

Proposed changes to Standards of Accreditation: March 2024

Comments sought by April 29, 2024

The AVMA Council on Education® (AVMA COE®) reviews the Standards of Accreditation on an ongoing basis, based on changes in the educational and professional community. Requests to modify the standards come from a variety of sources, and action on these suggestions is the result of broad input by the profession.

In line with these policies, the COE has reviewed and proposed revisions to Standard 9, Curriculum, and welcomes public comments on the proposed changes. Comments must be submitted in writing and must be postmarked or e-mailed **no later than April 29, 2024**. Mail comments to Anahita Gonda, Administrative Coordinator, AVMA, 1931 N. Meacham Road, Ste. 100, Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360. Emailed comments must be sent to coe@AVMA.org and must use the subject line **COE Standards revisions - Public Comments**.

The proposed revisions are shown here, with added text underscored and deleted text ~~struck through~~.

Standard 9, Curriculum

The curriculum ~~shall extend over a period equivalent to a minimum of four academic years,~~ must provide at least 130 weeks of instruction that is directly supervised. Direct instruction must include~~including~~ a minimum of ~~one academic year~~ 40 weeks of hands-on clinical education involving the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and mitigation of disease related to animal health. The curriculum and educational process should initiate and promote lifelong learning in each professional degree candidate.

The curriculum in veterinary medicine is the purview of the faculty of each college, but must be managed centrally based upon the mission and resources of the college. There must be sufficient flexibility in curriculum planning and management to facilitate timely revisions in response to emerging issues, and advancements in knowledge and technology. The curriculum must be guided by a college curriculum committee. The curriculum as a whole must be reviewed at least every seven (7) years. The majority of the members of the curriculum committee must be full-time faculty. Curriculum evaluations should include the gathering of sufficient qualitative and quantitative information to assure the curriculum content provides current concepts and principles as well as instructional quality and effectiveness.

The curriculum must provide:

- a. an understanding of the central biological principles and mechanisms that underlie animal health and disease from the molecular and cellular level to organismal and population manifestations.
- b. scientific, discipline-based instruction in an orderly and concise manner so that students gain an understanding of normal function, homeostasis, pathophysiology, mechanisms of health/disease, and the natural history and manifestations of important animal diseases, both domestic and foreign.

- c. instruction in both the theory and practice of medicine and surgery applicable to a broad range of species. The instruction must include principles and hands-on experiences in physical and laboratory diagnostic methods and interpretation (including diagnostic imaging, diagnostic pathology, and necropsy), disease prevention, biosecurity, therapeutic intervention (including surgery and dentistry), and patient management and care (including intensive care, emergency medicine and isolation procedures) involving clinical diseases of individual animals and populations. Instruction should emphasize problem solving that results in making and applying medical judgments. Instruction in these areas must provide exposure to the wide range of veterinary care options.
- d. instruction in the principles of epidemiology, zoonoses, food safety, antimicrobial stewardship, the interrelationship of animals and the environment, and the contribution of the veterinarian to the overall public and professional healthcare teams.
- e. opportunities for students to learn how to acquire information from clients (e.g. history) and about patients (e.g. medical records), to obtain, store and retrieve such information, and to communicate effectively with clients and colleagues.
- f. opportunities throughout the curriculum for students to gain an understanding of professional ethical, legal, economic, and regulatory principles related to the delivery of veterinary medical services; personal and business finance and management skills; and gain an understanding of the breadth of veterinary medicine, career opportunities and other information about the profession.
- g. Opportunities throughout the curriculum for students to gain and integrate an understanding of the important influences of diversity, equity and inclusion in veterinary medicine, including the impact of implicit bias related to an individual's personal circumstance on the delivery of veterinary medical services.
- h. knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, aptitudes and behaviors necessary to address responsibly the health and well-being of animals in the context of ever-changing societal expectations.
- i. fair and equitable assessment of student progress. The grading system for the college must be relevant and applied to all students in a fair and uniform manner.

Rationale for proposed change(s)

Increasing variability in the calendar length of veterinary educational programs requires standardization of requirements in terms of weeks of instruction to ensure students are able to participate fully in the didactic, required, and elective education necessary for their development.