

St Petersburg College  
Veterinary Technology Program  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
March 21, 2022, 7:00 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes

Attending: Laurie Rankin, Kimberly Leshko, Dr. Allison Sateren, Kelsey Karp, Cynthia Grey, Trish Gorham, Rhonda Valdez, Emily Scarborough, Tosha Zimmerman, Dr. Barbara Lewis, Sheri Holloway, Jane Hamblin, Dr. Kim Donovan.

Absent: Adam Holder, Dr. Greg Masters, Stacey Wider, Dr. David Landers, Dr. Stacey Huber,

Welcome

Old Business

Reviewed and Approved March 21, 2021 minutes – Moved to approve was made by Dr. Kim Donovan and seconded by Rhonda Valdez with no changes or discussion.

New Business

- Dr. Grey provided a summary of:
  - Student Enrollment for the academic year to-date:
    - For the AS program, although Spring enrollment is down across the college (which is similar to other community colleges across the state), approximately 10% – vet tech has not seen that significant of a drop. In Spring of 2021, our overall student enrollment was 337 with 88 of these on campus. Spring of 2022 our overall enrollment was 331 with 78 of these on campus, representing a 1% drop. What we have been experiencing since COVID is a reduction in campus students from 32 in spring of 2019 to 17 in spring 2022. Dr. Lewis asked questions regarding what we suspect is the reasoning for the change in modality. The reasons discussed were students not feeling comfortable due to COVID and that students, with the forced shutdown due to COVID, have found that it is more convenient not to have to come to campus with their work and family obligations. Trish Gorham discussed a possible trend that she is seeing as current online students are wanting to transition back to campus for Fall 2022. Our campus model may be changing to a more blended approach where many students opt for lectures on line and campus labs.
    - BAS update on new student enrollment - Spring to Spring, there was an increase of increase of approximately 1%. For the academic year (not including summer 2022) we had 42 new students; for 2021 (including summer) we had 41 new admits. We also shared the positive impact that the new Capstone Practicum is having on our students and their career paths. Each semester we

have 2 to 4 students who identify that their practicum experience has led to a job offer in an area of interest they never would have thought possible.

- CET impact on the program. Shared the report submitted to the college based upon BAS student responses from survey results and other pertinent research to support the value of the program and provide alternate credible data to refute the CTE audit's findings that there is not a high need for vet techs. The second finding is that the profession does not meet mid to high range pay (identified as \$52,000). Although this is true, the report supported that this is changing, especially within the corporate practice structure. We also shared the letter from Animal Services supporting what the program provides the community. These reports are attached.
  - Completion of dog yard renovations – Finally! We are very pleased with the result of the project and that once started, the project was completed in a timely fashion. Discussed how the students were great in helping with leashing walking our animals while we were unable to use the yard. Please see attached photos.
- Trish Gorham provided a review of the AS program:
    - VTNE Scores – Reviewed results. Very positive results. One area of concern is the online surgical nursing results (Please see attachment for all results.).
    - Trish discussed the difficulties for our online students in obtaining their skills in certain labs, specifically large animal, lab animal, and the requirement to participate in a necropsy. Special labs have been offered to our online students who choose to come to campus so these essential skills can be completed. This week Trish had students attend her large animal session, most of which the students were from across the state; however, two of the students came from outside of Florida. Previous session have also had students come from out of state. We already have students signed up for the necropsy lab, enough at this time for 2 sessions.

These optional labs certainly benefit our students in many ways. These lab opportunities have also increased student success rates, since students who cannot complete their skills in these courses are unable to successfully complete.

- Trish reiterated how nice the dog yard looks and invited everyone to stop by to see it.

## Open Forum

Dr. Barbara Lewis asked about VMX and student attendance. Trish shared how our VTS students were there and for the most part, handled SPC/VT exhibit. Trish also shared how she and Nikki Riggs advised students that they were to come professionally attired. Trish further commented that our students dressed and acted professionally during the entire conference.

Tosha Zimmerman asked about the discrepancy between FVMA credentialing requirements and FVTA. She shared that she was told that she was aware of students who were allowed to sit for the VTNE without having completed the requirement of graduating from an accredited AVMA program. They then applied to FVMA, and were granted their CVT credential. In Florida, we have an unusual circumstance in that we have two credentialing bodies and is the only state like that. Florida is also the only state where the veterinary professional organization credentials technicians. Trish shared that WI was the only state that allowed for technicians to sit for the VTNE without having graduated from an accredited program. She further explained that once passing the VTNE through the WI testing, technicians would apply to FVMA to be credentialed. Although it is states on the FVMA website “ Open to any graduate of an American Veterinary Medical Association-accredited veterinary technology program who has successfully passed the Veterinary Technician National Exam” – the graduate requirement does not seem to being checked by FVMA. Trish did share what FVTA is doing regarding this issue and working with BluePearl and AVMA to advocate for us in setting a meeting to discuss various concerns with FVMA. Sherri Holloway also shared her concerns and observations. There was also a discussion about how veterinary technicians need to be more active in educating veterinarians and the public about the profession and for veterinarians – how they can better utilize their credentialed technicians.

Dr. Grey asked that members of the board be prepared to advocate for the program as we work through the effects of the CTE audit and the impact it is having on the program moving forward.

Thanks to everyone for their support and feedback! If you have any suggestions, ideas, etc. that will help our programs before our next meeting please feel free to email me at [Grey.Cynthia@spcollege.edu](mailto:Grey.Cynthia@spcollege.edu) or give me a call at 727 302 6724