

Veterinary Faculty

Holds Curriculum Conference

On January 3 and 4, 1964, the faculty of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University engaged in a two-day conference to consider necessary curriculum changes at I.S.U. The entire faculty of the veterinary college participated. The veterinary curriculum evaluation committee, which has been in existence for some time, proposed the conference. Dr. Lovell of the Veterinary Medical Research Institute is chairman of the committee. Dr. Richard Bristol of the Department of Medicine and Surgery serves as secretary for the committee. Drs. Seaton, Tyler, Packer, and Talbot are the other committee members.

The faculty felt that the explosion of knowledge in the medical sciences made it necessary to review and examine the entire scope of veterinary medical education at I.S.U. It was for this purpose that the conference was held.

The conference was divided into several sessions to consider several topics. The topics covered were: "Objectives of Veterinary Medical Education," "The Veterinary Medical Curriculum," "The Veterinary Medical Student," "The Veterinary Medical Teacher," "Pre-Veterinary Training," and "Teaching Methods."

The committee is now in the process of formulating its recommendations. Any proposals for change will have to be acted upon by college and university commit-

tees as well as by the faculty, so that significant changes are a few years away.

In addition, a questionnaire has been sent to all Iowa practitioners and all alumni of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University. Each recipient of the questionnaire has been asked to evaluate his own veterinary medical education and to give his idea of future needs of the veterinary profession. It is hoped that the results of this survey will give further direction to the future changes to be seen at Iowa State University.

A highlight of the conference was an address by Dr. Wayne Riser of the University of Pennsylvania, an alumnus of Iowa State. In his address, Dr. Riser stated that the shortage of veterinarians is worldwide and will continue to increase. Iowa State must furnish 1/18th of the national need for veterinarians and is thus in reality a regional school. "If Iowa State is to continue to assume the role of a regional school, it must have the immediate endorsement of plans for radical increase in facilities and endeavors," he stated.

Dr. Riser stressed the expansion at other veterinary schools, especially California, Cornell, Illinois, Michigan State, Ontario, and Pennsylvania. Dr. Riser, having visited many veterinary schools in the United States and Europe, found that

Iowa State lacks much in terms of facilities. He found this hard to understand in a state where veterinary service is held in such high regard. Cornell put \$10 million in a new veterinary plant 10 years ago. Michigan State has a \$15 million facility underway. California has a \$16 million school on the drawing board with \$4 million more to go for equipment. Illinois has a \$15 million approval for a new veterinary complex.

Doctor Riser said that "the facilities at Iowa State do not and have never, except for a brief period between 1912 and 1922, reflected leadership in the veterinary profession nor have they attested to the pride this state has shown for its livestock."

Another highlight of the conference was an address by Dr. Robert Hardin, Dean of the Medical School at the State University of Iowa.

Dean Hardin outlined some recent changes that have been made in the curriculum at the medical school at SUI. Two years ago, the faculty of the College of Medicine at SUI held a conference on undergraduate medical education. Curriculum changes were then in progress and have been completed since. Dr. Hardin stated that such a conference served to define problems, crystallize ideas, and propose actions. He outlined two other benefits of their conference:

1. Abstract consideration of teaching and learning was attained.
2. Perspective was gained which is difficult to achieve in a work-a-day environment.

Dr. Hardin stated that in the broad aspects, the problems of medical and veterinary schools are similar or identical. Medical education reform is molded from social change, scientific progress, and growth of the general educational system. He stressed the increasing need for veterinarians to help control food-borne diseases, zoonoses, and animal vectors of disease.

According to Dr. Hardin, there is such a vast amount of knowledge in medicine now, the problem becomes one of what must be included and what must be left out. He stated, "We must accept the idea that students learn and are not taught.

If we can escape this, it is possible to escape many of our older ideas about curriculum."

One of the developments at the medical school has been the establishment of inter departmental clinical conferences. These conferences serve to bring basic scientists into consideration of clinical problems and to expose students to the various clinical disciplines throughout the last two years of study. A patient whose illness illustrates a clinical problem is presented and this problem is exhaustively discussed. Students are expected to enter into this presentation, discussion, and/or questioning. Each department is expected to present the important subject matter in its field rather completely in a two year cycle.

This system of clinical conferences seems to have ready application in the veterinary clinic at ISU. Students could then make greater use of the cases which are admitted to the clinic and gain a greater understanding of the diagnosis, etiology, prognosis, and treatment of these cases. Studies are now being made as to the feasibility of using this system of clinical conferences as part of the veterinary curriculum at Iowa State.

Changes at the veterinary college at Iowa State will not be rapid nor immediate as a result of this curriculum conference, but the faculty in general feels that much insight has been gained into the future needs of Iowa State. They also outlined many changes which should be made. At least some direction for the future has been gained by this conference.

The next step is an academic review of all courses in the veterinary college. Courses will be studied and investigated with regard to content, time on each subject, and methods of instruction. This study will lead to further recommendations to be made to the administration and faculty.

It is readily evident that a concentrated effort is being made to examine and alter the veterinary curriculum at Iowa State so as to keep pace with the rapid changes being made in the profession and the changing needs of graduate veterinarians.