

National Board Report

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Transparency

One of the NBVME's Values is "transparency." Applied to an organization, this word is defined as "open to public scrutiny." The NBVME strives to meet this objective in several ways.

As a 501(c)(3) not for profit corporation, the NBVME is required to file an annual Form 990 with the IRS, and must make the 990 open to public inspection. Guidestar has 990s available on its website, www.guidestar.org.

Another way to ensure transparency is to let people know what you are doing. Shortly after the NBVME became an independent organization, I began to write a quarterly newsletter, and the publication is now in its 16th year. Copies are mailed to each of the NBVME's nine constituent organizations, each US and Canadian licensing board, each accredited veterinary school, and to other interested parties. Back issues are available on the NBVME's web site. The constituent organizations also receive copies of the minutes of NBVME meetings, a copy of the board's annual audit, and an annual report. Detailed annual NAVLE technical reports are available on the NBVME's website. The website also includes a report from the NAVLE job analysis, and a NAVLE content outline. Each licensing board that accepts PAVE receives annual technical reports for the Qualifying Examination and the Veterinary Clinical Skills Assessment.

Finally, regular NBVME meetings are announced publicly (see page 3), and general sessions are open to guests.

John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD
Executive Director

NBVME Membership Includes Key Constituents

The membership composition of the NBVME has been in place since the board became incorporated as an independent organization in October 1994. Since it was formed in the late 1940s, the board has been structured so that key constituents within the veterinary medical profession had direct input into decisions regarding the national licensing examination program. Because one of the important tasks of NBVME members is reviewing and approving examination items and forms, a broad range of practice experience and content expertise among members is very important to the work of the board.

The NBVME is fairly unique in that all of the board members are appointed directly by the nine constituent organizations. Members serve three-year terms, and can be appointed for up to three terms.

Because the NBVME's primary focus is on developing and administering licensing examinations, the Bylaws specify that four of the 13 members are appointed by the **American Association of Veterinary State Boards**. Three of the AAVSB appointees must be licensed veterinarians, while the fourth must be a public member who is not a veterinarian. The current NBVME members designated by the AAVSB are Drs. Jay Hedrick, a former member of the Kansas board and a past president of AAVSB; Meg Glatly, a member of the Minnesota board; and Lila Miller, a member of the New York board. Drs. Hedrick and Glatly are private practitioners, and Dr. Miller works for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The NBVME's public member is

Ms. Joyceanne Fick, who is a member of the Idaho board.

Given that most veterinarians work in small animal practice, two of the NBVME members are licensed veterinarians appointed by the **American Animal Hospital Association**. At this time, the AAHA appointees are Drs. Dennis Feinberg and John Tait. Both are private practitioners and past presidents of AAHA.

Three other species practice categories are covered by licensed veterinarians appointed by the **American Association of Bovine Practitioners**, the **American Association of Equine Practitioners**, and the **American Association of Swine Veterinarians**. These members are Drs. Tom Hairgrove, Ben Franklin, and Rick Tubbs, respectively. All three are present or former private practitioners, and Dr. Tubbs is a past president of AASV. Expertise in public health and regulatory veterinary medicine is covered by the veterinarian designated by the **National Association of Federal Veterinarians**, presently Dr. Gary Gackstetter. Dr. Gackstetter is a retired US Air Force veterinarian, and presently works as a consultant to the Department of Defense.

Two important constituencies for the NBVME are veterinary medical colleges and the veterinary school accrediting body. Drs. Linda Blythe and Jayne Jensen are designated by the **Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges** and the **AVMA Council on Education**, respectively. Dr. Blythe is a faculty member at Oregon State University, and Dr. Jensen is a private practitioner.

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JAVMA ARTICLE LOOKS AT QE AND NAVLE SCORES

"Relationships among common measures of student performance and scores on the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination" is the title of an article in the February 15, 2011 issue of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*. The authors included Drs. Jared Danielson, Tsui-Feng Wu, and Vanessa Prest of Iowa State University; and Laura Molgaard of the University of Minnesota. Iowa State and Minnesota are two of the four AVMA accredited veterinary schools that have used the NBVME's Qualifying Examination (QE) as a standardized assessment of basic science knowledge.

The study compared various measures of student performance, including Graduate Record Examination scores, undergraduate grade point average, overall veterinary school grade point average, QE scores, and NAVLE scores. The candidates included Iowa State and Minnesota students who took the QE in January 2008 and 2009, and who took the NAVLE as senior students prior to graduating in 2009 and 2010. The research found that the QE score was the strongest predictor of NAVLE performance. The authors noted that "the QE is a stable, standardized measure that should provide an equivalent estimate of students' basic science preparation regardless of grading philosophy or other institutional idiosyncrasies."

Impact of Recent Accreditation Decisions on NBVME Examinations

Earlier this year, the AVMA Council on Education granted full accreditation to the veterinary schools at Ross University in St. Kitts, and the UNAM in Mexico City. As a result, Ross and UNAM graduates will no longer be required to be enrolled in a foreign graduate certification program (ECFVG or PAVE) in order to take the NAVLE.

In recent years, approximately half of the candidates taking the QE have been from Ross, so the decision to accredit Ross will have a big impact on PAVE QE candidate numbers. Until now, very few UNAM gradu-

ates have taken the QE as part of PAVE, or have taken the NAVLE in pursuit of licensure in the US.

ECFVG and PAVE candidates are required to demonstrate English proficiency before taking the NAVLE. The NAVLE is offered in French in Canada, but there are no plans to offer it in any language other than English in the US. NAVLE candidates from UNAM (or any other accredited school where the language of instruction is not English or French), will not have to demonstrate English proficiency before taking the NAVLE.

NBVME Membership

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Canada is the largest single user of the NAVLE, having more candidates than any individual US licensing board, so when the NBVME was incorporated, a membership position on the board was created for the **National Examining Board** of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. Dr. Sylvie Latour is the current NEB designee on the NBVME. Dr. Latour is employed by the licensing board in Quebec, and presently serves as Chair of the NEB.

From time to time, the NBVME receives inquiries about membership positions from other segments of the

profession. While the present membership clearly does not cover all practice or job categories, the board would have to be much larger if every possible constituency was to be included. The board believes that its present structure is adequate and appropriate. Additional content expertise for NAVLE development is provided by the 10 members of the Examination Development Advisory Board, the 20-25 NAVLE item writers who are used each year, and dozens of additional content experts who are involved in other aspects of NAVLE development, item review, standard setting, and job analysis activities.

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Dennis A. Feinberg, DVM; Linda L. Blythe, DVM, PhD, *Past Chair*; Joyceanne Fick, *Public Member*; Benjamin Franklin, Jr., DVM, *Secretary-Treasurer*; Meg Glattly, DVM; Gary D. Gackstetter, DVM, MPH, PhD; Thomas B. Hairgrove, DVM, DABVP; Jay Hedrick, DVM, *Chair*; Jayne Jensen, DVM; Sylvie Latour, DVM; Lila Miller, DVM; John D. Tait, DVM, MBA; Rick Tubbs, DVM, MS, MBA, DACT, DABVP, *Chair-Elect*. John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD, *Executive Director*

NBVME Examination Updates

NAVLE®

A total of 845 candidates took the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) during the April 11-23, 2011 testing window, an increase of almost 100 from April 2010. Scores were reported to licensing boards on May 9.

Applications for the November-December 2011 NAVLE testing window will be accepted beginning in early June, and the NBVME application receipt deadline is August 1. The 2011-2012 edition of the NAVLE Bulletin of Information for Candidates will be available on the NBVME's web site, www.nbvme.org, in June. This year, the candidate bulletin will be mailed to candidates from the NBVME office instead of by the individual licensing boards. The NAVLE fee for the 2011-12 testing windows will be \$550, the same as it was in 2010-2011.

All NAVLE candidates must be approved by a licensing board to take the examination. For the 2011-12 testing cycle, the NBVME office will approve candidates applying through 23 states: Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire,

New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia. These candidates can complete their state NAVLE application and pay the corresponding state application fee on-line, through the NBVME's website.

Qualifying Examination (QE)

The QE is a 300-item web-based basic science examination, and is the step three requirement of the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE). The QE is also used by several accredited veterinary schools as an outside measure of basic science competence.

The QE was administered to 43 PAVE candidates on May 12. The examination was offered in St. Kitts, Grenada, Grand Cayman, and South Korea, and at 11 sites in the US. The May QE was also administered to 100 students at the Western University College of Veterinary Medicine. Scores will be reported in mid-June.

Future QE administrations are planned for September 15, 2011, and January 19 and May 17, 2012. The 2011-2012 QE Bulletin of Information for Candidates is available on the NBVME's website.

NBVME Defends NAVLE® Trademark

The term "NAVLE" is a registered trademark of the NBVME, and the ® symbol should be used with the term in any publication. Over the past several months, the NBVME has been working with legal counsel to ensure that third parties who use the term "NAVLE" include the trademark symbol, that "NAVLE" not be used as part of a web address, and that individuals or groups that offer NAVLE study or preparation materials make it clear that their efforts are not licensed by, sponsored by, or affiliated with the NBVME.

Several new NAVLE study and preparation programs have been introduced in recent years, including web-based programs and publications. The NBVME's intent is not to prevent people from offering NAVLE preparation or study materials, only that they make it clear to potential users that they are doing so on their own. It is also important that they not use any actual NAVLE test materials, which would be in violation of the NBVME's copyright and could subject them to legal action.

Persons who may encounter websites or publications that do not follow the above guidelines are encouraged to let the NBVME know so that appropriate action can be taken.



July NBVME Meeting in Maine

The NBVME will hold its next meeting Friday and Saturday, July 20-21, in Bar Harbor, Maine. The NBVME's General Session is open to guests. Dr. Jay Hedrick will chair the meeting.

Guests at the July meeting will include former NBVME member Dr. Mike Thomas, who will receive the NBVME Award (see the next issue of the *National Board Report* for more informa-

tion), and Dr. Peter Scoles, Senior Vice President of the National Board of Medical Examiners. Dr. Thomas is serving as the NBVME's representative to the North American Veterinary Medical Education Consortium, and will give the board an update on the NAVMEC process.

For more information on the July meeting, contact the NBVME office.

2011 NAVLE Form Review

Each spring, the NBVME conducts a review of draft forms of the NAVLE to be administered in the coming fall-spring testing cycle. The review ensures that the test items are relevant to entry-level private clinical practice, and that the forms are balanced with regard to content. On April 13-14, 22 participants met at the offices of the National Board of Medical Examiners in Philadelphia to review



Drs. Erica Mitchell, Nepean, ON; Jennifer Gavin, Valley City, ND; Erica Barron, Alexandria, VA; and Lori Simma, Rockville, IN

and approve NAVLE forms to be administered in the November-December 2011 and April 2012 testing windows. Participants in the form review included nine of the 13 NBVME members, nine of the 10 members of the NBVME's Examination Development Advisory Board, and four recent veterinary graduates. This year's recent graduates were Drs. Erica Mitchell (Guelph 2009), Jennifer Gavin (Ross 2008), Erica Barron (Ohio State 2009) and Lori Simma (Purdue 2008).