

SPOTLIGHT ON Colorado State Veterinary Medicine

Innovative approaches in teaching the next generation of veterinarians.

More than a century of innovation

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When the Morrill Act establishing land-grant colleges became the law of the land in 1862, teaching the “agricultural arts” included instruction in the professional care and feeding of farm animals.

Ready to meet the needs of farmers and ranchers, the Colorado Agricultural College (now Colorado State University) launched veterinary education courses in 1879, the same year classes began at the new land-grant college.

Dr. George Glover, the first head of the Department of Veterinary Science, was optimistic about the future of the program, which was expanding its focus to include care for the dogs and cats that Americans were increasingly bringing into their homes as pets.

“We now have a clinic, in number and variety of cases equal to any veterinary college in the land,” Glover said in 1909. “We have treated over a thousand cases a year.”

In 2021, the James L. Voss Veterinary Teaching Hospital at Colorado State University treated more than 47,000 cases, while educating 600 veterinary students, as well as residents and interns.

Veterinary medicine at Colorado State University continues to represent the land-grant values of service, education, and research while meeting the needs of a changing world. These are just some of the innovations that are moving the land-grant mission into the 21st century:

- The Veterinary Communication for Professional Excellence curriculum is one of the most progressive in the nation, incorporating simulated clients, observational learning, feedback and self-evaluation, individual video review, and progressive skill advancement, all of which ultimately improve patient care and foster the human-animal bond.
- Virtual reality simulators have been implemented in anesthesia training to support repeated practice in complex and potentially stressful environments.
- High fidelity mannequin-based simulators support students in learning basic life support CPR.
- Adaptive technologies are coupled with in-clinic training to advance the learning of diagnostic imaging.
- 3D printing is utilized in several sections to assist clinicians in treatment planning and client communication.
- Led by 2 boarded dentists, expansion of the Dentistry



Veterinary medicine at Colorado State University, then and now.

and Oral Surgery suite has enabled realization of a core Dentistry rotation for all students in the small animal track, and a clinician specializing in equine dentistry trains students with equine interests.

- Nearly all clinical sections are normally represented by at least 2 specialists, providing depth and breadth of experience as well as ample availability to trainees.
- Students expand their global perspective and develop professional skills by experiencing veterinary medicine in diverse cultures and locations and working with veterinarians in general and specialty practice, public health, and government. The Community Practice service supports the Inclusive Health Collaborative to offer broad support to individuals experiencing homelessness and their pets. As part of the Equine Field Service, students from all 4 years of the program travel to ranches and rescue organizations to provide preventive, wellness, and general medical and surgical services.
- The Colorado State University DVM program provides robust and innovative Spanish-language training with courses and practicums designed for veterinarians.

We continue to fulfill our land-grant mission by elevating veterinary education through student-centered learning, diverse experiential opportunities, student-faculty engagement, and professional well-being in a vibrant Rocky Mountain community.