DEAN’S MESSAGE

In little over a decade, the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) has grown from an idea to an established community operating at the frontiers of pedagogical innovation and research. Currently UCVM is ranked among the top 50 veterinary schools in the world\(^1\). We are grateful to our community and stakeholders for their support and guidance.

Now, with the support of our community, we are determined to advance our vision. Currently, many complex problems that threaten the health of animals, humans and the environment are defying discipline-specific solutions. To find innovative solutions, we must link silos of disciplinary excellence, and knit together multiple human endeavours operating locally and globally. Building on the theme of One Community, One Health, we will forge linkages and collaborations among local and global communities to identify issues, integrate the disciplinary knowledge, create new knowledge, and deliver solutions to "wicked problems"\(^2\) confronting livestock producers, pets and their owners, wildlife and the environment.

**ONE HEALTH IS A FRAMEWORK TO DEVELOP RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS TO SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS AT THE INTERFACE OF ANIMALS, HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT, AND TO EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROBLEM SOLVING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT.**

UCVM established the innovative Distributed Veterinary Learning Community (DVLC) to educate general veterinary practitioners to serve the needs of Alberta. The DVLC expands our footprint and partnerships across Alberta, and provides clinical practice homes to our excellent clinicians. Our scholars conduct educational research in areas such as outcomes measurement and curricular design. We will continue to lead and be recognized globally in evidence-based and courageous improvements to stultified curricular structures across the profession.

UCVM’s research programs advance veterinary clinical, biomedical and environmental knowledge and educate the next generation of researchers. We have many research chairs, including four supported by the local community. We have strong partnerships with the Cumming School of Medicine, in growing areas such as Precision Health, and with the faculties of Engineering and Science. Our research will continue to benefit our community, and support the University of Calgary’s goal to become a top five research university in Canada.

Through our research, education and community service, we commit to demonstrate a high level of accountability and service to Albertans and make our community proud of UCVM.

I am privileged and honoured to lead this outstanding veterinary medical community.

Dr. Baljit Singh,
Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

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\(^1\)[topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2017/veterinary-science](topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2017/veterinary-science)

\(^2\)Problems that are difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete or contradictory knowledge, the number of people and opinions involved, the large economic burden, and their interconnected nature.
Vision, Mission and Values

OUR VISION:

Bringing innovation and community together to advance animal, human and environmental health.

OUR MISSION:

UCVM’s mission is to meet the veterinary, animal and public health needs of Alberta and beyond through excellence in:

• delivery of a comprehensive undergraduate veterinary medical education, emphasizing production animal health, ecosystem and public health, equine health, and investigative medicine;

• clinical, diagnostic and professional teaching and service, in collaboration with our partners in the Distributed Veterinary Learning Community, and;

• the creation and distribution of new knowledge through research, graduate education, and continuing education in animal health, disease, and welfare, and its interaction with human and environmental health.

Our education, research and service activities will contribute to the promotion and protection of animal and human health and welfare in Alberta, Canada and internationally.

OUR VALUES:

UCVM is committed to excellence in a research, educational and clinical community that values:

Collegiality
Empathy
Diversity
Respect
Empowerment
Integrity
Wellness
Passion for knowledge and community service
Our story:

UCVM was initiated in 2005. Our aim was to:

• develop an innovative, community-based approach to educate future veterinarians.

• support and respond to the needs of Alberta’s agricultural community with clinical and diagnostic expertise, and research excellence.

• become a leader amongst research-intensive North American veterinary colleges.

• use innovative approaches to address complex issues facing animals, people and the environment in Alberta and beyond our borders.

We have accomplished what we set out to do. We are proud of our achievements and grateful to the community that supported us.

As a young faculty of the highly dynamic University of Calgary and the youngest Canadian veterinary school, we have established an international reputation for outstanding scholarship.

2017 - 22

ADVANCING OUR VISION:
ONE COMMUNITY, ONE HEALTH

We are a success story of community engagement, strong partnerships, and leadership in education and research.

In the next five years, we will build on this foundation with purpose, passion, creativity and a strong commitment to our community to become an exceptional faculty.
Providing a positive student experience
Our students are emerging leaders. UCVM will continue recruitment and retention of excellent teachers to ensure our students have a positive experience during their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) or graduate studies, and are provided with the necessary mentorship and the tools to develop their leadership potential to enhance their career development.

Leading reform of veterinary medical curriculum
To further improve the education of general practice veterinarians, we will lead the reform of the North American veterinary medical curriculum through evidence-based courageous innovations and thoughtful disruptions of current models.


Conducting leading-edge basic and translational research
We will continue to lead in rigorous basic and solution-driven research. We will recruit and retain outstanding scholars, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows and enable them through robust physical and support infrastructure.


Supporting Alberta’s production animal and rural communities
Animal agriculture is key to Alberta’s economy, its identity and the sustainability of rural communities. This industry is poised to play a major role in the delivery of safe, affordable and nutritious food. It’s an industry facing growing public interest in food safety and the welfare of production animals. As the agriculture industry grows and diversifies, UCVM will continue to serve this important community through excellence in clinical care, advanced diagnostics and research.
Leading equine clinical care and research
We will continue to support Alberta’s horse community with clinical expertise and innovative research leading to discoveries that improve the health and well-being of horses.

Recognizing the role companion animals play in human health and happiness
Pets contribute to the health and wellness of people across cultures and socio-economic statuses. Through advanced clinical care, research and respectful service, UCVM will continue to make important contributions to our diverse communities of pet owners.

Providing One Health leadership
UCVM will utilize the One Health concept to forge transdisciplinary collaborations at local, national and global levels to solve complex problems at the interface of animals, humans and the environment. UCVM will take a leadership role in creating a campus-wide One Health initiative.

Promoting collaboration
UCVM will promote the creation, translation and sharing of knowledge with local and global communities. We will embrace collaborations initiated in other places and institutions.

Promoting alumni engagement
UCVM will commit to life-long engagement with our alumni by developing networking platforms, providing professional enrichment opportunities and celebrating their successes.

Promoting diversity and understanding
UCVM will be a leader in Canada in promoting diversity and understanding across cultures, in our faculty and the veterinary profession. We will harness the talents — and different ways of learning and creating knowledge — of a community with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. We will continue promoting integration of immigrant veterinarians. We will participate in the reconciliation process between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians and strive to build positive two-way relationships, and serve underserved communities.
Advancing our One Community, One Health vision: Key priorities for 2017 - 22

The process of developing our strategic plan — a plan that sets out our goals and commitments, and roadmaps our future direction — involved extensive consultation with our community. Through an online survey, four retreats, and numerous small group and individual meetings we took the pulse of, and guidance from, students, faculty, staff, community partners, government agencies and other stakeholders. From this “ground-up” process, the following key priority areas emerged.
PRIORITY 1

Fostering an empowered and connected community of scholarship, research and service

We are committed to fostering a shared vision for UCVM’s future by providing a respectful workplace and learning environment that inspires excellence, and promotes well-being and continuous renewal. We commit to serve our communities with passion and compassion.

- We will foster effective communication, a collaborative environment and development of goals shared by all students, faculty and staff while retaining freedom for our individual aspirations and areas of work.
- We will support the ability of all students, faculty and staff to contribute to UCVM’s continuous growth and improvement.
- UCVM leadership commits to collegial and transparent decision-making processes with opportunities for input and feedback.
- We will continue to acknowledge and celebrate accomplishments, as well as innovative ideas and processes that make us efficient and effective.
- We will create opportunities to learn more about each other, and share stories of the transformational work conducted by the UCVM community.

EXPANDING AND INTEGRATING OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY THROUGH ONE HEALTH, INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

We will further develop our global community through research, teaching and outreach activities in the areas of One Health, Indigenous engagement, and internationalization. We will establish priorities, identify goals and develop programs in these areas. In some cases, we will build on existing activities and, in others, develop new directions.

One Health

One Health — the collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally and globally to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment — will underpin many of UCVM’s initiatives.

• We will collaborate to create a campus-wide One Health strategy, in support of transdisciplinary research, education and community engagement programs.

• We will establish UCVM as a collaborative international leader in developing and using One Health approaches to address a variety of complex problems and to improve policy.

• We will develop and use the concept of a One Health Knowledge Platform to identify issues and assemble appropriate transdisciplinary teams from various sectors to integrate knowledge and find solutions to complex problems, and to educate the next generation of transdisciplinary thinkers.

ACTION INITIATED: CAMPUS-WIDE ONE HEALTH EXPERIENCE

Approved by the Provost and Deans Council for piloting in summer 2017.
Indigenization
As part of campus-wide efforts, the UCVM Indigenous Strategy is an initiative that arose from the desire to be active participants in the reconciliation process between Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) and non-Indigenous Canadians. It builds on current programs and linkages with Indigenous communities in wildlife health, production animal health, equine and companion animal health, and ecosystem and public health. This strategy will incorporate recognition of, and respect for, Indigenous perspectives, culture and ways of knowing. While collaborating with, and learning from, Indigenous Canadians, we will partner with the greater University of Calgary community to build a sustainable plan for indigenization.

• We will form a UCVM Indigenous Strategy action planning committee with sustainable and inclusive student, faculty and staff membership, as well as representatives from the Cumming School of Medicine, the University of Calgary Native Centre and local Indigenous communities.

• We will hold faculty-wide educational events to increase awareness of Indigenous perspectives, cultures and communities.

• We will increase the number of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in UCVM programs.

Action Initiated: In early 2017, UCVM began discussions with the Verna J. Kirkness Education Foundation to provide summer research experiences to First Nations, Métis and Inuit high school students.

Internationalization
We will formally expand and focus UCVM’s international activities in a manner that aligns with and supports the University of Calgary’s internationalization goals.

• We will develop a long-term, strategically aligned and sustainable international program at UCVM, and work to develop multifaceted collaborations with a select number of strategic partners to build on current collaborations.

• We will continue to promote student engagement in international activities.

• We will encourage individual faculty members to establish collaborations leading to formal institutional partnerships.

• We will appoint a UCVM leader to coordinate international activities and initiatives.
PRIORITY 3

Strengthening our clinical and diagnostic community

We are committed to enhancing growth in clinical education and research by developing a cohesive and sustainable clinical and diagnostic community for UCVM faculty, DVM students and graduate students. This will be accomplished in partnership with the Distributed Veterinary Learning Community (DVLC) and professional bodies such as the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association.

- We will create meaningful opportunities for education, research and clinical work by clinical faculty.
- We will recognize and celebrate our clinicians for the excellence of their clinical work and their importance to the community.
- We will strengthen clinical practice relationships between UCVM and the DVLC.
- We will explore alternative and synergistic strategies for clinical practice to meet the needs of UCVM faculty and students that are not met in the current model, and that allow us to grow in clinical excellence, research and education.
- We will facilitate collaboration between basic researchers and clinicians, and create translational teams to increase clinical research opportunities and develop new animal health technologies.
- We will build on existing strengths in anatomic pathology in the Diagnostic Services Unit (DSU) to expand the diagnostic support to the province of Alberta, in coordination with the DVLC and the wider University of Calgary community.
- We will strengthen the educational experience of 4th year DVM students by developing programs to enhance their clinical reasoning and skills prior to entry into the DVLC, and continue to expose students to a breadth of opportunities in clinical practice, including rural community practice, general practice, referral practice, and wildlife health population and conservation medicine.

Action initiated: The curricular reforms of the 4th year were initiated in 2016. The DSU leadership has initiated plans to expand the pathology support provided to stakeholders in the wider University of Calgary community, as well as in wildlife and food animal sectors.
PRIORITY 4

Enhancing the learning experience of our postgraduate trainees

Talented graduate students, clinical trainees and postdoctoral fellows are critical to UCVM’s success in research and knowledge creation. We are committed to providing a comprehensive learner-centred graduate education program that offers a positive learning experience and a suite of options aligned with the career development goals of trainees, the expertise of UCVM faculty members, and the needs of society.

We will continue to improve the education and mentoring of postgraduate trainees by:

• Providing teaching, leadership and career development opportunities.

• Clarifying student and supervisor responsibilities and accountabilities to support development of positive professional and mentoring relationships.

• Developing and delivering comprehensive on-boarding strategies for postgraduate trainees to ensure a sense of inclusivity.

• Enhancing mentorship and communication for postdoctoral fellows to advance their careers.

• Investing in enhancing the mentoring skills of faculty.

We will increase internship, residency, and postgraduate training opportunities by:

• Prioritizing new internships, residencies and fellowships to stimulate the growth and impact of our clinical programs and translational research.

• Developing programs in collaboration with other faculties within the University of Calgary, other institutions and the DVLC.

• Creating linkages between graduate training programs and international partnerships.

• Developing graduate programs integrated with the DVM program.