

National Board Report

A Quarterly Newsletter of the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

Volume 12 Issue 4

© National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

November, 2007

Computers

It goes without saying that computers are capable of doing things that no one would have imagined just a few years ago. It is also apparent to anyone who works with computers that they are also capable of messing things up from time to time.

On the afternoon of the first day of the fall NAVLE testing window, we received a call from a candidate who reported that two items on her examination referred to a graphic image that did not appear on the monitor. When a second candidate contacted us later that day to report the same thing, we knew we had a problem. The NBME subsequently confirmed that four items appearing on some forms of the fall NAVLE referred to an image that did not display. All four of the items were unscored pretest items, but it was an unfortunate problem, and worse, it could not be fixed during the remainder of the four-week fall testing window. The NBVME notified contact persons at veterinary schools and posted information about the problem on its website. The NBME informed Prometric, so test center administrators could let NAVLE candidates know that they might encounter the flawed items on their examination.

This particular problem would not have happened if the NAVLE was a paper and pencil examination. However, even with an occasional computer-related test delivery problem, the NAVLE is far better than its paper and pencil predecessors. As anyone who worked with the NBE and the CCT can attest, problems with printed examinations can be far more serious. I could tell stories, but I won't.

John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD
Executive Director

New NAVLE Self-Assessments

The NBVME and the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) have completed work on two new web-based NAVLE self-assessments, which will be made available to candidates beginning in mid-December. The self-assessments are designed to help NAVLE candidates identify their strengths and weaknesses as they prepare to take the NAVLE, and to help candidates and others learn about the content and format of the NAVLE.

There are two forms of each self-assessment, each consisting of 200 unique multiple choice questions taken from the NAVLE item bank. Each of the forms will be available in standard time and self-paced versions. All self-assessments will be available in English and French.

Candidates will be able to access the self-assessments via the NBVME's web site, www.nbvme.org, where a link will take them to the self-assessment page. There, candidates will be able to learn more about the self-assessments, take a free sample assessment and establish an account. Once the account is set up, the candidate can purchase one or more assessments for \$50 each. Candidates will have 30 days to complete an assessment once it is purchased.

Irregular Behavior Update

The NBVME convened its fourth NAVLE irregular behavior hearing in Minneapolis on September 17. Three candidates were invited to the hearing, and two attended. Each of the two candidates was associated with NAVLE test content posted on Yahoo! discussion groups (now closed). Both candidates were fined for violating the NBVME's copyright by posting the test material on Yahoo, and the cases were closed after payment of the fines. The third candidate will attend a hearing in San Antonio on January 26.

The self-assessments will closely resemble the NAVLE as it is administered at a Prometric testing center. The standard time versions will consist of four sections of 50 items in 55 minutes (the actual NAVLE consists of six sections of 60 items in 65 minutes). The self-paced versions allow 110 minutes per section. Candidates will be able to take an assessment in one sitting, or they can stop and resume an assessment as they desire. Once the assessment is completed, the candidate will receive a score feedback report, showing their overall score, and subscores by the major NAVLE content areas. The scores will be accompanied by data showing how actual NAVLE candidates performed on the same items.

At this time, the self-assessments will work properly only on Windows computers using Internet Explorer. The NBME is working on modifications that will allow the self-assessments to work on Macintosh computers and with other internet browsers, and those changes should be in place in early 2008.

January NBVME Meeting

The NBVME will meet in San Antonio January 25-26. Dr. Meg Glattly of Richfield, MN will chair the meeting. The NBVME's general session, which is open to all, is scheduled for Friday afternoon. Persons interested in attending should contact the NBVME office for more information.



Dr. Meg Glattly

NAVLE New Item Review

A total of 24 veterinarians served as NAVLE item writers this year, and 22 of them traveled to the office of the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) in Philadelphia for the annual new item review meeting on November 13-14.

NAVLE item writers for 2007 included Drs. Kevin Anderson (Raleigh, NC), John August (College Station, TX), R.B. Baker (Ames, IA), Paul Coe (East Lansing, MI), Cheryl Dhein (Pullman, WA), Alison Eddy (Blacksburg, VA), Maria Fahie (Pomona, CA), Robert Froehlich (Grand Lake, CO), Ned Gentz (Albuquerque, NM), Eric Gingerich (Kennett Square, PA), Johanna Heselstine (Stillwater, OK), Veronika Kiklevich (Boerne, TX), Adam Langer (Lawrenceville, NJ), Isabelle Langlois (St-Hyacinthe, QU), Karen Lehe (West Lafayette, IN), Susan Little (Ottawa, ON), Jeanne Lofstedt (Charlottetown, PEI), Dianne Mawby (Knoxville, TN), Tatjana Mirkovic (Port Moody, BC), Daryl Nydam (Ithaca, NY), Joel Schrader (Ashland, NE), Saralyn Smith-Carr (Auburn, AL), Jeff Tyler (Columbia, MO), and David VanMetre (Ft. Collins, CO).

To date, a total of 93 individuals have served as NAVLE item writers, including faculty members from 30 different US and Canadian veterinary schools, and veterinarians from a variety of private and public practice settings. The NBVME appreciates these item writers and the NBME editorial staff who work to ensure the continuing quality of the examination.

From the Past: State Board Questions

Number 26 in a Series

It's time to move on to the Meat and Milk Hygiene chapter of the book, *Veterinary State Board Questions and Answers*, published in 1917 by V. G. Kimball.

Questions

1. Define proximate principle. Name three proximate principles and mention a common food substance in which each is respectively contained.
2. State the minimum amount of air space that should be provided in a stable (a) for each horse, (b) for each cow.
3. Describe an effective method of disinfecting a ship that has contained cattle affected with anthrax.
4. What precautions are necessary for public safety in an outbreak of rabies?
5. Name ten local disease conditions that do not call for rejection of the meat for human food.
6. What is cold slaughtered beef and how is it detected?

Answers

1. A proximate principle is a substance which is capable of being decomposed into simpler principles or parts, as distinguished from ultimate principles which are not capable of further division. For example, NaCl is a proximate principle and can be decomposed into Na and Cl, which, as ultimate principles, cannot be further subdivided. Starch, protein, and fat are proximate principles which may be decomposed into C, O, H, etc. A common food substance which contains these principles is oats.
2. This all depends on how often the air of the space is changed. A horse requires 15,000 cubic feet per hour, and

cattle slightly less. The average air space given to a horse is 1500 cubic feet, and to a cow 1200 cubic feet. In the case of the horse, the air would need to be changed ten times per hour, and for the cow about twelve times.

3. Send the boat out to sea not less than forty miles from land and, beginning at the lowest occupied deck, have all excreta, fodder, fittings, etc., brought up and thrown overboard. Then turn live steam under pressure against every portion of the ship's interior, touching every crevice, nook, and corner. The bilge should be pumped out and disinfected with bichloride of mercury or carbolic acid.
4. Rigid quarantine for 100 days, or longer if necessary. Muzzle all dogs over a wide area. All stray and unmuzzled dogs should be shot. All dogs and cats that have been bitten by a rabid animal should be destroyed or shut up in iron cages for six months under veterinary supervision.
5. Localized tuberculosis, actinomycosis and botryomycosis; pericarditis, benign tumors, chronic nephritis, dermatitis, mange, hemorrhage, thrombosis.
6. Cold slaughtered beef is that from a carcass of a dead unslaughtered animal. Fraudulent attempts are made to give the carcass the appearance of a normally slaughtered animal by performing the sticking or cutting on post-mortem. This can be detected by the absence of bloody infiltration of the edges of the wound, improper bleeding, and perhaps evidence of post-mortem decomposition.

Next issue: more Milk and Meat Hygiene

The *National Board Report* is published quarterly by the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME®), PO Box 1356, Bismarck, ND 58502. Phone (701) 224-0332, fax (701) 224-0435, mail@nbvme.org, <http://www.nbvme.org>.

The purpose of the *National Board Report* is to educate, to inform, and to communicate information about the objectives and programs of the NBVME. The opinions and views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official opinions, views, or policies of the NBVME or any of its members, unless expressly so stated.

Linda L. Blythe, DVM, PhD; Dale D. Boyle, DVM, MPH, DACVPM; James Dalley, DVM, MS; Dennis A. Feinberg, DVM, *Chair-Elect*; Benjamin Franklin, Jr., DVM, *Secretary-Treasurer*; Meg Glattly, DVM, *Chair*; Thomas B. Hairgrove, DVM, DABVP; Francis A. Kallfelz, DVM, PhD, DACVN; Sylvie Latour, DVM; Lila Miller, DVM; Ellen L. O'Connor, *Public Member*; Mike Thomas, DVM, *Past Chair*; Rick Tubbs, DVM, MS, MBA, DACT, DABVP; John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD, *Executive Director*; Anita Casey-Reed, Debbie Larson, Bridget Whittey, and Tonee VanderVliet, *Staff*

Species Specific Examinations Revised

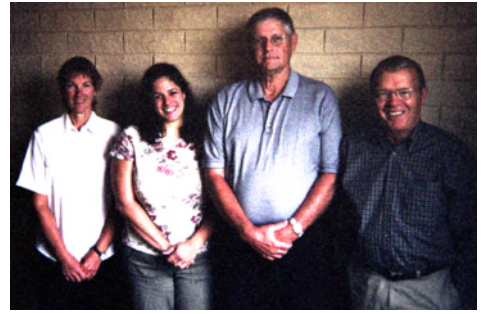
The NBVME is almost finished with a thorough revision to its two species specific examinations. Companion animal and equine examinations were first developed in 1997 in response to requests from licensing boards for examinations suitable for use in disciplinary cases. In 2000, the examinations were made available to boards to use for other purposes, and they were revised in 2003.

Nine individuals participated as reviewers for the companion animal forms, including Drs. Doug Aspros, Jim Dalley, Cheryl Dhein, Julie Fixman, Dennis Feinberg, Lila Miller, Jon Pennell, Helen Tuzio, and Tom Whitley.

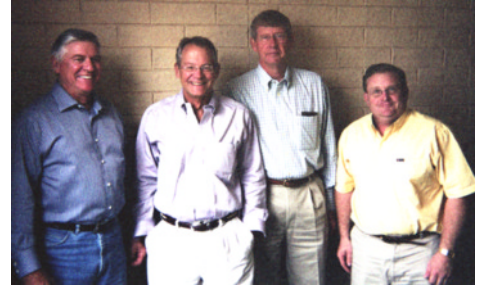
Eight people reviewed the equine forms, including Drs. Jon Betts, Christopher Brown, Nancy Collins, Benjamin Darien, Ben Franklin, John King, Roger Magnusson, and Patricia Provost.

Some items from the present forms of the examination were retained, some were revised, and some were deleted. Deleted items were replaced with items selected from the NAVLE item bank. The review resulted in two new 100-item forms of each examination.

In September, eight of the reviewers (four for each examination) met in Minneapolis to review drafts of the revised forms. After all the revisions were compiled, the reviewers met via conference call on November 28 to conduct a standard setting exercise. The results of the standard setting will be reviewed by the NBVME, which will establish a recommended passing standard for each examination. Once that is done, the examinations will be printed and offered to licensing boards for their use. The examinations will be priced at \$300 per form.



Drs. Cheryl Dhein, Julie Fixman, Tom Whitley, and Jim Dalley



Drs. Ben Franklin, Benjamin Darien, Roger Magnusson, and John King

AAVSB in Charleston

One of the goals in the NBVME's new strategic plan is outreach. In July, the board met in Ottawa in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and its National Examining Board (NEB). In September, 10 of the 13 NBVME members and three NBVME staff attended the annual meeting of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards in Charleston, SC.



Erin Jones and Robyn Kendrick from the AAVSB staff with Dr. John Boyce



NBVME staff Debbie Larson and Bridget Whitley



Drs. Jim Dalley, Dennis Feinberg, and Mike Thomas



Dr. Lila Miller and Ms. Ellen O'Connor

Qualifying Examination Update

September Administration

A total of 129 candidates took the NBVME's Qualifying Examination on September 13, 2007. The QE is a 300-item web-based multiple choice basic science examination developed for use by the AAVSB's PAVE program in assessing the educational equivalence of graduates of foreign, non-accredited veterinary schools.

September candidates took the QE at three sites in the Caribbean (St. Kitts, Grenada, and Grand Cayman), and at eight locations in the US. The NBVME Executive Committee met via conference call on October 11 to review examination statistics and approve a passing standard for the examination. The failure rate for criterion candidates (first time test takers) was 33.3%.

The QE is administered three times per year at proctored testing sites. Upcoming administrations are scheduled for January 17 and May 15, 2008. Candidates apply for the QE through the AAVSB office, www.aavsb.org.

Use By Accredited Schools

Western University's College of Veterinary Medicine required its second year students to take the QE in May 2005, 2006, and 2007. Iowa State University administered the QE for the first time in January 2007, and will give it again in January 2008. Two additional accredited schools are making plans to administer the QE in 2008 (one in January and one in May). The QE is available to other accredited schools who are interested in using the examination as a standardized assessment of basic science knowledge.

QE Item Writers

QE item writers gather in Philadelphia each fall to review newly written items for addition to the item bank. On September 25-26, 11 of this year's 13 item writers participated in the item review meeting.

QE item writers for 2007 included Drs. Thomas Caceci, Blacksburg, VA (histology); Paul Davenport, Gainesville, FL (physiology); Anton Hoffman, College Station, TX (anatomy); Gayle Johnson, Columbia,

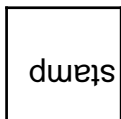
MO (pathology); Ron Johnson, Guelph, ON (pharmacology); Lynne Kushner, Philadelphia, PA (pharmacology); Susan Little, Stillwater, OK (parasitology); Abdelfattah Nour, West Lafayette, IN (physiology); Jon Patterson, East Lansing, MI (pathology); Tom Phillips, Pomona, CA (virology); Marc Ratzlaff, Pullman, WA (anatomy); Elizabeth Spangler, Auburn, AL (clinical pathology); and Jean Whichard, Atlanta, GA (bacteriology).

New item writers for 2008 will meet in Philadelphia February 26-27 for an item writing workshop, and will join the returning item writers to review QE forms to be administered in the 2008-09 testing cycle.

More Information

To date, the QE has been administered to a total of 1055 PAVE candidates and 388 students at accredited veterinary schools. Additional information on the QE can be found at www.nbvme.org.

Mailing Label



National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
Post Office Box 1356
Bismarck, ND 58502