May 6, 2020

Dear Program Director:

Please know that the CVTEA is thinking of you, your teams, and your students at this unprecedented time and appreciate all of your efforts to matriculate your students through to graduation.

This is the fourth COVID-19 communication from AVMA-CVTEA. Previous communications have been sent by email on March 10, 2020, March 13, 2020, and March 18, 2020.

The AVMA-CVTEA is aware that programs are making operational changes in response to the evolving COVID-19 situation and recognize that some of the changes are at the discretion of the program, others at institution level, and others mandated by local, state and federal authorities.

The AVMA-CVTEA’s priority is student safety, followed by ongoing acquisition of knowledge and ensuring that students complete essential skills, as outlined in Appendix I, Veterinary Technology Essential and Recommended Skills List, prior to graduation.

To date, many programs have used the AVMA-CVTEA COVID-19 Substantive Change Form (https://form.jotform.com/AVMAConvention/COVID-19SCR) to communicate to the AVMA CVTEA their contingency plans under the situation. Thank you for your efforts to communicate with the Committee.

As contingency plans and changes are made, programs are encouraged to ensure they are working within state educational requirements, institutional policy, and the requirements for institutional accreditation.

At the recent the AVMA-CVTEA meeting, the Committee approved the attached AVMA-CVTEA COVID-19 Policy. For programs with site visits scheduled in 2020, staff will be in contact with you if changes in schedule or modality are deemed appropriate by the CVTEA. No changes have been made to site visit plans for 2021.

The AVMA-CVTEA also wanted to bring the provisions of Standard 10d to your attention regarding clinical externship hours.

Standard 10d of the Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual of the AVMA-CVTEA regarding the 240 hours reads as “should” and not “must”.

10d. Practical veterinary experience that expands student knowledge and builds proficiency of acquired skills through task-specific exercises is a required portion of the curriculum. These experiences are usually termed preceptorships, practicums, internships, or externships. Practical experiences are for the purpose of honing skills learned in formal instructional settings and should be scheduled to occur following completion of skills acquisition. These practical experiences should be a minimum of 240 cumulative contact hours and must be monitored by the program director or the director’s appointee who must be a program faculty or staff member who is either a licensed veterinarian or credentialed veterinary technician who is a graduate of an AVMA CVTEA/CVMA accredited veterinary technology program.
The following definitions shall be used in applying the Standards:

- **Must, shall:** Indicates an imperative need, duty or requirement; an essential or indispensable item; mandatory.
- **Should:** Indicates the recommended and highly desirable manner in which to attain the Standard. Compliance is expected unless there are extraordinary and justifiable circumstances that preclude full compliance.
- **May:** Indicates freedom or liberty to follow a suggested alternative.

Therefore, though a practical experience is a required part of the curriculum, a minimum number of hours is not required. 240 hours is a recommendation.

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding accreditation matters to the CVTEA through Julie Horvath, CVTEA Accreditation Manager ([jhorvath@avma.org](mailto:jhorvath@avma.org)).

Sincerely,

Dr. Kelly Black, CVTEA Chair