bubb, coordinator, orthopedics

Specialty Medicine
Dr. Karen L. Campbell (section head, dermatology), Sandy Grable, coordinator
Dr. Timothy M. Fan (oncology), Nancy George, coordinator
Dr. Ralph E. Hamor (ophthalmology), Shari Poruba, coordinator
Dr. Mark A. Oyama (cardiology), Robyn Ostapkowicz, coordinator

Hospital hours are weekdays from 8:30 am to 5 pm.
Large Animal Clinic, 217/333-2000 (to make appointments or to reach LAC clinicians)
Small Animal Clinic Appointment Hotline, 217/265-5163 (till 4:30 pm)
Small Animal Clinic Referring Veterinarian Line, 217/333-5311 (to reach section coordinators or any clinician)
Medical record fax numbers: SAC, 217/244-9554; LAC, 217/333-9796.