

**Kansas State University
University of California-Davis**

Focus group discussion guide for FSVMC research

Student applicant career path focus groups

Participants will be screened for their current practice interest/focus with the goal of having an equal number of applicants interested in companion animals and food animals.

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- a. Introduce researchers – I am Kevin Gwinner / Dave Andrus and this is Dave Andrus / Kevin Gwinner. We are both professors in the marketing department of the College of Business at Kansas State University. I will mostly be leading our discussion today and Dave / Kevin will be moving around the room taking care of our audio/visual equipment, writing down notes, and he may occasionally ask a question or two.
- b. Why we are here – we are working with a coalition of professional veterinary organizations and these groups are interested in understanding the major factors that influence your decision to focus on a particular area within veterinary medicine (e.g., food animal, companion animal, equine, etc.).
- c. Discussion guidelines – Please note that we are video taping this session so that we can focus on the discussion and not on taking notes. Because of the tapes it is important that everyone speak one at a time. Although we will be using what you say here in our research, we will never link a specific comment with a specific individual. Therefore, we will protect your confidentiality in this process. Finally, there are no "right" answers to these questions, all of your opinions are important.
- d. Participant Introduction – Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves by saying our first name, undergraduate area of study, and age.

2. Written Exercise (5 minutes)

The sheet of paper that is being handed out now asks you to respond in writing to three questions. This is to focus your thinking about the discussions we will have over the next hour. We will take about 5 minutes to have you think about and respond to each question. Your responses do not have to be elaborate and can be written as bullet points. *[Distribute participant feedback form]*

Q1: Why did you select a career in veterinary medicine?

Q2: What types of animals/species do you most want to work with and why?

Q3: Thinking ahead to your graduation from veterinary college, what will be most important to you in selecting the type of job you will pursue (e.g., income, lifestyle, peer respect, flexible work schedule, etc.)?

3. Discussion of factors influencing career focus decision (15 minutes) (FSVM versus companion animals):

What area of practice (e.g., companion animal, food animal, equine, exotics, etc.) do you see yourself going into after graduation and what has lead you to that decision?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants.

- a. Availability of good jobs
- b. # of hours worked
- c. Quality of life issues (e.g., working evenings and weekends)
- d. Nature of the job (focus on individual animals versus herds)
- e. Rural versus urban lifestyle
- f. Time for children
- g. Caring for pets versus food supply animals
- h. Nature of clients (pet owners versus ranchers and farmers)
- i. Career opportunities for spouse
- j. Salary concerns
- k. Exposure to veterinarians in that focus area (personal encouragement)
- l. Exposure in pre-vet program
- m. Pickering bill loan forgiveness
- n. Prior work / life experience in that area
- o. Physical demands of veterinary work

4. Knowledge of food supply veterinarian medicine careers. (10 minutes)

What do you know about the career opportunities available in the food animal / food supply side of veterinarian medicine? What are your perceptions about the availability of good jobs in FSVM?

Do you have an interest in a public health veterinary career? For example, public health careers include working with a state or federal agency to help ensure the safety of the food supply. Why or why not? What is attractive / unattractive about a public health career to you?

In your opinion, what would be the best way for you to learn about different career options in veterinary medicine? How have you learned of these different career areas so far?

5. Image/perception of different career choices (10 minutes)

What are the images you have of a food animal veterinarian career and a companion animal veterinarian career? Discuss stereo typical people in that career, adjectives that come to mind, etc.

In your opinion, why would someone choose NOT go into a FSVM career?

6. Effectiveness of methods for building interest in FSVM (10 minutes)

What are some things that a college or professional veterinary association might do to get more first year students interested in a career in FSVM? What can be done to get students that initially express an interest in food supply medicine to stay committed to it?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants (some are from Hoblet, Maccabe, and Heider JVME 2003).

- a. loan forgiveness / scholarships for those interested in FSVM
- b. quotas of FSVM interested applicants
- c. exposure to FSVM career opportunities in pre-vet and high school
- d. admitting students based on how they say they will use their degree
- e. mentoring program
- f. paid internships
- g. paid externships
- h. curricular changes
- i. probe for other ideas....

To what extent would developing joint programs with other college programs increase your interest in going into FSVM (including public health)? e.g., DVM/MPH (see JAVMA News 2/15/2003)

7. Summary / Wrap-up discussion (5 minutes)

If a close friend of yours was thinking about applying for veterinary college and asked you for advice about going into either food supply veterinary medicine or companion animal veterinary medicine, what would you tell your close friend?

Ask at the end if everything else is covered.

What things do you think are most important to alumni in staying in a particular job and not switching to a different career focus in veterinary medicine? List the top 5.

What are the major factors effecting the future of FSVM?

How would you attract students from non-traditional academic majors to seek a veterinary career?

**Kansas State University
University of California-Davis**

Focus group discussion guide for FSVMC research

Faculty applicant career path focus groups

Participants will be screened for their primary teaching/research areas with the goal of having an equal number of applicants interested in companion animals and food animals.

4. Introduction (5 minutes)

- e. Introduce researchers – I am Kevin Gwinner / Dave Andrus and this is Dave Andrus / Kevin Gwinner. We are both professors in the marketing department of the College of Business at Kansas State University. I will mostly be leading our discussion today and Dave / Kevin will be moving around the room taking care of our audio/visual equipment, writing down notes, and he may occasionally ask a question or two.
- f. Why we are here – we are working with a coalition of professional veterinary organizations and these groups are interested in understanding the major factors that influence students’ decisions to focus on a particular area within veterinary medicine (e.g., food animal, companion animal, equine, etc.). As faculty you have unique insight into student motivations because you see a broad cross-section of students and you have had a chance to observe different student cohorts over time.
- g. Discussion guidelines – Please note that we are video taping this session so that we can focus on the discussion and not on taking notes. Because of the tapes it is important that everyone speak one at a time. Although we will be using what you say here in our research, we will never link a specific comment with a specific individual. Therefore, we will protect your confidentiality in this process. Finally, there are no "right" answers to these questions, all of your opinions are important.
- h. Participant Introduction – Let’s go around the room and introduce ourselves by saying your first name, your primary teaching or research area and how long you have been at KSU.

5. Written Exercise (5 minutes)

The sheet of paper that is being handed out now asks you to respond in writing to three questions. This is to focus your thinking about the discussions we will have over the next hour. We will take about 5 minutes to have you think about and respond to each question. Your responses do not have to be elaborate and can be written as bullet points. *[Distribute participant feedback form]*

Q1: Why does the typical student select a career in veterinary medicine?

- Q2: What factors lead a student to want to work in a particular area (e.g., food animal, companion animal, equine, exotics, etc.)?
- Q3: What things do you think are most important to those students graduating from veterinary college in selecting the type of job they will pursue (e.g., income, lifestyle, peer respect, flexible work schedule, etc.)? List the top 5.

6. Discussion of factors influencing career focus decision (15 minutes) (FSVM versus companion animals):

What factors most influence the career focus (e.g., companion animal, food animal, equine, exotics, etc.) of today's veterinary college applicants and graduates?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants.

- p. Availability of good jobs
- q. # of hours worked
- r. Quality of life issues (e.g., working evenings and weekends)
- s. Nature of the job (focus on individual animals versus herds)
- t. Rural versus urban lifestyle
- u. Time for children
- v. Caring for pets versus food supply animals
- w. Nature of clients (pet owners versus ranchers and farmers)
- x. Career opportunities for spouse
- y. Salary concerns
- z. Exposure to veterinarians in that focus area (personal encouragement)
- aa. Exposure in pre-vet program
- bb. Picking bill loan forgiveness
- cc. Prior work / life experience in that area
- dd. Physical demands of veterinary work

4. Knowledge of food supply veterinarian medicine careers. (10 minutes)

Do students have a good knowledge of the career opportunities available in the food animal / food supply side of veterinarian medicine? What do you think student perceptions are regarding the availability of good jobs in FSVM?

Do you find that students have an interest in a public health veterinary career? Why or why not? What is attractive / unattractive about a public health career to students?

In your opinion, what would be the best way for students to learn about different career options in veterinary medicine? How do they typically learn about different career options?

5. Image/perception of different career choices (10 minutes)

What are the images students have of a food animal veterinarian career and a companion animal veterinarian career? How might they describe stereo-typical people in that career? What adjectives might students use to describe that career focus?

In your opinion, why would a student choose NOT go into a FSVM career?

6. Effectiveness of methods for building interest in FSVM (10 minutes)

What are some things that a college or professional veterinary association might do to get more first year students interested in a career in FSVM? What can be done to get students that initially express an interest in food supply medicine to stay committed to it during veterinary school?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants (some are from Hoblet, Maccabe, and Heider JVME 2003).

- j. loan forgiveness / scholarships for those interested in FSVM
- k. quotas of FSVM interested applicants
- l. exposure to FSVM career opportunities in pre-vet and high school
- m. admitting students based on how they say they will use their degree
- n. mentoring program
- o. paid internships
- p. paid externships
- q. curricular changes
- r. probe for other ideas....

To what extent do you feel developing joint programs with other college programs increases student interest in going into FSVM (including public health)? e.g., DVM/MPH or DVM/MBA (see JAVMA News 2/15/2003)

7. Summary / Wrap-up discussion (5 minutes)

If a college senior you knew well was thinking about applying for veterinary college and asked you for advice about going into either food supply veterinary medicine or companion animal veterinary medicine, what would you tell that person?

Other potential questions from KPMG report:

How have students changed over the last decade? [Probe for applicant quality, work attitudes, life style preferences, interests, and career expectations]

If you could make one curriculum change that would improve the preparedness of new veterinarians, what would it be? What obstacles prevent that from happening?

What is the biggest challenge today facing the graduating veterinary student as they begin their career?

How can higher quality applicants be attracted to a career in FSVM?

How would you attract students from non-traditional academic majors to seek a veterinary career?

Ask if everything else has been covered:

What things do you think are most important to alumni in staying in a particular job and not switching to a different career focus in veterinary medicine? List the top 5.

What are the major factors affecting the future of FSVM?

Iowa State focus group discussion guide for FSVMC research

Fourth Year Student Career Path Selection

*** Turn on video camera *** *** Turn on microphone and turn on recorder ***

1. Introduction (3 minutes)

- a. Introduce researchers – I am Kevin Gwinner / Dave Andrus and this is Dave Andrus / Kevin Gwinner. We are both professors in the marketing department of the College of Business at Kansas State University. I will mostly be leading our discussion today and Dave / Kevin will be moving around the room taking care of our audio/visual equipment, writing down notes, and he may occasionally ask a question or two.
- b. Why we are here – we are working with a coalition of professional veterinary organizations and these groups are interested in understanding the major factors that influence your decision to focus on a particular veterinary medicine career (e.g., food animal, companion animal, public health, etc.).
- c. Discussion guidelines – Please note that we are video taping this session so that we can focus on the discussion and not on taking notes. Because of the tapes it is important that everyone speak one at a time. Although we will be using what you say here in our research, we will never link a specific comment with a specific individual. Therefore, we will protect your confidentiality in this process. Finally, there are no "right" answers to these questions, all of your opinions are important.
- d. Participant Introduction – Let's go around the room and introduce yourself by saying your first name, career focus area, and undergraduate degree.

2. Written Exercise (7 minutes)

The sheet of paper that is being handed out now asks you to respond in writing to three questions. This is to focus your thinking about the discussions we will have over the next hour. We will take about 5 minutes to have you think about and respond to each question. Your responses do not have to be elaborate and can be written as bullet points. *[Distribute participant feedback form]*

Q1: What type of veterinary career do you plan to enter and why?

Q2: What *challenges* do you expect to encounter in your selected career area? What *opportunities* do you expect to have in your selected career area?

Q3: Thinking ahead to your future employment, what things will be most critical in keeping you in that career area of the veterinary profession (e.g., income, lifestyle, peer respect, flexible work schedule, etc.)?

3. **Discussion of factors influencing career focus decision (20 minutes)** (FSVM versus companion animals):

What career area (e.g., companion animal, food animal, public health, etc.) do you plan on going into after graduation and what has lead you to that decision?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants.

- a. Experiences while in school
- b. Availability of good jobs
- c. # of hours worked
- d. Quality of life issues (e.g., working evenings and weekends)
- e. Nature of the job (focus on individual animals versus herds)
- f. Rural versus urban lifestyle
- g. Time for children
- h. Caring for pets versus food supply animals
- i. Nature of clients (pet owners versus ranchers and farmers)
- j. Career opportunities for spouse
- k. Salary concerns
- l. Exposure to veterinarians in that focus area (personal encouragement)
- m. Exposure in pre-vet program
- n. loan forgiveness
- o. Prior work / life experience in that area
- p. Physical demands of veterinary work

What specific challenges and opportunities do you see in your selected career area?

4. **Career focus switching. (10 minutes)**

How prevalent is switching ones career focus during veterinary school?

Why do students initially interested in FSVM switch to other areas and when does this happen?

What things do you think are most important to alumni in staying in a particular job and not switching to a different career focus in veterinary medicine?

5. Effectiveness of methods for building interest in FSVM (15 minutes)

What are some things that a college or professional veterinary association might do to get more students interested in a career in FSVM?

What can be done to get students who initially express an interest in a food supply medicine career stay committed to it?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants (some are from Hoblet, Maccabe, and Heider JVME 2003).

- a. Reserve class slots for those interested in FSVM
- b. Scholarships for FSVM students
- c. Help starting a FSVM career
- d. Develop early interest (high school)
- e. Exposure while in veterinary medicine college
- f. Implement tracking programs
- g. FSVM Externships
- h. mentoring program
- i. probe for other ideas....

To what extent would developing joint programs with other college programs increase your interest in going into FSVM (including public health)? e.g., DVM/MPH (see JAVMA News 2/15/2003)

6. Summary / Wrap-up discussion (5 minutes)

If a close friend of yours was just entering veterinary college and asked you for advice about the attractiveness of careers in food supply veterinary medicine versus companion animal veterinary medicine, what would you tell your close friend?

Ask at the end if everything else is covered.

What are the major factors effecting the future of FSVM?

How would you attract students from non-traditional academic majors to seek a veterinary career?

How much do you know about veterinary careers in public health or industry?

North Carolina State University

Focus group discussion guide for FSVMC research

Second and Third Year Student Career Path Selection

*** Turn on video camera *** *** Turn on microphone and turn on recorder ***

4. Introduction (3 minutes)

- e. Introduce researchers – I am Kevin Gwinner / Dave Andrus and this is Dave Andrus / Kevin Gwinner. We are both professors in the marketing department of the College of Business at Kansas State University. I will mostly be leading our discussion today and Dave / Kevin will be moving around the room taking care of our audio/visual equipment, writing down notes, and he may occasionally ask a question or two.
- f. Why we are here – we are working with a coalition of professional veterinary organizations and these groups are interested in understanding the major factors that influence your decision to focus on a particular veterinary medicine career (e.g., food animal, companion animal, public health, etc.).
- g. Discussion guidelines – Please note that we are video taping this session so that we can focus on the discussion and not on taking notes. Because of the tapes it is important that everyone speak one at a time. Although we will be using what you say here in our research, we will never link a specific comment with a specific individual. Therefore, we will protect your confidentiality in this process. Finally, there are no "right" answers to these questions, all of your opinions are important.
- h. Participant Introduction – Let's go around the room and introduce yourself by saying your first name, career focus area, and undergraduate degree.

5. Written Exercise (7 minutes)

The sheet of paper that is being handed out now asks you to respond in writing to three questions. This is to focus your thinking about the discussions we will have over the next hour. We will take about 5 minutes to have you think about and respond to each question. Your responses do not have to be elaborate and can be written as bullet points. [*Distribute participant feedback form*]

Q1: What type of veterinary career do you plan to enter and why?

Q2: Think about the job duties, lifestyle, rewards and responsibilities that are important long term career goals for you. Thinking ahead to your future employment, what **THREE** things will be most critical in keeping you in that career area of the veterinary profession?

Q3: What things lead some students to change their career focus during veterinary school (for example, from food animal medicine to companion animal medicine)?

6. **Discussion of factors influencing career commitment decision (15 minutes)**

What factors will keep you committed to the career area you have selected (i.e., so that you won't switch)?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants.

- q. Availability of good jobs
- r. Personally meaningful work.
- s. # of hours worked
- t. Quality of life issues (e.g., working evenings and weekends)
- u. Nature of the job (focus on individual animals versus herds)
- v. Rural versus urban lifestyle
- w. Time for children
- x. Caring for pets versus food supply animals
- y. Nature of clients (pet owners versus ranchers and farmers)
- z. Career opportunities for spouse
- aa. Salary concerns / paying student loans
- bb. Exposure to veterinarians in that focus area (personal encouragement)
- cc. Exposure in pre-vet program
- dd. Pickering bill loan forgiveness
- ee. Prior work / life experience in that area
- ff. Physical demands / injury of veterinary work

What specific challenges and opportunities do you see in your selected career area?

4. **Effectiveness of methods for building commitment in FSVM (15 minutes)**

What are some things that a college or professional veterinary association might do to get more students committed to a career in FSVM?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants:

- j. Reserve class slots for those interested in FSVM.
- k. Scholarships for FSVM students
- l. Help starting a FSVM career
- m. Exposure while in Veterinary Medicine College.
- n. Implement tracking programs.
- o. loan forgiveness by government
- p. exposure to FSVM career opportunities in pre-vet and high school
- q. mentoring program
- r. paid internships
- s. paid externships
- t. curricular changes

5. Career focus switching. (10 minutes)

How prevalent is switching ones career focus during veterinary school?

Why do students initially interested in FSVM switch to other areas and when does this happen?

6. Summary / Wrap-up discussion (5 minutes)

If a close friend of yours was just entering veterinary college and asked you for advice about the attractiveness of careers in food supply veterinary medicine versus companion animal veterinary medicine, what would you tell your close friend?

Ask at the end if everything else is covered.

What are the major factors effecting the future of FSVM?

How would you attract students from non-traditional academic majors to seek a veterinary career?

How much do you know about veterinary careers in public health or industry?

University of Georgia
Focus Group Discussion guide for FSVMC research

First year student / applicant career path decision

*** Turn on video camera *** *** Turn on microphone and turn on recorder ***

7. Introduction (3 minutes)

- i. Introduce researchers – I am Kevin Gwinner / Dave Andrus and this is Dave Andrus / Kevin Gwinner. We are both professors in the marketing department of the College of Business at Kansas State University. I will mostly be leading our discussion today and Dave / Kevin will be moving around the room taking care of our audio/visual equipment, writing down notes, and he may occasionally ask a question or two.
- j. Why we are here – we are working with a coalition of professional veterinary organizations and these groups are interested in understanding the major factors that influence your decision to focus on a particular area within veterinary medicine (e.g., food animal, companion animal, equine, etc.).
- k. Discussion guidelines – Please note that we are video taping this session so that we can focus on the discussion and not on taking notes. Because of the tapes it is important that everyone speak one at a time. Although we will be using what you say here in our research, we will never link a specific comment with a specific individual. Therefore, we will protect your confidentiality in this process. Finally, there are no "right" answers to these questions, all of your opinions are important.
- l. Participant Introduction – Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves by saying our first name, undergraduate area of study, and age.

8. Written Exercise (7 minutes)

The sheet of paper that is being handed out now asks you to respond in writing to three questions. This is to focus your thinking about the discussions we will have over the next hour. We will take about 5 minutes to have you think about and respond to each question. Your responses do not have to be elaborate and can be written as bullet points. *[Distribute participant feedback form]*

Q1: What types of animals/species do you most want to work with and why?

Q2: What type of veterinary career do you plan to enter and why?

Q3: Thinking ahead to your graduation from veterinary college, what will be most important to you in selecting the type of job you will pursue (e.g., income, lifestyle, peer respect, flexible work schedule, etc.)?

9. Discussion of factors influencing career focus decision (20 minutes) (FSVM versus companion animals):

What area of practice (e.g., companion animal, food animal, equine, exotics, etc.) do you see yourself going into after graduation and what has lead you to that decision?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants.

- gg. Availability of good jobs
- hh. Personally meaningful work.
- ii. # of hours worked
- jj. Quality of life issues (e.g., working evenings and weekends)
- kk. Nature of the job (focus on individual animals versus herds)
- ll. Rural versus urban lifestyle
- mm. Time for children
- nn. Caring for pets versus food supply animals
- oo. Nature of clients (pet owners versus ranchers and farmers)
- pp. Career opportunities for spouse
- qq. Salary concerns / paying student loans
- rr. Exposure to veterinarians in that focus area (personal encouragement)
- ss. Exposure in pre-vet program
- tt. Pickering bill loan forgiveness
- uu. Prior work / life experience in that area
- vv. Physical demands / injury of veterinary work

4. Effectiveness of methods for building interest in FSVM (10 minutes)

What are some things that a college or professional veterinary association might do to get more first year students interested in a career in FSVM? What can be done to get students that initially express an interest in food supply medicine to stay committed to it?

Refer to these issues if not covered by focus group participants:

- u. Reserve class slots for those interested in FSVM.
- v. Scholarships for FSVM students
- w. Help starting a FSVM career
- x. Exposure while in Veterinary Medicine College.
- y. Implement tracking programs.
- z. loan forgiveness by government
- aa. exposure to FSVM career opportunities in pre-vet and high school
- bb. mentoring program
- cc. paid internships
- dd. paid externships
- ee. curricular changes
- ff. probe for other ideas....

To what extent would developing joint programs with other college programs increase your interest in going into FSVM (including public health)? e.g., DVM/MPH (see JAVMA News 2/15/2003)

5. Knowledge of food supply veterinarian medicine careers. (10 minutes)

How familiar are you regarding the career opportunities available in the food animal / food supply side of veterinarian medicine? What are your perceptions about the availability of good jobs in FSVM?

In your opinion, what would be the best way for you to learn about different career options in veterinary medicine? How have you learned of these different career areas so far?

Do you have an interest in a public health veterinary career? For example, public health careers include working with a state or federal agency to help ensure the safety of the food supply. Why or why not? What is attractive / unattractive about a public health career to you?

Do you have an interest in a industry veterinary career? For example, working for a pharmaceutical company or food company. Why or why not? What is attractive / unattractive about a career in industry to you?

6. Image/perception of different career choices (10 minutes)

What are the images you have of a food animal veterinarian career and a companion animal veterinarian career? Discuss stereo typical people in that career, adjectives that come to mind, etc.

In your opinion, why would someone choose NOT go into a FSVM career?

7. Summary / Wrap-up discussion (5 minutes)

If a close friend of yours was thinking about applying for veterinary college and asked you for advice about going into either food supply veterinary medicine or companion animal veterinary medicine, what would you tell your close friend?

Ask at the end if everything else is covered.

What things do you think are most important to alumni in staying in a particular job and not switching to a different career focus in veterinary medicine? List the top 5.

What are the major factors effecting the future of FSVM?

How would you attract students from non-traditional academic majors to seek a veterinary career?