



**Foothill College Veterinary Technology Program  
Annual Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

Date: 2/23/22  
 Time: 6:00 pm  
 Location: Zoom and Vet Tech Lab

**Attendee List**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Email</b>
Lisa Eshman, DVM	Foothill Veterinary Technology Program	Program Director	<a href="mailto:eshmanlisa@fhda.edu">eshmanlisa@fhda.edu</a>
Shaelyn St. Onge-Cole, RVT	Foothill Veterinary Technology Program	Full time faculty	<a href="mailto:Stonge-coleshaelyn@fhda.edu">Stonge-coleshaelyn@fhda.edu</a>
Kelly Zeytoonian, DVM	Foothill Veterinary Technology Program	Internship Coordinator, Practice Owner Starwood Equine	<a href="mailto:kelly@starwoodequine.com">kelly@starwoodequine.com</a>
Sharon Fornes, RVT, VTS (Anesthesia/Analgesia)	VCA Hospitals, Northern California	VCA Senior Talent Acquisition Partner, Technician and Assistant, Northern California Regions	<a href="mailto:sharon.fornes@vca.com">sharon.fornes@vca.com</a>
Sue Brodbeck, RVT	Covetrus	Field Representative	<a href="mailto:sue.brodbeck@covetrus.com">sue.brodbeck@covetrus.com</a>
Sara Taylor, RVT	SF SPCA	Nursing Manager	<a href="mailto:staylor@sfspca.org">staylor@sfspca.org</a>
Teresa Ong, MA	Foothill College	AVP Workforce	<a href="mailto:ongteresa@foothill.edu">ongteresa@foothill.edu</a>
Summer Burke Irmiter, RVT	Adobe Animal Hospital	President	<a href="mailto:summer@adobestaff.com">summer@adobestaff.com</a>
Tish Callos Dipman	BOK Ranch	Executive Director at BOK Ranch	<a href="mailto:tishcallos@yahoo.com">tishcallos@yahoo.com</a>
Tiffany Mitchener, DVM	Foothill College	Full time faculty	<a href="mailto:mitchenertiffany@fhda.edu">mitchenertiffany@fhda.edu</a>
Laurie Kenny	Foothill College	1 <sup>st</sup> year student	<a href="mailto:kennylor@gmail.com">kennylor@gmail.com</a>
Mark Brinker	Foothill College	2 <sup>nd</sup> year student	<a href="mailto:brinker.mark@gmail.com">brinker.mark@gmail.com</a>

Ria Janelle Quinton	Foothill College	student	
Michelle Hoppe	Foothill College	2 <sup>nd</sup> year student	<a href="mailto:michelle@rightsock.com">michelle@rightsock.com</a>
Kelly Sinkula	Adobe Animal Hospital	Intern director, Adobe	<a href="mailto:kellys@adobestaff.com">kellys@adobestaff.com</a>
Stephen Cital, RVT	Laboratory Manager at Stanford University		matacital@gmail.com
Yvonne Brandenburg, RVT, VTS (SAIM)	SAGE	Clinical Learning & Development Specialist, Sage Centers	ybrandenburg@sagecenters.com
Shay Magditch, RVT	Steinbeck Equine	Equine	shay@steinbeckequine.com
Kim Adams	SAGE Learning and Development	Clinical Trainer	nadams@sagecenters.com
Kit O'Doherty	Public member		<a href="mailto:kitodoherty@gmail.com">kitodoherty@gmail.com</a>
Elizabeth Belaski, RVT	Silicon Valley CTE	Program Director, Veterinary Assisting at Silicon Valley CTE	ebelaski@metroed.net

### Meeting Objectives:

-  Update Advisory Board on Program Status
-  Introduce Shae as Co-Director of Program
-  Introduce new full time faculty member, Tiffany Mitchener, DVM
-  Prepare for AVMA-CVTEA Site Visit 11/30-12/1/22
-  Curriculum discussion
-  Program improvement discussion

### Agenda

1. Introductions: Shae is now co-program director, new full time faculty Dr. Tiffany Mitchener, new part time faculty (Laressa Dimalanta, RVT, Dr. Michelle Croom, Dr. Harish Narayan, Dr. John Gorzynski, Sue Novik, RVT)

2. Approval of June 2021 Minutes.

Link to minutes: [VT Advisory Board Minutes 2021](#)

Minutes approved with no comments or corrections. No abstentions or objections.

3. Discuss program status and our response to pandemic.

- a. Zoom Room – allows faculty to teach simultaneously in class and at home. Can record demos and lectures. Student learning continues when unable to attend in person.
- b. Flexibility around attendance to keep us safe
- c. Student demographics
- d. Surgery patients change to private owners—advantages are in soft skills, client communication, real world experience under professional teachers, service to community. (Shae). Soft skills considered “critical skills.” We will update our language and start calling these skills “critical.”
- e. Animal care (Tiffany) Goat update: Ziggy has R CFJ luxation. Likely secondary to trauma from interaction with Lucy. Goats have been permanently separated. Not ideal separation but managing. Fall Q there were 4 dogs and 4 cats on campus. Winter Q there are only 3 dogs due to very low census at animal shelter. All IACUC protocols being followed. New weekly

- rounds with DVM and students to improve animal care/treatment and give students increased time to perform physical exams.
- f. New Veterinary Assisting programs at Elmwood and Street Academy (Shae). Elmwood is a correctional facility that will start an 8-week course in vet assisting with separate female and male cohorts. Street Academy is an alternative high school. Enrollment to start in spring. The Program long-term goal is to expand to juvenile facilities. Early opportunities for incarcerated students may help them succeed. Need more instructors to expand to more programs.
  - g. Guided Pathways (Lisa). Foothill's Guided Pathways supports all students through the confusion of community college. Guided Pathways informs all students of the opportunities in veterinary technology. Lisa has worked with the Guided Pathways team to create MetaMajors that reach all students who may be interested in a career with animals. Veterinary Technology has dedicated counselors who can assist any student that expresses an interest in veterinary medicine.
  - h. As part of our Mission, we have been reflecting on our DEI policies and hosted one of two trainings in winter quarter for all faculty. (Lisa) In the winter workshop, faculty discussed assessment through an equity lens. A spring workshop is scheduled to build on this topic.
  - i. Equipment and Supplies Update (X-ray, washer, dryer) (Shae). Discussed new software system (Vetblue). Feedback on the software is that it takes practice. Nice to access from home. Do not need to see logs in the physical lab. There is a student request for further training and formatting. Suggestion to create zoom video with explanations and print out a report for students to see final copy.
  - j. Perkins money received for new X-ray machine to be installed this spring. New washer was purchased last spring quarter. Just learned active scavenge system is not working. Will cost \$30-40K to fix. Board member discussed a system of modified canisters with built in vacuum may be an option. Shae and Lisa will use f/air canisters for all anesthesia machines this spring and get more information on HVAC/active scavenger during spring quarter.

4. Update partners on AVMA site visit (Shae). Our next accreditation visit will be Nov-Dec 2022.

There have been numerous changes to Site Visits due to COVID. More pictures and videos required on the site end. Visit will be 11/30-12/1. Advisory Board members were informed of the following needs:

Public member  
 DVM  
 RVT not from Foothill  
 AVMA will be sending a survey to members  
 Student Vaccination Status

AVMA requires Rabies vaccinations for all students, or we must institute a draconian Rabies mitigation policy. For at least 1/3-1/2 students, they do not have medical insurance, or their insurance does not cover Rabies vaccination.

Timeframe is the challenge. AVMA requiring immediate compliance. Goal to vaccinate seniors by end of summer and rising seniors/freshman by 1<sup>st</sup> day of fall quarter.

\$260 per person w/o insurance. Adobe offered to cover student interns, then went on to offer to cover any senior student for full RV in exchange for 3 relief shifts. Each shift is 8 hours. Student would also get paid for relief shift. Megan Packer = contact.

#### 5. Student demographics

There are three male students in both classes.

One Black student in each class with the remaining women mixed between Asian, white, LatinX. One pregnancy occurred this year. One Native American. 40% Latin X, 30% Asian American.

#### 6. Curriculum update

1. OER use

2. Library books. Will have program-wide textbooks available to all VT students starting next year. Intro students will have access to limited supply for next couple years; goal is for full set. Offering free access to all texts fulfills our mission of equity and inclusion.
3. Moving classes—summer tutoring is offered to rising seniors and graduates (help with VTNE prep), moving terminology to summer. COVID was very difficult for students. Trying to increase support. In 2023, we will be adding Radiology to the summer schedule for seniors.
4. Long term goal is to move anesthesia lecture to winter, so students are better prepared in the lab. Asked for feedback from AB: The advisory board seemed receptive to this idea. Discussion about pharmacology. Recommendation to embed pharmacology in other classes. Idea of going slower and more in depth as well as application of drugs in all classes. Teaching students how to learn. More repetition is better for students in the long run. Difficult to revise curriculum completely but might be able to have “side conversations” within courses. Both SAGE and Stanford advisory board members offer their services as pharmacology guest lecturers. SAGE has content it can share.
5. Offer three-year track for our program—need input. Advisory board is very supportive. Several state that this would help their vet assistants to be involved with program to become RVT’s and continue to work at their practices. As a response, Lisa stated that we already have students who spend three years to complete the program and asked those employees to contact us.

7. Internship discussion with Dr. Kelly Zeytoonian. First year Internship class will be moved fully to summer (all 110 hours), starting in 2023. This is to offer more support to the students. Recent survey of students in program show 42% want to work in exotics and wildlife, 16% in SA/emergency, 16% in SA/GP, 2 students interested in equine. Of current students: 80% currently in paid internship positions. Average pay is \$20-23/hr. Over 50% are paid >\$18/hr. Some are in the \$25-30/hr range. Speaks to quality of students. Survey of why students pick an internship site: Looking for mentorship, room for growth, extra practice, a teamwork culture, a good medical practice culture. Pay was very low on the list. Majority of students plan to remain in the Bay Area after graduation. Note was made by SAGE that they are working on developing an internship program. It was noted that several students are interning with shelters. These internships often excel with animal handling but not as much of an emphasis on client communication skills.

Finally, a note from the AB: students seemed more engaging this year at the job fair. There has been a noticeable positive difference in communication skills.

8. Survey will go out later this year to program graduates. Opened discussion for any specific questions to ask on survey. Suggestions were what kind of practice, where is it located, what is the pay/benefits? Why did they choose it? If they have left a practice, then why? What should VT program work on more? What were you best prepared for – and least? Bottom line: What can the VT program do better?

Dr. Zeytoonian noted that she asks the students every year for feedback on the practices with internships. She has 420 entries in her database. This is confidential information used only within the program and not shared.

9. Suggestions for program improvement:

Curriculum – Discussion from students in program. The difficulty is in the vast amount of material to cover. Feel like they are “drinking from a fire hose.” Notes that supplemental time, repetition, and review are all helpful. Discussion that senior year has been more cumulative with different classes informing each other. New assessments have been created which are more case-based. This is based on best practices in learning which suggests it is best to make the topic relevant and to tell students why they are learning things.

SAGE offered to create a list of reputable podcasts with helpful topics as well as noted a helpful anesthesia Facebook group.

Discussion regarding move to create structured 3-year path for completion. Very positive feedback and support from AB in discussion. Currently each student creates an individual IEP and “picks and chooses” classes. Idea is to create a program which would require fewer classes at one time – may also help students to retain jobs outside of program. Many on AB reported this may help their own employees be successful entering and completing the program. It was noted that this opportunity could help to address the critical shortage of

RVT's in the community and help students. Idea is to take limited 1<sup>st</sup> year classes year 1, then a blend of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> year courses the second year, and finish 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. With a year of pre-reqs this would make the program a 4-year program. Unable to create bachelor's degree as Cal Poly Pomona offers one for vet technology. Some challenges noted: How to include all students in communication, do we want to offer this program to all students, how do we keep track of everyone and what is the risk to losing the cohort model? Critical skills—suggest change “soft skills” to critical skills to emphasize the importance of these abilities.

Room for improvement -- Question from directors to AB: What can we do better? AB comments: “You cannot do more.” You are appreciated and “doing the Lord’s work.” “Way to go!” Overall very impressed with program, especially with the challenges of COVID.

#### 10. Licensing exam statistics

Our three-year pass rate for first time test takers is 95%

Last year’s seniors passed boards at 21/25 during the June/July and Nov/Dec VTNE windows, with 84% pass rate. We instituted summer supplemental tutoring in anticipation of their struggles and will continue to do so.

11. Mental health discussion. More open talking instituted with students regarding the challenges of the field. Attempts to reduce test anxiety. Shae discussed her math class where everyone starts with an A to reduce anxiety. There is more project and team-based learning.

General discussion about what critical skills are needed to survive and thrive in our industry. SAGE is piloting a program with a vet social worker. SAGE to ask her if she would be willing to guest lecture at Foothill. The hospital which the social worker supports has seen a tremendous positive culture shift. It has been a “game changer.” Noted that Foothill students have access to psych services on campus, but not a specific veterinary oriented service.

Additional discussion about budgeting and finances. Students do not currently receive this in the VT program. May be able to weave it into the Guided Pathways.

12. Offer a tour of facility, show images or highlight new dental X-ray, Vet Blue, prep for Site

13. Open discussion: AB wants to know if we can increase our student numbers. Note how desperately needed the RVT profession is in the Bay Area. Unfortunately, Foothill is limited by AVMA, facility size and number of animals to be kept on site. Expansion would require more instructors and space. Discussed thoughts to expand vet assisting classes. Limited by faculty unable to run these classes due to other responsibilities. Idea to incorporate senior students to teach. Concern this may put too much load on to students. Post-graduation? Could survey students for interest. Vet assisting is more flexible because there is no AVMA oversight; however the AVMA stresses that they do not want veterinary assisting programs to detract from the program’s ability to instruct veterinary technicians. There are offers from AB for guest lecturing. Noted that the need is for class runners to “own” a class. Is it possible to have a bridge between vet assisting and RVT program? Note this may change demographics of VT program.

Dr. Eshman announces her retirement in December, end of fall quarter. Shae to become the new full-time director. A new full-time RVT will be hired for instruction. Job will be posted for 2023-2024 school year. VT program will need a top candidate. Plea made to AB to encourage any candidates they may know. There will be an increased need for more part-timers next year.

**Meeting adjourned 8:00 pm**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tiffany Mitchener.