The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
The Koret School of Veterinary Medicine

December 2007

Committee Members:
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2. Prof. Michael Day, University of Bristol
3. Prof. Hans Dietz, Univ. of Copenhagen, (EAEVE member)
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Executive Summary
The review committee evaluated the Koret School of Veterinary Medicine (KSVM) within the Faculty of Agriculture between November 3rd and 8th, 2007. The Committee met with members of the faculty, non-faculty teachers, DVM students, graduate students, and clinical instructors. The Committee also visited the School teaching and clinical facilities in Rehovot and the Hospital and diagnostic facilities at Beit-Dagan.

The Koret School is the only veterinary school in Israel and is an essential resource for the health of all types of animals in the country. In the long term, the KSVM has great potential to be a regional center of excellence for veterinary medicine in the Middle East. The importance of this cannot be underestimated since there are many zoonotic and epizoonotic diseases in the region that threaten the welfare of all societies.

The KSVM has made great improvements since the last review and the Committee applauds the Central University, the School administration, and the academic staff for the progress that has been made. A number of the recommendations of the Pedersen Committee have been addressed. The new teaching facilities in Rehovot are very good, and the physical facilities and technology in the new gross anatomy lab are outstanding. The School is developing programs of excellence in teaching, clinical service, and research. The students are excellent and receive a first-rate veterinary education. As a measure of the School’s success, its graduates are accepted by veterinary institutions of high standing throughout the world.

The Faculty is talented, involved in high quality research, and committed to the success of the School in a remarkable way. However, the Committee sees this as a School still in need of care, guidance and investment. Specifically, there should be: (1) a critical number of faculty in basic science and clinical disciplines, (2) additional research floors and adequate equipment in the teaching and research building, (3) improved and expanded facilities at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH), (4) a major investment in both faculty and facilities in pathology, and (5) a bridge that links the Veterinary School with other Institutes in the Faculty of Agriculture.

In combination with the School of Agriculture, the KSVM is developing an initiative entitled Helping Individuals to Feed Themselves that is visionary and has
great potential for addressing world food problems in the 21st Century. Research and graduate education in the Institutes will form the core of this new initiative and will provide veterinary students with unique opportunities in public health and research.

A. Administration/Leadership and Administrative Structure
The School has appointed Professor Shimon Harrus as the new Head of School. One of his first priorities must be to develop closer academic ties with the Faculty of Agriculture. A second priority should be to institute a clear administrative structure within the School.

Recommendations
1. The School should be divided administratively into 3 departments: Basic Sciences, Pathobiology (to include pathology, immunology, parasitology and microbiology), and Clinical Sciences.
2. A system analogous to tenure for clinical track faculty should be considered.

B. Faculty Members/Academic Staff
The number of faculty positions is too small to support the missions of the School. Most disciplines in both basic and clinical sciences lack a critical number.

Recommendations
1. The number of faculty should be increased to a minimum of 40. The goal should be to increase by at least two new faculty positions per year for the next 10 years in addition to replacing faculty members who leave or retire during the decade. The School’s highest priority should be in recruiting faculty with board certification in pathology, clinical pathology, and diagnostic imaging.
2. Every junior faculty should be allocated a mentor.
3. The Academic Planning and Development Committee should be enlarged to include representatives of junior clinical faculty.

C. Pathology
At present there is a severe deficiency in this discipline within the School and the necropsy facility at the Kimron Institute presents a health hazard to all personnel. It must be replaced.

Recommendations
The KSVM and University must urgently address the marked deficiencies in this core subject area; specifically:
1. a concerted effort must be made at the highest level to build a new Diagnostic Services Facility (Post Mortem Room, Histopathology and Clinical Pathology laboratories). The Committee deems this as an essential investment in the future of the KSVM and the State Veterinary Services.
2. administration of this service facility should be transferred, under contract, from the Kimron Institute to the KSVM.
3. two anatomical pathologists and two clinical pathologists must be recruited to supplement existing expertise, and to form the nucleus of a new Department of Pathobiology. The postmortem and histopathology facilities make it unlikely that any faculty appointment in diagnostic pathology can succeed under the present circumstances.

D. Curriculum
The Committee recognizes that there are particular gaps within the curriculum.
Recommendations
1. The School should expand educational opportunities in veterinary public health, and provide laboratories in microbiology and parasitology. The course in laboratory animal medicine should be moved from the first year to later in the curriculum.
2. All core disciplines must be taught by faculty and not by external teachers.
3. Students should have a more career-specific curriculum in the 4th year, permitting them to take advantage of all the electives in their chosen field.
4. Peer review of teaching should be instituted to help junior faculty develop their instructional skills. Resident teaching should be mentored and evaluated.
5. The results of the 4th year comprehensive examination should be used as an outcomes assessment of the curriculum.

E. Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH)
The hospital functions well and is a vibrant centre for animal care and teaching.
Recommendations
1. There must be a minimum of two faculty per clinical service
2. A budget to insure acquisition of new clinical equipment should be developed.
2. Junior clinical faculty should be mentored ensure the success of their academic careers.
3. A long-term strategic plan for the VTH should be developed.

F. Research
The Committee was impressed by the range and quality of basic research conducted at the KSVM. Recent appointments of key research scientists now form the basis for a high quality research program.
The School and University appear to place less value on clinical research than basic research. Clinical research is defined too narrowly, is not well supported, and in terms of importance to the KSVM’s mission, should not be considered distinct from basic research.
Recommendations
1. A School Research Committee should be formed to establish research priorities, equipment purchases, and the adequacy of facilities.
2. Start-up funding should be adequate for the needs of all faculty in the School.
3. An infrastructure to support clinical research in the Hospital should be in place.
4. Clinical staff should have adequate protected time to conduct research.

G. Students
The students are mature, highly motivated, of excellent calibre, and dedicated to the profession.
Recommendations
1. Admission to the School should take into consideration the requirement for full participation in courses on laboratory animal medicine and food hygiene.
2. The Committee recommends that the senior thesis becomes a prestigious competition with a substantial monetary award.
3. From the start of their 1st year, and continuing through the entire 4-year curriculum, students should be exposed to seminars from leaders in veterinary medicine from all walks of life. The goal should be to enlarge the window through which students view the world.
4. The School should secure funds to support students wishing to undertake research with faculty during the summer months.
5. In view of the need for veterinary training in global public health, the KSVM should actively develop opportunities for students to work in foreign countries, especially in countries of the developing world.
6. Provided the size of the academic staff and the facilities are increased, student numbers could be increased moderately.

H. Teaching Facilities
Teaching facilities are very good, those in the new gross anatomy lab are outstanding. The Committee recommends that the School utilize or construct a student laboratory for the teaching wet laboratories in microbiology and parasitology.

I. Admission and Tuition
Admission to the KSVM is highly competitive and a large proportion of Israeli students must study abroad. As a result, Israel is faced with a growing number of recent graduates from foreign institutions who require clinical training before they are licensed to practice veterinary medicine in Israel. It seems desirable and important to incorporate some of these students into clinical training programs of the School, which may include the 4th year program and/or post-graduate clinical courses. In view of the small size of the faculty, this will require a concomitant and appropriate increase in the number of faculty and staff as well as investment in infrastructure.

J Future plans to strengthen KSVM
1. The KSVM should strongly embrace the Faculty of Agriculture’s initiative Helping People Help Themselves. The Faculty of Agriculture administration should be fully aware of the strength the KSVM can bring to this program. The KSVM administration should pursue this initiative vigorously for it provides opportunities in veterinary medicine that are unmatched anywhere!
2. The School should negotiate with the University for one, full-time Development Officer to lead the fund raising program. The Veterinary Teaching Hospital, especially the equine clinic, will obtain the greatest benefit from such an appointment.