

Global Initiatives in Veterinary Education (GIVE)

The Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida and School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Austral



The Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine (VMRCVM) at Blacksburg, VA, USA, and College Park, MD, USA, and the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) at the University of Florida (UFL), Gainesville, FL, USA, and their companion college, the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Austral in Valdivia, Chile are undertaking a long-term, mutually beneficial partnership to upgrade three veterinary schools through a cooperative exchange program involving faculty, staff, and students.

The co-partnership of AAVMC member colleges is mutually coordinated by Dr. Bettye Walters (bwalter1@umd.edu) (301-314-6821) and Dr. Jorge Hernandez (hernandezj@vetmed.ufl.edu). Since VMRCVM is the lead institution, Dr. Walters is the primary contact.

Dr. Walters (bwalter1@umd.edu) is Director of the Center for Public and Corporate Veterinary Medicine at VMRCVM and is the University of Maryland representative on the AAVMC International Affairs Committee. Dr. Francois Elvinger is the Virginia Tech member of the AAVMC International Affairs Committee. The Dean of VMRCVM is Dr. Gerhardt Schurig (gschurig@vt.edu). The College Phone number is 540-331-7666. About five additional VMRCVM faculty members will participate in the program.

The UFL project coordinator is Dr. Jorge Hernandez (hernandezj@vetmed.ufl.edu) who is Director of International Programs for the College of Veterinary Medicine at UFL and a member of the AAVMC International Affairs Committee. The Dean of the veterinary College at UFL is Dr. Glenn Hoffsis (hoffsisg@mail.vetmed.ufl.edu). About 10 additional UFL veterinary faculty members will cooperate in various phases of the project. The college telephone number is 352-392-4700.

Dr. Victor Cubillos Goody is the Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences, Universidad Austral de Chile. Five veterinary faculty members from the Universidad Austral de Chile will cooperate in this partnership.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by Dean Schurig and Dean Goody that highlights the agreements between VMRCVM and School of veterinary Medicine at the University of Austral.

International programs at VMRCVM focus on improving the educational status of both US and Chilean veterinary students and faculty while addressing—in cooperation with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and International Services (IS)—potential barriers to trade in animals and animal products in face of increasing risks of introduction of emerging and exotic diseases resulting from accelerating international trade and travel. Issues surrounding the project include adding curricular

components focusing on food safety and security, veterinary infrastructure strengthening, emergency responsiveness, animal welfare, and international trade in genetically modified organisms.

International programs at UFL target Latin America. They are student centered—with heavy faculty involvement—and serve companion animals, livestock & poultry. They incorporate education, research, public information, delivery of veterinary services, and broad activities in animal health, food safety, and public health.

The School of Veterinary Medicine at the University Austral in Valdivia, Chile, founded in 1954, has a five-year curriculum and is one of six Chilean veterinary colleges listed in the AVMA Directory and Resource Manual whose graduates are certified by the national government to practice veterinary medicine in the country. It offers training in basic and clinical sciences.

This alliance of two US veterinary colleges—involving three major universities—with a companion college in Chile presents a unique opportunity to achieve AAVMC GIVE program goals of improving safe international trade and addressing global tranquility by alleviating poverty and starvation through a global initiative in veterinary medical education. Current program components include:

- Assessment of potential trade barriers between US and Chile
- Training of veterinary students and faculty to address the challenges of safe international trade in animals and animal products in conformance with internationally accepted guidelines and regulations;
- US / Chile two-way faculty and student exchanges involving academic campuses and field trips; and
- Development of real-time audio-video conferencing between the partner colleges;
- Exchange programs for academic clinicians;
- Recovery of wetlands and wildlife in Chile; and
- Animal control, animal welfare and control of rabies and other zoonoses.

If you wish further information about the VMRCVM-UFL co-partnership with the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Austral GIVE program, please contact Dr. Bettye Walters or Dr. Jorge Hernandez.

If you seek further information about the AAVMC GIVE Program, please contact Dr. Mike Chaddock (mchaddock@aavmc.org).