

# **Veterinary Skills Training and Enhancement Program Course Calendar**

## **Philosophy:**

The objective of the Veterinary Skills Training and Enhancement Program (VSTEP) is to educate and re-train internationally educated veterinarians who wish to pursue a rewarding and successful career in veterinary medicine.

## **Course Structure:**

This objective will be achieved through three means.

- 1) Academic Training
- 2) Self and Group Study
- 3) Field Placement

Upon completion of the program participants will not only be educated and have had experience in the practice of veterinary medicine in a North American context, but will also have begun to establish their professional network, which is necessary to their pursuit of a successful career in veterinary medicine.

## **1) Academic Training:**

There will be approximately 470 hours of academic labs and lectures delivered in the disciplines of pathology, pharmacology, radiology, anesthesia, surgery and clinical communication with emphasis on the feline, canine, equine and bovine species.

### **Pathology (46 hours)**

This module is composed of a series of seminars providing a case-based review of background material and several hands on laboratory sessions to put theory into practice. Topics include conducting a necropsy examination, recognizing and describing gross lesions of common disease problems, formulating a list of differential diagnoses, developing an efficient diagnostic plan, interpreting and applying results and performing basic laboratory procedures relating to hematology, parasitology, cytology, microbiology and urinalysis.

### **Pharmacology and Pharmacy (50 hours)**

This module stresses rational drug therapy through an integrated understanding of drug factors, host factors and disease factors, with emphasis on clinically relevant properties of selected major drug classes used in small animals, food animals, and horses. Topics include an introduction to clinical pharmacology, general therapeutics and therapy of organ systems.

### **Radiology (35 hours)**

This module provides instruction on the principles of radiology, radiographic safety and techniques. Through in-class presentations and practical lab experiences participants will understand and recognize normal and abnormal radiology of the respiratory, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, urinary and

musculoskeletal systems of the dog and cat. An additional component covering equine and bovine radiology concludes the module.

**Anesthesia (71 hours)**

Through lectures, labs, and case-based problem solving, this module provides instruction in modern regional and general anesthetic techniques as they relate to cattle, horses, dogs and cats. Included in the material presented will be care and use of equipment, catheter placement, intubation and monitors, as well as pre-medication, maintenance, recovery, anesthetic emergencies, fluid therapy, special conditions and record-keeping. Laboratory experiences will emphasize practical applications using live animals.

**Companion Animal Surgery (40 hours)**

Through a series of lectures, participants will be taught such topics as patient preparation, instrumentation, suturing and wound management as well as surgical treatments of the abdomen, urogenital tract, oncologic, orthopedic and spinal conditions of the dog and cat. Participants will have an opportunity to become proficient at these skills in a controlled laboratory setting.

**Clinical Communication (43 hours)**

This module will teach the basic principles of effective interpersonal communication in a North American context and how to apply these skills in a clinical setting. Methods of instruction include in-class lectures, videotaped simulations, self reflection and feedback from peers and coaches. Participants will also receive instruction to enhance their English language skills and training in how to effectively find a job including mock interviews and resume writing.

**Companion Animal Medicine (76 hours)**

Participants receive instruction in the specific disciplines of dentistry, ophthalmology, dermatology, urology, neurology, electrocardiology and preventive medicine complemented by presentation and discussion of multiple actual case based scenarios covering other disciplines. Laboratory instruction includes ECG interpretation, physical examination and practical dermatology and practical ophthalmology.

**Equine Medicine (51 hours)**

The module emphasizes instruction in preventive medicine as well as conditions affecting the respiratory, gastrointestinal, reproductive, musculo-skeletal, cardiovascular and neurological systems of horses. Participants will be provided in depth instruction on colic and lameness. Laboratory instruction focuses on the general physical exam, lameness exam, case work up and handling skills as well as describing the equine patient.

**Bovine Medicine (30 hours)**

This module covers common bovine diseases in Ontario through an interactive case-based approach. Topics include contemporary diseases and herd management and emphasize the veterinarian's responsibility to the client, the animal and the safety of the public food supply. Laboratory instruction concentrates on basic procedures and the handling of animals.

**Ethics and Jurisprudence (6 hours)**

Participants receive instruction on professional ethics and the North American regulatory environment.

**Medical Records Management (3 hours)**

This seminar provides instruction to the participants on the requirements for maintaining veterinary medical records in Ontario and addresses common problems encountered with medical records and their regulatory implications.

**Veterinary Business Skills Training (7 hours)**

Participants receive instruction on the fundamentals of investing in or operating a veterinary practice in Ontario.

**Animals in Society (12 hours)**

These lectures will comprise a new road map for participants to the placement of companion, food and equine animals in North American society. The instruction will emphasize integration with other partnering industries and orient participants to the rapidly changing trends that will impact their time in practice.

**2) Group and Self Study:**

Foreign trained veterinarians have a wealth of knowledge which they will be encouraged to share with their colleagues and apply in a North American context. Participants will also become aware of the common, valuable resources used by veterinarians in North America. VSTEP is designed to be an intensive and challenging full time learning experience for which participants should consider taking a leave of absence from any existing employment positions. For each hour of class time, participants should expect to devote an additional 2 - 3 hours of group and/or self study.

**3) Field Placement:**

The goal of the field placement is to gain practical experience in a North American setting, to learn the intricacies of modern veterinary practice and most importantly to begin establishing their professional networks. Participants will be exposed to the daily routines, some cases, and have an opportunity to establish a relationship with the veterinarians, staff and clients of one or more veterinary practices.