

UMN CVM Well-being Handbook

*UMN CVM
Well-being
Handbook*

ERIN MALONE

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Welcome to the Student Well-Being Handbook! The administration, faculty, staff, and students of the University of Minnesota are invested in the personal and professional success of all veterinary students. Unexpected hurdles may present themselves in the form of academic challenges, financial, physical or emotional stress or health issues; sudden developments in our personal lives may threaten happiness, success, or well-being, and this Handbook is devised as a resource to help maintain or restore a sense of well-being.

While the UMN learning environment is one of high expectations, we hope you will find it a nurturing one as well. When confronted by a problem while in our program, we hope you'll consider turning to this handbook for advice, guidance and resources.

Imagine facing your first exam and all the stress surrounding your preparation. Turn to the section on *Getting Over Test Anxiety*. Suppose you're facing the challenge of balancing family life with your Vet school demands. Turn to the section on *Being a Husband or Wife in Vet school* or *Being a Parent in Vet school*. Perhaps you're studying late each night in the building and are concerned about safety. Flip to the chapter on *Being Safe on Campus*. Perhaps you're concerned about feelings of depression in yourself or others. Turn to the section on *Recognizing Depression* or *Supporting My Classmates*.

Please remember that the University's administration, faculty, and staff highly value our veterinary students– you have been chosen to train with us, and we will make every effort to assist you.

If you have suggestions to improve how this Handbook will best serve you and your colleagues, please feel free to contact Dr. Erin Malone (malon001@umn.edu), Athena Diesch-Chham (diesc009@umn.edu) or Sara Dion at the Office of Student Affairs at 612-624-4747.

The University of Minnesota Vet School is committed to diversity, non-discrimination, and fairness in our educational opportunities, curriculum and activities.

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Believing in Yourself

Introduction

A part of succeeding is believing in yourself. It is very easy for vet students to forget how truly talented they really are. As one of the students in the selected class, each UMN CVM student was selected from over 500 applicants comprised of some of the brightest and most talented individuals in the United States.

"I'm Not Sure if I'm Smart Enough"

You and the vast majority of students accepted into vet school possess the ability and potential to succeed. Very few (<1/year) students do not complete their veterinary studies and even fewer of those who do not are unsuccessful because of academic reasons. A "sense of belonging" often develops after successfully completing your first set of exams.

Failing an Exam, or not getting the highest grade is NOT the End of the World

Most vet students are used to performing exceptionally well on tests. However, it's not uncommon to stumble once, given the

many exams taken from the beginning of vet school through the end of clinics. Failing an exam is not the end of the world. It does not mean your career is over! It does not mean you will never find a job. It **never** means your faculty will give up on you.

Consider an unsatisfactory grade an opportunity to rededicate to learning and examining strategies to be the best veterinarian possible. Keep exams in perspective. Performance on an exam does not define worth as a person.

Stop and Smell the Roses

In the midst of your veterinary education, it's easy for students to forget how far they have come. Many students have already received a degree prior to starting vet school. In the first year of vet school, students begin to master a "privileged knowledge". Students will learn so much that very few people in the world have an opportunity to learn and understand.

Vocabulary will grow by the thousands. Students who take the time to bask in their significant accomplishments and unique experiences gain perspective. They remember how much they've overcome to be where they are. They "pat themselves on the back", and remember that they are fortunate and trusted.

People to Talk to

Your supporters (family, friends, classmates)

Yourself – give yourself the same advice you would give a classmate!

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,
diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Anyone in Academic/Student Affairs
GOALe mentor(s)
Any faculty you feel you can approach

Final Thoughts

Remember how far you've come.
You're a UMN CVM student and you BELONG to a special group!

—————

"We all have impostor syndrome sometimes, or all of the time. Vet school is extremely difficult on your brain, body, and soul. We have all felt like we are not good enough, not smart enough, or not strong enough to survive the trial-by-fire that is this program. But you are strong. You are smart. You can do this. Remind yourself and your classmates of this every single day. On good days and bad days, tell your friends and peers that they are good enough to be here, they deserve to be in this program, and they will become amazing veterinarians."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Vet school can be quite intimidating at first. Especially because some of your classmates may have more experience than you. Don't let it get you down. You are just as smart as they are, you just lack some of their experience. Use it to your advantage. Engage and learn from them. They're your colleagues!"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"The most important lesson I have learned in vet school is: failure is

one of the best ways to learn. It's hard to imagine you will ever succeed when you fail an exam, say something wrong in front of the class, mess up a simple surgical technique or improperly treat a patient. But, these are memories you will probably never forget and when you have the opportunity to redeem yourself, you will understand your mistake and how to fix it. So don't beat yourself up when you fail, instead learn from your failures. Remember that vet school is a safe environment where failure is expected/acceptable (at least it should be)." [we agree and are working on this! EDM]

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Don't let anyone tell you "first year is easy". A lot of first years (including myself, way back when) get really down on themselves when they struggle first year because "it is supposed to be the easiest one". Sure, the schedule is better and the material is not as complex, but there is a little shock that comes with your first semester. Vet school is a TON of information, and it takes a little time to learn how to handle it all and take it all in. Be kind to yourself. I wish I knew starting out that my worst grades would be my first semester. Just because you may not be the star of your class first semester, absolutely does not mean you won't rock the rest of them."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Trust yourself and your school. JABSOM graduates a whole class of doctors each year. Each of these individuals passed Steps 1 and 2, secured a residency, and eventually became a successful physician. If you work at it, you can do it."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"It's very easy to doubt yourself...[Med] school is extremely challenging! You made it in for a reason, so never feel like you are inadequate for the job. Everyone has those feelings at some point—if you feel that way, do not think you are the only one."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

Recommended resources including NAVLE prep

Introduction

What is the NAVLE?

What subjects are being assessed in the NAVLE

blueprint

What is the typical format of the NAVLE

It is a computer-based exam, comprised of xx multiple choice questions given over a xxhour time period at a specialized testing center.

Strategies/Suggestions:

People I Can Talk to

....

Final Thoughts

As you review for your cases on clinics, also think in terms of NAVLE

- *“Dog and Cat Dissection Guide, A Regional Approach” Pasquini, Pasquini*

If you buy one thing for vet school, make it this book!! It was required for my anatomy 1 class, and I have used it every single semester of vet school. Unlike many other anatomy books, it tells

you the clinical significance of everything. It is so easy to get bogged down first year in the minutia, and if you can get your brain thinking clinically from day 1, you'll be in good shape. It is also an investment for the rest of your career, you will use it in several future classes, studying for boards, and your career in practice. I would give you mine but I refuse to ever give it up ?

- *Viral Vet- this is an iphone app where veterinary professionals can post cool cases. It's basically instagram for people in the profession.*

- *Zuku Review- sign up for the NAVLE practice question of the day to be emailed to you! Seems ridiculous to start studying for boards so early, but now that mine are creeping up on me, I at least have a backlog of old practice questions that I saved from over the years!*

- *Vetprep- same as zuku review*

- *Neuropetvet website- neuro is one of the most challenging parts of vet school (in my opinion), this website has a huge variety of cases, videos, articles and teaching tools. It's free for vet students! Take advantage!*

- *Plumbs Veterinary Drug Handbook- I never bought the actual book, but I do know many vet students do. I just signed up on their website*

for basically all the same information, another one that's free to for vet students!

- *Merck Manual- Great for a quick explanation of disease states/ conditions. Puts Pathogenesis/Clinical Picture/Diagnosis/Prognosis/Treatment in just a few pages.*

- *Colorado Anatomy Website- free, and a must have for first year*

- *Illinois Imaging- also free, really helpful for learning normals first year*

- *Veterinaryradiology.net – great practice cases for when you start abnormals in radiology*

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

Maintaining Physical Health

Introduction

In order to do well in school, especially considering the rigors of the program, balance mental well-being and physical health. Being healthy allows for best learning, performance, and personal satisfaction while in school. Creating a healthy lifestyle now will promote a lifelong healthy lifestyle. Bonus: exercise promotes brain neuronal growth and persistent connections. Exercise before class to stimulate brain function. Exercise right after learning a new skill to hone the skill even further without more practice!

Strategies

Find ways to be sure to eat healthily and exercise regularly.

Lifestyle

- Get regular medical and dental check-ups while in school.
- Minimize caffeine consumption.
- Don't start smoking OR if you do smoke, consider quitting
- Don't do drugs.
- Minimize alcohol consumption.
- Set a goal for weight loss if necessary.
- Give yourself a reward if you've stuck to your plan of exercising all week.
- Be sure to get adequate sleep, ESPECIALLY the night before a big exam.
- See your physician or to the Boynton if you feel ill, don't wait until you are so ill that it is necessary to go to an Emergency Room.
- Practice safe sex.
- Appoint a designated driver if you plan on drinking.

Nutrition

- Minimize fatty/sugary snacks and meals.
- Start the day with a healthy breakfast.
- Take healthy snacks, such as veggies, fruits, nuts, or yogurt to school to snack on while you're studying.
- When possible, bring a healthy lunch from home.
- See <http://www.amsa.org/pdf/recipes.pdf> for "Doctor Feed Thyself: NUTRITIOUS RECIPES BY AND FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS" from AMSA"

Physical Activity

- Consider walking or riding a bike when appropriate.
- Walk during your breaks. Aim for 10,000 steps/day.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Exercise with a friend—set a regular time and remind each other.
- Buy portable equipment, like a jump rope and use it when you can.
- Be sure that the exercise you choose to do is accessible, comfortable, but mainly be sure that it's FUN, so that you continue to do it.

Under times of stress, some people find it hard to maintain weight. Others use dieting to feel in control

- Don't forget to eat.
- Set up specific times for eating, even if you're not hungry.
- Consider a healthy supplement instead of skipping a meal.
- Carry health snacks like fruit, raisins, or energy bars.
- Talk to a counselor if you struggle with your relationship with food

People to talk about a healthy lifestyle

- Your physician
- Your faculty mentors

- Your classmates
- Your personal trainer
- A nutritionist or dietitian
- A mental health counselor
- Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323
- Boynton Mental health clinic: (612) 624-1444
- Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168, diesc009@umn.edu

Final Thoughts

If you haven't had a healthy lifestyle before coming into vet school, IT IS NOT TOO LATE. Learning is optimal when you are at your best mentally and physically. Start doing something for yourself today to promote a healthy lifestyle and to facilitate personal and academic success.

"I tend to be a B or C student in veterinary school, but the one semester I almost got straight A's was the semester that I started training for a half marathon, and essentially prioritized things other than school. It made me use my time more efficiently, and honestly working out solved a lot of other problems for me like anxiety, insomnia, and that feeling of guilt you have for taking care of yourself when you feel like you should be studying. Prioritize the important things first. You can do it."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Play a sport! Whether it's intramural or a league out in the cities, it gives you an excuse to play at least once a week and completely forget about your stressors. Also, they cost money so you're less likely to skip games which ensure you get your wellness activity in!"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"The hardest part about maintaining physical health is simply getting out of bed, driving/walking to the gym, etc. An awesome way to motivate yourself to get active is to have accountability partners. Have a friend that you go to a yoga class with, a partner for running or a group of other students for an intramural team. This way you have others who you have to meet and are expecting you to be there. It's a win-win situation! Being active in veterinary school has really helped me maintain not only my physical health but also my mental and emotional health as well."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Always make time for exercise. It helps decrease stress and gives you a study break. You don't need to do a lot. Just do something to get moving. There is no draw back."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"I like to pick a number of workouts I want to complete each day and write down which days I will do them. That way when I have a day off I don't have to second guess if I should be at the gym."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Find a classmate with similar exercise activities that they enjoy and plan to do them together. My friends and I do yoga, challenge each other to get enough steps on FitBit, and lift weights together. It keeps you motivated to maintain your physical health, and you get to socialize while you do it!"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"It is essential to continue extracurricular activities that enhance your life. For example, soccer has always been a great stress relief and a time for me to socialize with friends, so I chose to continue playing during Vet school. Not only did it help me stay balanced between academics and extracurricular activities, but it also kept me feeling fit and healthy. When I feel healthy, I have more energy to study and feel better overall, especially on days that require longer hours."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"I have always been an athlete. It is tough to keep it up in school. Sometimes I chose to sleep or study over running/getting outdoors. But, I've learned that I could study so much better on the days that I did go surfing, running, etc."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2003

"In Unit 3, I took undergraduate yoga and hula classes. I found these classes to be stress- relievers [which helped] me maintain good physical and psychological health. Also, in Unit 4, I took undergraduate dance class for a couple of months. It was very relaxing and energizing. In addition, though I was so busy most of the time, I tried to cook my own healthy food and avoided eating out too [often]. Lastly, I set aside a time for a mass every Sunday to stay in touch with the Higher Power."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

"Intramural sports with classmates (Running, basketball, [surfing]) is a great way to bond, stay fit, and keep your sanity."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

"Its been helpful for me to commit to riding my bike to class. That way I am forced to exercise."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2008

Being Safe on Campus

“One of the things that was great was having someone from security escort me off the campus after a late night of studying with just a phone call.”

JABSOM 1993 Graduate

Introduction

Campus safety is an important issue for all veterinary students. Vet students often find themselves in the Library, Computer Lab, or Group Study Rooms till very late in the evening. Current statistics show that 1 in 8 college women are victims of rape. The health and safety of our students is extremely important and should be a shared priority for each UMN CVM student.

Safety Strategies

- Travel in lighted areas and in pairs.
- Be sure to keep the doors to the study rooms and lounges locked at all times.
- Let others know when you expect to be home.

- Call campus police (911) immediately if you see strangers loitering, doors or windows open or broken, people loading valuables into private vehicles, strangers appearing to go from door to door in the building.
- When studying on campus, especially in the evening, study in pairs or groups.
- Ask for escort to your car if you feel unsafe. UMN- WALK

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

o JABSOM Veterinary Education Building Security	692-0911
o Honolulu Police Department	911
o JABSOM Office of Student Affairs	692-1000
o Emergency Call Box	Pick Up
o Office of Gender Equity Counselor	956-9499
o University of Hawaii Counseling and Student Development Center	956-7927
o University Health Service	956-8965
o Women's Center	956-8059
o Sex Abuse Treatment Center	524-7273
o Shelter for Abused Spouses and Children	841-0822

Final Thoughts

Make the safety of all members of the JABSOM family a priority. Look out for each other. Do all that you can to help each other be safe.

Having Fun in Vet school

Introduction

Having fun is an important part of student lives even when working hard in school. Vet school should be fun. Learning should be fun. Studying together should be fun. Incorporating fun into lives leads to greater success and happiness.

Choose to have fun!

Strategies

Find ways to make having fun part of your life in and out of Vet school with classmates, friends, and family. Plan outings or activities just for your enjoyment or combine studying with other things you enjoy.

- Study with friends and take breaks to talk and laugh.
- Go to an arcade, mini golf course or zoo
- Plan a day that includes both study time and fun time (going to the beach, out to dinner, etc.) with your anatomy group, GOALe group or study mates.
- See a movie or rent one that you will enjoy.
- Play sports.

- Go on a date.
- Go to a show in St. Paul.
- Study at different locations e.g. Como Zoo, Starbuck's, any lake
- Study while doing activities that don't require constant attention e.g. read while fishing, watching a baseball game, or in between making moves in a game of checkers or chess.
- Plan periodic "fun days" for the entire class.
- Create fun rewards for yourself after studying hard. e.g. "We'll study from 10am to 3pm then go to Famous Daves!"

Signs That I Need More Fun in My Life

- I haven't laughed or smiled for a few days.
- I'm only thinking of studying.
- I haven't spent time or relaxed with those I'm closest to.
- I feel burned-out.

People to Talk to:

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

Final thoughts

Give yourself permission to have fun in and out of school and consider it a necessary part of well-being. Use common sense and time management considerations to decide when to maximize fun.

"It's very important to not focus solely on school, which is easier said than done especially during crunch weeks. I always say that a little bit of fun is better than no fun at all, so instead of blocking out hours to do XYZ in your social life, if you cannot, then have "mini" bits of fun when you can—and then longer bits when you can. For example: if you are pressed for time and cannot meet someone for coffee, go through the Starbucks drive through line and get a coffee and enjoy it that way. If you don't have an hour to do yoga, do 15 minutes — and then do the hour when your schedule allows. Take short walks outside instead of long. Meditate for 10 minutes instead of a half hour, etc. The point is to remove yourself from school stress in whatever way you can, for as long as you can, and then revisiting it another time."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Plan one fun thing a week with friends so you always have something to look forward to. It doesn't have to be something extravagant, but it should leave you feeling rejuvenated"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Having fun should be as mandatory as studying is. Getting through school is much easier if you take time to have fun in school, but also OUTSIDE of school. Don't feel guilty for going out with friends, having dinner with family, enjoying a hobby, or taking time for yourself. It will actually make you a much better student."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Give yourself permission to take nights off, relax, and just be a kid in your 20's. Looking back I wish I did more of this. You won't get this time back."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Vet school is hard. There's no way around that. But so is "real life" (life after graduation). We have the perfect opportunity right here and right now to figure out how we are going to balance our work/life responsibilities before we get into an industry that is going to ask for as much time as we are willing to give. Who cares right now if you get an A vs a B, or a B vs a C? No one. Take a few minutes between classes to toss a football or Frisbee around with a classmate. Or go explore LAH and see if there are any new clients. Or run up to the gym and swim over lunch. Or take one night a week to spend time with your friends (forget studying, you need to give your brain a break so it can actually retain all the information you are giving it anyway). Or take one night a week to go to bed super early (I'm talking 6 or 7 o'clock, let your brain take a vacation, and 5 bucks you will feel like a million bucks after that). Or maybe you are a workaholic like me, find yourself a job that you love (or at least coworkers you love) and pick up an extra shift or two. The big thing is figuring out what you like to do and giving yourself permission to do it. Because if we are honest with ourselves, letting ourselves have a little fun once in awhile makes us way more productive when studying than trying to study 24/7 anyway. This is your life, spend it the way you want to."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"In order to be the best student, you have to be your best self. This means that you need to make sure you are making your physical, mental and emotional health at an equal priority with veterinary school. This means that sometimes you have to actively make the choice to do something fun with classmates, whether its a trip to the dog park or going out for dinner. These things are what allow you to recharge and refill yourself – otherwise you will get drained, and quickly."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Having fun in [med] School is a must. I think that it is important to focus on studying and doing well in school, but it is equally as important to maintain focus on family and friends who help maintain balance. They are often the ones who make you laugh and smile especially after a long day."

JABSOM Student, Class 2004

"There were so many fun moments in med school. You are with a truly great group of people. Take advantage of them . . . study groups, movies, barbeques . . ."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"Putting a 'Joke of the Day' on my learning issues helped my classmates, tutors and I to have a good laugh and to remember that medicine is as fun as it is challenging."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

Supporting Classmates

Scenario #1

I could see that John was really under a lot of stress. He's been studying really hard this week, camping out in the classroom till after 3am. He always seems to have a cup of coffee in his hand.

We're all worried about finals. Jane said he's been sleeping in the mens room because he's been too tired to go home. He missed most of the lectures this week, including the review session before next week's exam because he said he couldn't wake up in the morning. I know he's worried because he doesn't have any lecture notes. I wonder if I should do something.

Scenario #2

I talked to Christina when I saw her crying in the bathroom. She said she was "OK" and had to do a history and physical examination on her patient tonight before scrubbing in on the surgery tomorrow morning. This rotation has been tough. Christina has been late for morning rounds and the residents have been on her for not seeing her patients before they did. In rounds, it seems like she's not even there. She said she didn't know if it was worth it anymore. She hasn't been eating and it looks like she's losing weight. But her last words to me got me frightened.

She said, "What should I do? Should I speak to someone about it? I don't know what I'm going to do. Maybe it's better to end it all."

Introduction

It's been said, "No one gets through vet school alone." Friends and colleagues in Vet school the program know first-hand what the experience is like and are often major sources of support. As you begin school, you will meet classmates who will become lifelong friends. Make a commitment to help each other along the way. Take a personal interest in the well-being of your friends and colleagues.

Strategies

- Use the **Buddy System**. Promise to always be there and support a friend and ask their support of you. When people ask for help (or you sense they need help) act immediately.
- Include people in your study groups. When exams approach, stress levels rise and students who feel they have no one to study with may feel left out or frightened. Reach out to those who seem alone.
- Share lecture notes, lab notes, and due date calendars with each other.
- Make a **Performance Pact** with each other. For example, if six students are assigned to a rotation at a hospital, they might promise each other to make it the best learning experience possible. "Let's be the best group of students they ever had here. Let's help each other out. If someone has lots of patients to take care of or is really tired, let's help ease their load. If anyone has a great patient or learns something really exciting, share it with others."

- Recognize distress in others. If someone looks anxious or worried, speak to him or her. If you feel s/he need help, suggest faculty or counseling help to her or him, or share your concerns with resources listed below.
- Embrace differences. Most people we meet during vet school experience will not talk and think exactly as we do. Appreciate these differences, and see the opportunities in reflection when others see the world differently.
- Listen. One way to really help classmates when they're under stress is to simply listen. Let your friend tell his/her story without interruption. Be aware of body language, such as nodding your head and leaning forward, to emphasize that you are listening and you care.

People to Talk to- it doesn't matter which you start with. Just start!

Crisis hot line (for yourself or someone else):
(612)-301-4673

Text "UMN" to 61222

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Boynton Mental health clinic: (612) 624-1444

Behavioral Consultation Team: (612) 626-3030

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

Final thoughts

Vet school friendships are special and can be lifelong. Support each other.

—————

“Go out with other friends from vet school and get Margaritas on Tuesdays from La Casita! Or even just a drink or ice cream at a restaurant of your choice. Especially after a hard test or a surgery lab that didn’t go as planned, it feels good to take a couple hours and vent to other friends who are going through the same issues as you. Makes you feel like you’re not the only one feeling the way you do, and get to have some laughs and relaxation time at the same time.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

“If you find that you are struggling with time, funds, stress, depression, or anything else, there is always another student in the class who is feeling something similar. Find that other person! Take that first step. Open yourself up to your classmates and they will open up to you. We’re a team.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

“Remember that what most people need is for someone to listen to them and understand. You don’t have to be able to solve all their problems, but just taking the time for your day to support them will go a long way. And if they want specific advice, they will ask for it.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

“There is a lot of material. Group studying is a very useful tool. Try it. Even if it’s not your typical learning style. You’ll find it very helpful!”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

“The way to survive [med] School is to support your classmates and feel supported yourself. Forget about competition. I found that the

more I was open to helping, teaching, spending time with friends from school, the better I felt and did."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"Making some time during study group for us to vent our frustrations and voice our concerns with each other was invaluable in helping all of us maintain our sanity."

ABSOM Student, Class of 2006

Maintaining Motivation

Scenario #1:

Joe didn't feel like himself. At the start of the year he felt so energetic, motivated, and excited to begin vet school. He was up late each night studying and he genuinely enjoyed his clinical skills preceptor. But as the year went on his feelings began to change. He didn't feel like opening his textbook. Each class seemed to blend into the next and attending lectures became more and more difficult.

Introduction

No matter how devoted a person is to a particular career or course of action, it's completely normal to find motivation waning at different points in the year. It doesn't necessarily mean that you've chosen the wrong career or that you aren't committed. Consider some of the tips below to find the "spark" again.

Tips for Maintaining Motivation

- Ask yourself why you came to vet school. Remind yourself of your overall goals.

- Reflect on the things that you've enjoyed about vet school; new friends, new knowledge, etc. and remind yourself that between the studying, there have been many enjoyable moments.
- Vary your routine. Switch things around to make it new and fresh. See things from different perspectives.
- Identify things that sap your energy or are causing you concern. Don't let them linger or fester. Address them right away so that they bother you no more, or seek guidance from trusted friends, faculty or counselors.
- Spend more time with people who motivate you. Who makes you laugh? Who inspires you?
- Phone family members that give you an emotional lift.
- Reflect on the positive impact you've made on the lives of some of your patients.
- Take frequent breaks.
- Try presenting a learning issue in a different way than you have before. Make it fun.
- Develop a personal reward system- reward yourself for a good day's work. The reward can be a small thing like a favorite dinner, or a great movie. Perhaps, start a collection of something you value (e.g., stamps, rocks, baseball cards, etc.), and reward yourself with additions to your collection with each accomplishment of an academic goal, or a transition. Plan a trip at the end of the year or an outing at the end of each unit or subunit. Vary the type, amount, and frequency of your rewards.

Final Thoughts

If these tips don't seem to work or you feel overwhelmed

by anxiety or depression, see the chapters on *Recognizing Depression* and *Test Anxiety*.

People to talk to about maintaining motivation

Your supporters (family, friends, classmates)

Yourself – give yourself the same advice you would give a classmate!

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168, diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

- Your physician

“What helps me keep up motivation more than anything is keeping a positive attitude. If there’s a test you’re struggling to study for coming up, look beyond it. Maybe there’s a cool lab you’re looking forward to, so tell yourself that you just have to get past the difficult test and then you’ll get to do something really interesting! As bad as things seem sometimes, there’s always something to look forward to, so do your best to focus on the good and the bad won’t seem so bad anymore.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

“Stay close to your friends that aren’t in vet school, they will give you a good perspective and its nice to have that outlet when you need to get away.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

*“Dog and Cat Dissection Guide, A Regional Approach” Pasquini, Pasquini
If you buy one thing for vet school, make it this book!! It was required*

for my anatomy 1 class, and I have used it every single semester of vet school. Unlike many other anatomy books, it tells

you the clinical significance of everything. It is so easy to get bogged down first year in the minutia, and if you can get your brain thinking clinically from day 1, you'll be in good shape. It is also an investment for the rest of your career, you will use it in several future classes, studying for boards, and your career in practice. I would give you mine but I refuse to ever give it up ?

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Try these to remember why you want to be here:

Viral Vet- this is an iphone app where veterinary professionals can post cool cases. It's basically instagram for people in the profession.

Neuropetvet website- neuro is one of the most challenging parts of vet school (in my opinion), this website has a huge variety of cases, videos, articles and teaching tools. It's free for vet students! Take advantage!"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"If you are too chronically sleep deprived, exhaustion will begin to color your whole world negatively and challenge your motivation—try to insure enough personal time as well as sleep to keep yourself going about your studies with enjoyment and purpose. Just trying to push ahead and study without taking breaks can create a lot of inefficiency."

JABSOM Class of 2006

"Try to catch a movie here and there, and use that fun time as a reward if you finish a certain amount of work. Spend time with family and take some personal time for yourself to just relax, sleep, and 'de-stress."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"I think the more people [to whom you become responsible], the better. Your tutorial and study group members in the first 2 years hold you accountable—this is motivation for really learning

concepts well so you can teach them... The sense of value in such accountability will shine through when you take care of patients later. You learn something...because you care about what it means to someone else..."

JABSOM Class of 2007

Valuing and Maintaining Your Support System

Introduction

Going through vet school can be extremely stressful and nerve-wracking at times. Students often learn to deal with these situations on their own through the use of effective coping strategies. However, a student may not feel equipped to handle the stress without the support of others, whether it may be in the form of assistance, advice, or having a “sounding board”. It is important to form and nurture these support systems; they can make all the difference in a student’s life.

Strategies

- Say “thank you.” Voicing your gratitude can go a long way. People who provide support also need to feel appreciated.
- Remember NOT to take your support system for granted. Show your appreciation with a simple but meaningful gesture such as a hug, a flower, a special note, or a favorite snack.

- You may need to identify different support systems for your differing needs. Be proactive about talking to people who may be able to offer advice and support.
- Don't always receive, take the time to give back.
- Communicate your needs; never assume that others, even close relationships, can read your mind.
- Have fun with your support systems when appropriate. HUMOR and LAUGHTER can result in miracles and can make all the difference.
- Tell your support system specifically what they've meant to you. "Aunty, if it wasn't for your financial help, occasional free dinners, and couch for me to nap on, I really don't think I could make it through vet school. You've really made a difference in my life."
- Invite your support system to your White Coat Ceremony and Graduation.

People to Talk to:

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or
anyone in Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

- Your spiritual advisor
-
- Organizations to which you belong

Final Thoughts

You do not have to always handle everything by yourself. If you need support and advice, reach out and ask. Asking for support is not a sign of weakness. It can be a measure of one's maturity and insight. Value and maintain your support systems. Let them know how much you appreciate them.

"Although I've always thought of myself as a strong person, there were moments in med school where the support of my family and friends meant a lot. Sometimes just being able to cry in front of them was comforting. It was easy to neglect relationships in med school, but as time went on, I got better at calling, e-mailing, and spending time with loved ones when I had some time."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"My first year of [med] school was one of my biggest challenges. So many things were going wrong in my life, and at some points, I lost my interest in becoming a doctor. However, because of the great moral support I received from good friends, family, other students, and our counselors, I became stronger and more driven. I am glad they were there when I was most in need. I truly appreciate their support."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

"I think it is normal to feel uncertain sometimes. When I did, I mentioned it to my significant other and he would help to remind me why I am here."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2008

Being a Husband, Wife, or Significant Other in Vet School

Introduction

Vet school often comes at a time when students are starting or considering starting life-long relationships. Or, some veterinary students have been married for many years prior to matriculating. The stresses and strains of vet school life have been known to adversely affect new and long-standing relationships.

Signs That A Relationship may be Suffering

- I'm always feeling angry or hostile.
- I don't communicate as well with my partner.
- We're not speaking.
- My school work is suffering.
- I never study at home anymore.
- I never ask my partner about his/her day because I'm too preoccupied with my own stresses and challenges.

How to keep relationships healthy and vital during the

period when so much effort will be devoted to learning medicine.....

Strategies

Find ways to involve your partner in your vet school experience. Make your success a shared goal and not an individual one. Let the important person in your life know that though you will be busy as a student, their role in your life will not change. Let your relationship and respect for one another become a motivator for your academic success.

- Bring your partner to school to become familiar with your environment and experience. Introduce the tutorial rooms, labs, etc.
- Share an academic calendar to share your schedule, especially busy times.
- Share your successes (and disappointments) to encourage celebration with you, and to offer comfort when needed.
- Schedule time with your partner that is protected from school responsibilities. Use a calendar, write it in, and keep the commitment.
- Consider designating an evening each week to be the time you spend together (i.e. every Sunday evening).
- If finding study time is still difficult, considering doing work together (i.e., you could study and he/she could read or do work at the coffee house together).
- Talk often, share experiences and concerns.
- Find ways to continue to nurture the relationship (e.g., share your feelings in writing or by special

demonstrations of affection and attention). While important in any relationship, it may be even more important during vet school.

- Try to maintain phone contact when able. Even if only for a short call, it's refreshing and healthy to share a few words, especially if you can't be together as much as you'd like to.
- If you've made a commitment, when stress or conflict arises, try not to resort to ending the relationship as a solution; focus on finding other ways to problem-solve that are grounded in the special aspects of your relationship.
- *"I'm sharing this with you because I love you and want us to live happily together for the rest of our lives."*
- *"First of all, let me say that you're the best thing in my life and I can't imagine being without you...I have been worried however..."*

People to Talk to About Relationships

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

Final thoughts

Contrary to what many think, having a meaningful relationship

can help and NOT hinder school performance because it provides an additional support person and gives one purpose. No one

gets through vet school alone. Think of your spouse or significant other as a precious source of love, support, and inspiration. Keep your relationships healthy and strong.

"I actually think being married is better than not being married. Sure, [med] school is stressful, but your partner can be a very stabilizing force in your life. My wife has helped me keep things in perspective, while supporting me when times get tough. I make sure I set aside time for her just like I set aside time for school."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2000

"I couldn't imagine going through [med] school without my fiancé. He not only supported me through the best and the worst of times, but he also reminded me that there is a world outside of medicine—the one that my patients live in. For example, I used to joke that if I didn't have someone in my life to remind me of current events, the world could end and I wouldn't even know it. Having that perspective has been invaluable in relating to my patients."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"Some ways that my fiancé and I vitalized our relationship while I was in [med] school were to take ½ to 1 day off per week to do something unrelated to either of our chosen professions so we could both relax, and to give him a short phone call to say good night when I was on overnight call and I had some downtime."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"Try to make time for a "date" with your significant other/spouse...it doesn't have to be anything too fancy. It's not that meaningful if you just see them when you're eating, sleeping, or cleaning house. Just take a little time to enjoy each other's company without worrying about school. This definitely helps the relationship."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"It has been helpful for us to sit down on the weekend and discuss my schedule for the week. Then we write it on the calendar. This way [my spouse] knows what to expect and can see how busy I am in 'black and white.'"

JABSOM Student, Class of 2008

I'm Expecting a Child!

Introduction

For many, vet school often coincides with a time in when students may consider starting a family. When expecting a child, planning can especially help lessen school-related stress.

Students may opt to take a leave of absence from vet school. Students should consider their own wishes regarding graduation date, their physiologic adaptation to the pregnancy and delivery, their support at home, and the time they wish to spend with the child/children soon after birth.

•

For all, family and medicine become a balancing act, and some are not motivated to undertake the challenge. You are the only one who can make the decision about if and/or when to have a family.

Things to Consider

- Speak to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs (Dr. Molgaard) to develop a plan of how to manage school responsibilities during the pregnancy. The Office of Student Affairs wants to support you.

- When necessary, inform faculty if your due date may coincide with a scheduled exam or required instructional session so that alternative plans can be developed in advance.
- Prior to the delivery, talk with your family and friends so that you have a clear and accurate picture of the support you'll have at home.
- If you are interested in having a babysitter, begin looking early.
- Remember to make time for regular visits to your physician for prenatal care during vet school.
- Consider speaking with other veterinarians or veterinary students who are mothers or fathers to gain a perspective of how they balance academic demands and family life. Feel free to ask the Office of Student Affairs for people you can contact.
- Discuss with the Office of Student Affairs options for nursing or expressing breast milk while on campus.
- Find ways to support your spouse throughout the experience.
- See section on *Being a Parent in Vet school*.

People to Talk to with Concerns about Expecting a Child

Your family

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

- Your physician or Student Health Services

Being a Parent in Vet School

Introduction

Vet school often comes at a time when students may start or considering starting a family. Some students enter vet school as parents. The demands of a veterinary curriculum make paying special attention to the needs of our children an important part of our adaptation to vet school.

Signs That Our Relationship with our Children Needs Attention

- A sense of guilt about being away from them is affecting your studying.
- Absence from the children is contributing to stress with your partner.
- Your children are expressing concern about your time away.
- You're missing significant milestones and events in your children's lives.

How can a busy vet student maintain and enhance relationships with children during the period when so much effort will be devoted to learning medicine?

Strategies

Find ways to involve your children in your vet school experience. So much of our effort and sacrifice is ultimately for our children. Use this as a motivating factor in your studying. Find ways of letting them know often how important they are to you.

- Bring your loved one to campus so that they can become familiar with your environment and experience. Show them the classroom. [please avoid the hospitals]
- If they're old enough, share your weekly calendar with them.
- Schedule time with your loved one that is protected from school responsibilities. Use a calendar, write it in, and keep the commitment.
- Consider designating time each day to devote to them (e.g., playing a game, reading a book, making a puzzle). The quality of the time spent is more essential than the quantity.
- Do things you both have to do together to maximize time shared (e.g., exercise, prepare/ eat dinner, do the dishes together; or fold laundry, take a bath, or brush your teeth together, etc.).
- Discuss with the Office of Student Affairs options for nursing or expressing breast milk while on campus.
- Talk often, share your day and any concerns you might have.
- Ask for support for childcare from family or friends. Anticipate when you might need additional help (before exams) and schedule this help well in advance so family

members can plan as well.

- If your children are older, consider investing in a cell-phone for each child so they feel they can reach you when they need to when you're not at home.

People to Talk to About Parenting in Vet school

Your family

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

- Your physician or Student Health Services

Final thoughts

Our children are so special to us. They are a precious source of love, support, and inspiration. Maintaining the meaningful relationships in our lives is what makes it all worthwhile.

—————

"I had my first child in [med] school. Looking back now as a resident, I know it was the right time for us to start a family. My marriage is still going strong, my sons are great, and I was still able to surf. I watch a lot less TV than the average person."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2000

Helping an Ill Pet of a Family Member or Friend

Scenario #1

Last night my mother called from Ohio. She said Dad had been coughing a lot lately so she finally got him to see a doctor. He had an X-Ray done and they found something in his lung that might be a cancer. I know if he has lung cancer, he'll probably die. I'm thinking of flying back tonight. I'm thinking of quitting [med] school.

Scenario #2

My grandmother is really ill. She has heart failure, hypertension, and brittle diabetes. Her memory is poor and she needs help going to the bathroom and eating. Last week, she had a stroke and has been in the hospital. My family says we should do whatever I say. I don't want to say the wrong thing. I don't want them to blame me for what happens to grandma.

Scenario #3

A friend of mine was just diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He says that they are recommending that he have a Whipple

Procedure done. He wants to know if I think that is the best thing. What should I say?

Introduction

Members of the veterinary profession, including students, are often turned to by family or friends whenever a crisis arises. Because of our love for them, we want to do all we can. However, we must also remember what role we should play when a family member is involved. We don't want to inadvertently cause confusion, conflict, or mistrust. What is most important is to express care, concern, and when asked, to help the family understand those aspects of their disease or therapy that still seems unclear and that we are comfortable explaining. We can help alleviate fear and uncertainty.

Things to Remember

- Make sure the role you'll play is clear to all parties. Communicate in a way that allows others to know how much you care.
 - *The way I believe I can help best is to help you understand the treatments being prescribed and how they'll help. I also want to provide emotional support and help to communicate some of the questions you have to your regular veterinarian. You're so important to me. While I'm studying to be a vet, I'm not one yet. But I'm still your family member, and that means I love you very much.*
- Remember that as students we have not yet completed our training nor accumulated the clinical experience necessary to fully counsel patients on complex topics.

Know your limitations and become comfortable sharing with others that you are just beginning to learn medicine.

- Recognize that some family members may not wish to “burden” you because they fear their problems might interfere with your studies. When you suspect this may be happening, encourage open discussion and express your love and concern.
- In some instances, embrace the fact that quality time with a loved one may be more important than academics.
- If necessary, a leave of absence can be arranged from vet school in order to address the needs of a loved one.

People I Can Talk to

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168, diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or anyone in Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

- Your spiritual advisor

“Family, friends, even acquaintances will start looking to you as their own “expert” in medicine. For me, it was easy to get sucked in and involved. I soon learned what most of them needed was someone to listen to their experiences, and, when appropriate, refer specific questions and concerns to true “experts”.

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"It has been really great how the whole class has come together with expressions of support for classmates with ill family members. Several have opted to defer a year in order to be with an ill family member. The [med] school is very supportive in [such difficult situations]."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

"Your family comes first and being a medical student doesn't change that. When classmates have family health [concerns], it is a time for us to come together and support them because we [too] are a family here. The courage and determination [shown by] some of our classmates as they have dealt with [health-related] challenges of their own or of family members have been an inspiration."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

Is Vet School Right for Me?

Introduction

Being a veterinarian takes a certain amount of commitment and conviction. It may have been something you always wanted to do, something another person told you would fit your personality, or your parents instilled in you as a child. Whatever the case, you are the one to make the decision to become a veterinarian. You are the one who will dedicate your life to being the best that you can be.

Considerations

- It is normal to question whether you are doing the right thing being in vet school. At some point along the way, just about everyone will ask himself that same question. Your particular experiences may at times cause doubt. At other times, they may reaffirm your decision to become a vet.
- Talking to classmates, friends, peers, parents, siblings can help by strengthening your conviction to pursue veterinary medicine. Clinics may also influence you.
- It may get very frustrating if studying doesn't help you pass the exam. You may have to learn a new way to study.

Take advice from others who have done it before you. Be open to new suggestions.

- Don't worry about getting discouraged, because inevitably it will happen to everyone. Persevere; this too shall pass.
- Just when you think what you've learned doesn't make sense, you see a patient and it all comes together.

Quotes

"You can eat the whole whale, you just have to take one bite at a time."

John
Hardman,
M.D.

"If you like to read, medicine is the ultimate novel. You get to see the same person over again and this becomes a new chapter. Then you meet another family member and yet another chapter is had. The never ending story. . . ."

Lisa
Seeber,
M.D.

People I Can Talk To

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Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or
anyone in Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

- Your spiritual advisor

Final thought

No matter where you graduate in the class, what do they call you?
DOCTOR. . . .

"If you hate working with people, vet school is not for you. Until the day our patients can start bringing themselves to the clinic and telling us what's wrong, we have to rely on owners and be able to properly communicate with them."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Find your niche – this is the time to reach out to others with similar interests so you don't feel like you've made a huge mistake".

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"I never questioned my choosing [med] school before entering, but every now and then, I'd wonder why I was working so hard when I saw friends making money, successful careers, and families. There are those moments, though, where I realized that I had chosen the most rewarding profession in the world. Those are the moments that I remind myself about when I'm having a hard time."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"You're not abnormal if you're questioning whether or not you belong in [med] school. Lots of people may at some point in their training, so reach out to others who feel the same way."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"In Unit 1, I often felt I may have not chosen the right career path for me. After talking to others in my support system and having experiences interacting with patients, I realized both that I was not alone and that I still loved medicine. Making good friends in the class who I could talk to about these issues also helped tremendously. By

the time I was working on the wards in 3rd year, it didn't seem to be as much of an issue because I realized how much I enjoyed being a doctor and that I could do the job just as well as anyone else."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"JABSOM [offers] many opportunities...to address these feelings. Reach out to the committed faculty here, to clinicians in the community through CSP or interest groups, and most of all, reach out to your fellow classmates because they [may be] going through the same thing."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

Getting Along with My Classmates

Scenario #1

It's your first day in the ALC and there are five strangers around the table with you. A few are talking to each other like they've been friends for a long time. You feel like no one knows you exist. What do you do?

Scenario #2

You're in Physiology lab and it's a new group. There's someone in this new group who is always voicing his opinion. You want to tell him to "shut up!" He's so irritating, but you don't know how to handle the situation.

Strategies

- Smile at the person next to you.
- Say hello to your neighbor and introduce yourself.
- Think of others before yourself.
- Bring food for your group to eat while you're studying.

- Respect each person's privacy.
- Be courteous to others.
- If you have a car, offer a ride to your classmate.
- Take time to go to the movie with your study partner or study group.
- Do a good job when you do your group work.
- Do not make unfair assumptions about the intent of others.
- Ask questions tactfully if you're not sure of something.
- Actively listen and be non-judgmental of others or what they say.
- Compliment others when appropriate.
- If you need to be critical, provide constructive criticism regarding the behavior of the person.
- Realize that different people learn in different ways; what may work for you may not work for the next person.
- Be aware of time limitations; start on time and end on time.
- Embrace the differences in all and respect ideas that may differ from yours.
- Make the learning environment fun for all of you.

Consider this sentiment in working with classmates:

*Hear and understand me
Even if you
disagree, please
don't make me
wrong
Acknowledge the*

*greatness within
me*

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Professionalism is a critical characteristic of veterinarians, requiring treating everyone with respect, including peers, faculty, advisors, and especially patients. Remember that classmates will be peers and colleagues in the future; many will be life-long friends.

People I Can Talk To

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168, diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or anyone in Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

"You are never going to get along with everyone. When I am having a day where I feel especially annoyed, I sit in the back of the room or I LC from home. It is okay! Sometimes the stress filled environment of fellow classmates can be overwhelming and I can pick it up via osmosis! When my classmates are getting, stressy, I pick a coffee shop instead to learn and fill my environment with happy thoughts."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

*“Surround yourself with people that are positive about vet school. We all have our hard days, from both universities I have attended, I have learned that there will ALWAYS be the people that complain about everything. Negativity is contagious. Of course having 3 exams in one week is terrible, but I try to take the stance, “I’m going to have to do it anyways, not worth complaining.”** note: we all do have our slip ups”*

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

“Another important aspect of [med] school is “finding yourself” and where you belong. Once you have found the bunch of friends with whom you relate to and feel comfortable with in your class, the 4 years of school fly by because you are enjoying the learning process and experiences with friends.”

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

“Studying in groups [with classmates] from other tutorials has been invaluable. In a curriculum in which every student has a different experience (because it is not rigidly standardized—different tutors, different CSP preceptors), collaborating helps normalize things.”

JABSOM Class of 2007

Getting Along with Faculty

Scenario #1

You're meeting your PBL tutor, Dr. X, for the first time and you're a little nervous. What will he be like? Will he help me learn medicine? Will he think that I am competent? You wonder what to say as you walk in the door.

Scenario #2

On rounds during your pediatrics clerkship, your preceptor points out some errors on your physical exam report. You sense she wants to help you improve. You really want to impress her but aren't sure how to meet her expectations. You wonder what your next step should be.

Introduction

It is imperative in vet school, internships, and beyond that we learn to work effectively with others, including the faculty you'll learn from and who will some day be your peers. Mutual respect, courtesy, and recognizing differences in a collegial way are important foundations upon which to build strong relationships.

Strategies

- Start with developing mutual respect. Speak to everyone in a caring and thoughtful manner.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. Your faculty want to assist you in solidifying your knowledge base and developing your critical reasoning skills.
- Thank them for their efforts.
- While students are an extremely high priority (often the highest) for faculty, recognize that they have other responsibilities as well and may not be always be able to address your needs immediately. If this is the case, offer to schedule a time to meet with them. Most faculty welcome this.
- If you are unsure of your faculty's expectations, ask them in a positive way to clarify this for you. *"Dr. Jones, I really want to do well in my surgery rotation. Please share with me your expectations so that I can do the best job I can."* Most faculty respond very well to this.
 - If faculty members are constantly belittling you, asking you to perform personal services, or not grading you fairly, you may discuss this with them, the Hospital Director, or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. UMN CVM does not tolerate student abuse and also protects those who express concern, from any retribution. You may also refer to the Academic Appeals Policy.

People I Can Talk To

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Laura Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or anyone in Student Affairs

Dr. David Lee (rotations)
Other faculty mentors
Your parents, family members and classmates

Final Thoughts

We are fortunate to have a supportive and knowledgeable faculty who are concerned about your success in vet school. Get to know them. Ask questions. Learn from them.

The faculty here are great! Some can come off as a bit aloof or uninterested, but if you show them that you do actually care about learning the material, they usually bend over backwards trying to help you out. Find one or two faculty that work in the area of vet med that you are interested in, and reach out. Who knows, maybe they will have a research project that you can help with, or maybe they know someone that will provide you with a fantastic summer internship, or maybe they will become a great mentor for you. The faculty here really do care, take the time to reach out to them."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"A big part of [med] school seems to be honing interpersonal relationship skills. There are many ['difficult' personalities] out there ...and part of [the process] is learning how to deal with personalities with whom you do not 'click.' You just have to do your best and keep a thick skin on."

JABSOM Student Class of 2006

Issues Related to Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual and Questioning Students

AND TRANS

Introduction

There are several LGBTQ groups on campus (<https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/groupsanddepts>) and an [LGBTQ center](#). The center provides services for individuals, trainings, online resources, and schedule special events. They run a listserv and can provide contacts and referrals to various community and campus organizations and services.

Consider the following Questions:

- Do I avoid classmates who are gay?
- Do I allow my classmate to speak about things that may be uncomfortable for me to hear?
- Does it make me feel uncomfortable to hang around my classmate who is a lesbian?

- Do I worry that others will think I am gay if I spend time with someone who is?
- Do I worry that others will avoid me if they know I am bisexual?

If you are unsure about your responses to these considerations, you may want to think about this:

- Often during college and post-graduate years, students reflect upon their sexuality. For some, this process may result in the discovery or questioning that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.
- Some individuals embark upon the process of “coming out” to friends, colleagues, and family. Although it may be difficult to understand what your friend (or classmate or family member or patient) is going through, you would be a friend by accepting that person’s decision to “come out”.
- People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender have the same rights as others to learn, grow and discover themselves. Their feeling and needs are the same as heterosexuals. So, everyone should be treated the same way.
- Remember that those in the veterinary profession (including vet students) may be more hesitant to share their feelings, beliefs or sexual identities for fear that they may receive less referrals as a practicing veterinarian.
- Treat one another as you would have them treat you.

People I Can Talk To

- Office for equity and diversity <https://diversity.umn.edu/>
-

- Gender and sexuality center for queer and trans life
<https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/home>
-

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Boynton Mental health clinic: (612) 624-1444

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168, diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Laura Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Other faculty mentors

Your physician

Your parents, family members and classmates

Anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

Final Thoughts

All people are valued at UMN CVM regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race or political affiliation! Please trust each other with your true self and respect others' true selves.

"Try to use more gender neutral language when talking to clients. For example, say "Fido's owners" instead of "Fido's mom and dad" because you never know how someone identifies."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

Cultural Awareness

Introduction

Veterinary medicine touches our world and the people in it in many different ways. Disparities in health outcomes continue in many groups and many groups see the role of the veterinarian differently. It is crucial to learn about how best to assist various groups in the way most effective for them.

Some Suggestions:

- Increase your understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities among and between groups.
- Approach individuals from different groups with respect in terms of cultural beliefs and practices.
- Develop effective communication skills that allow you to elicit and acknowledge understanding of others, such as asking what the client believes is the problem, and what outcome of care is expected.
- Learn about the cultural milieu of each academic and clinical setting you enter.
- Explore various programs for low income populations and gain an awareness of health care delivery resources in

your region. Partnerships with human health care can strengthen both components.

- Don't be afraid to ask others to help you understand how they view animal health and illness in their culture.

People I can Talk to:

- Office for equity and diversity <https://diversity.umn.edu/>
-

Dr. Laura Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Other faculty mentors, particularly those involved in SIRVS, VeTouch, and Professional Development

Your parents, family members and classmates

Final Thought

These comments are a beginning in your journey in becoming a competent and culturally sensitive veterinary student and veterinarian. Communication is challenging even within the same culture.

■ *"Practice listening to understand rather than listening to respond."*

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

■ *"Don't forget who you are – but don't let that same feeling keep you from connecting to others."*

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

■ *"As a [med] student, I felt I had an advantage in getting thorough histories from patients, because I was given more time with them. This helped me hone my communication skills as well as my cultural*

sensitivity. One time, some residents had thought a patient from Guam had received little education because of his non-compliance. After spending time with that patient, I learned that he had actually graduated from college, and was non-compliant because the goals of his treatment had not been explained to him. Over time, a more effective, culturally sensitive relationship developed.

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"Wouldn't a world (and a school) where everyone was the same be really boring?"

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"Take advantage of the [time]to identify your own biases, strengths and weaknesses in your interpersonal skills. The program offers such a valuable opportunity to grow personally and it is easy to overlook this when we think [that all] we are supposed to learn about [is] disease."

JABSOM Student Class of 2007

Recognizing Depression

Introduction

Feelings of depression or anxiety are not uncommon in vet school. It may be most common in the second-year but can hit at any time. Recognizing the signs and symptoms in yourself or others is extremely important for your health and wellness.

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

- Feeling sad or depressed
- Loss of motivation
- Problems concentrating
- Feelings of self-doubt and despair
- Apathy about vet school or other things that were important to you
- A change in appetite, weight gain, and/or weight loss
- Difficulty sleeping or the desire to always sleep
- Inability to feel joy in any aspect of your life
- Not being able to identify anything you are looking forward to
- A gross imbalance in your life between what you are

giving and what you are getting back

Other Developments that Might Represent a Problem

- A failing marriage
- Friends not calling anymore
- Inability to balance family responsibilities with school
- Unbearable stress about upcoming exams
- Failing courses
- Difficulty with professionalism or attitude
- Unconnected with any classmates
- Use of drugs or alcohol

What to do

Depression is a serious but common condition and confidential treatment and counseling is available. There may also be a hereditary component. If you or a colleague suffer from these

symptoms, please ask for help. The Academic and Student Affairs office knows the best route forward for students in each year of the program.

People I Can Talk to:

Crisis hot line (for yourself or someone else):
(612)-301-4673

Text "UMN" to 61222

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Boynton Mental health clinic: (612) 624-1444

Behavioral Consultation Team: (612) 626-3030

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,
diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or
anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

- Classmates, family and friends
-
- Your physician, student health services and/or your spiritual advisor

Final Thoughts

Depression is a treatable condition. If you feel you may be at risk, seek help. If a colleague is at risk, care enough to guide them to therapy or speak to a faculty member or school official who can offer assistance in this matter.

“What really tipped me off in realizing I was depressed was when I realized nothing I did was fun anymore. I used to love spending time on my own reading or writing (when I wasn’t doing homework), but I found myself starting to go to bed earlier just because I was so bored. Nothing was enjoyable, but even being bored wasn’t enough to motivate me to do any schoolwork either. So really, if things you normally enjoy aren’t fun for you anymore, pay attention to that. Maybe you’re just getting bored of your hobbies, but it might be indicative of something deeper.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

“It’s really easy to have the “this will never happen to me” mentality when it comes to depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. In the moment, you might not even realize that it’s happening to you at all. The most important thing you can do to monitor yourself is be self-aware. Make a note of all the people and activities that make you happy on a daily basis. If they stop bringing you joy, you’ll notice a

change right away because you are in touch with your own mind. At that point, you can acknowledge the fact it's time to take care of your mental health and be proactive about seeking help."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"If you find that you are struggling with time, funds, stress, depression, or anything else, there is always another student in the class who is feeling something similar. Find that other person! Take that first step. Open yourself up to your classmates and they will open up to you. We're a team."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"Check in with yourself daily on how you are feeling. It sounds simple, but often times it's so easy to get wrapped up in our own emotions and stress we forget to simply acknowledge that they are happening. You don't have to try to stop what you are feeling, but taking a moment to consciously check-in can help separate yourself from overwhelming emotions and allow you to move forward. It can also serve as a moment for you to evaluate whether or not the stress/anxiety/depression are getting out of control."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"People's behavior changes with stress and depression. And the changes can look similar for both stress and depression. A single bad day or bad week is on the calendar for each and every one of us. A bad day is not depression. Pay attention to your friends eating, sleeping, drinking, socializing, and study habits. And trust your gut. If you feel like your friend is has been acting different for more than a few days, it is never wrong to check in with them to make sure they are okay. Whether or not they are experiencing depression, asking how they are doing can help with their bad week or their struggle with mental health. Remind them that they are loved and supported."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"After spending one Christmas with my family, I began to feel both sad (I cried a lot) and anxious (I was very worried about the upcoming Step 1 exam) at the thought of having to go back to school."

I knew I still had more than half way to go, and just was unsure whether I could cope well through the rest of it. I talked it over with my family and decided that I could go talk to a therapist. It was actually really effective talking to an “outsider” about all the stress/ anxiety that I was facing. It helped put things in perspective.”

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

Getting Over Test Anxiety

Scenario #1:

Whenever an exam approaches, I have difficulty sleeping. Thoughts of the exam and the enormous amount of information I will have to retain fill my every thought. "What if ...?" "Did I....?" "Can I....?" What can I do about this?

Scenario #2

The night before an exam, I get so anxious that I think about the possible horrors that could occur. "What if I don't pass the exam?" "What can I do?"

Introduction

Exams probably cause more anxiety, fear, and self-doubt than any other aspect of vet school. Test anxiety is fairly common and never fatal. A small amount of anxiety may be beneficial because it sharpens the senses and the mind. In large excess though, test anxiety may be over whelming and can cause discomforting symptoms.

Test anxiety to a large degree, is related to test preparation. The more certain you are that you know the material, the less you experience test anxiety. Cramming contributes to test

anxiety. When crammers are not working up to speed, they inwardly criticize themselves and worry about what they are not doing. As the test approaches, they are prey to anxious thoughts about being able to learn everything that they are being held accountable for and about possible failure. This stress increases proportionally to the immensity of the workload and peaks in the days just prior to the test.

It is estimated that 15 – 20% of college students experience lower grades due to effects of test anxiety.

Strategies

- Have a *positive* attitude toward exams – being prepared and having self-confidence will minimize your anxiety and increase your performance on exams.
- PLAN. PLAN. PLAN. Having a schedule for exam review and implementing it will definitely help to decrease exam anxiety. Reinforce information regularly. Pace your review. Cramming is not a substitute for studying.
- Find out as much as you can about the exam – what to focus on, the number and types of questions asked.
- Review using a variety of techniques and make your review an active process (e.g., case mapping, study groups, self-recitation).
- Engage in study groups as a way to clarify and solidify information and to view information from different perspectives.
- Seek out faculty for tutorial assistance to clarify information.
- Engage in stress reduction activities to minimize your

stress level – visualization, meditation, deep breathing, positive self-affirmations prior to exams. It is important to BELIEVE in yourself.

- Control worrisome thoughts – stop negative thoughts as soon as they occur and replace them with positive and more functional thoughts.
- EXERCISE REGULARLY to decrease anxiety and to increase your overall physical and mental well-being.
- GET ADEQUATE SLEEP during your preparation for the exam, including the night prior.
- Avoid taking sleep inducing agents (like anti-histamines) prior to exams, as they may have negative side effects.
- Be cautious of dramatically changing your lifestyle and the amount of caffeine ingested during the study period leading up to your exams.
- If you feel nervous going into or during an exam, take a couple of deep breaths to clear your thoughts, to center yourself, and to rid yourself of negative energy and self-doubts.
- If your anxiety is overwhelming and continues despite everything you do, seek professional assistance. Sometimes a professional “shoulder” or professional treatment will make an amazing difference; there’s no reason to suffer unnecessarily.
- Determine whether talking to classmates near the time of the exam enhances or alleviates your anxiety and act accordingly.

People I can Talk to:

Disability resource center: <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/home>

Your course instructors

Sara Dion to ask about a VetPAC or VetSkills coach or how to set up accommodations

Office of Student Affairs at 612-624-4747

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,
diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Final Thoughts

Knowing how to study for exams and feeling prepared for exams are keys to decreasing test anxiety. These factors contribute to a sense of self-confidence in doing well on exams.

Remember, exams should be viewed as tools to evaluate your learning and to identify areas of further self-improvement. They are not indicative of your self-worth.

"It can be very frustrating and daunting to share your feelings to a fellow student about, for example, your anxiety about taking an upcoming exam – only to have that student downplay your anxiety, or tell you that they don't worry, or tell you that you shouldn't worry, or worse – critique your intense study habits. My advice is to surround yourself with people who recognize anxiety, admit that it's real, and then help you find helpful solutions for it. These solutions can be in a variety of forms, including reviewing a troublesome topic for you, or taking a walk, or just allowing you to vent your frustration without critiquing what you're saying. I find that is the most helpful way to deal with anxiety at school, for anxiety is very real."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"I've found that the biggest source of test anxiety for me is my other classmates. There's always going to be someone else who studies more than you, and those are typically the people who like to vocalize how much they've studied. The key is to not get freaked out by that. Don't feed off of their anxiety. Get away from them. Study alone or find people who are supportive and helpful rather than competitive. You'll be able to remember more when you're not stressed out about how much you don't know."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"On the day of the test, I will go over the material one last time — usually just looking up a few little details. When I leave for school, I leave my study materials at home and I am officially done studying for the test. At school while I am waiting right before the test to start, I look at photos of my animals; it is nice because it reminds me why I am in vet school and it makes me happy. I am a big proponent of having a positive mindset will ultimately serve you better on a test than cramming and stressing the morning of."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"Try to study or look at the information every day. Don't procrastinate. It will bite you in the butt every time."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"The night before every exam in [med] school, I would stop studying and go see a movie. I think I learned early on that my goal in school was to learn what I needed to know to be a good doctor. As long as I reminded myself of that, exams only became a confirmation, not an obstacle to my goals."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"One way that I helped to decrease my test anxiety right before taking exams was to listen to music and focus on being calm but alert."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

Managing Stress

Introduction

Stress is a normal aspect of daily life; it is not something you can take or leave. How we manage stress is dependent upon whether we view a situation as being stressful and how we cope with that stress. Stress is how people react to situations that feel taxing. What motivates one person, may burden another. It is important for to identify stressors and to develop skills in coping with them. Remember, stress is a response to events, both external and self-generated. A moderate amount of stress is good because it fosters creativity, motivation, and change. Too much stress can get in the way and become so overwhelming that it can be immobilizing.

Signs of Stress

- Forgetfulness
- Increased procrastination
- Excessive crying
- Racing heart, sweaty palms
- Tense muscles

- Headaches
- Lack of concentration
- Lingering or unidentified illnesses

Strategies

- Understand the causes of your anxiety and stress. Awareness is the first step in stress management.
- Know and accept your limits.
- “Let it out” – communication is ventilation. A good cry or leaning on someone’s shoulder is OK and healthy.
- Engage in physical activities regularly to minimize your stress (e.g., running, aerobics, swimming, volleyball).
- Get organized. Good time management skills are important. Focus on the most important tasks first, not just the easiest. Plan your time. Learn to say “no”. Set realistic goals and follow through.
- Take time for yourself – it allows you the opportunity to “re-energize” yourself.
- Seek help. It’s OK to turn to others in resolving your problems. It is not a sign of weakness.
- Learn to delegate whenever possible.
- Change your negative behavior. Approach tasks in a positive way. Deal with situations and people that support positive behavior patterns.
- Identify your stress relievers.
- Have fun – laughter and humor are the best medicine.
- Get adequate rest. Replenish your energy and do not get “burned out” so that you can focus, think clearly, and

persevere.

- Avoid drugs and alcohol. They will decrease your capability to handle stress.
- Try to eat regular and well balanced meals. Keep healthy snacks available. Reduce caffeine and fat in your diet.
- Engage in quiet time. Spend a few minutes daily to dream, relax, or to ponder on something soothing or that brings a pleasant thought to mind. Maintain “stability zones” and personal rituals. It is important to have meaning in your life.
- Compliment yourself for a job well done or for handling a difficult situation.
- Remember, you are not perfect – we all make mistakes. Forgive yourself for your imperfections.

People I Can Talk to:

Crisis hot line (for yourself or someone else):
(612)-301-4673

Text “UMN” to 61222

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Boynton Mental health clinic: (612) 624-1444

Behavioral Consultation Team: (612) 626-3030

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or

anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

- Classmates, family and friends
-
- Your physician, student health services and/or your spiritual advisor

Final Thoughts

Attempt to minimize stress whenever possible. You can learn to make situations less stressful through developing effective coping strategies. Remember, the causes of stress are not only generated from external sources, but are also self-generated. You can change your perception of what you view as being stressful.

“Stress is always a hot topic in professional school, and, to a great extent, even more so in veterinary school. The best advice I can give is to put yourself first. If you recognize that your stress levels are increasing, fall back to a hobby you have that you can lose yourself in, or even better, let your stress out on. For me, I play video games. Sometimes puzzles, sometimes shooters, sometimes exploration games. I rely heavily on this hobby to help me express and exert what I feel, to get it out of my system. Take the time to take care of yourself, even at the cost of a better grade. You are worth more than a letter grade, and you’ll perform better in the long run if you accept that and make yourself the priority.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

“Veterinary school and stress go hand-in-hand. Unfortunately, this is a reality and it is something I strongly pondered prior to submitting my letter of intention in coming to veterinary school. To deal with this burden that can often become drowning and downright depressive, you must maintain your self-confidence, relationships and habits formed prior to your entry into veterinary school. The curriculum is challenging, and it may require you to alter how you fulfill your mental stamina, but do not lose sight of who you are and who you want to be. Don’t let

relationships with your family or friends fall away, because those are the people that will help you get through stressful times. Don't get too overcommitted, but don't also be complacent. To deal with stress, I have maintained physical activity through weekly yoga and gym exercises, and I have taken breaks from school work to contact family members and friends (yes, via phone!). Veterinary school is a dream for a lot, and a reality for a few. Finding that balance is difficult, but it is a rewarding journey for those who don't shy away from the challenge."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"I failed in one exam. The student affair office sent me mail and email to remind me. It was very stressful. I didn't cry or complain because I knew the reason why I failed. I thought it would be easy and I didn't study that much for it. For the following exams of that course, I spent much more time preparing for them. For this kind of stress, doing exercise or your supporting system may not be very helpful. Don't blame yourself too much or doubt yourself. Going to the exams with full preparedness is the best way to destress."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Your mental health is more important than your grades"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Find something you enjoy doing that has absolutely nothing to do with the veterinary field and stick with it. For me, I joined a new gym and learned how to box/kickbox. It made a huge difference in my mental health to work on myself in a way that had nothing to do with veterinary academia"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Prioritize yourself. There is enough stress in vet school, that you need to remove any kind of extraneous stressors in your environment, whether that be toxic friends or classmates that stress you out. Find a different place to sit, find another study group or study by yourself. "

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2021

"Find your stress relievers. For me they were talking on the phone, watching silly talk shows, running, splurging on a frappuccino. All the little perks in life can really help when you need a lift. Also, remember that sometimes you can't do it all yourself. Remember to ask for help."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2003

"Exercise is fun and good for the body and mind—an exercise routine keeps me feeling healthy, physically and psychologically—Meditation helps me spiritually."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

"Always plan fun things as motivation to do something productive for school (i.e. finishing an LI early, reading in preparation for lectures, reviewing anatomy, etc.). Do the work first, then play as a reward."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

Managing Time Effectively

Scenario #1

I plan to study and have every intention to do so but my focus shifts to responsibilities at home. I feel guilty if I ignore them. I want to be all things to all people. I know what my priorities are but I have problems following through with them. Something always seems to interfere with my plans and I have difficulty saying "no." What should I do?

Scenario #2

I always seem to be able to do things that I want to do or enjoy doing. However, when tasks seem difficult, inconvenient, or scary, I shift into my procrastination mode. I say to myself, "I'll wait until I am in the mood to do it," "There's plenty of time to get it done," "I work better under pressure so I don't need to do it now," or "If I start early, I will forget what I learned." What should I do?

Introduction

Managing your time effectively in vet school is critical in balancing the expectations and demands of your coursework, in maximizing your enjoyment of recreation and relaxation,

and in maintaining a quality lifestyle. By organizing your time, you will be able to plan and prioritize your tasks and activities to avoid cramming, to allocate adequate study time, to schedule social activities and to spend time with significant others, and ultimately, to prevent burnout.

Strategies

- Take an accurate *assessment of yourself* – strengths/weaknesses, habits and traits; learning style, time usage – be realistic in your planning.
- Know *when, where*, and under what *conditions* you study most effectively.
- Be aware of your peak hours of alertness – when do you study most effectively?
- Have a regular place to study – identify a study headquarter that is well lit and relatively free from distractions and have needed resources available to you.
- You may also want to identify other areas that are conducive to certain types of studying (e.g., study groups, review for anatomy lab, resources available)
- Determine whether you need total quietness when studying or prefer to have background noise. Or is this determined by what you are studying?
- Avoid things that are “toxic” (e.g., television, phone, internet).
- Set *priorities* – do things that are important first instead of shifting into any “urgency” mode. This will help to decrease anxiety and to prevent procrastination.
- Avoid scheduling *marathon study sessions* – take breaks to

reinforce information. Bring closure to information prior to your breaks. When you return from your breaks, summarize information covered prior your breaks and then continue with your studying. This will reinforce the information and recreate the mindset held before the break.

- Create *monthly schedules* for long-term planning to prevent cramming and over commitment and to ensure quality work.
- Engage in task analysis – break large tasks into bite size bits and identify internal deadlines for the completion of these tasks.
- Create a *weekly routine* of activities (e.g., background reading, notes reviews, open online quizzes, big projects). This will result in consistency in your studying and in establishing a study habit. This will also ensure the completion of all necessary tasks for each of your courses.
- Be realistic about the time needed to complete tasks and activities. It is better to overestimate than under estimate the time needed.
- Include a *preview* and *review* time prior to and following classes.
- Reviewing as soon as possible following classes will help you to retain **80**

– **90%** of the information.

- Study in *blocks of time* – 50 to 60 minutes before taking a break.
- Be *assertive*; learn to say “no.”

- *Delegate* responsibilities whenever possible.
- Leave some unscheduled time for *unforeseen occurrences*.
- Be *flexible* – accommodate changes as they occur.
- Have *clear lines of communication* with significant others – let them know what is in store for you and when your crunch times are.
- Take care of yourself. Take steps to maintain personal, mental, and physical well-being in dealing with the pressures of vet school.
- Schedule time for yourself and significant others – you need “time outs” for effective “time ins.” We all need to nourish our souls. Humor, happiness, and relationships are critical in maintaining personal well-being. You should be focusing on quality and not quantity of time spent with others.
- To decrease anxiety and to avoid burn-out, make sure you have adequate sleep, a nutritional diet, exercise, and personal recreation time.
- Periodically, step back and engage in *self-reflection* about your usage of time and the results of your studying; make modifications if necessary.
- If things don’t seem to be working out for you, *seek advice*.

People I can Talk to:

Disability resource center: <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/home>

Your course instructors

Sara Dion to ask about a VetPAC coach

Office of Student Affairs at 612-624-4747
Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323
Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,
diesc009@umn.edu
Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu
GOALe mentor(s)
Any faculty you feel you can approach

Final Thoughts

Time management is really self-management – managing yourself in relation to time. Therefore, getting to know yourself is critical in effective time usage and in being satisfied with the results of your studying. Some of us are better at this than others, but we can all engage in some degree of time management that fits our needs and personalities.

"We all know that vet school asks a lot from us. If someone wanted to, they could spend every waking minute studying the material we are presented in class and still probably still not learn it all. But we also have lives outside of school. Maybe we have a job, or a family, or are heavily involved in a community organization. Those things are important. Find a time management tool that you feel comfortable using. For me, I end up changing tool every few years to make sure that I am using the most effective one. Right now I am using Wunderlist. It is fantastic because I can create as many different categories of To-Do items as I want and if I add a due date, it will organize them by due date. It also syncs between my phone and computer, so I always have my list with me. I can share items if there is a group project to work on and I can send emails directly to it if I know I need to deal with that email at a later date. Great application! I have also used Google Keep in the past. But in all reality, it doesn't matter what system you use. What matters is finding one that works for you and making sure that you aren't just planning school things. You are a real person who has a real life outside of vet school. Don't neglect those things for vet school. Find a balance. Your worth is NOT dictated by your grades anymore. That was only for getting into vet school (haha). But guess what, you

are here now. Now what matters is preparing for your life after school. Part of that is your vet career, but a big part of that is also your non-vet career. Invest in relationships and hobbies. How are you going to spend your life after graduation? Married to your clinic or company? Or are you going to live a well-balanced life? No, its not easy, but now is the time to learn those skills. Do you ever truly regret the time you spend with good friends? (Hint: the answer is no)."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Google Drive-if you don't know how to use google drive, get familiar with it. Its SUPER helpful for group work, and splitting up typing notes/ study guides with classmates."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Hide your smartphone while studying. I do feel that digital devices steal away a lot of our time. You won't miss anything if you spend less time on Facebook.

Sign up the study hours survey. You can track how much time you spent on a course. You can compare the time you spent for preparing the exam and the grade you got. Then next time you have a better idea of how much time you needed for the grade you want and plan it ahead of time. I usually just record the efficient time I have spent instead of the time I sat at the desk, so I would know how much time I actually wasted and I would feel bad about it and it would be a reminder for me "

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"The vet school calendar runs our lives for four years. In second year, when the course load picks up immensely leaving little to no free time, that calendar can be daunting. I recommend laying everything out in the calendar as early in the semester as you can: every assignment due date, every test date, clerk duty shifts, mini rotations, work, etc. — everything. Use a color coding system that works for you. And then, once you do that, do not focus on the entire semester at once or you will lose your mind. Know peripherally what's out there, and then focus exclusively on just the one week in front of you."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"I find that there are little chunks of time during the day that I can use to check tasks off. When I do so I find that the nights are less full and I end up having time to relax."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

"Find a study partner! This has been the most life changing aspect of my vet school career. If you can teach someone something, you know the material. Talking things out is not only effective, its quicker... and I promise you, year 2 especially, there is seemingly no such thing as free time."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Figure out what works for you, whatever that is, do it. There will be times you have to learn

100's of pages in notes in just a few days. It's amazing what you can do in a short period of time when under pressure (so don't freak out, you'll figure it out, it just may not be a super fun time). Here are some things that worked for me:

- *Putting my phone away when studying*
- *Talking things out*
- *Condensing down pages of information into one smaller chart*
- *Setting time limits*
- *Actually paying attention in class (rather than surfing facebook, youtube etc)."*

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Study smarter not harder'. If you hate a class, don't kill yourself over it. Pick a class that is the same number of credits that you really enjoy. Focus on that, get an A in that class, and allow yourself to get a B in the one you don't enjoy as much. Before you know it you'll be getting A's in both."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Learn to balance work and play. You need both to maintain a healthy life!"

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

"Leaving [assignments] to the very last minute can be [stressful]...[start early but] try to budget a certain amount of time...to spend on it & try to stick to it so you are not spending all of your time on the[assignments]."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"Make adequate time for sleep...if you are not well rested... all the facts you spend time studying won't be remembered well!"

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"I study when I'm feeling efficient. When I'm not productive, I work on other things."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

"I found it really nice to keep one non-med school-related activity despite the increased workload, stress, etc.. I dance with a halau for only an hour every week, and it is very refreshing to get away from [assignments], textbooks, and studying, and have fun with people not related to the [medical] field. It kind of brings me back down to earth for a little while and gives me time to clear my head before I return to my books and computer."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2008

"I have come to value the importance of studying with others from different tutorial groups because it fills in gaps..."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

Getting the Most out of Vet School: Extra-Curricular Activities

Introduction

Vet school provides an opportunity not only to grow academically but also to enrich your life with extra-curricular activities that can “round out” your educational experience. UMN CVM students have a long tradition of participating in research, community service, and school activities. Students have valued basic or clinical research, participated in State Fair activities, worked with undergraduate students as a part of the Mentorship Program, volunteered with various groups and participated in multitudes of wet labs and lunch hour discussions.

All activities should be balanced with one’s educational responsibilities, but for most students, time exists in their schedules to “get involved”.

Benefits of Getting Involved

There are many ways that participating in class activities,

community service, or scholarly pursuits outside of class can benefit each of you:

- It provides an opportunity to get to know classmates and form new, lasting friendships.
- It provides an opportunity to work with and get to know faculty in the school.
- It can strengthen our resume making us more competitive for internship positions.
- It can contribute to the function of the CVM.
- It can provide an outlet or break from lectures and a means of applying lab skills.
- Depending on the project, it might lead to learning more about a topic than one could from a textbook.
- It can lead to a sense of accomplishment.
- It can help build confidence that can be carried over to other aspects of your life.
- It can provide an opportunity to learn about different careers.
- It provides an opportunity to give back to the community.

Strategies

- Actively think about whether you'd like to contribute in the form of community service, class activities, or research. Be proactive!
- Identify areas you have passion for.
- Call the contact people and get involved.

- Talk to other students about their activities.

Final Comments

Extra-curricular activities add to the richness of your vet school experience. Determine the time that you can afford to spend on these while still maintaining a strong academic performance. Identify areas of passion. Get involved.

Resources

- ...
- Your Class Officers
- Student Interest Group Coordinators

"Have you ever noticed that all the clubs in vet school are all about, well, vet school? Have you ever felt like you're supposed to be filling every moment of your time with externships, shadowing, and volunteer experience relating to the veterinary field? It seems like we're constantly being told that we need to do more veterinary things, but I strongly disagree. We spend so much time in and out of the classroom studying for exams and practicing skills, my advice is to use your free time to pursue other interests! Go to trivia nights, try out different fitness classes, join a book club, find friends outside of vet school. In my experience doing these things doesn't detract from time spent learning, but rather having time to disconnect completely from the vet med world means that I avoid burning out and come back to school feeling ready to learn."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Join clubs, but don't feel like you have to join every single one. Be a human outside of vet school."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

Dealing With Life, Death, and Human Suffering

Introduction

Veterinarians assist patients with many challenges and one of the most difficult challenges for many health care providers is providing care for patients who are dying or suffering. Veterinary professionals often feel a sense of hopelessness that they can no longer “do anything” for patients when they are unable to provide a cure. Dealing with these emotions may be especially challenging for veterinary students.

Reactions to these types of scenarios vary widely. Some feel numb and detached from their patients while others may become sad and distraught. Some desire to support the patient and family as much as possible while others prefer to avoid too much contact.

Veterinary professionals may fill the role of helping others through the end of their lives and must develop the skills to do so compassionately, while maintaining our own emotional and spiritual well-being.

Additionally, veterinary students are often dealing with the deaths of family and friends themselves.

Strategies

- Remember that there will be times when it's more important to *care* than to *cure*.
- Caring for a patient is a process—dealing with suffering and illness takes time but what you do on a daily basis may have great value to your patient.
- When patients who you are caring for on the wards die, talk to other members of your team (interns, residents, etc.) about what happened and support each other.
- Grieve when you are able to (depending on the urgency of the situation) and when you feel that you need to. Some prefer to grieve with the patient's family and friends while others usually chose to express such emotions in privacy.
- Some members of healthcare teams attend the funeral of patients they've cared for. It can provide some personal closure and offer an opportunity to empathize and support family members.
- Read books to help inspire you. Some recommendations are "The Good Death" by Marilyn Webb; "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom, and "Dying Well" by Dr. Ira Byock.
- Take time to renew yourself, such as watching a funny movie, spending time with a loved one or going to the beach.
- If religion or spirituality is important to you, pray for your patients.
- Particular scenarios that especially trouble you may be due to your own experiences with family members or friends who have been in similar situations. You may have unresolved grief that you need to deal with.

- Don't be afraid to seek professional help if needed, especially if you become depressed (see *Recognizing Depression*).
- Remind yourself about the preciousness of life. The dying can often teach us how to live. Try to live each moment to the fullest as much as they do.
- When a cure is no longer possible and a patient's passing is imminent, find your victories in helping them achieve a painless or "good" death. Avoid focusing on death as a defeat. Instead find solace in providing good palliative care.

People I Can Talk to

Crisis hot line (for yourself or someone else):
(612)-301-4673

Text "UMN" to 61222

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Boynton Mental health clinic: (612) 624-1444

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

- Your spiritual advisor
- Classmates, family or friends

SUGGESTED READING

- *The Good Death: The New American Search to Reshape the End of Life* by Marilyn Webb. This book discusses ethical issues surrounding death and dying as well as the hospice movement.
- *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom. This popular narrative is of one man's approach to his life and final days, seen through discourse with a former student.
- *Dying Well* by Dr. Ira Byock. This book, written by an experienced palliative care physician and advocate for improved end-of-life care, contains stories of how patients go through the dying process with dignity and how their hospice team helped them along the way.

Final Thoughts

"We are faced with a situation that the classroom cannot prepare you for. It is so important to recognize this and not be afraid to take time to get your thoughts and emotions together. No one will ever fault you for being compassionate and feeling badly for your patient. It is a normal and necessary process to go through on the way to becoming a physician."

—Daniel Egan, Emergency Medicine Resident and Medscape Columnist

"My advice is doing physical activity you like. It is not about health or building muscle. It is just therapy. If we only needed to worry about school stuff, it was actually the easiest. But we are adults. Everyone has to face other life difficulties besides school. I have been through an extremely hard time because of relationship. After crying every day for one month, I decided to take action to heal myself. I signed up for a week of yoga class. I went to yoga class at 6am for one week. Doing yoga and being in that atmosphere made me feel relax and better. I didn't

sign up for the whole year classes because of lacking of money. After that week, I started to use online yoga classes which are much cheaper. I can keep doing it because I do feel relax afterwards and I really enjoy it. Meanwhile, I read articles about how to move on stuff like that. "

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Don't delay mental health help – there is no shame in seeking counseling."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"My dad died unexpectedly during my undergraduate education. Dealing with that while still trying to maintain my GPA was one of the most difficult things I've ever had to do. I found that I grieved best when I was alone. I needed the solitude to just let my feelings out as they came to me. But then as time went by, I found I wanted to talk to someone about it. The University has counseling services and that helped me so much. Just having someone to help talk through what I experienced was more helpful than I ever thought it could be. Everyone grieves differently. If you feel you want to be around your friends after a loss, then do it. Don't let anyone tell you how you should grieve. But just know there are resources and people who want to help you. All you have to do is ask."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

Thriving on Clinics

Introduction

Your 4th year of vet school is a fun year and perhaps the most exciting. You finally get to see your learning process in action...with a real live patient! You'll have the chance to experience different specialties and find what you enjoy. You'll begin to develop a feel for the lifestyle of veterinarians. But it can also be exhausting at times. You may be working longer hours, taking call, seeing stressed clients and dying patients, and struggling with non-patient care issues like... finding parking around the hospitals and working with new teams.

Strategies

- Remember that teamwork is the key. It's great to find opportunities to "shine" on the wards and in the clinics but do not try to do so at the expense of your team.
- Maintain your nutrition and eat regularly.
- Carry articles or small pocket books with you so you can read up on things when you have small bits of down time.
- Always make sure your team knows how to find you.
- Do not be offended if a client requests that no vet student

be involved in her animal's care. It isn't personal; they are just scared.

- Try to take a multivitamin or bring home lunches. Available food is often not the healthiest food. And it's expensive.
- Even on busy rotations, try to find the time for activities that help you maintain your balance and motivation. Take breaks when you need, then give yourself permission to reward your efforts, and maintain contact with those you value.
- Seek feedback. Read the feedback you receive on your evaluations. Respond to the feedback positively.
- Be a sponge and soak things up.
- Remember that when their pets are ill, many clients are not at their "best".
- If you know you will be in a long procedure ahead of time, consider limiting your fluid intake beforehand.
- Remember that while we are invested in our patients, we do not have ultimate responsibility for their care. This can be reassuring at times. Our job is to learn.
- Enjoy your experiences...you may go into another field and never have the same opportunities again
-

Final Thoughts

Enjoy your moments in clinics. You will never have another opportunity like it. Yes, it can be tiring at times, but it's one important step in becoming a veterinarian.

Resources

...

- Your faculty mentor(s)
- Residents/attendings/senior students

—————

"I've always enjoyed watching UH volleyball and basketball. Even though it was difficult, I made it a point to go to as many games as I could. It was always a nice break from the hospital and it made me feel like I wasn't neglecting myself or my friends."

JABSOM student, Class of 2006

"I had a really difficult time during one of my rotations and my evaluations made me look like a terrible person. But, in some ways, these negative evaluations helped me succeed in my subsequent rotations because I was determined not to make the same mistakes and make sure the residents and attendings saw me as the curious and caring student that I really was."

JABSOM student, Class of 2006

"Going for twenty minutes runs after I was done working for the day help me keep in shape and maintain my sanity."

JABSOM student Class of 2006

Identifying and Managing Compassion Fatigue

*Student Well-
Being*

Dealing with Student Mistreatment

Introduction

Mistreatment remains, unfortunately, a common complaint in professional schools across the nation. In a 1998 JAMA study, some 72-99% of 1001 medical students surveyed reported some form of harassment or mistreatment from instructors, peers, hospital staff, or patients—this includes verbal, physical, and sexual abuse as well as discrimination based on race, age, ethnicity, gender, and religion.

- Abuse or mistreatment of any kind has been shown to negatively impact and compromise performance, productivity, and learning in professional and academic environments, and should not be tolerated.
- Some may say abuse or mistreatment is an inevitable part of a grueling professional training. This kind of apathy and submission, however, will only perpetuate the cycle of abuse and harassment.
- The cycle of abuse is not unique to medicine—it is seen in other professional and graduate training environments. Community-wide awareness is necessary.

- Persistent abuse is detrimental to the human spirit and erodes the purpose of the veterinary profession, which is to care for and serve those in need of health care.

UMN CVM prides itself in creating a friendly learning environment. Interaction in a supportive atmosphere is integral. As such, it is important that every generation of students and faculty work purposefully to create and mold this environment with enthusiasm.

What is Mistreatment?

Mistreatment may be defined as behavior or actions that show disrespect towards the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process. Disrespectful behaviors which include abuse, harassment, and discrimination are inherently destructive to the student/teacher relationship and not tolerated at the UMN CVM.

Abuse refers to treating others in a harmful, injurious or offensive way. It may include pressuring others into performing personal services, attacking someone verbally with insults,

unnecessarily humiliating or speaking unjustly about an individual. It also includes emotional abuse through the creation of an unnecessarily hostile environment, physical assaults, or unwanted sexual advances or request for services in exchange for higher grades.

Harassment refers to verbal or physical conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile work or learning environment in which submission to such conduct is a condition of continuing one's professional training.

Discrimination is those behaviors, actions, interactions, and policies that have an adverse effect because of disparate treatment, disparate impact, or the creation of a hostile or

intimidating work or learning environment due to gender, race, age, sexual orientation or other biases.

Questions to Consider?

- Am I reasonably certain my situation constitutes abuse? Is there a chance that I misinterpreted the perceived abuser's statements?
- Am I being overly sensitive to comments?
- Did the person say things to intentionally ridicule or humiliate me?
- Is there some other explanation for a person's behavior?

Having asked these questions, if you still feel violated or demoralized, it is important not to dismiss the matter and hope it will pass, or think that you are responsible for the mistreatment. Many vet students have an extremely high tolerance for different kinds of treatment, and that includes the abuse that may occur in clinical settings, whether from faculty, residents, interns, peers, hospital staff, or clients. It is thus important remember that respect and professional interactions help preserve student well-being and enthusiasm for vet med.

STRATEGIES

- A student who experiences mistreatment is strongly urged to bring the matter to the attention of their course director, rotation coordinator, or the Academic and Student Affairs office. University resources are also available for equity and diversity issues.
- Discussion and efforts to achieve clarity in the onset and nature of the mistreatment is an important step in resolving the issue.

- Students should be prepared to document the incident as well as have a clear self- understanding of how to present the matter in a mature, nonjudgmental, and objective way.
- Remember not to confuse firm feedback meant to assist you with mistreatment.
- Remember that while mistreatment may occur, it is not the rule.
- Remember if mistreatment is allowed to continue, it will do so. This is a detriment of an individual student, the vet school and to the veterinary profession as a whole. It is important to put a stop to the cycle.

Title IX – Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Under Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, the UMN has a responsibility to ensure that students have a learning environment that is free of gender discrimination and sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination prohibited by Title IX. If you feel you have been subjected to sexual harassment or discrimination, you should seek assistance as soon as possible.

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As a veterinary student at the UMN CVM, there are a number of potential resources available to you:

- All students at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (including JABSOM veterinary students) fall under the oversight of the University of Hawaii at Manoa Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Lori Ideta (Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of Hawaii at Manoa. lideta@hawaii.edu, or 956-3290).
- The JABSOM Office of Student Affairs (smerz@hawaii.edu,

692-1000, or via JABSOM Security after hours, weekends or holidays 692-0911) is available to JABSOM veterinary students “24/7” and works very closely with the UH Title IX Coordinator.

- The University of Hawaii Office of Gender Equity (Jennifer Rose, 956-9499, RoseJenn@hawaii.edu)
- The University of Hawaii Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office (Mei Watanabe, 956-7077, eeo@hawaii.edu)

Final Comments

Vet students will have many opportunities to interact with veterinarians, residents, peers, hospital staff, and clients. In any interaction, UMN CVM students are expected to act professionally and with maturity. Your maturity and respectfulness will be appreciated. The great majority of people you will encounter in vet school will want to foster your learning and help you in any way they can. Recognize, however, that if treatment towards you represents abuse, help is available. Don't hesitate to seek out your rotation coordinator, Dr. Lee (hospital director), Dr. Molgaard in the office of Academic & Student Affairs, or other resources listed.

Resources

- o ...
- Your Course or Clerkship Director

Paying for Vet school

Introduction

Now that you have successfully met all of the requirements for acceptance into vet school, how are you going to pay for four years of vet school? What is the cost? What are some of the resources available to you? Who can help you?

Cost and Sources of Financial Support

As of 2018, the average cost of four years at the UMN CVM (includes tuition, books, supplies and living expenses) is xxx. Sources of financial support include: Personal/family funds, federal loans, institutional loans, scholarships, grants and private loans.

Financial Strategies and Tips for Avoiding High Debt

- Have a reasonable and simple budget of your expenses each month.
- Have only one credit card and use it only for emergencies. Only charge what you can pay each month.
- Maintain a fund for emergencies (i.e. car repairs, medical bills, pet vet bills etc.).

- Little things add up! If you don't purchase that cup of coffee at least once a week, you will save about \$5 a week for a total of \$20.00 a month and in a year, that's a savings of \$240.00.
- Do you really need that new pair of shoes right now? Practice restraint on spontaneous shopping. "Window shop" instead.
- Do things that are fun and won't cost you anything (i.e. go to the beach with friends or family, get together with friends for a 'potluck dinner).
- Purchase an inexpensive accordion file to keep all of your loans and maintain contact with your lenders on a regular basis.
- Speak with your financial counselor before your debt becomes unmanageable.
- Eat at home or bring a lunch from home

How do I repay my loans?

Consolidation: If you have multiple loans, you may wish to consolidate all of them into one loan. Contact your lender(s) for various options on consolidation. You may also contact the Direct Loan Origination Center's Consolidation Department at 1-800-557-7392 or visit www.loanconsolidation.ed.gov.

Deferment

Deferment is a postponement of repayment under certain circumstances. Again, consult with your lender for your options. Visit the website: <http://studentaid.ed.gov> for details on special circumstances for deferment of your loan payments.

Forbearance

A period in which your repayments are temporarily reduced or postponed. There are usually specific conditions under which a forbearance is granted. You will need to check with your lender.

People I Can Talk to/Resources I May Need

- ...
- UH Financial Aid Services finaid@hawaii.edu
www.hawaii.edu/fas 956-7251
- General Information: Federal Aid Programs 1-800-4-FED-AID

(1-
80
0-4
33-
32
43)

- Federal Student Aid (FSA) www.studentaid.ed.gov
- FAFSA on the Web www.fafsa.ed.gov
- PIN website www.pin.ed.gov
- National Student Loan Data System www.nslds.ed.gov
- Scholarship Search www.fastweb.com
- MyUH Portal www.hawaii.edu/myuh/manoa
- OpenNet (Stafford loan application/

status)www.opennet.salliemae.com

Final Thoughts

Live like a student while you are a student so that you don't have to live like a student while you are a doctor. Make sound and thoughtful financial decisions during your four years of Vet school which will impact, positively, the rest of your life.

"Another thing most don't think of.. What does tuition look like for fourth year? Remember, clinical year is very different than your first three years; it has 3 semesters and can really bump up that tuition bill. Be aware of tuition hikes for fourth year and keep this in mind when making decisions."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Loans add up FAST, and what adds up even faster is interest. Unfortunately the debt to income ratio in vet med is killer, remember that when taking out loans now. That's not to say don't take out what you need, but there is a difference between what you want and what you need (I struggle with this)."

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Scholarships, scholarships, scholarships. You can't complain about being poor if you don't apply for scholarships (I do this and still don't get them, so I allow myself to complain ?)"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Paying for school can be a daunting task. Fortunately there are a number of resources available to you through both OSA and the financial aid office. It's manageable, especially when you can decide what is most important to you and where you should spend with the money you do have."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

“Make sure to complete and turn in the FAFSA as soon as the new year begins– just after Jan 1st, if you want a chance at getting good financial aid.”

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

Maintaining Motivation

Scenario #1:

Joe didn't feel like himself. At the start of the year he felt so energetic, motivated, and excited to begin vet school. He was up late each night studying and he genuinely enjoyed his clinical skills preceptor. But as the year went on his feelings began to change. He didn't feel like opening his textbook. Each class seemed to blend into the next and attending lectures became more and more difficult.

Introduction

No matter how devoted a person is to a particular career or course of action, it's completely normal to find motivation waning at different points in the year. It doesn't necessarily mean that you've chosen the wrong career or that you aren't committed. Consider some of the tips below to find the "spark" again.

Tips for Maintaining Motivation

- Ask yourself why you came to vet school. Remind yourself of your overall goals.

- Reflect on the things that you've enjoyed about vet school; new friends, new knowledge, etc. and remind yourself that between the studying, there have been many enjoyable moments.
- Vary your routine. Switch things around to make it new and fresh. See things from different perspectives.
- Identify things that sap your energy or are causing you concern. Don't let them linger or fester. Address them right away so that they bother you no more, or seek guidance from trusted friends, faculty or counselors.
- Spend more time with people who motivate you. Who makes you laugh? Who inspires you?
- Phone family members that give you an emotional lift.
- Reflect on the positive impact you've made on the lives of some of your patients.
- Take frequent breaks.
- Try presenting a learning issue in a different way than you have before. Make it fun.
- Develop a personal reward system- reward yourself for a good day's work. The reward can be a small thing like a favorite dinner, or a great movie. Perhaps, start a collection of something you value (e.g., stamps, rocks, baseball cards, etc.), and reward yourself with additions to your collection with each accomplishment of an academic goal, or a transition. Plan a trip at the end of the year or an outing at the end of each unit or subunit. Vary the type, amount, and frequency of your rewards.

Final Thoughts

If these tips don't seem to work or you feel overwhelmed

by anxiety or depression, see the chapters on *Recognizing Depression* and *Test Anxiety*.

People to talk to about maintaining motivation

Your supporters (family, friends, classmates)

Yourself – give yourself the same advice you would give a classmate!

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168, diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Anyone in Academic/Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

- Your physician

“What helps me keep up motivation more than anything is keeping a positive attitude. If there’s a test you’re struggling to study for coming up, look beyond it. Maybe there’s a cool lab you’re looking forward to, so tell yourself that you just have to get past the difficult test and then you’ll get to do something really interesting! As bad as things seem sometimes, there’s always something to look forward to, so do your best to focus on the good and the bad won’t seem so bad anymore.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2020

“Stay close to your friends that aren’t in vet school, they will give you a good perspective and its nice to have that outlet when you need to get away.”

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

“Dog and Cat Dissection Guide, A Regional Approach” Pasquini, Pasquini

If you buy one thing for vet school, make it this book!! It was required

for my anatomy 1 class, and I have used it every single semester of vet school. Unlike many other anatomy books, it tells

you the clinical significance of everything. It is so easy to get bogged down first year in the minutia, and if you can get your brain thinking clinically from day 1, you'll be in good shape. It is also an investment for the rest of your career, you will use it in several future classes, studying for boards, and your career in practice. I would give you mine but I refuse to ever give it up ?

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"Try these to remember why you want to be here:

Viral Vet- this is an iphone app where veterinary professionals can post cool cases. It's basically instagram for people in the profession.

Neuropetvet website- neuro is one of the most challenging parts of vet school (in my opinion), this website has a huge variety of cases, videos, articles and teaching tools. It's free for vet students! Take advantage!"

UMN CVM Student, Class of 2019

"If you are too chronically sleep deprived, exhaustion will begin to color your whole world negatively and challenge your motivation—try to insure enough personal time as well as sleep to keep yourself going about your studies with enjoyment and purpose. Just trying to push ahead and study without taking breaks can create a lot of inefficiency."

JABSOM Class of 2006

"Try to catch a movie here and there, and use that fun time as a reward if you finish a certain amount of work. Spend time with family and take some personal time for yourself to just relax, sleep, and 'de-stress."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"I think the more people [to whom you become

responsible], the better. Your tutorial and study group members in the first 2 years hold you accountable—this is motivation for really learning concepts well so you can teach them... The sense of value in such accountability will shine through when you take care of patients later. You learn something...because you care about what it means to someone else..."

JABSOM Class of 2007

Student Well-Being Valuing and Maintaining Your Support System

imageSelf-Assessment:Question #1:Do I have someone to lean on or to speak to in moments of frustration, stress, or depression? Yes No
Question #2:Do I often feel alone with no one to turn to in times of need? Yes No

Introduction

Going through vet school can be extremely stressful and nerve-racking at times. Students often learn to deal with these situations on their own through the use of effective coping strategies. However, a student may not feel equipped to handle the stress without the support of others, whether it may be in the form of assistance, advice, or having a "sounding board". It is important to form and nurture these support systems; they can make all the difference in a student's life.

Strategies

- Say "thank you." Voicing your gratitude can go a long way.

People who provide support also need to feel appreciated.

- Remember NOT to take your support system for granted. Show your appreciation with a simple but meaningful gesture such as a hug, a flower, a special note, or a favorite snack.
- You may need to identify different support systems for your differing needs. Be proactive about talking to people who may be able to offer advice and support.
- Don't always receive, take the time to give back.
- Communicate your needs; never assume that others, even close relationships, can read your mind.
- Have fun with your support systems when appropriate. HUMOR and LAUGHTER can result in miracles and can make all the difference.
- Tell your support system specifically what they've meant to you. "Aunty, if it wasn't for your financial help, occasional free dinners, and couch for me to nap on, I really don't think I could make it through vet school. You've really made a difference in my life."
- Invite your support system to your White Coat Ceremony and Graduation.

People to Talk to:

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,

diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu or anyone in Student Affairs

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

- Your spiritual advisor
-
- Organizations to which you belong

Final Thoughts

You do not have to always handle everything by yourself. If you need support and advice, reach out and ask. Asking for support is not a sign of weakness. It can be a measure of one's maturity and insight. Value and maintain your support systems. Let them know how much you appreciate them.

—————

“Although I’ve always thought of myself as a strong person, there were moments in med school where the support of my family and friends meant a lot. Sometimes just being able to cry in front of them was comforting. It was easy to neglect relationships in med school, but as time went on, I got better at calling, e-mailing, and spending time with loved ones when I had some time.”

JABSOM Student, Class of 2004

“My first year of [med] school was one of my biggest challenges. So many things were going wrong in my life, and at some points, I lost my interest in becoming a doctor. However, because of the great moral support I received from good friends, family, other students, and our counselors, I became stronger and more driven. I am glad they were there when I was most in need. I truly appreciate their support.”

JABSOM Student, Class of 2007

“I think it is normal to feel uncertain sometimes. When I did, I mentioned it to my significant other and he would help to remind me why I am here.”

JABSOM Student, Class of 2008*Student Well-Being**Being a Husband, Wife, or Significant Other in Vet School*

imageSelf-AssessmentQuestion #1: Would being married or in a long-term relationship affect my performance in vet school? Yes No
Question #2: Will my relationships suffer in vet school? Yes No

Introduction

Vet school often comes at a time when students are starting or considering starting life-long relationships. Or, some veterinary students have been married for many years prior to matriculating. The stresses and strains of vet school life have been known to adversely affect new and long-standing relationships.

Signs That A Relationship may be Suffering

- I'm always feeling angry or hostile.
- I don't communicate as well with my partner.
- We're not speaking.
- My school work is suffering.
- I never study at home anymore.
- I never ask my partner about his/her day because I'm too preoccupied with my own stresses and challenges.

How to keep relationships healthy and vital during the period when so much effort will be devoted to learning medicine.....

Strategies

Find ways to involve your partner in your vet school experience. Make your success a shared goal and not an individual one. Let the important person in your life know that though you will be busy as a student, their role in your life will not change. Let your relationship and respect for one another become a motivator for your academic success.

- Bring your partner to school to become familiar with your environment and experience. Introduce the tutorial rooms, labs, etc.
- Share an academic calendar to share your schedule, especially busy times.
- Share your successes (and disappointments) to encourage celebration with you, and to offer comfort when needed.
- Schedule time with your partner that is protected from school responsibilities. Use a calendar, write it in, and keep the commitment.
- Consider designating an evening each week to be the time you spend together (i.e. every Sunday evening).
- If finding study time is still difficult, considering doing work together (i.e., you could study and he/she could read or do work at the coffee house together).
- Talk often, share experiences and concerns.
- Find ways to continue to nurture the relationship (e.g., share your feelings in writing or by special demonstrations of affection and attention). While important in any relationship, it may be even more important during vet school.

- Try to maintain phone contact when able. Even if only for a short call, it's refreshing and healthy to share a few words, especially if you can't be together as much as you'd like to.
- If you've made a commitment, when stress or conflict arises, try not to resort to ending the relationship as a solution; focus on finding other ways to problem-solve that are grounded in the special aspects of your relationship.
- *"I'm sharing this with you because I love you and want us to live happily together for the rest of our lives."*
- *"First of all, let me say that you're the best thing in my life and I can't imagine being without you...I have been worried however..."*

People to Talk to About Relationships

Student counseling services: (612) 624-3323

Athena Diesch-Chham, 612-625-4168,
diesc009@umn.edu

Dr. Erin Malone, 612-625-4762, malon001@umn.edu

Dr. Molgaard, 612-624-4747, molga001@umn.edu

GOALe mentor(s)

Any faculty you feel you can approach

Classmates, friends, and family

Final thoughts

Contrary to what many think, having a meaningful relationship can help and NOT hinder school performance because it provides an additional support person and gives one purpose. No one

gets through vet school alone. Think of your spouse or significant other as a precious source of love, support, and inspiration. Keep your relationships healthy and strong.

"I actually think being married is better than not being married. Sure, [med] school is stressful, but your partner can be a very stabilizing force in your life. My wife has helped me keep things in perspective, while supporting me when times get tough. I make sure I set aside time for her just like I set aside time for school."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2000

"I couldn't imagine going through [med] school without my fiancé. He not only supported me through the best and the worst of times, but he also reminded me that there is a world outside of medicine—the one that my patients live in. For example, I used to joke that if I didn't have someone in my life to remind me of current events, the world could end and I wouldn't even know it. Having that perspective has been invaluable in relating to my patients."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"Some ways that my fiancé and I vitalized our relationship while I was in [med] school were to take ½ to 1 day off per week to do something unrelated to either of our chosen professions so we could both relax, and to give him a short phone call to say good night when I was on overnight call and I had some downtime."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"Try to make time for a "date" with your significant other/spouse...it doesn't have to be anything too fancy. It's not that meaningful if you just see them when you're eating, sleeping, or cleaning house. Just take a little time to enjoy each other's company

without worrying about school. This definitely helps the relationship."

JABSOM Student, Class of 2006

"It has been helpful for us to sit down on the weekend and discuss my schedule for the week. Then we write it on the calendar. This way [my spouse] knows what to expect and can see how busy I am in 'black and white.'"

JABSOM Student, Class of 2008

Student Well-Being

This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.