The UH Veterinarian Mentorship/Shadowing Program
BY THE PRE-VETERINARY CLUB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI’I-MANOA
2011

Abstract
In order to provide a valuable opportunity and learning experience for all UH pre-veterinary students, the UH Pre-Veterinary Club will be sponsoring a pilot program that will match students with a veterinarian for an unpaid volunteer position which will entail observing and participating in clinical procedures and case studies. Veterinary medicine is an extremely diverse field, so this program aims to help expose students to different aspects of the profession and may provide guidance to a particular area of interest. Over the course of summer and fall of 2011, Hawai’i veterinarians will be contacted in order to build a list of vets who are interested in participating in the program. Students will fill out an application form explaining what they hope to get out of the program, and the pre-veterinary club officers and/or the pre-veterinary advisor will match them to a veterinarian. The pre-veterinary club will be keeping in contact with both the veterinarian and the student to ensure that both parties are getting as much out of the experience as possible.

Background
The consensus among pre-veterinary students is that it is important to their educational experiences to procure a position working in a clinical environment that promotes active learning and development of critical thinking skills. The Pre-Veterinary Club has seen a large increase in the amount of members over the past few years, so it has been decided that we will put forth our best effort to provide our pre-veterinary students with a valuable opportunity to learn as much about the veterinary field as possible.

Layout and Methods

Overview
Phase 1 of developing this program involves sending this proposal out to as many members of the veterinary community on this island. For those veterinarians who are interested in participating in this program, a concise “profile” of their practice (including area of specialty, location, and availability) will be maintained in our records.

These records will be available for pre-veterinary students and veterinarians to browse online. All students applying for a shadowing position will fill out an application form and indicate their top 5 choices. The pre-veterinary club committee and/or the pre-veterinary advisor will make the final decision based on availability / complementarity.

The student and the veterinarian will receive an evaluation form (see attachment) which will be kept for club records and used to help improve the structure of this program. The student will also fill out a risk release waiver form prior to starting their volunteer position.

After the student receives an assignment with the veterinarian, it will be the student’s responsibility to contact the veterinarian 2-3 weeks prior to the first day of work in order to coordinate a schedule that will benefit both the student and the veterinarian.

The student will also receive a contract and a set of program guidelines and rules after being accepted into the program.

Each student is expected to volunteer a minimum of 50 hours/semester or 100 hours/summer while matched with a veterinarian. After the end of each semester or summer, participating veterinarians will be reassigned to new students—this is done in order to give the student the opportunity of learning how to work in a variety of clinical environments. However, in special cases or depending on the amount of students participating, reassignment schedules may be subject to change. The student should
also be recording their hours worked and experiences and skills gained for their own personal records.

**Layout and Methods**

**Logistics Discussion**

In an attempt to reach as many local veterinarians as possible, veterinarians who are members of groups such as the HVMA (Hawai’i Veterinary Medical Association) and HVS (Honolulu Veterinary Society) will be initially contacted to see if they would be willing to participate and spread the word to other members. Through this and word of mouth, it is hoped that a large number of veterinarians in diverse areas of practice will participate in this program.

**Management**

A Program Coordinator (PC) from the Pre-Veterinary Club will be selected to oversee this program. The PC will be responsible in management of student applications, coordinating the veterinarians’ schedules with potential applications, assigning students to veterinarians, and organization of student and veterinarian evaluations.

The PC will be under some supervision from the President of the Pre-Veterinary Club, but must otherwise be able to work independently.

Applications will be available to view year-round on the Pre-Veterinary Club website. Applications can be submitted either electronically via e-mail or a hard copy can be hand-delivered to the PC during Pre-Veterinary Club meetings.

**Timetable to Completion**

Once approved, Phase 1 will begin promptly. Once veterinarians express interest in participating, Phase 2 can begin shortly thereafter. This will include maintaining records on the Pre-Veterinary Club website located at [http://www2.hawaii.edu/~prevet/](http://www2.hawaii.edu/~prevet/) and contacting pre-veterinary students and alerting them to begin the application process.

Since this is the first time this shadowing program will be implemented, student applications will be accepted throughout the Fall 2011 semester. All participants in the program should schedule their first day of work to begin within the first week of classes in January 2012 at the latest.

The application process for all subsequent semesters will be carried out during school intermission, so that the student will begin their first day of the shadowing program within the first week of the semester—this way, the entire semester can be spent volunteering with the assigned veterinarian.

**In Conclusion**

The Pre-Veterinary Club is committed to develop a successful veterinarian mentorship / shadowing program which will benefit all pre-veterinary students by providing a valuable opportunity to experience diversity among the veterinary field.

We thank you for your support of this initiative and look forward to further improving the Pre-Veterinary Club so that it can foster a positive, learning-focused environment for the benefit of the club members and for the veterinary community.

**Contact Information**

- The Pre-Veterinary Club – prevet@hawaii.edu
- Mentorship Leader of the PVC – prevet@hawaii.edu
- Dr. Ashley Stokes (PVC advisor) – amstokes@hawaii.edu

**Attachments**

- Risk Release Form
- Shadow Program Application (includes rules, guidelines, and expectations)
- Student Evaluation Form
- Veterinarian Evaluation Form

* Forms will be made available online at the UH Pre-Veterinary Club website: [http://www2.hawaii.edu/~prevet](http://www2.hawaii.edu/~prevet)