

SABBATICAL PROPOSAL

CYNTHIA E. STRINGFIELD, D.V.M

NOVEMBER, 2009

I began my position as Faculty and Zoo Veterinarian in the Animal Science and Exotic Animal Training and Management department at Moorpark College in the Fall of 2004. The last five years have been very challenging ones. Before I started, I was a clinical zoo veterinarian who had management skills and experience, and had taught veterinary students and animal keepers on a one-on-one basis, but had no formal teaching education or experience. The classes I inherited were taught on lecture only – no required textbooks, powerpoints or other media to appeal to a variety of learning styles, and notes provided were outlines only. Additionally, the classes were completely unique, to match the unique EATM program that exists at Moorpark College. I have spent the last five years adopting text books, making powerpoints, including alternative learning styles, and learning to be a good teacher. I am grateful to my parents, both teachers, that I evidently inherited the knack, as my student evaluation have always been good and I made it through tenure with praise. My additional challenge has been to incorporate the veterinary and husbandry care of 150 animals into my full-time faculty load. The ability to go to continuing education in that field has taken a back seat to learning to teach. Now, in 2009, we face budget cuts and new challenges in how to educate students in less time and units. My sabbatical would be spent exploring this problem and coming up with solutions for these challenges. Additionally, if allowed sabbatical during the fall, I would attend my field's annual conference on zoo veterinary medicine.

- 1) **Problem-Based Learning:** While on the admission committee for the very first entering class for the new veterinary school at Western University (<http://www.westernu.edu/xp/edu/veterinary/about.xml>) in 2003, I was educated about Problem-Based Learning (PBL). I was then amazed the next year, to go visit a first-year class session and see that the students were so far ahead of where I was when was at the same place in veterinary school! Being a hands-on and experiential learner, I was intrigued with PBL and wished I had been taught that way. In my sabbatical I would like to work with the PBL experts at Western University and elsewhere to understand PBL and be able to apply it to my curriculum. I also would be able to bring it back to the entire EATM/ANSC faculty – none of which have heard of it before. I am an excellent teacher (see student evaluations and tenure evaluation), and

have given one webcast lecture to the college already: "Environmental Obstacles to the Recovery of the California Condor" in 2007. I would be excited to share my PBL findings college and district-wide.

- 2) **Transferability of units of ANSC/EATM courses:** Currently, most of the courses I teach are not transferable. Since the EATM program is a vocational program, previously this was not a concern. However, with a changing job market and the preference for a 4 year degree in the field (see Sabbatical Proposal Oct. 2005, Chuck Brinkman), this is a current problem that needs to be addressed. Cal State SLO has recently hired a zoo nutritionist for their Nutrition program, however Moorpark College was denied transferability for ANSC MO3 Animal Nutrition, and I have not had the time to work on what the course needs to be transferable. NONE of the nine EATM units I teach second year EATM students are transferable to any institution. ANSC M40 and M02 are also not transferable. This bothers me since many of my students desire to go on to get degrees, or have their interest sparked and want to pursue nutrition or veterinary medicine. During my sabbatical, I would research these classes in an effort to change them so they are transferable units. Pierce College's Registered Veterinary Technician program would be a priority, as well as CSU SLO's Nutrition major, in addition to other California 4 year colleges.

- 3) **Budget concerns:** EATM students have a large number of units they need to take to receive the information they need to go into their field. A sabbatical goal would be to re-work the courses I teach to decrease the number of units in the EATM 23A and B (Veterinary Care) series, and re-do the ANSC M40 (Avian and Reptile Care) course to allow this.

- 4) **Continuing Education:** It is difficult (and has been impossible so far) for me to take an entire week off during the fall semester to attend the Zoo Veterinarians conference which meets in October. If allowed a fall semester sabbatical, I would attend this conference. This is an important meeting for me to attend to stay current in my field, and not one I have been able to attend in its entirety since I began teaching.

Sabbatical Proposal – Summary

Cynthia E. Stringfield, D.V.M.

Purpose:

My sabbatical will have 4 main goals:

- 1.) **Research Problem Based Learning** to improve the educational experience of ANSC/EATM students and my ability to teach them the critical tools they need to succeed in their field. This information will be shared with ANSC/EATM faculty and Moorpark college faculty (and VCCCD faculty if the district so desires).
- 2.) **Increase Transferability of ANSC/EATM units** to other CA four-year colleges: Specific classes to be researched: ANSC MO2, ANSC MO3, ANSC M40, EATM 23A/B/AL/BL.
- 3.) **Decrease number of units** needed for husbandry and veterinary medicine education of the EATM program.
- 4.) **Attend American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (www.aazv.org) annual week-long meeting** in October of 2010.

Value:

- 1.) **Benefits to faculty member:** Gaining expertise and improving teaching by incorporating PBL into ANSC/EATM courses. Continuing education will keep the zoo's veterinarian current in a field that changes rapidly.
- 2.) **Benefits to students:** Students will be taught in a way that has been proven to be a superior method of instruction for fields where the student will be encountering problems: See attached article: "Animal Welfare in Veterinary Medicine Education" as an example. Students will also benefit by more transferability of courses taken in ANSC and EATM so they can go on and get a degree and receive a higher paying position (or a position period in a competitive job market). Less units will cost the student less time and money for the same education. Continuing education information will be passed on to the students and benefit them with current knowledge.

- 3.) **Benefits to college:** Resources and information will be provided regarding PBL. Decreased units will save the college money. Improved knowledge of veterinary care will benefit the college's valuable zoo animals.
- 4.) **Benefits to district:** See number 3: PBL information would be shared district-wide if desired. Money saved by decreasing units would benefit the district.
- 5.) **Feasibility:** All aspects of this sabbatical are completely feasible, and able to be implemented on return from the sabbatical.
- 6.) **Guarantee:** I guarantee I will return from sabbatical for a period of twice the leave granted. In fact, I am planning on staying for at least 10 more years.
- 7.) **Frequency of leave:** This would be my first sabbatical leave.

Proposed Sabbatical Itinerary: Year-Long

August-September and October - May

Work with Western University and other PBL experts to learn requirements for my courses for Problem Based Learning, and incorporate PBL into the courses I teach.

October

Attend AAZV (American Association of Zoo Veterinarians) conference

November-December, January-May

Re-work ANSC MO2, M03, M40 and EATM 23A and B and AL and BL to be problem-based, less units and improve transferability.

Proposed Sabbatical Itinerary: Semester-Long

If Spring semester: Abbreviated schedule for January-May as above without attending AAZV conference.

If Fall semester: Abbreviated schedule for August-December as above with attendance of AAZV conference in October.

Animal Welfare in Veterinary Medicine Education

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Introduction

The learning benefits of teaching animal welfare in veterinary education are determined by a number of factors. Content alone is insufficient to guarantee a good understanding of animal welfare - pedagogy and assessment strategies are fundamental.

University lecturers are not necessarily trained in the art of teaching and learning psychology. The research of those teaching animal welfare normally focuses on a subject expertise such as dairy cow welfare, and may overlook developments in pedagogy. Lecturers therefore commonly adopt a traditional didactic format characterised by lectures and tutorials, which may fail to achieve learning outcomes such as a developing a deep understanding of animal welfare by the student.

What is Animal Welfare?

There has been an ongoing debate about the definition of animal welfare for at least 30 years. The definitions range from 'the welfare of an animal is its state as regards its attempts to cope with its environment' (Fraser & Broom, 1990), to 'an animal's capacity to avoid suffering and sustain fitness' (Webster, 1995). In contrast Duncan (1993) contends that 'neither health nor lack of stress nor fitness is necessary and/or sufficient to conclude that an animal has good welfare. Welfare is dependant on what animals feel.

Instead of getting caught up in the confusion of definitions, Webster (1995, 2005) has suggested that we should operate on first principles, to assess the animals' needs, such as the Five Freedoms (FAWC, 1993) or Welfare Inputs and Outputs more recently developed by WSPA and the University of Bristol (see Whay *et al.*, 2003). Both systems provide a framework to assess the welfare state of an animal, providing a practical approach.

Course Content of an Animal Welfare Programme

The relevance of material that should be covered in an animal welfare course is partly determined by the country and culture. A recent review of animal welfare teaching in 13 veterinary schools in Europe, North America and South America (Hewson *et al.*, 2006) demonstrates the broad range of topics covered.

With the growth in research in veterinary sciences, curriculum overload is becoming a problem. In recent years the veterinary curriculum at UCD has undergone a major overhaul, resulting in a 10-15% decrease in time allocation to each subject, in order to create a lecture-free final year. If time is a consideration, instead of trying to deliver the same content in less time, which is overwhelming for the students, the course material needs to be prioritised, so that not every issue is addressed.

In the veterinary programme at UCD, students are provided with both the principles and applications of animal welfare. Time constraints preclude all topics from being covered in lectures. Instead applied topics such as ritual slaughter, animal welfare legislation, and the needs of less common farmed species such as deer are contained in problem-based learning (PBL) tutorials. A description of PBL is provided below. In brief, the underlying concept is to develop critical thinking in students. In the PBL tutorials of the animal welfare module, students are provided with real life case histories and, under supervision, they discuss their learning needs relevant to each case, conduct research and present their findings to the class (Hanlon 2005). In addition to gaining new knowledge about applied animal welfare issues, another important learning outcome is that students are provided with the skills to conduct research and critically evaluate relevant literature thus 'future-proofing' their knowledge, and enabling them to keep up-to-date with developments in animal welfare.

Incorporate Animal Ethics into Animal Welfare

Animal Welfare defines the boundary of humane treatment of animals, but it does not help the students to develop the necessary skills to debate the acceptability of animal use. Veterinarians like other professionals working with animals, are often criticised for their failure to contribute to public debates on animal use (Sandøe and Holtug, 1998). In the past this failure may have been due to the fact that veterinarians and animal scientists do not feel that it is their remit to debate such issues, however it may be because they have not been provided with the necessary skills.

Providing training on animal ethics in veterinary teaching is becoming increasingly necessary, as societal views on animal use become more polarised. In contrast to the science of animal welfare, animal ethics is a philosophical subject, and requires a forum to discuss a multitude of views towards the human interactions with animals. In so doing it helps to increase the moral imagination of the students, giving explanations to the justification of varying perspectives.

European research suggests that those teaching animal welfare will also be expected to teach animal ethics (Edwards, 2002; Gandini & Monaghé, 2002; Marie, 2002). For an animal or veterinary scientist without formal training in animal ethics, this can be a daunting task. Increasingly new teaching materials are becoming available to complement animal ethics' teaching such as www.animaethicsdilemma.net, and www.ethicalmatrix.net, both of which are free of charge, when used in a teaching context.

Pedagogic and Assessment Strategies

Traditional didactic teaching such as the conventional lecture format is an efficient method of delivering facts to large numbers of students. The teaching strategy should however be appropriate to attaining the learning objectives and outcomes. In veterinary training, it is commonly desirable for students to develop a deep understanding of the material. For example, if we use Bloom's Taxonomy (1984), we not only want students to gain knowledge, but also to

develop a comprehension of the material, to be able to apply their understanding, to be analytical, hypothesise and appraise ideas. Overall, it is desirable to train them to develop critical thinking skills. A conventional lecture format may be able to provide the student with knowledge, but is inadequate in facilitating critical thinking.

PBL → Instead, a range of teaching strategies can be used. For example, PBL, role-play and journal clubs. Problem-based learning has been part of the veterinary programme at UCD for 6 years. Its general aims are to develop critical thinking and communication skills, as well as knowledge acquisition, in a problem-solving context. It is a student-centred mode of teaching, where the students determine the learning objectives within the context of a problem. It is problem-based and not necessarily subject based, demonstrating the interdisciplinary nature of most real-life problems; the teacher acts as a facilitator and not as a provider of facts, thus supporting learner autonomy.

There are different PBL models, and, as with other forms of teaching and learning, there are guidelines that need to be adhered to in order to maximise learning potential and prevent shortfalls in PBL:

PBL offers the opportunity to increase the students' awareness of animal welfare and animal ethics in a dynamic learning environment and to provide essential training to deal with animal welfare cases, as part of the professional development of veterinary undergraduates. At UCD, animal welfare cases are presented to second year undergraduates (Hanlon 2005). The cases are presented as single documents. They encompass clinical problems, animal husbandry, legislation as well as an important ethical dimension. Students are invited to adopt the role of a government veterinarian who is called to the scene of the animal welfare case. Using the Barrow's (1988) four headings (facts, ideas, learning issues and plans), the students analyse each case under the guidance of a facilitator. At the end of the tutorial, learning issues (i.e. facts or theories that need to be researched) are assigned to each student. In the second tutorial, each group has to present their case to the rest of the class. This is followed by a question and answer session directed by the students, and a brief summary of the 'experts' actions' presented by the facilitator (all cases used are based on real life events). Since 2006, the government veterinarian who authored the cases was also present in the second tutorial, and was able to provide the students with expert opinion on each case after each case presentation.

The resource implications of PBL depend on the model used. One of the greatest costs is associated with the requirement for small group sizes, which has repercussions for room allocations and facilitators. At an anecdotal level this cost is considered by teaching staff to be worthwhile, because of the apparent learning benefits to the students.

In addition to the teaching format, the type of assessment can determine the students' approach to study (Biggs, 2003; Entwistle et al., 1992). Research of veterinary undergraduates at UCD has shown that traditional examination formats encourage strategic learning approach (Ryan et al 2004).

Learning Styles

Using a variety of pedagogic and assessment strategies not only facilitates critical thinking skills, but will also help to stimulate students with different learning styles. Traditionally, conventional lectures support students who have a good aptitude for text-based information, however Fleming (2001) has reported that there are in total four types of instructional preferences: Visual, aural, read/write and kinaesthetic.

Presenting material to cater for different learning styles is simple and with no resource implications. Instead of presenting course material as only text-based, relevant pictures and graphics should also be used, as well as creating a level of interactions in the class, to stimulate

those with a kinaesthetic learning style. Most lecturers may already do so, but maybe unaware of the learning benefits.

Conclusion

Research in teaching and learning has shown that University lecturers must consider more than the content of their courses. In the fast pace of animal and veterinary sciences, students need to be equipped with critical thinking skills, to be able to research emerging issues related to their work after they have qualified.

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Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM)

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Examine the Curriculum

Employers of our first graduates expressed an impressive 95% satisfaction rate, based on our graduates' knowledge, performance, communication, problem solving, and learning skills.

WesternU's four-year DVM curriculum uses a problem-based learning approach, and is guided by a reverence-for-life philosophy. Your education will include not only wellness care, primary and tertiary care, but also client communication, collegial exchange, and business training.

As you click on each semester, corresponding course details will appear in the box below.

Year 1

- CVM 5000 Veterinary Basic/Medical Sciences
- CVM 5020 Veterinary Basic/Medical Sciences
- CVM 5030 Molecular/Cellular Biology
- CVM 5040 Veterinary Issues
- CVM 5060 Veterinary Clinical Science/Skills I
- CVM 5100 Veterinary Basic/Medical Sciences
- CVM 5120 Veterinary Basic/Medical Sciences
- CVM 5130 Molecular/Cellular Biology
- CVM 5140 Veterinary Issues
- CVM 5160 Vet Clinical Science/Skills II

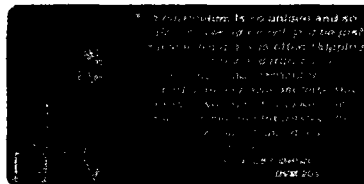
Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

For more detail review the course catalog

PBL →



Problem-Based Learning

Problem-based learning (PBL) is significantly different from the traditional lecture-based format. In WesternU's PBL curriculum, groups of approximately 7 students actively engage in the learning process while faculty facilitate and provide subject-matter knowledge.

Working independently and in small groups, students explore case studies to learn basic science and clinical

concepts. As a student, you'll learn to uncover answers, assess the quality of information, learn basic science knowledge and communicate effectively as you explore 64 carefully selected cases during your first and second year in the program.

Although the transition from a traditional to a problem-based learning style can be challenging, students and alumni say it is extremely rewarding and worth the effort! Read more on PBL...

Reverence-for-Life Philosophy

You will master all the technical skills you need to become a skilled professional, and you will learn them in a manner that does not harm animals. For example, you will acquire skills, such as how to anesthetize and perform surgeries through use of inanimate and dynamic models, computer simulations and apprenticeships. Mastery of skills is required before you work on live animals; we never perform unnecessary surgeries or procedures on healthy animals. You will have the chance to practice your skills on real animals with real medical issues at various points in the program.



Early Clinical Experience

You can expect clinical exposure starting in the very first week of class, and more extensive third year clinical

From: Sabbatical Proposal: Chuck Brinkman
10/05

3 – Placement & Transfer

In order to find options to help benefit the degrees and program here at Moorpark College, I will first explore similar programs around the nation. I plan to examine what programs, services and options they have in place for their graduates, with the goal being to use some of their ideas to develop new opportunities at Moorpark College for EATM, ANSC, and other graduates or transferring students. I will be specifically looking at Job Placement options and Transfer options, to see what I can "adapt" that would work well at Moorpark College.

I propose to start the development of "agreements" between Moorpark College and some 4-year colleges with similar animal programs/degrees, so that graduates of the EATM program have viable options for transfer. This will help shift the EATM program from a strictly vocational program, into a stepping stone towards a Bachelor's degree at some of these 4-year colleges

Previous work....

In years past, the EATM Program – largely through the efforts and contacts of Dr. Jim Peddie (who retired in Spring 2003) - had a "gentleman's agreement" with Dr. Dennis Schmidt at Southwest Missouri State University (SWMSU). This "agreement" allowed 1 student from Moorpark College who already had a Bachelor Degree, to apply and be admitted to the Masters program in "Natural and Applied Science" at SWMSU, provided that student met the admissions requirements for the Masters program SWMSU. Through this "agreement" Moorpark College has sent 1 student there each year for the past 6 years. Three of these students have received their Masters degree, and the first student will be getting her PhD this December 2005.

Unfortunately, with the retirement of Dr. Peddie who was the driving force, no-one has taken over for him in this area, and it looks like this year we will not be sending a student to SWMSU – for the first time since 1999. I hope to renew and revitalize this arrangement, and develop some type of written agreement – beyond the "verbal" agreement that was in place.

Currently, the EATM Program is considered a Vocational Program. The EATM Degree is thought of as a terminal degree – there are no similar programs offered at any 4-year colleges in the United States. Any EATM students who wish to go on and further their education after completing the EATM program, usually explore such majors as; Biology, Psychology, or Animal Science, which are most similar to the animal training experiences and theories they learn during the EATM program. While similar, these 4-year degrees are all either theoretical, or deal exclusively with domestic animals (cows, horses, sheep, pigs, etc.). Graduates of the EATM program have gone and transferred to many different 4-year colleges – specifically to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo for their Animal Science degree, and to San Diego State for the Psychology degree, to name a few.

I plan to try and initiate agreements with 4-year colleges to enable students from Moorpark College to transfer and work toward their Bachelor degree at these and other colleges. I would like to try and develop specific agreements with;

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo – Animal Science major
CSU Bakersfield – Environmental Resource Management major (an online degree program)
CSU Fresno – Animal Science major
CSU Humboldt – Wildlife Management
CSU Chico – Animal Science major
UC Davis – Animal Science major

Dr. Jim Peddie saw the need for having some sort of Transfer mechanism in place for graduates of the EATM program. Together, the two of us started much of the initial contact and groundwork between Moorpark College and Cal Poly SLO. As part of this sabbatical I am planning to finish this process, and expand it out to other colleges as well. Dr. Peddie saw the need for EATM students to work toward a Bachelor's degree. (see attachment # 3) His quote below supports this need.

"I feel that EATM by itself does not give an adequate level of education for our graduates to compete in today's work place and that we need to encourage our graduates to complete their education if they want a career in the animal field."

"You might share with them that I had a phone conversation earlier this week with Diane DiNardo who's husband is the curator of the New York Aquarium in New York City and she said that for any job in the New York City area Zoos or Aquariums above the entry level, a Bachelor's degree or higher is required for advancement."

Dr. James Peddie, DVM

In the United States, the program most similar to EATM is a Zookeeping program at Santa Fe Community College, in Gainesville Florida. They currently have in place several options whereby students from Santa Fe can transfer into any of several different 4-year colleges to complete a Bachelor degree. I plan to explore the process they have in place in Florida, and adapt some of their agreements to be used at Moorpark College.

When this sabbatical is complete, I will have several options in place that allow students from Moorpark College in our EATM, ANSC, or other science programs to transfer on and work toward their 4-year degree in a closely related major. I also will have some better ideas, insight, and useful resources concerning job placement for Moorpark College graduates.