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VETERINARY MEDICAL TRAINING, MT. HOPE MEDICAL COMPLEX,  
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, TRINIDAD, W.I.

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### *Introduction*

Veterinary medicine is a unique profession being related to both medicine and agriculture; and among the health professions, it has the most diverse responsibilities. This diversity has a profound effect on veterinary medical training in which there is a balanced emphasis on health and production of food, on companion animals and public health.

The School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) is planned as a regional institution committed to the development and promotion of animal health and productivity in the Caribbean. The curriculum will be structured to provide students with scientific training that will emphasize preventive aspects of medicine with a herd; and not an individual approach to the veterinary medical problems in the communities they will serve.

Major efforts will be made to orient the students to operate as members of a health science team dedicated to the concept of *one medicine*; in which the total health of all animals, including man, is of primary importance. Activities of the SVM will encompass teaching, research and public service across the full range of interests of modern veterinary medicine, while at the same time giving priority to the needs of the livestock subsector of the Caribbean.

### *Mount Hope Medical Complex Task Force*

In September 1978, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago established the Mount Hope Medical Complex Task Force which was charged with the responsibility of planning and implementing the decision to establish a Medical School and Teaching Hospital, a Children's Hospital, a Dental School, Advanced

Nursing Education Unit, and facilities for teaching Pharmacy. In accordance with its decision that the proposed School of Veterinary Medicine should be co-located on a suitable site with the Medical and Dental Schools at Mount Hope, the Government expanded the terms of reference of the Task Force to include the planning and implementation of the Veterinary School and expand the membership of the Task Force accordingly.

### *Physical Facilities*

The School is designed for an annual intake of 20 students and a faculty of approximately 35 academic staff. The veterinary facilities are located in the south-east corner of the site, west of the central administration building and south of the housing area. The total net area for the School and Teaching Hospital is 3,478 square metres, exclusive of joint facilities to be shared between the three disciplines and located in the medical school complex. These facilities include four multipurpose laboratories, library, audio-visual and auto-tutorial facilities.

The School and Hospital are designed as a two-storey concept that conserves land area along a linear east-west axis to take advantage of the breeze which by providing natural ventilation for temperature, humidity, odour and noise control will keep the operating cost of the physical facility down.

### *Educational Objectives*

The objectives of the Veterinary Medical School include:-

1. Veterinary medical education and service programme oriented towards developing and

promoting a livestock industry aimed at producing wholesome meat and dairy products and regional self-sufficiency in these products.

2. Provision of reasonable opportunity for students from the Commonwealth Caribbean to enter the profession of Veterinary Medicine in preparation for life-long learning and an appreciation for, and sensitivity to, societal needs.
3. Providing adequate manpower to meet the needs of the Region for veterinary services with specialised training in food animal medicine to students, veterinary officers and practitioners.
4. Improve continuing educational programmes for veterinarians and animal owners.
5. Provide a programme of Veterinary Medicine well balanced in teaching, research and public service.
6. Encourage animal disease research with special emphasis on livestock health problems peculiar to the Caribbean region.
7. Promote a clear understanding and appreciation for the practice of preventive medicine in relation to both animal and human health.
8. Provide a biomedical investigational resource of animal disease models for promoting joint research programmes with other disciplines.

#### *Academic Structure*

Initially, it is proposed that the SVM consist of three departments, Preclinical, Paraclinical, and Clinical Sciences. In view of the integrated teaching of the Preclinical Sciences, it is recommended that the Department of Preclinical Sciences be a joint department between Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine.

#### *Admission*

The admission requirements will be the same as those of Medicine and Dentistry. The first intake of students is currently scheduled for October 1985.

#### *Proposed Curriculum*

The emphasis on the proposed curriculum will be on food animals, preventive herd medicine, production, and public or community health.

##### *Year I (4 terms):*

Physiology I  
Anatomy I  
Histology and Embryology  
Biochemistry  
Animal Management  
Animal Production I  
Principles of Rural Sociology

##### *Year II:*

Physiology II  
Anatomy II  
Animal Genetics  
Nutrition  
Animal Production II  
Pharmacology  
Biostatistics  
Clinical Methodology

##### *Year III:*

Pathology  
Microbiology  
Parasitology  
Immunology  
Theriogenology  
Clinical Methodology

##### *Year IV:*

Medicine - integrated diseases and production of food  
Animals - cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry, rabbits and fish  
Surgery  
Radiology  
Toxicology  
Public Health and Epidemiology  
Clinics

##### *Year V:*

Diseases of Dogs

Diseases of Cats  
Diseases of Horses  
Public Health  
Livestock Economics  
Clinics  
Ambulatory Clinics & Extension  
Extra-Mural Clinical Experience

The Year V students will be divided into small groups to gain experience in the Animal Hospital, with the Ambulatory Clinic and Extension.

Students will be required to obtain approved Extra-mural Experience during the breaks between Year I and II, II and III, and III and IV. Recommended experience includes spending a month at the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (ECIAF), working on livestock and poultry farms, working with Ministry veterinarians in their countries, and working with private practitioners, etc.

The teaching of Veterinary Public Health and Food Hygiene will be assisted by part-time faculty from the Division of Veterinary Public Health, Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Animal husbandry, an important part of the Veterinary Medical Curriculum, will be taught by members of the Department of Livestock Sciences, Faculty of Agriculture, The University of the West Indies.

#### *Ambulatory Clinical Training*

Establishment of an ambulatory clinical service is essential in the teaching of good animal medicine. Clinical cases for teaching will come from The University Farm, Government livestock projects, and private farms sufficiently close to the Mount Hope Medical Complex. The ambulatory service is intended to provide livestock and poultry farmers with a clinical service, herd health programme, and a regular extension service. This service will be supplemented by diagnostic help from pathologists, microbiologists, and parasitologists in the Department of

#### *Veterinary Paraclinical Sciences.*

An Extension Service for the Livestock Industry, especially small farmers, is urgently required since little information is currently available on reduced productivity due to disease, inadequate nutrition and parasitism. Provision of such an extension service covering the various sections of the Livestock Industry will be a central part of the Ambulatory Service to be provided by the Veterinary School. An efficient Ambulatory Clinical and Extension Service will justify much of the expense of the SVM.

#### *Postgraduate Training*

It is recommended that postgraduate training within the SVM be established as soon as possible after undergraduate teaching commences. Programmes envisaged include M.Sc. and MPH by course work, and research degrees M.Phil., Ph.D., and DVSc. (or DSc.). In addition, it is proposed to offer a MVSc. degree for external candidates in the Caribbean. The MVSc. will be awarded to candidates completing a programme of guided study, passing a comprehensive examination, completing an applied research project in the field and submitting a satisfactory thesis.

#### *Research*

An active research programme is considered essential if the SVM is to assume a major role in promoting animal health and productivity within the Caribbean. The SVM plans to employ as many veterinarians with a Ph.D. degree and a record of research accomplishments as possible. Inter-disciplinary research will be encouraged within and without the SVM in the Complex.

Careful attention will be given to:-

1. Maintaining a balanced basic and applied research programme.
2. Developing a research programme that will address existing priority problems in the

Caribbean.

3. Confining efforts to projects that can be adequately completed and dropping projects that are no longer productive or needed;

and

4. Avoid dissipating research energies in diverse and scattered projects, i.e. team research in priority problems will be actively encouraged and supported. °
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