

National Board Report

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Ready for April

This week, the NBVME office submitted the last of 904 candidate eligibility records to the NBME for the April 8-20 NAVLE testing window. We also mailed scheduling permits to most of the April candidates this week.

It's always a challenge to compile the master eligibility list. Information comes from individual NAVLE application forms and data downloaded from our web site, where candidates can apply on-line and pay by credit card. The NBVME office works hard to ensure that the eligibility files are accurate. A mistake in entering a candidate's name, so that the name printed on the scheduling permit and the name on the photo identification does not match exactly, means additional work will be necessary before the candidate can take the examination. The on-line application has helped to minimize data entry errors, but some candidates still occasionally manage to enter their own information incorrectly!

We appreciate the efforts of licensing board staff and staff at the NBME in cooperating to ensure that everyone who wanted to take the exam next month will be able to do so.

John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD
Executive Director

Tonee VanderVliet
Tiffany Thomas
NBVME staff

NBVME Meets in Fort Worth, Holds the Line on NAVLE Fees

The NBVME moved back to Fort Worth, Texas for its January 2002 meeting, after meeting elsewhere for the previous three years. The January 19 meeting included a morning Executive Session and a General Session held in the afternoon.

NAVLE Contract

During the Executive Session, the Board spent considerable time discussing a draft NAVLE contract, prepared by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) and covering NAVLE development and administration through the April 2004 testing window. Later, Drs. Norman LaFaunce, Nancy Collins, and David Sandals met with NBVME legal counsel John Atkinson and Executive Director John Boyce to compile revisions to the draft contract for submission to the NBME. At press time, the contract has not yet been finalized.

NAVLE fees

In the draft contract, the NBME proposed a fee increase for examinations to be given during the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 testing cycles. However, the NBVME voted to keep the NAVLE fee at \$325 through the April 2003 administration. A fee increase will likely be implemented for the 2003-2004 examination cycle.

NAVLE Passing Standard

Jennifer Stevens Pappas, the NBVME's primary contact at the NBME, presented data on the performance of NAVLE candidates on the November-December 2001 examination. NBVME members subsequently approved the passing standard, which was not changed

from the standard approved in January 2001. See page 4 for more information on the results of the fall NAVLE administration.

Job Analysis

The NBVME approved a plan to issue a Request for Proposal for a comprehensive job analysis to form the foundation for the NAVLE, and also for the Qualifying Examination and the Veterinary Clinical Skills Assessment. The present job analysis was completed in 1997, as plans for the NAVLE were being established. The new job analysis will use the present one as a starting point, and will be expanded to include all three examinations.

Bylaws

The NBVME approved several amendments to its Bylaws, most of the changes reflecting the NBVME's new corporate name. The revised Bylaws were distributed to the NBVME's constituent organizations in late January.

NAVLE Retakes

The NBVME agreed to cooperate with the AAVSB and its member boards in exploring a possible limit on the number of times a candidate can attempt the NAVLE without receiving remedial education.

Guests

The NBVME meeting was enhanced by the presence of several guests, including Dr. Sonny Corley, AAVSB President; all the other AAVSB officers and Executive Committee members; Dr. Bonnie Beaver, AVMA Executive Board Chair; Dr. John Albers, Executive Director of the American Animal Hospital Association; and Mr. Ron Allen, Executive Director of the Texas Board.

Item Writers Meet in Philadelphia

On February 25, the NBME hosted an item writing workshop for five new NAVLE item writers and 9 of 10 new item writers for the Qualifying Examination (QE). At the workshop, participants received instruction on how to write good items (and how to avoid writing bad items!). They also spent time writing and reviewing items. Following the meeting, NBME editorial staff will prepare and distribute the item writing assignments.

The new NAVLE item writers for 2002 include Drs. Susan McDonough, Arnold, Maryland (feline); Robert Hardy, University of Minnesota (canine); Julie Fixman, Carmel, New York (canine); Darryl Ragland, Purdue University (swine); and Joe Taboada, Louisiana State University (feline). The other 24 NAVLE item writers for this year have served in previous years.

QE item writers for 2002 include Drs. Walter Hsu, Iowa State University and Leslie Sprunger, Washington State University (physiology); John Van Vleet, Purdue University, Alfonso Lopez, Atlantic Veterinary College, and Amanda Fales-Williams, Iowa State University (pathology); Melissa Kennedy, University of Tennessee, Mark Kuhlenschmidt, University of Illinois, and Cliff Monahan, Ohio State University (microbiology); and Tom Purinton, University of Georgia and Marc Ratzlaff, Washington State University (anatomy).

From the Past: State Board Questions

Number 4 in a Series

Continuing in a series of questions taken from the 1917 book, *Veterinary State Board Questions and Answers* by V.G. Kimball, we move on to physiology.

1. What does the study of physiology comprise?
2. Describe the composition of the blood with reference to the nature and the purpose of each component part.
3. Name the digestive ferments. What digestive ferments act on (a) fat, (b) starch, and (c) proteid?
4. State the function of the pancreas.
5. What medicinal and other agencies may be employed as lymphagogues?
6. Of what does dandruff consist?
7. Mention the conditions that favor the growth of wool or of improvement in its quality.

Answers.

1. The sum of the knowledge concerning the function of living things.
2. It consists of a colorless liquid, the plasma, containing red blood-corpuses (erythrocytes), yellowish, circular, biconcave discs, containing haemoglobin which carries the oxygen; white blood-corpuses (leucocytes), white spherical amoeboid masses of protoplasm, having phagocytic powers; blood platelets, small bodies, one-quarter

the size of a red cell, function unknown.

3. Ptyalin, pepsin, rennin, trypsin, steapsin, amylopsin, enterokinase, erepsin, maltase, invertase, and lactase. (a) Steapsin; (b) ptyalin and amylopsin; (c) pepsin and trypsin.
4. The pancreas secretes a digestive fluid and also has an internal secretion which, in some way not well understood, governs the amount of sugar in the body.
5. Ingestion of large quantities of water assists in increasing the amount of lymph. Certain agents, when injected into the circulation, increase the flow of lymph, such as peptone, decoctions of intestinal wall, liver, etc., crystalline bodies such as sugar and neutral salts. The administration of sodium citrate by the mouth increases the general lymphatic circulation.
6. Epithelial scales, fat, coloring matters, salts, silica, and dirt.
7. Good feeding of a rather high nitrogenous diet; neither too hot nor too cold temperature; dry surroundings. Salt and sulphur are thought to aid the growth of wool; at any rate, the former is indispensable as a part of the diet and should be given regularly; the latter is valuable as a mild laxative and, by its general tonic action, may improve the fleece.

Next month: more physiology.

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NAVLE Score Reporting: It Takes Time To Do It Right

One of the common questions we receive from candidates this time of year is, "why does it take so long to report my NAVLE score?" The expectation is that since the NAVLE is a computer based examination, score reporting should be quick and easy. There are several reasons why it takes some time to report scores.

Testing Window

The NAVLE is administered during a two or four week testing window, instead of on one common date like the NBE and CCT. No scoring can begin until the window closes, and all scores are reported on the same day. That means that candidates who test early in the window must wait longer to receive their scores than candidates who test near the end of the window. In addition, the published end of the window isn't always the latest date when candidates take the examination. For various reasons, including weather related closings of

test centers, scheduling problems at certain centers, and candidates needing test accommodations that can not be provided during the established window, some candidates take the NAVLE after the planned closing date.

Key Validation

Before the NAVLE can be scored, the scoring key needs to be finalized. Even though the NBVME, its item writers and reviewers, and the NBME editorial staff work hard to ensure that all items on the NAVLE are well written, an occasional item does not perform as expected. In order to maintain the validity and reliability of the NAVLE, the computer conducts an initial scoring of the examination, and flags items that might benefit from review. These items might appear to be too difficult or too easy, may be poor discriminators between candidates of different abilities, and/or may be mis-keyed. The flagged items are then reviewed

by teams of content experts, and some items are deleted from the scoring key based on this review. The exam is then scored again to generate final scores.

Standard Setting

Before scores can be reported, the passing standard must be approved. In January 2001, this required two meetings of standard setting panels and subsequent approval of the recommended passing standard by the NBVME. The standard setting meetings do not need to be held each year, but the passing standard still needs to be approved each January. This is done by the full NBVME, meeting and discussing the process and the recommended standard in person. The standard approved in January is applied to the April examination without further review by the NBVME.

Score reporting

Once the score reports are
(continued on page 4)

NBVME Member Profile: Lynn Green

The NBVME's newest member is Mrs. Lynn Green, who was appointed last fall by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards to fill a vacancy in the public member position caused by the resignation of Jenna Jones. She attended her first NBVME meeting in January.

Lynn and her husband Richard own and operate a family farm near the southwestern Minnesota town of Morgan. For 30 years, they raised swine, and Lynn held several leadership positions with the Minnesota and National Pork Producers (including two years as President of the Minnesota Pork Producers Association). Today, the farm is devoted to crop production.



A native of Minnesota, Lynn graduated from the University of Minnesota with a BS degree in Education. She holds a Minnesota teacher's license and currently works

as a substitute teacher. Lynn is also a director of a local bank.

Lynn is a member of the Minnesota Board of Veterinary Medicine, presently serving as the Board's Vice President and on the large animal complaint committee.

Lynn and her husband have two married daughters. Jennifer is a computer analyst and Jamie is a lieutenant and pilot in the US Air Force. In her spare time, Lynn enjoys sewing, riding motorcycles, and snowmobiling.

Lynn looks forward to serving on the NBVME, and helping maintain public confidence in the organization and its examinations. Respecting the rights of potential licensees through avoidance of conflict of interest is one of her key objectives.

Fall NAVLE Stats

A total of 3,164 candidates took the NAVLE during the November-December 2001 testing window. This included 2,376 criterion candidates, 278 non-criterion candidates, and 510 foreign-trained candidates. Eighty candidates took the NAVLE in French. Twenty five candidates were approved for test accommodations.

The passing standard approved last January, when applied to the fall 2001 examination, resulted in a passing rate for criterion candidates of approximately 92%. This was slightly higher than the passing rate for criterion candidates for the fall 2000 examination (about 90%).

Criterion candidates are defined as senior students at AVMA accredited schools taking the NAVLE for the first time in English. Non-criterion candidates include candidates who are repeating the

Office Staff Changes

Almost exactly one year after she began working for the NBVME, Tiffany Thomas is leaving. Tiffany will be moving to Vermont in April, and is getting married in July. Tiffany's main duties in the office have been processing credit card payments, making meeting arrangements, keeping track of NAVLE contracts with licensing boards, and assisting with processing NAVLE applications. Tiffany has done an excellent job in her part time position, and we will miss her. A search for a replacement is now under way.

examination, candidates taking the NAVLE in French, candidates taking the NAVLE with accommodations, and other candidates who do not meet the definition of criterion candidates.

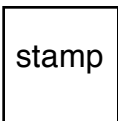
NAVLE Score Reporting (continued from page 3)

generated, the NBME sends them to licensing boards. The information includes a roster of all candidates applying through that board and their scores, individual score reports for all candidates, diagnostic score reports for failing candidates, and a diskette containing the scoring information for use by those boards that prefer to generate their own score reports. Boards then report scores to candidates. Scores from the November-December NAVLE administration were reported to licensing boards on the same date for the past two years, January 31. The April scores are reported to boards by the end of May.

The NBVME office cannot report scores to candidates. However, we can and do assist candidates who do not pass and need to reapply to take the NAVLE during the next testing window.

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