The Faculty has successfully secured support from the University’s Teaching Improvement Fund (TIF) for three new teaching and learning projects for 2005. Established in 2001, the fund provides additional resources to enable faculties to address areas for improvement identified in Academic Board reviews and to pursue educational innovations.

The 2005 funding will support the Veterinary Education and Information Network (VEIN), assisting Dr Paul Sheehy and Ms Philippa Stevens (Badham Library) to tailor a more student centred learning resource. The other two projects are ‘In-class and online learning resources for the integration of anatomy/physiology and diagnostic imaging’ managed by Dr Jacqui Norris and

Sarah Jobbins, an agricultural graduate, has recently joined the Faculty to develop online cases ready for the first students starting the new course this year. She will also be working with staff to map and revise the Graduate Attributes for this course.

Previously TIF funds have assisted the Faculty in developing a range of education projects, including case-based learning in Year 3, the extramural Year 5 program and quality assurance. Last year saw funding allocated to introduce an online resource for the new Animal and Veterinary Biosciences Degree.

The contest is judged on a gruelling range of criteria including personality, confidence, ambition, general knowledge, knowledge of the contestants’ local community and rural issues, and current affairs.

Organised by Dr Ian Martin, fellow 1955 alumnus and Faculty staff member, with the support of the Veterinary Science Foundation, the group enjoyed the opportunity to reminisce as well as hearing about current Faculty projects and future plans in areas such as research, the curriculum, and fundraising. Professor Paul Canfield, unofficial Faculty archivist, took the opportunity to look back on their experience of studying at the University with a series of historic photographs.
The key focus of the Faculty at this time is the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) accreditation visit, taking place from 10 – 14 April 2005. Associate Professor Jennie Hodgson and Meg Vost have done a brilliant job preparing, editing and condensing the Self Study document to a streamlined 50-page booklet. This is the most crucial document of all, because it addresses the 11 critical AVMA accreditation standards, sets the scene for the entire AVMA visit and forms the basis of all the questions from the visiting team. Now the action has moved to a “clean-up-and-tidy” campaign at both campuses, so that the Faculty really looks its best for their tours of inspection.

I should very much like to acknowledge the tremendous Faculty “team” effort that has gone into this project so far – I am sure it will be worth it!

Professor Leo Jeffcott, Dean

The 2005 ‘Lunchtime Seminars’ series commenced last month with guest speaker Dr Adam Toyler presenting ‘The science behind alternative therapies’ and Faculty staff member, Ms Irene Van Ekris, leading a historical campus walking tour, ‘The Gargoyles of the University’.

Everyone, both internal and external to the Faculty, is welcome to attend the seminars with future sessions including:

- Grand Rounds - interesting cases from the University Veterinary Centre Sydney - Dr Craig Bailey and Dr Amy Lingard (April 7, 1pm, Webster Theatre Veterinary Science Conference Centre (VSCC))
- Environmental enrichment of Meerkats and Immunohistochemical characterisation of poorly differentiated tumours of the skin and oral cavity of dogs - Trudie Vestey and Louise Fitzgerald (14 April)
- Trekking in Nepal – conservation issues - Jennie Churchill (21 April)
- The highlights and the lowlights for the vets at the Olympics in Athens ’04 - Professor Leo Jeffcott (28 April)
- Q Fever - Heather Gidding (12 May)
- Where did the little piggies come from? or Evolutionary history of pigs and peccaries based on DNA data - Jamie Gongora (19 May)

Organised by Dr Jacqui Norris, Dr Merran Govendir, Dr Kate Bosward, Dr Jane Stevenson and Dr Nick Malikides - the Lunchtime Seminars have been running since 2002 and are given by guest specialists, Faculty staff and students. For further details please contact Dr Norris on (02) 9351 7095 or email jnorris@mail.usyd.edu.au.

Dr Henry Collins, Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Parasitology and Professional Practice, retired in March having worked at the Faculty for 25 years. A veterinary graduate of Bristol University in the UK, he arrived in Australia from Massey University in New Zealand. Henry has played a significant role within the Faculty, creatively supporting student development from both a personal and academic perspective through subjects such as Professional Practice, as well as teaching parasitology. The Faculty wishes him all the best in his life post-academia.

Looking for a home

Ginger (14 yrs, male, ginger domestic shorthair, desexed) and Suzie (12 yrs, female, tortoiseshell domestic, desexed) both recently lost their owner and are being cared for by the staff of the University Veterinary Centre Sydney. As part of their owner’s request to the Veterinary Science Foundation at the University of Sydney she asked for them to be found a new loving home. Both are indoor cats and they must stay together. Ginger is the more outgoing feline while Suzie is quieter and more curious – but both are loving all the attention from our senior veterinary students and staff.

Enquiries are welcome at the University Veterinary Centre Sydney on (02) 9351 3437.

Postgraduate student, Simon de Graaf has successfully gained a fellowship to the The World Life Sciences Forum BioVision (BioVision.Nxt 2005) conference in Lyon this month. Among a number of postgraduate students from around the world, Simon will have the opportunity to hear from prominent scientists and society and industry leaders, including Nobel Laureates, involved in the development of Healthcare, Agriculture and Environment.

Dr Henry Collins

Date for the Diary!

The 2005 Vet Ball will be held on 19 August, further details to follow.

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