

**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

**FACULTY OF VETERINARY SCIENCE**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS IN  
VETERINARY SCIENCE**

September 2009

**INTRODUCTION**

As the only Faculty of Veterinary Science in the country, it is important for us to keep prospective students, their parents/guardians and potential donors informed of changes in the degree programme which will allow graduates to register and work as veterinarians in South Africa.

**This information leaflet contains important information on the proposed changes to the current double degree structure for veterinary science.**

Since its inception, a number of problem areas have been identified with the double degree programme as follows:

- the admission and selection process is rigid and based only on academic performance,
- selection to BSc(Veterinary Biology) III, and thus to BVSc, only occurs at the end of the second year of study,
- students wishing to be admitted to veterinary science are not always identifiable during the first two years of study,
- the study period of 7 years is excessively long and costly,
- the allocation of bursaries in the first two years of study is risky as there is no guarantee of admission to veterinary science,
- there is little or no control (by the Faculty of Veterinary Science) over module content and academic rules and regulations in the first two years,
- there is little or no insight into student support systems in the first two years of study,
- there is a general perception that the programme does not address the needs of the country and its population (biased towards the delivery of small animal practitioners), and
- it is known that the programme is heavily overloaded.

Due to these problems, changes in veterinary education internationally, recommendations emanating from the accreditation visit of the South African Veterinary Council in 2006 and the importance of heeding local need, relevance and impact, yet retaining international competitiveness, the need for change was identified in various strategic discussions of the Faculty executive as long ago as in 2006. Extensive internal and external consultations followed. The 2007 – 2011 Faculty Plan identifies the following objectives:

- development of a shorter, single degree programme,
- alignment with the latest veterinary educational philosophies and approaches,
- to meet national needs and expectations,
- to apply a core-elective approach,
- to reduce overload,
- to review the education format and technologies used in training to include web based technologies, problem-based methodologies and to stimulate self-learning,

- to review the assessment policy,
- to consider the inclusion of a distributive model for experiential training,
- to add life skills and leadership as an integral component of the core programme, and
- to review the admission policy.

With this in mind, it has been agreed to implement a new degree structure as described below.

## **NEW DEGREE STRUCTURE**

A core-elective 6 year single degree structure has been developed to replace the existing double degree structure consisting of the 3 year BSc (Veterinary Biology) and 4 year BVSc degrees with effect from 2010/2011.

The core-elective structure is an internationally recognised and recommended approach in which all candidates will complete a core curriculum over 4.5 years (9 semesters). They will then complete a chosen elective over the next 4 months which will give them increased competencies to enter practice in their chosen career paths. The training will be concluded with approximately 14 months of experiential training in the core and chosen elective components.

## **ADMISSION AND SELECTION**

The following admission requirements and basic selection procedures have been accepted:

The minimum entry requirement is the National Senior Certificate (NSC) with the following subjects and minimum performance levels:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| - | Two languages; one must be English<br>(Home or First Additional level) | Level 4                                 |
|   | Mathematics  | Level 4;                                |
|   |  | provided Physical Science is at level 5 |
| - | Physical Science   | Level 4;                                |
|   |  | provided Mathematics is at level 5      |
| - | Two additional subjects  | Level 4                                 |

An Admission Point Score (APS) of 30 will be required (the sum of the 6 highest performance levels excluding Life Orientation). The selection procedure will make provision for various categories and will be reviewed on an annual basis for approval by Faculty Board and Senate.

Once the new programme has been fully implemented, a set percentage (number) of school-leaving students will be selected on the basis of their Grade 11 and 12 results together with other criteria such as an admission/aptitude test(s), and an interview if/as required. The remainder will be selected at the end of the first semester on the basis of their first semester results, aptitude testing (if not already done), and an interview if/as required. The suggested selection process at the end of the first semester will also provide the opportunity of making the programme accessible to students who entered the extended programme on the Mamelodi campus at the beginning of the previous year. Provision will also be made for international students and students with tertiary exposure and/or completed degrees.

The possibility for top-up selection at the end of the second semester also exists on the basis of the same criteria. A maximum of 140 students will be admitted to the second year of the programme.

The Faculty of Veterinary Science views student selection as a key component of its endeavours to meet the veterinary needs of the country and the specific requirements of higher education legislation. To this end the Faculty of Veterinary Science once again states its intent to actively recruit and select students to ensure that the student body will ultimately reflect national demographics. It may also consider market needs in allocating specific positions for e.g. state veterinary service (national and provinces), the defence force and the needs of neighbouring countries who do not have a faculty of veterinary science, etc.

Students who are unable to obtain admission due to an APS score below 30 may still obtain admission to the four-year BSc programme offered at the Mamelodi campus provided they have the necessary subject combination and an APS of 22 or more. These students may be able to transfer to the mainstream programme at the end of the third semester provided they have passed all their modules.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Changing a programme from 7 to 6 years has major implications on the logistics of both old and new programmes in terms of facilities, timetables and human resources. The most important of these is to ensure that the final year (which is an experiential training year) of both programmes do not overlap as the current facilities and human resources (staff:student:ratios) can only accommodate an absolute maximum of 140 students. It is therefore inevitable that applicants and students will have to contend with transitional arrangements in the first few years of the new programme in order to ensure a smooth transition from the one to the other.

With this in mind, the following arrangements will be in effect from 2010 onwards:

- Students registered for BSc (Veterinary Biology) I and II in 2009/2010 will be required to complete the existing double degree programme with selection at the end of 2009/2010 for admission to BSc (Veterinary Biology) III in 2010/2011 whereafter they will be required to complete the existing four year BVSc degree programme for qualification at the end of 2014/2015 respectively.
- Students who have been admitted to BSc (Veterinary Biology) I in 2010 will be registered for BSc (Biological Sciences) I and will have to apply for admission to BVSc by 30 June 2010. These students will be considered for admission to BVSc I in 2011 at the end of 2010 according to an approved selection policy. Ample opportunity has been created for them as the majority of the places available in the programme for 2011 has been assigned to these first year students in this cycle. This will obviously change in subsequent years.
- Selected students will qualify for exemption from the first year subjects already completed but will have to do additional subjects in 2011 while in BVSc I on the Hatfield campus of the University (Medical Terminology in the first semester; Introductory Animal Science, Animal Nutrition and Professional Life in the second semester) to retain their admission to BVSc II in 2012. Provided timetable allocations permit, they may also be able to do second year subjects presented by the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences which are required in the veterinary science programme and obtain exemption from these in the following year. These students will graduate at the earliest in 2016 – this will imply that this first batch of students will still be required to complete the degree programme in 7 years.
- Students who complete the NSC in 2010 will not be considered for admission to BVSc I in 2011 but will be considered together with the 2011 cohort for admission to BVSc I in 2012.
- Students who have registered for the first time in the extended programme in 2010 may gain admission to BVSc I in the middle of 2011 after selection provided they have passed

all the modules at that time. They will then be required to complete the second semester of the first year for promotion to BVSc II in 2012.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMME**

The first year of study of the new programme is very similar to the existing first year of the BSc (Veterinary Biology) and BSc (Biological Sciences) programmes. During the first semester one additional module, Medical Terminology has been included, whereas the second semester has three new modules, Animal Nutrition, Introductory Animal Science and Professional Life. It is these three modules which are referred to in the third bullet under implementation. The entire first year will be offered at the Hatfield campus of the University of Pretoria where after the remaining years will be offered on the Onderstepoort campus of the University of Pretoria.

The second year of study deals exclusively with basic veterinary disciplines such as Anatomy, Histology, Microbiology and Physiology as well as modules in Animal Science, Pasture Science and Professional Life.

The third year will be devoted to the causes and effects of disease and includes modules on Infectious Diseases, Parasitology, Toxicology, Pharmacology, Organ Pathology and Professional Life.

In the fourth year the student will be confronted with modules aimed at diagnostics and therapeutics and in the first semester of the fifth year with community interaction. Specific species directed modules in these semesters will also be presented. In the second semester of the fifth year the emphasis will be on the didactic components of the elective modules.

The remaining approximately 14 months will be devoted to experiential training in the core and experiential components in the academic hospital as well as in satellite and other approved facilities.

A macro-curriculum is attached to the end of this document.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

Students can obtain accommodation in the residences of the University at the Hatfield campus for the first year and at Onderstepoort for the remainder of the programme. Allocation of accommodation is subject to selection and availability of rooms.

## **LANGUAGE OF TUITION**

The language of tuition in the Faculty of Veterinary Science is English.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

All students registered for BSc(Biological Sciences) in 2010 will be notified of the application procedure for BVSc during the course of the first semester in 2010. The closing date is 30 June 2010.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

General information on the University of Pretoria as well as on the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the Faculty of Veterinary Science can be obtained on the web at <http://www.up.ac.za>

Further information can be obtained from the Client Service Centre of the University of Pretoria at 012 420 3111 or by e-mail at [csc@up.ac.za](mailto:csc@up.ac.za)

If you need specific information on the BSc (Biological Sciences) degree or on the recognition of credits, please contact Mrs H van Vuuren in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at 012 420 2726 or by e-mail at [henda.vanvuuren@up.ac.za](mailto:henda.vanvuuren@up.ac.za)

If you need more information on the BVSc degree, please contact the following:

Mr Joe Vhengani, Head Student Administration, Onderstepoort at 012 529 8061 or by e-mail at [joe.vhengani@up.ac.za](mailto:joe.vhengani@up.ac.za)

Mrs A Burger in the Faculty of Veterinary Science at 012 529 8193 or by e-mail at [antoinette.burger@up.ac.za](mailto:antoinette.burger@up.ac.za)

## MACRO-CURRICULUM

<b>FIRST YEAR : FIRST SEMESTER</b>	<b>FIRST YEAR : SECOND SEMESTER</b>
<b>THEME: NATURAL SCIENCES</b>	<b>THEME: NATURAL SCIENCES</b>
Academic literacy 110	Academic literacy 120
Computer literacy 111	Information literacy 121
Mathematics 134	Biometry 120
Chemistry 117	Chemistry 127
Physics 131	Introductory Genetics
Molecular and cell biology 111	Animal Nutrition
Medical Terminology 180	Introductory Animal Science
	Professional Life

<b>SECOND YEAR : FIRST SEMESTER</b>	<b>SECOND YEAR : SECOND SEMESTER</b>
<b>THEME: BASIC VETERINARY DISCIPLINES</b>	<b>THEME: BASIC VETERINARY DISCIPLINES</b>
Veterinary Anatomy + Embryology	Veterinary Anatomy + Embryology
Veterinary Histology	Veterinary Histology
Veterinary Physiology	Veterinary Physiology
Veterinary Ethology + Genetics	Veterinary Ethology + Genetics
Animal Science	Animal Ecology
Veterinary Microbiology	Veterinary Immunology
Pasture Science (to be developed)	Professional Life
Professional Life	

<b>THIRD YEAR : FIRST SEMESTER</b>	<b>THIRD YEAR : SECOND SEMESTER</b>
<b>THEME: CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF DISEASE</b>	<b>THEME: CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF DISEASE</b>
Veterinary Infectious Diseases	Veterinary Infectious Diseases
Veterinary Parasitology	Veterinary Parasitology
Veterinary Toxicology	Veterinary Toxicology
General Veterinary Pharmacology	General Veterinary Pharmacology
General and Organ Pathology (GOP)	General and Organ Pathology (GOP)
Applied Veterinary Physiology	General Surgery
Professional Life	Professional Life

<b>FOURTH YEAR : FIRST SEMESTER</b>	<b>FOURTH YEAR : SECOND SEMESTER</b>
<b>THEME: VETERINARY DIAGNOSTICS AND THERAPEUTICS</b>	<b>THEME: VETERINARY DIAGNOSTICS AND THERAPEUTICS</b>
Small Animal Medicine and Surgery	Small Animal Medicine and Surgery
Equine Medicine and Surgery	Porcine Health and Production
Veterinary Reproduction	Poultry Health and Production
Diagnostic Imaging	Veterinary Reproduction
Clinical Pathology	Diagnostic Imaging
Diagnostic Pathology	Anaesthesiology
Professional Life	Diagnostic Pathology
	Professional Life

<b>FIFTH YEAR : FIRST SEMESTER</b>	<b>FIFTH YEAR : SECOND SEMESTER</b>
<b>VETERINARY COMMUNITY INTERACTION</b>	<b>ELECTIVE DIDACTIC</b>
Veterinary Public Health	All students do a short course in
Veterinary Practice Management (Professional Life)	Research Methodology and a short project in the elective module
Tropical Animal Health	
Veterinary Epidemiology	
Bovine Health and Production	Choose between:
Small Stock Health and Production	1. Small Animal and Exotic Practice
	2. Equine Practice
	3. Production Animal and Wildlife Practice
	4. Veterinary Public Health and State Veterinary Practice

<b>SIXTH YEAR : FIRST 8 MONTHS</b>	<b>SIXTH YEAR : LAST 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>CORE CLINICS</b>	<b>ELECTIVE CLINICS</b>