

## **Department of Veterinary Science Implementation Plan FY 2014 Annual Report**

(Implementation Plan developed from August 2011 Department of Veterinary Science  
Program Review which focused on the Gluck Equine Research Center)

### **Action item #1: Advance the mission and goals of the Gluck Equine Research Center (GERC).**

**Assessment Method:** Monitor all measures of faculty productivity.

**Results:** For the reporting period, faculty produced 81 refereed publications, 8 non-refereed publications, and 58 abstracts. The faculty gave 47 presentations and hosted 11 regional, 3 national, and 2 international meetings during this period. Additionally, a total of 164 accessions were made by GERC Veterinary Science faculty to GenBank. In the past year, faculty members submitted 42 extramural grants (8 Federal and 34 non-Federal) with a combined requested budget of \$10.6 million. A total of 20 grants were funded representing \$1.1 million in total awards for FY 2014.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The number of refereed publications and abstracts increased over the preceding period (3.9% and 29.1%, respectively). This increase in publications and abstracts is a continuing trend in the program. Non-refereed publications and presentations decreased (60% and 27.7%). This decrease in non-refereed publications likely represents a greater emphasis by faculty on refereed publications. The decline in presentations can be accounted for in part by the occurrence of major international conferences in reproduction and infectious disease during the preceding report period. The total number of grants submitted by faculty was consistent in FY 2014 (42) compared to FY 2013 (42). Federal funds received in FY 2014 amounted to \$88,830 (2 projects funded) and \$1.1 million (18 projects) was received from non-federal funds. This represented a significant decline in Federal funds and a slight decline in the number of non-federal extramural funding compared to FY 2013. This can be accounted for by the awarding of a significant USDA grant in FY 2013 to one faculty member.

**Improvement actions:** Faculty and graduate students will be encouraged to publish their work in refereed journals. Faculty and graduate students will also be encouraged to continue to submit abstracts and present their findings at scientific meetings. Faculty will continue to be encouraged to seek extramural funding for their research and to apply for federal funds when possible.

**Action item #2: Increase collaboration between University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (UKVDL) and GERC Veterinary Science faculty.**

**Assessment Method:** An increase in the number of collaborative projects, co-authorship on papers, and meetings sponsored by both units.

**Results:** Veterinary Science faculty from the GERC and UKVDL faculty continue to collaborate on a number of research projects involving infectious disease and equine reproduction. This has resulted in three co-authored refereed publications. UKVDL faculty members continue to serve on graduate student committees and participate in regional meetings hosted by GERC Veterinary Science faculty. A seminar program established in 2006, is held at the UKVDL and is jointly sponsored and hosted by the Veterinary Science Department and UKVDL.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Significant collaborations between UKVDL faculty and GERC Veterinary Science faculty are in progress. UKVDL faculty provide important expertise to graduate student programs, as evidenced by their participation as committee members on graduate students who recently completed their programs.

**Improvement actions:** Faculty at both centers will be encouraged to enter into collaborative efforts, whenever possible. Any impediments to this effort will be identified and reduced.

**Action item #3: Improve communications between the GERC Veterinary Science Department and the equine industry and stakeholders.**

**Assessment Method:** Increase in outreach activities including press releases, lay publications, and web presence.

**Results:** The Department now produces a number of lay publications that are distributed to horse owners and veterinarians. These include the Bluegrass Equine Digest with over 24,000 subscribers, the Equine Disease Quarterly (EDQ) with 16,500 subscribers, and the University of Kentucky Gluck Equine Research and Service report with over 3,000 subscribers. The GERC also has established a Facebook page (GluckEquineResearchCenter) and a presence on twitter. Veterinary Science faculty also participated in the organization and presentations at the UK Equine Showcase Breeder's Short Course and the Department of Veterinary Science's Research and Diagnostic Seminars presented at the UKVDL.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Our program has made significant strides over the past several years in increasing our presence on the web and through various outreach

efforts. These efforts involve tens of thousands of direct subscribers and likely many more that receive the information via others. Our Research and Diagnostic seminar series is recorded by TheHorse.com and made available for web viewing by thousands of persons worldwide.

**Improvement actions:** The Veterinary Science Department will continue to grow our presence online and through our various publications. The content and appearance of our Departmental Webpage will be updated.

**Action item #4: Strengthen the graduate program by enhancing industry and academic partnerships and by increasing the competitiveness of graduate assistantships/fellowships.**

**Assessment Method:** Increase in graduate funding support from industry partners to support students with veterinary training. Increase in assistantship stipends. A benchmark of at least 1/4 of PhD students in the program should have a veterinary degree and board certification.

**Results:** Since 2011, an agreement with Pfizer/Zoetis Animal Health has provided graduate fellowships to support two students with veterinary degrees and board certification in a discipline of veterinary medicine. A dual-degree program leading to the PhD was established with the University of Copenhagen. The program is targeted for students with a veterinary degree who are board eligible or board certified in a veterinary discipline. As of August 2014, stipends were increased for all department-supported research assistantships. Base stipends of \$18,000 (non-veterinary degree) and \$23,000 (veterinary degree) were increased to \$20,000 and \$26,000, respectively. A 2-year milestone was added that provides a further increase to \$23,000 and \$29,000, respectively. During the 2013-2014 academic year, five of sixteen students in the PhD program had a veterinary degree and board certification in a veterinary discipline.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** New partnerships with industry (Pfizer/Zoetis) and academia (University of Copenhagen) along with increased research assistantship stipends have enhanced our ability to recruit top-quality students to the program, including students with veterinary training and board certification.

**Improvement actions:** The Veterinary Science Department Chair and Director of Graduate Studies will continue to seek additional graduate fellowships from industry partners.

**Action item #5: Increase faculty involvement in graduate and undergraduate teaching efforts within the College.**

**Assessment Method:** Faculty participation in undergraduate and graduate courses.

**Results:** At the time of the program review, most of the faculty members in the GERC Veterinary Science Department had 100% research appointments and relatively few faculty (3) were regularly involved in undergraduate instruction. Since then, 7 faculty members are now actively engaged in teaching both Veterinary Science and other courses. In addition to our regular offering of VS 350 (Introductory Anatomy, Physiology, and Animal Hygiene) and VS 351 (Principles of Animal Hygiene and Disease Control), faculty have provided guest lectures in a number of courses including EQM 351 (Equine Health and Disease) and EQM 399 (Equine Science and Management Internship). Additionally, in the past year, GERC faculty have offered new courses under GEN 300 (Special Course: Equine Infectious Diseases) and recently VS 777 (Current Literature in Equine Reproduction), VS 500 (Advanced Equine Reproduction), and VS 307 (Genetics of Horses).

**Analysis of results and reflection:** GERC Veterinary Science faculty participation in undergraduate and graduate teaching efforts is increasing. Over the past year this has been reflected in both increased participation in courses offered outside of our department, as well as the creation of new courses within the VS series.

**Improvement actions:** A task force is being formed to further examine faculty participation in undergraduate and graduate courses. One of the goals of this group will be to determine the possible role for new courses offered by Veterinary Science faculty in the Equine Science and Management program.

**Action Item #6: Hold faculty accountable to productivity standards established for the program.**

**Assessment Method:** Compare individual faculty productivity measures (see Action Item #1) to Department expectations.

**Results:** The Departmental expectation for refereed publications is 3 per Research FTE. This goal was met or exceeded by 73% of the faculty. Similarly, the expectation for Abstracts was 1 per Research FTE and 73% of the faculty met or exceeded that goal. Sixty-four percent of the faculty met or exceeded the goal of 1 presentation per year.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Overall, the majority of the faculty (as identified by research FTE) met the minimum goals for publications, abstracts and presentations. As noted above, of the three measures, presentations were the lowest and could be accounted for, in part, by the scheduling of major conferences in the prior reporting period. It should also be acknowledged that annual publication production can vary depending upon the status of research projects. Thus, some years may see multiple

papers being submitted as projects are completed, while in other years this may not be possible. The average number of publications over a longer interval than a single year is probably warranted.

**Improvement actions:** Faculty will continue to be encouraged to submit at least 3 papers and 1 abstract per year. Faculty will also be encouraged to attend and present at one meeting per year. Averaging of publications over a three year period will be monitored to provide a better measure of faculty productivity.

**Action item #7: Increase faculty participation in the Equine Initiative (now Ag Equine Programs).**

**Assessment Method:** Determine faculty participation in Ag Equine Programs

**Results:** Since the time of the review a number of faculty are currently involved in various aspects of the Ag Equine Programs, this includes two GERC Veterinary Science faculty serving as Directors of the program. This also includes participation in various committees, as well as participation in the regular Equine Forum meetings.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** While some faculty are actively participating in these programs, the majority of faculty are not (based on recent attendance numbers at Equine Forum meetings, for example).

**Improvement actions:** The Veterinary Science Department will encourage more faculty participation in these efforts, stressing faculty participation at departmental meetings.

**Action item #8: Upgrade GERC Veterinary Science lab animal and large animal (equine) facilities.**

**Assessment Method:** Evaluate the research capabilities and quality of animal care of the lab animal and equine facilities.

**Results:** Significant improvements to the large animal facilities at the North Farm have been completed. This includes the operation of a fully functional BSL2 facility and enhancements to equine reproduction facilities including improvements to both mare and stallion research areas using funds provided by the equine industry.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** While some aspects of the large animal facility have been improved, others still require attention.

**Improvement actions:** A strategic plan for the North Farm and other large animal facilities will be developed.

**Action item #9: Develop a strategic plan for recruitment of new faculty and development of research programs.**

**Assessment Method:** Use a strategic plan for faculty recruitment

**Results:** There is currently no strategic plan in place in regard to faculty recruitment. Nevertheless, tenure-track faculty hires over the past several years have focused on improving both the reproduction and parasitology programs in the department. A research track faculty member was also hired to develop a plan in equine metabolic disease and geriatric research.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** While recent and ongoing financial constraints have limited the opportunities for faculty recruitment over the past several years, faculty vacancies may be anticipated going forward.

**Improvement actions:** A strategic plan for faculty recruitment will be developed.