

Office of Student Administration  
New York State College of Veterinary Medicine  
Cornell University

STUDENT HANDBOOK  
To The  
First Year Class

1976

## PREFACE

In all probability, no phase of a veterinarian's education is entered into with more trepidation than the first year at veterinary college. With this thought in mind, the College, in cooperation with the Students of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Cornell Chapter (SAVMA), has established an orientation program for first year students.

The purpose of this handbook is to introduce you to the College, and to provide some overviews of what to expect as you enter this exciting period in your life. Please read it carefully and become familiar with the contents. We hope that you will find this useful in the days ahead.

### MESSAGE FROM DEAN MELBY

To all new members of the student body, greetings and a warm welcome. The uncertainties and competition of admissions are over, and you are ready to embark on a four year course which we hope will be most rewarding. Hard work lies ahead, to be sure, but with its accomplishment will come a satisfaction which is its own reward.

Your instructors will expect a high level of performance, but they are people of understanding and will not ask the impossible. You will find that they are glad to help you.

You are here to prepare yourself to enter a profession which demands, above all else, integrity, as well as a perceptive understanding of your clients and patients. Your relations with classmates offer an excellent opportunity to start your training for such a life. An overly competitive spirit may lead you to lay undue emphasis on your grades compared with theirs. But remember that you are studying to master a subject which is basic to your life work, not to obtain a grade.

In this college you will find an atmosphere of helpful cooperation which we hope to see you cherish and develop to an even higher level during your years with us.

Good luck to all of you!

### HISTORY

The New York State College of Veterinary Medicine was established as the first of the contract colleges at Cornell University on March 21, 1894, twenty-six years after Ezra Cornell announced at the inaugural address for Cornell University that Dr. James Law, a Scottish veterinarian, had been appointed Professor of Veterinary Science. He was a member of the original faculty and the first Professor of Veterinary Science in any university in the United States. The College was inaugurated on September 24, 1896, as "a new enterprise in America: a State Veterinary College" as expressed at that time by the words of its first Dean, Dr. James Law. This inauguration followed the appointment of the original faculty by the Board of Trustees of Cornell University on June 17, 1896.

It was not until the following year, however, that official provision was made in Albany for the administration of the College by an Act of the Legislature of the State of New York, cited in Chapter 689 of the Laws of 1897, approved on May 22, 1897.

Beginning with a faculty of six, it was the third veterinary college to have been established of those in existence today. Cornell was preceded by colleges at Iowa State University in 1877 and at the University of Pennsylvania in 1883. The current faculty and professional staff contains 160 scientists.

Beginning as a three-year course based upon two years of high school training, the curriculum now covers a four-year period with the requirement that all candidates for admission have at least three years of pre-professional college education.

The Flower Veterinary Library, named for one of its principal early benefactors, Roswell P. Flower, who was the Governor of the State of New York when the College was founded, contains a very large volume of literature. It contains the largest number of accessions of veterinary literature in the world, except for the collection in the United States Department of Agriculture.

The College enjoys a reputation as one of the finest in the world because of an academic policy established in the early days of its development. The major responsibility for teaching rests with the senior faculty, and research, the fire of education, is a significant part of the College program.

Thus, the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine has maintained its prominence as a teaching and investigative institution. The heritage of the past is one of which we all may be proud. The present first year class, entering at this time of continuing growth and expansion, will have much to say about its future.

#### THE HONOR SYSTEM

The Honor Code was founded by the students in the Class of 1963, approved by a majority vote of the faculty in June 1960, and has been accepted by each entering class since that time. It is based on the principal that responsibility for ethical conduct rests with the student himself. This system depends upon the personal integrity of each student and upon each student's insisting, by the means placed at his or her disposal, that all students abide by the Honor Code.

The Student Honor Code Committee, composed of representatives from all classes, deals with problems relating to student conduct. The Committee receives information concerning misconduct and breaches of the Honor Code, reviews the information and presents its recommendations to the Faculty Committee on Student Conduct. When appropriate, the Student Committee institutes disciplinary action.

#### REGISTRATION

Registration for both the fall and spring semester is conducted in the college at the Office of Student Administration. The office will issue class registration sheets and class schedules.

#### ADVISORS

Each matriculant will have a faculty advisor whose name will be given to the student on registration day. The professor will be the student's advisor throughout the four years of study. At the beginning of each semester, every student must consult with the advisor about the ensuing term's course work, including electives. Registration can be completed only after the advisor has signed or initialed the registration sheets. The advisor will be available during registration and during the academic year as well.

A student who has a problem or concern which would affect scholastic performance (or anything that needs to be discussed with an understanding person), should see his or her advisor, or another faculty member or the Director of Student Administration.

Faculty advisors give special attention to advisees who do not maintain satisfactory work. Advice is usually given, especially at mid-term. This may enable the student to improve enough during the latter part of the semester to avoid class failures.

### ADVANCED CREDIT

Entering students who seek advanced credit for work done elsewhere should consult the professor in charge of the particular course at the College. After being satisfied that the work is equivalent to that in the veterinary curriculum, the professor will provide a written statement of approval granting the advanced credit. The statement will go to the Director of Student Administration who will record the approval in the student's record.

Students who, while registered in other colleges at Cornell, have taken the identical courses required in the curriculum in the Veterinary College, need only to call attention to the Director of Student Administration to this fact and the advanced credit will be entered on the student's record.

### ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is expected in all courses. Unexcused absences do not entitle students to the privilege of making up credits for the work missed. Each professor is privileged to establish rules with respect to class attendance.

Students who have been absent from classes for valid reasons should apply to the Director of Student Administration for official documents. These should be given to all instructors at the first class, after the period of absence. The University Medical Clinic has the authority to grant medical excuses or leaves.

The University faculty has established the following rules for all classes which fall in the two days immediately preceding and following vacation periods during the academic year: 1) No instructor may change the time of classes, except with the specific approval of the Dean of the College, 2) The quantity and quality of the work given during these periods must conform to that given during the remainder of the term, irrespective of class attendance.

### AUTOMOBILES

The following rules for parking automobiles apply to all second, third, and fourth year professional veterinary students and all graduate students with their major subject in veterinary medicine: 1) Parking is permitted, where marked, along the south side of Tower Road (diagonal parking) from the corner of Caldwell Road to the entrance of the large parking lot B on the south side of Tower Road. 2) Parking is permitted in the lot at the corner of Tower and Caldwell Roads, 3) Parking is permitted in the two eastern-most bays of the large B lot. Cars parked in any other areas will be tagged by the Traffic Bureau.

There is a charge for parking permits, but no guarantee of a space. First year students are not allowed to obtain a B lot sticker if their residence is 1 1/2 air miles from Day Hall. The permit costs \$27.00 currently.

All students who bring cars to Ithaca must register them with the Traffic Bureau, 115 Wait Avenue. Students who own bicycles should also register them with the University Safety Division Office, G 2 Barton Hall. Please have your bicycle with you when you apply for a registration card.

### SMOKING & HOUSEKEEPING

Smoking is prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, elevators, and animal holding areas. This means that lighted cigarettes, cigars, and pipes should not be carried into these areas and that smoking should be done only after leaving buildings where fire hazards are considered to be especially great.

Students are requested not to litter the floors nor fill up cigarette receptacles with items other than cigarettes. The tables in the Research Tower cafeteria should be cleared after use. The cooperation of all in keeping our buildings clean and orderly is necessary. In rooms where smoking is permitted, ashtrays will be provided.

We also ask students not to bring pets to classes or to the College. This is the College of Veterinary Medicine request, and the University is guided by local ordinance rules. Bicycles should not be brought into the buildings or classrooms. There is a bike rack located between Schurman Hall and the Diagnostic Laboratory.

### THE FIRST YEAR

#### ANATOMY

The entire class of first year students meets four mornings a week in the Gross Dissection Laboratory for a two and one quarter hour dissection period. One of the four laboratory periods is preceded by a lecture or demonstration.

The lectures consider comparative gross aspects of vertebrate organ systems, the specific anatomy of selected organs, radiographic anatomy, new books and reference materials, and biological principles as they apply to gross anatomy.

In the laboratory, students work in pairs, alternating as reader and dissector. This is a cooperative enterprise and each has an obligation not only for his own learning but for that of his partner as well. It is expected that all students will attend all laboratory and lecture-demonstration sessions.

Embalmed, arterially injected dogs remain in the laboratory throughout the term and their care is the students' responsibility. This necessitates moistening and wrapping the specimen at the end of each laboratory period. Frozen specimens are provided when necessary. Occasionally, clinical patients are introduced, postmortem specimens are displayed or a preserved demonstration is arranged.

The laboratory is open at all times, when the building is open. Professors and graduate assistants are present during the regular laboratory periods to answer questions and supervise the dissection. Protective clothing (greens or coveralls) is required in the laboratory and must be kept clean.

The dog is dissected according to an assigned schedule which is divided into weekly units. A laboratory manual, "Miller's Guide to the Dissection of the Dog" by Evans and deLahunta, has been designed for the course. The instructions for dissection are specific and take into account the precise time available.

Pre-dissected specimens, whole brains, and skeletal materials are prepared yearly to replenish those consumed by normal use. Each student is loaned a set of dog bones for home study.

During the last week of the term, students dissect a bird, a fish, and a laboratory rodent. Mineographed instructions and drawings have been prepared to facilitate this work.

The facilities and materials required for the proper conduct of the gross dissection laboratory represent a considerable investment of money, labor and planning in order to fully utilize the time available. It is expected that students will attend all classes.

## Equipment Needed

### 1. Dissecting Kit

5 1/2" Sharp over blunt-straight scissors  
6" Scalpel (cartilage knife)  
1 Flexible probe  
#3 Scalpel handle (Bard-Parker type)  
#10 Scalpel blades (dozen)  
5" Mouse-tooth thumb forceps  
4" watchmaker's forceps  
A wide field magnifying glass is a useful addition.  
For home use - Bone Box (Disarticulated Dog Skeleton)  
Loaned by the Department. (Replacement value \$30.00)

### 2. Clothing

Laboratory coats, or coveralls, or clinical uniforms are required. If you do not have suitable laboratory clothing, it is advisable to purchase the type required later by the clinics. Seniors are required by the Small Animal Clinic to wear a standard uniform (tunic and pants) and it may be worn in first-term Anatomy.

### 3. Texts

Required: "Miller's Guide to the Dissection of the Dog"  
Evans and deLahunta (brown cover)  
Optional: "Anatomy of the Dog" Miller, Christensen, and Evans (1964)  
a Medical Dictionary; "Sisson and Grossman's Anatomy of Domestic Animals," Getty 1976; "Outlines of Avian Anatomy," King and McClelland 1975.

In the study of anatomy, the proper apportioning of time is of major importance! Keep the work up to date, do not fall behind. Help your classmates to learn and ask for help when you are unable to understand the material.

## DEVELOPMENTAL ANATOMY AND HISTOLOGY

Of the fourteen weeks in the Fall term, the first eight weeks are devoted to developmental anatomy, and the last six weeks to histology. There are two lectures and one laboratory per week assigned to the course, but during developmental anatomy many of the laboratory periods will be one-hour lectures.

One purpose of the course in developmental anatomy is to provide another dimension to the understanding of the definitive anatomy being studied in the dissection of the dog (Anatomy 501). The course is organized in such a way that the study of various systems coincides with other courses. Another purpose of the course is to provide a foundation for the understanding of the development of malformations. Clinical material demonstrating some of these malformations will be presented. You will repeatedly hear the saying "you can not recognize the abnormal until you know the normal."

The textbook that is used as a reference during the course is L. B. Arey's Developmental Anatomy, W.B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 7th Edition, 1965. Required readings will not be assigned and there are many other textbooks that cover the subject adequately. You are not required to purchase a textbook. Mimeographed lecture notes will be provided.

Students who have had a course in embryology will not find this course entirely repetitious, because of the stress made to accomplish the above mentioned goals of the course. Experimental embryology and the laboratory study of histologic sections of embryos are not emphasized in the course.

You will spend your last six weeks of this course in histology learning microscopic anatomy. Much practice is required for proper identification and the only way to learn this subject is by patiently looking down the microscope. The course has been planned so that you will be given ample time for thoughtful study. This course will continue into the Spring semester with the study of each organ system.

### VERTEBRATE BIOCHEMISTRY

Vertebrate Biochemistry, which is presented during the first semester, initiates the sequence of courses offered by the Department of Physiology, Biochemistry and Pharmacology. The physiological sciences deal with functions of animals at all levels from molecules to the intact animal. They encompass the attributes which give life to animal structures. Since these attributes arise from physical and chemical processes, the physiological sciences involve the application of physical and chemical principles in order to explain animal function in health and disease. Through their study, one should develop a fundamental fabric of knowledge about living systems through which the clinical aspects of medicine can be approached in a sound and rational manner.

The biochemistry course consists of three lectures and one discussion period per week. The class is sectionalized for laboratory exercises, which occupy two afternoons in alternate weeks. The course is designed to put into physiologic context the basic principles and techniques of biochemistry, and to amplify topics which are of particular significance to the specialized functions of higher animals. Emphasis is placed upon the integration and regulation of metabolism at the cellular and whole body levels.

Biochemistry, Second Edition (preferably second printing) by A.L. Lehninger is the required textbook from which many reading assignments are chosen. A lecture supplement and a laboratory manual are required. These are supplied by the Department at cost. Books to which more selective reference are made will be placed on reserve in the library.

### PHYSIOLOGY

An understanding of normal body functions is basic to the prevention or treatment of disease. The course in physiology examines the functions of the various organs and systems. It concentrates on the domestic species which are presently of most importance to veterinary medicine in order to define common denominators as well as species variations. It also attempts to discuss major variations in a wider range of species whenever possible.

Lectures are organized primarily by systems, e.g. cardiovascular, urogenital, respiratory, digestive, etc., although it is sometimes necessary to discuss multiple systems under subjects such as metabolism or acid-base balance. The laboratory is organized as much as possible to correlate with the lectures. It is a very important part of the course since it provides the opportunity to work with animals and observe what does happen, as distinct from what one believes should happen. The laboratories require the use of a large number of animals and a considerable amount of student and faculty time. Students are sometimes disturbed by difficulties in obtaining good clean, readily interpretable results. But for those who are looking for relevance to

veterinary medicine, the laboratory is the place to find it. It provides the opportunity to palpate, auscult and, especially, observe the species which will later be your patients. The surgical and other procedures will need to be learned as you progress. This requires a thorough reading and understanding of laboratory exercises prior to the day of an experiment, careful observation during the course of the experiment and the reading of recommended references. Any problems or questions which you have about the lectures or laboratory exercises should be discussed with your instructors.

#### VETERINARY MEDICAL ORIENTATION

One hour per week is devoted to orienting the student to clinical medicine and surgery. Clinical teachers participate in this course in their various specialty areas. The purpose is to acquaint the student to the practice of veterinary medicine in the hospital and to demonstrate the clinical application of the subject matter being taught during the first term in gross and developmental anatomy. Thus you will be made to feel that in your basic science courses, you are not merely assembling facts but are learning principles applicable to living patients. Students are invited and urged to observe patients in the hospital, and practice the clinical procedures of examination that are taught in the course.

A short introduction to the history of veterinary medicine will be followed by a review of the organizational structure of the profession and a discussion of medical ethics. This will be followed by consideration of those aspects of civil and criminal law relating to veterinary medicine including qualification for practice, use of controlled drugs and animal humane laws.

#### LIBRARY

During your first year you should familiarize yourself with the library's extensive collection of veterinary books and journals. It is one of the best in the country. Develop the habit, when time permits, of consulting the literature on a subject to discover important new facts, which may not be included in the standard textbooks.

The Flower Veterinary Library staff are here to assist you in your quest for knowledge.

#### GRADES

Before going further, it may be well to consider briefly the matter of grades. In 1970, the Student Faculty Liaison Committee presented a proposal to the faculty for reporting grades. After a trial period, the following proposal was approved by a majority vote of the faculty in March 1971.

1. All grades given in a course will be reported to the students as Satisfactory, Warning, or Unsatisfactory, with Satisfactory = C- and above, Warning = D-, D, D+, and Unsatisfactory = F. Exams will be corrected and returned, but with no indication of the grade other than S, W, or U. Errors and omissions by students are to be indicated and exams are to be returned to students, but the numerical or letter grade (A-F) is not to be written on the paper. Any student, however, may obtain his numerical or letter grade (A-F) from the professor at any time.
2. Teachers will continue to report the official letter grades (A through F) to the Office of Student Administration as is presently being done.
3. Term grades will be available from the Office of Student Administration, if the student wishes to obtain them. They will not be mailed out from the school.



4. Advisors will be furnished with student's course grades as S, W, or U unless the official grades recorded are specifically requested from the Office of Student Administration by the advisor. Class Teachers Committees will be given the course grades (A-F) and cumulative averages.

It is felt that this system will improve the learning environment in the school because you must always strive to understand basic principles, for they, not details, form the basis for lasting knowledge and understanding.

Because the very basis of your future success in the field of veterinary medicine is dependent not only upon your interest, aptitude, initiative and application, but also upon the satisfactory assimilation of the subject matter, the faculty of the College of Veterinary Medicine has unanimously adopted the following Guidelines for Academic Performance of Veterinary Students:

1. Any student receiving an F or U grade in a required course shall be denied permission to reregister in the College of Veterinary Medicine or if in the last semester, shall be denied permission to graduate.
2. Any student receiving four (4) D- to D+ (W) grades in one term shall be denied permission to reregister in the College, or, if in the last term, shall be denied permission to graduate.
3. Any student receiving three (3) D- to D+ (W) grades in one term may be denied permission to reregister or be required to repeat the courses in which he or she obtained marginal grades or be required to repeat the entire term.
4. Any student receiving two (2) D- to D+ (W) grades in one term shall receive a letter of warning from the Secretary of the College. When a student has been warned, it is expected that his or her performance will improve in the subsequent term. If it does not, the individual shall be denied permission to reregister in the College. The Director of Student Administration shall notify each class teachers committee of the students who have been warned in the previous term.
5. None of the foregoing in any way compromises the prerogatives of the Faculty which may, under special circumstances, make exception to these guidelines.

Definition: Denied permission to reregister: indicates a student's deficiency, precludes his continuation in the College. It does not preclude acceptance by another college at Cornell University and does not preclude the right to apply for readmission to the College.

#### INCOMPLETES

An Incomplete is given to a student who is in good standing in a course that has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor. The Incomplete must be made up within three months from the end of the preceding term.

#### STUDENT-FACULTY GRIEVANCES

"The Student-Faculty Liaison Committee proposes to the faculty that in the event that any grievance arises between a student and an instructor or his or her department, other than an honor code violation, this grievance should be handled by the following mechanism:

1. The student and the instructor should resolve the issue, if possible, or
2. The student's Liaison Committee representative should resolve it with the instructor, or if neither (1) or (2) seemed practical or satisfactory

3. A student member and faculty member of the Liaison Committee could meet informally and attempt to resolve the grievance with the instructor. If this latter procedure does not effect a satisfactory resolution of the problem then
4. The student's Liaison Committee representative should present the problem to the Liaison Committee as a whole."

#### GUIDELINES FOR ELECTIVE COURSES

1. Veterinary students will take elective courses for credit. Visitors may be allowed with permission of the instructor, but these do not appear on the student's transcript and no recognition is given.
2. Elective courses may be offered as optional Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory (S-U) at the discretion of the instructor and the opportunity of the option will be indicated in the College Announcement.
3. The elective course grades of the veterinary students will appear on their permanent record but will not influence their class rank.
4. Students whose performance is deficient in the core curriculum should be discouraged from taking elective courses in the subsequent semester. Any students who receive a D in a core course shall be regarded as deficient for this purpose.
5. Each student must have the permission of his or her advisor in order to take an elective course for credit.
6. Students may add or drop an elective during the first three weeks of the semester.

#### UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Undergraduate students may receive help from various scholarship funds throughout the four-year course of study. The nature and extent of such assistance is dependent upon scholastic achievements, specific criteria established by each benefactor, and recommendations of the appropriate college committees. Students are briefed on the scholarship program in the fall semester and application procedures are outlined in posted announcements. Committee evaluations, selections, and faculty action are completed by early April. Scholarship stipends are handled by the University Treasurer and credited to the students' academic charges during the following year.

Other forms of financial assistance are handled by the University Office of Financial Aid. Students interested in securing such aid should contact the college Director of Student Administration.

Numerous prizes are also available for veterinary students and are subject to conditions listed under each award. Many of the prizes, awards, and scholarships were established with endowments, so that the income distributed and number of awards may vary from year to year.

#### FRATERNITIES

In this section of the handbook, we will try to give you a picture of the veterinary medical fraternity life at Cornell University. It is not our purpose to discuss the merits of the various houses, but rather to picture for you the veterinary fraternity system in general. There are currently two veterinary fraternities at Cornell: Alpha Psi and Omega Tau Sigma.

Although the ideals are much the same as undergraduate fraternities, their purpose is more serious, the companionship closer, the expenses less, and the entertainment about the same. Upper class brothers and sisters and the fraternity files stand ready to aid you in your studies. With respect to expense, the food, the rooms, and the dues are generally less than those of an undergraduate fraternity. Likewise the activities of veterinary fraternities are less time consuming. They have meetings less often, and require no pledge duties. All in all, the fact that the overwhelming majority of students each year join fraternities speaks well for the system.

Rushing will be explained during the first week of class. It will take place in the evenings of your first two and one-half weeks of school. One thing to remember--the faculty realizes that this will be happening, and they usually allow for it in their schedules. No great academic demands will be made on you at this time.

All in all, the veterinary fraternities at Cornell are worth consideration, and it is generally recommended that you attend the rushing functions and see for yourselves.

#### SAVMA

The Cornell veterinary student organization is the Students of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Cornell Chapter (SAVMA). This organization sponsors a monthly speaker's program, an annual Open House at the College, and an annual Spring picnic, and many varied events of interest to you and your families.

Annual dues are estimated at \$13.00 and are collected on Registration Day at the College. With the SAVMA membership, you will receive the Journal of the AVMA (the normal cost of which is \$25.00 per year) and when you graduate, your first year of membership in the AVMA is free and your second year dues are less than normal.

The student chapters have also formed the National Chapter of Student Chapters (NCSC). This organization, among other things, is working for a nationwide Veterinary Board examination which would be accepted in each state. With good hard work, the proposals will be accepted in the near future.

SAVMA has a lot to offer the veterinary student. With your enthusiastic support and new ideas, there will be even more to offer in the future. We look forward to seeing you in the Fall and will answer any questions you might have at that time.

#### CONCLUSION

The College of Veterinary Medicine has a long and impressive list of faculty members whose objective is to instruct, advise, and guide your professional development. You will be treated as a responsible adult, capable of making your own decisions, though help is readily available when it is needed. You will be taught in a manner conducive to reasoning and thinking along lines which will enable you to continue your education after graduation. This is the core of the teaching philosophy of the College. There are many things which you will need to learn. Going on the premise that the more you know about a subject, the more you will develop interest in it and enjoy it, try to make the most of each day of work and study during your four years at the College.