

Proposed MuSU School of Veterinary Medicine (MuSU-CVM) Concerns

1. **How will the MuSU-CVM establish guarantees that more than 60% of its graduates practice in KY after they graduate? How will MuSU-CVM guarantee that the majority of these graduates will go into a rural practice?**

Reference: 50-70 veterinarians graduating each year from a KY vet school would increase the likelihood of veterinarians remaining in KY". There is no requirement that a veterinarian graduating from MuSU-CVM stay in KY. There are no vet schools in the U.S. that make any such guarantee. Auburn University cannot require Alabama residents to remain in Alabama. Only 40% of Alabama vet graduates stay in Alabama. It is categorically incorrect to make such a claim. In fact, 57% of KY vet grads that go to Auburn or Tuskegee return each year. This is a much higher rate than most any state supported schools. Nearly 75% of KY graduates return to the state within 8 years.

2. **Although the current contracts with Auburn and Tuskegee can remain in place with the MuSU-CVM, will the legislature realistically fund both a vet school at Murray and contract spaces?**

Reference: Although this is a true statement, under what possible scenario would the KY legislature appropriate money to support the massive undertaking of a new vet school at MuSU AND keep monies flowing into regional contracts with Auburn and Tuskegee. In any form of economic common sense, this scenario is unreasonable and unsustainable. If having a vet school at MuSU is such a fantastic idea for our state, why would it make any sense to send our students to Auburn or Tuskegee. This statement about the contract spaces is completely contradictory to the premise of the feasibility study.

- ❖ **Current academic trends in Kentucky undergraduate schools do not support a significant increase in the number of students academically eligible to enter a professional veterinary program.**

3. **What is the difference between enrolling in a 9-semester, 3-year DVM degree at MSU-SVM and a 9-semester, 4-year DVM program at Auburn, Tuskegee, Lincoln Memorial, Ohio State, Is there any actual financial savings to the student?**

Reference: The statements here are very misleading because even though it is a 3-year long program, it truthfully is a 9-semester program. The distributive CVM at Lincoln Memorial is 9 months long. They spread it out over 4 years because of the intensity of the education and students needing a summer break and to work and make money at their home clinics. Auburn and Tuskegee CVMs are 9 semesters. They are spread over 4 years. So, keeping costs low in a 3-year program is can be viewed as an optical illusion. Students pay tuition by the semester and all the schools have 9 semesters.

4. **Is the statement that there are only 54 Large Animal veterinarians in the state accurate since this figure does not include all of the over 300 mixed animal practices in the KY?**

Reference: This is an inaccurate statement, because the KDA and KBVE study of veterinary practices across the state clearly states that there are over 300 mixed animal veterinarians in KY. Although there may only be the 54 sole large animal veterinarians, the majority of bovine, equine, and small ruminant veterinary medicine is accomplished through mixed animal practitioners. The LA vet classification is for clerical use by the KBVE and the KVMA. It does not reflect which practices are actually involved in the care of large animals in the state.

5. **MuSU-CVM has proposed an \$88 million budget to build the vet school facility which is 78,000 square feet. What will this building encompass? Classrooms, lab suites for surgery, medicine, clinical pathology, and research?**

Reference: Auburn and Tuskegee CVMs (where KY students currently are educated) have over 500,000 sq.ft. of dedicated veterinary teaching space worth between \$300-\$400 million dollars.

6. What is the proposed annual budget for operation and maintenance of the CVM? The Feasibility study does not seem to demonstrate those figures?

Reference: There are no budget items for maintenance and operational monies needed to instruct students once the facility is built. Items such as faculty salaries, utilities, accreditation fees, animal care costs specifically related to the veterinary school, supplies and equipment for clinical training and research are not addressed in this budget. This is a conundrum, since all these items would be necessary for a successful accreditation process. As a comparison, the annual budget for Auburn CVM (non-distributive) is \$100 million and the budget of LMU-CVM (distributive model) is \$15 million. This does not include building upgrades or equipment, just M & O (salaries, utilities, supplies)

7. Can you describe what the accreditation process entails? Why is it critical for the MuSU-CVM achieve full accreditation from the American Veterinary Medical Association? What are the contingency plans for students who might graduate if the MuSU-CVM is not fully accredited?

Reference: (1) Veterinarians cannot obtain a license to practice in any state unless they have graduated from an AVMA accredited DVM program. (2) A new vet school cannot receive full accreditation until it has graduated its first class of students. This will take 3-4 years after construction. (3) The AVMA dictates the courses and curriculum that must be taught.

8. One standard to meet accreditation is to require faculty to conduct research, what are your plans in meeting that particular standard?

Reference: Without this component and enough dedicated research time, the school will not become accredited. Note: There are currently at least 12 new veterinarian schools in various stages of planning prior to MuSU entertained the idea. All of these schools will be competing for qualified faculty. In the current CVM environment, schools are competing NOW for faculty, and some are resorting to sharing faculty. Staffing is becoming a real issue and concern at many CVM's.

9. What is a distributive model curriculum, how is it administrated, how many affiliated practices will you need to train senior vet students, and what will the affiliated practices be paid to train each student?

Reference: The concerns with this type of curriculum: (1) with so many new vet schools coming online and most, if not all, will use the distributive method, how soon before there is a complete saturation of clinics trying to train senior veterinary students? LMU currently has over 200 veterinary clinical sites that are active. How many will MuSU-SVM require for 70 students? There is no indication that MuSU has explored this important question in any of this report. (2) Auburn, Tuskegee and LMU have current contracts with the majority of the qualified practitioners, MuSU would be entering into an existing and limited market for these practices. (3) AVMA COE accreditation process requires that these practices meet certain standards, and not all practices will qualify, and there are limits to the number (3) Most all of the clinical sites that are used in a distributed model, such as LMU, receive a stipend to train the student. The current rate for private practices is \$1000 / student/rotation. The rate for specialty practices is \$1800 / student / rotation. In the case of MuSU, that would be a cost of \$1000 for 70 senior students per rotation (= \$70,000). The current typical senior rotations last 4 weeks and students do 12 rotations (48 weeks) through their senior clinical year. So, \$70,000 per rotation X 12 rotations = \$840,000 each year budgeted for stipends to private sector practitioners to train the MuSU-SVM students. If there are a significant number of specialty practices involved, then the annual training stipends could reach well over \$1,000,000. (3) Private veterinary practitioners are tremendously overworked. Adding the responsibility of teaching a senior MuSU student may present some significant challenges for the practitioner and the student.

Practitioners are not paid to teach. Some will do a fantastic job because they have a heart for teaching/mentoring. Some may not provide the needed patience for a student with rudimentary skills.

10. Although MuSU-CVM has titled itself “the Large Animal Vet School”, will students be able to specialize only in large animal medicine?

Reference: The issue is that the curriculum design of the AVMA mandates that all vet schools teach basic courses in small animal medicine, surgery, exotics, cattle, small ruminants, equine, emergency medicine and critical care. You cannot just concentrate on a specific area and neglect other areas. There is a subtle implication that students will have priority placed at large animal practices. This will be in conflict with requirements for mandatory rotations in small animals and exotics. There will probably be some opportunity for students to focus in certain areas on elective rotations, but mandatory rotations will still have to cover all species and all disciplines. Further, the North America Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) required competency in ALL species. Every U.S. and Canadian jurisdiction require licensure candidates to pass the NAVLE. Without the proper and diverse species training, the students will be unlikely to pass the competency exam and qualify for licensure.

*****There is wording in the Feasibility Study that implies that there are no good food animal vet schools in the US. Several vet schools would vehemently oppose this statement. Two vet schools in particular, Auburn & Tuskegee CVMs, where Ky students currently go to vet school, have robust caseloads of equine, bovine (beef & dairy), and small ruminants. The faculty that teaches these rotations are the finest large animal veterinarians in the U.S.***

11. Why is there no data on the annual maintenance and operational costs? Is the data not available? Are there other distributive model vet schools that could be used to estimate M & O? Is this important to know this data before the construction of the vet school facilities?

Reference: According to the Feasibility Study_ “This data is not readily available since the program is yet to be launched.” Supposedly, this is a comprehensive report. All the authors would have had to do would have been to simply contact other distributive model programs (there is one 5 miles across the border in Tennessee) and obtain some possible operational budget data as an approximation of what a program like this might cost. Even more confusing about this statement is the fact that one of the listed co-authors (Dr. Roberson) is currently a department chair of a distributive model program and came to that position from LMU-CVM, also a distributive model program. With all of his experience on the administrative side of these programs, I find it strange that he would not be able to provide some insight on operational and maintenance costs to deliver a vet school curriculum in a distributive model. The current operational budget for Auburn CVM is approximately \$100 million (data from Dr. Calvin Johnson, Dean, AU-CVM). This is not quite a fair comparison because AU-CVM is not a distributive model program. The operational budget for LMU, a distributive model, is approximately \$15 million per year (data from Dr. Randy Evans, Assoc. Dean, LMU-CVM). The operational budget for the state of KY to send 164 students to AU-CVM and TU-CVM is \$5.6 million annually to pay for the contract spaces through SREB.

12. How many faculty positions will need to be added to support the MSU-SVM? How many current faculty members in the Vet Technology and Animal Science programs will be used to deliver the curriculum? Will they be required to teach in both programs?

Reference: The only mention in this report about number of positions that might be hired to deliver the CVM program is the statement that 12 new positions would be added. It does not indicate what these positions would entail. AU-CVM currently has over 125 dedicated faculty to deliver their veterinary program. To make a fairer comparison, LMU-CVM (distributive model) has 46 full-time faculty and 14 part-time faculty (per phone conversation with Assoc. Dean at LMU). This does not include all of the private practice individuals that would be needed to instruct senior MuSU-CVM students.