

January 16, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

We've gotten some questions about the University of Arizona Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program and I'd like to tell you more about the program, how it will work, and clarify some of the information out there. Spread across the state and bridging Arizona's diverse communities, you are the best positioned friends we could have at a moment like this when it is important for all of us to continue to educate others about the value of this initiative.

*The UA Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program's plan of study will graduate qualified veterinarians more quickly and at less cost, address the veterinarian shortage in rural communities and tribal nations, benefit bioscience businesses, and promote public health.*

- **Arizona needs more veterinarians.** The need is particularly acute for counties and cities outside Maricopa County, especially for large-animal practices. The tribal nations also have been short of veterinarians for several years.
- Students at the UA Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program will be more likely to remain in Arizona. Likewise, most state dollars for veterinary student support, an estimated \$1.5 million each year, also would stay in Arizona.
- Currently, Arizona students must compete for veterinary school admissions at out-of-state institutions, many of which privilege resident students. For example, 1,600 applicants compete for 130 slots at Colorado State University.
- Arizona students pay higher costs through non-resident or private tuition, incur more debt and often stay in the practices or seek employment with the out-of-state veterinary practices and companies they intern with.
- The proposed UA Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program **will offer a full, accredited year-round curriculum that will allow qualified students with acceptable prerequisites to graduate and enter the workforce in as few as four years after admission to the UA**, reducing student debt and speeding time to graduation.
- The UA Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program's business plan **will partner with private practitioners to provide clinical experience for student veterinarians.** By

working with existing practices and animal health agencies, the UA Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program will avoid competing with private practices.

- Other clinical training partners will include federal and state animal health labs and regulators, Border Patrol and Homeland Security, animal shelter and rescue agencies. The UA already has letters of interest from some of them.
- The UA Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program will graduate more Arizona veterinarians, which means **improved animal health and public health.**
- More Arizona veterinarians also will be **an incentive for bioscience companies who depend on veterinary expertise to stay or relocate to Arizona.**

Thank you again for your enthusiastic response to the proposed Veterinary Medical & Surgical Program over the past several months. Your support is critical.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shane C. Burgess", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shane C. Burgess  
Vice Provost and Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences  
Director, Arizona Experiment Station