

Christian Veterinary Fellowship

Student Manual



Introduction

Each year hundreds of veterinary students participate in Christian Veterinary Fellowship (CVF) chapters across the United States. CVM seeks to challenge these students in their Biblical worldview of veterinary medicine and its applications, and encourages students to serve others through their profession, living out their Christian faith. These student chapters promote outreach to others in their campus and community through a variety of student-organized activities and events. Many students also become involved in short-term mission opportunities during their time in veterinary school.

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Suggested Organization

President:

- Supervise and coordinate events and meetings for CVF
- Set vision and leadership for CVF
- Coordinate all functions & activities of CVF among officers and general membership
- Plan regular officer/leadership meetings
- Communicate general CVF updates to faculty advisor and to vet school at large
- Coordinate missions trips through CVM, or designate another officer or member to fulfill the role as the CVF Missions Coordinator
- We recommend that you set a Constitution and Bi-Laws as part of your CVF group. CVM has samples upon request.
- Act as the main point person between your CVF and your area CVM Region Rep

Vice-president:

- Aid the president in planning and maintaining CVF activities throughout the year
- Assist in planning Bible study and prayer groups for the year and coordinating Bible study and prayer group leaders

Secretary:

- Maintain and update contact information for all participants
 - Send updated contact list to CVM (studentinfo@cvmusa.org) at the beginning of the school year
 - Send graduate contact list to CVM (studentinfo@cvmusa.org) before leaving school at the end of the year
- Maintain and update the CVF website of Facebook Page
- Reserve rooms and maintain correspondence with public as needed

Treasurer:

- Custodian of the financial resources of the organization and maintain the CVF bank account
 - Collect any monies received in accountable fashion
 - Pay bills as necessary
- Oversee other monetary transactions including fundraising and social activities
- Keep officers informed of CVF's financial status at least once a semester
- Arrange fundraising opportunities for the organization as needed.

Social chair:

- Plan and coordinate social activities for the organization outside of the regular Bible study and prayer meetings.

NOTE: Remember, these are just guidelines, add officers or consolidate roles as you see fit.

Bible Studies

Study of God's Word is critical to every believer's spiritual growth! *"Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees"* (Job 4:4, NIV). No one has grown deeper in their walk with God without a scriptural foundation. Having weekly Bible studies is a good way to foster growth and fellowship. It is also a good chance for outreach to the rest of the veterinary school. Encourage CVF members to invite their classmates and be open to seekers. Keep the atmosphere open and friendly so that people of various faiths feel welcome and able to ask questions. You can set up whatever time works best for most students to attend. Many CVF groups find that meeting at lunch works well because students of different years generally have the same lunch hour, and most are already at school. You might consider using the fall as a growth semester and the spring more for outreach or evangelism with your study.

Here are some Bible Study resources for your CVF group:

- The CVM Staff have written a devotional series especially for CVF student groups based on this year's theme of "**Called**" from Ephesians 4:1.
 - Get to know the CVM family and explore all the ways you could be called to walk closer with Christ.
 - Includes 10 2-page studies with discussion questions for your group and short bios about each author.
- We provide the **Campus ALPHA** Bible study video series. You may want to kick off your school year with this valuable resource or use it in the spring as more of an outreach once your group has meshed:
 - Everyone searches for meaning in life: "Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I headed? Is there an ultimate meaning or purpose to my life?" Campus ALPHA is the perfect place to begin that search. It is a no-pressure introduction to the Christian faith where no question is too simple or too hostile. Each of the seven-week sessions includes a talk, and a small group discussion time when people are free to speak their minds and even disagree with what has been said!
 - Every student president receives a flash drive with curriculum, video and publicity resources for this seven week, fifty minute, group study to use.
 - We encourage you to kick off this first quarter/semester study with a Nutramax-sponsored all school lunch, showing the video introduction on the flash drive, with an invitation to the seven week study. This is an excellent way to begin your school year and your CVF group study, or start in the spring when you're ready to reach out more.
- We also provide **A Discipleship Journey** DVDs, workbook, and leader guide for your CVF group. This comprehensive resource is created to equip followers of Jesus to grow deeper spiritually while being empowered to make disciples in your CVF. Here are some ways you can use this resource:
 - One-on-one discipleship
 - Small group resource
 - Large group resource

- CVM provides a condensed list of 15-minute videos you could use as a group for one semester, referring to the book only optionally.
- There are Bible studies online on the CVM Student Resources page (www.cvmusa.org/students) that can be downloaded for your CVF group. They are put together specifically with veterinary students in mind – one of the studies is written specifically for First-Year Students.
- The group can get together and choose any other topics for Bible study. Usually going through a book of the Bible works well. Other sources are NavPress and InterVarsity Press or just stop by your local Christian bookstore and peruse the Group Bible Study materials. Try to get members involved in leading, as it empowers their spiritual growth and increases their commitment to your CVF.
- Several Real Life/Real Impact presentations on the CVM YouTube student channel (CVMstudentministries) could also make great resources. Due to the length of the presentations, they may not be good for lunch meetings. However they are a wealth of information for evening meetings, preparation for Short-Term Mission trips and other valuable topics. Check them out at www.youtube.com/CVMstudentministries.

Prayer

Prayer is vital! *“LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief” (Psalm 143:1, NIV).* Lives centered in prayer find peace, direction, and hope. There are many ways to promote prayer within your group. Here are some ideas that have worked for CVF groups:

- Weekly prayer meeting: Set aside a time each week for members to get together and share prayer requests and pray for one another, maybe even before class one morning.
- Prayer Partners: Set up a name exchange at a CVF meeting either at the beginning of the year or at each break. Purpose to pray for the other person each day.
- Prayer requests: Collecting prayer requests can also be used as an outreach to the school at large. If your club has a shadowbox or mailbox, prayer requests can be placed here and the club can pray about it at the next Bible study or prayer meeting. Some clubs send out weekly emails with prayer requests.

NOTE: Remember to keep prayer requests completely confidential.

Ministry to Others

There are many ways your CVF group can serve. *Matthew 25: 44-45 (NCV) says, “Then those people will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or alone and away from home or without clothes or sick or in prison? When did we see these things and not help you?’ Then the King will answer, ‘I tell you the truth, anything you refused to do for even*

the least of my people here, you refused to do for me.'" Whenever we see others through the eyes of Jesus, we see how to love, serve, give and come alongside to love people toward Him.

- Adopt a Field Staff Member to pray for, support, and maybe even visit on a short-term mission trip. Your Region Rep will talk to you about which Field Staff Members would be a good fit for adoption by your CVF group.
- Check out the CVM Gift Guide (www.cvmusa.org/GiftGuide) which supports fieldworker projects such as the Give a Kid to a Kid goat project for children in Haiti plus many more vital ministries.
- Connect with a local church in an ongoing, supportive ministry that is critically needed in your community.
- Local food pantry/soup kitchen/Habitat for Humanity/Ronald McDonald House
- Partner with another club at school for a community service project to be "salt and light" both in the project and in relationship building with other students for His glory.
- Sponsor a family for Christmas through a program such as Angel Tree.
- Choose a project with World Concern (www.worldconcern.org) to support.

Outreach

As Christians, we are called to share our faith with those around us. *Romans 1:16 (NIV), "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."* God has given us unique opportunities in veterinary school to reach out to our classmates, faculty and staff.

- Campus ALPHA is a wonderful way to reach out to your entire school! Check out the information in the Bible Study to find out more.
- Website: Through your school, set up a website for your CVF where people can find information about your Bible studies, activities, officer and faculty advisor contact information. Additional information to include on the website could be a list of local churches, schedule of activities, links to CVM and other websites or devotionals, etc. Make sure and send us the link to your website! Or set up a Facebook page to keep everyone updated with your CVF news and event reminders.
- Kick-off Encouragements: Serve a breakfast for the first year students to introduce them to CVF, give out first-test treat bags with scripture.
- Weekly Inspiration Emails: Think of short, inspiring quotes, text and Bible verses to send out weekly to encourage your group and all who have signed up for them throughout the year.
- Finals Outreach: Think of ways to reach out to the vet school at finals such as, healthy food as a potluck one lunch, candy canes to everyone, inspirational notes around the vet school

- Prayer Box: Set out a prayer request box at school, check it often, and pray for the needs that people have in your school.
- Brochures about CVF : These can be placed in students' mailboxes to give information about your CVF and Bible studies. CVM Brochures/Displays are available to CVF groups for freshman orientation, "club day", annual conferences, or other campus events. Please email (studentinfo@cvmusa.org) at least 1 month in advance with the date of the event and number of brochures needed. Displays will be reserved on a first-come first-serve basis.
- Local Church list: This can be placed in students' mailboxes, emailed to students, or posted on the club website. This is especially important for First Year students.
- Mailbox stuffers: These can be little packets of candy and Bible verses to put in students' mailboxes during finals week or a particularly busy week for one class. This is a great way to show the love of Christ to your classmates in the midst of tests and stress.
- Table at open house: Set up an information table about CVF at your school's open house. At orientation or the beginning of the year SCAVMA meeting, ask if you can make an announcement about CVF club activities/Bible studies. Displays will be reserved on a first-come first-serve basis.

Speakers

Guest speakers are a great way to get other perspectives and delve into "real-world" topics. *Colossians 1:28 (NIV)*, "He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ." CVM has a database of dedicated Christian doctors who can speak to your group (studentinfo@cvmusa.org). We recommend maintaining a list of local speakers for your area and passing it down from year to year through the CVF officers. Some speaker events can be specific to CVF, while others can easily be of interest to the whole school. Topics that could be addressed are:

- Putting God first in the hectic pace of vet school
- Short term missions
- Dealing with difficult clients
- International veterinary work
- How to share your faith
- Balancing your family and career
- Surviving your first year out of veterinary school
- Time and money management
- Personal testimonies
- The list goes on...

One valuable resource for funding is Nutramax (a ministry partner with CVM), who has made funds available to CVF groups interested in organizing a guest speaker to share during a meeting. It is preferred that these lunches be opened to the entire veterinary

campus, as Nutramax wants to support your efforts in outreach to your colleagues. Each CVF chapter may apply once per school year and the application must be received by CVM two weeks prior to the event to be considered for approval. A copy of the application can be found online (www.cvmusa.org/Students) under Student Resources.

Fundraisers

Fundraisers are not only effective in raising funds, they help get the message out about Jesus Christ through the ministry of CVF. Scripture reminds us that God has given us all we need for His glory (*1 Chronicles 29:11-17*). Fundraising allows your CVF to have funds for social activities, Bible study/outreach resources, short-term mission trips, and other activities. Below are some examples of what has worked for other clubs:

- Animal Impact Fund is an amazing way to change the world for Christ! Monies raised are for animal adoption funds for fieldworkers to use to advance the Gospel in their context.
- Promote the CVM Gift Guide www.cvmusa.org/giftguide - all the monies raised goes to specific ministries outlined in the guide.
- Online auction through your website – this will increase impact by involving people from home, work, etc.
- “Dine with a Doctor” auction
- Rummage sale – what about extending your Rummage sale on Craigslist or Ebay? Think of it as a virtual way to get rid of some stuff AND make a little more money...(make sure you include the cost of shipping those items online or else you'll end up losing money!)
- Chili cook-off or international dinner
- Christmas pictures with pets and Santa
- Seasonal Candy-grams
- Fall Festival
- Pet sitting
- Arrange with local restaurants to donate a percentage of their profit for a certain night and promote it throughout your vet school as a community/fundraising opportunity.
- Bake Sale, Book/CD sales
- Selling T-shirts, postcards, surgery caps, cat toys/grass, homemade Christmas cards, fair-trade merchandise
- Have a local church provide lunch for your CVF meetings and ask everyone who attends to donate a dollar.

NOTE: Don't be afraid to approach local churches, restaurants and businesses to ask for support and partnership with your fundraising efforts. You'll be surprised how many people in the community want to participate in cause-minded events!

Missions

Christian Veterinary Mission provides many mission trip opportunities to CVF student groups. *Romans 10:15 (NIV), "And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"*

- **Short term:** Opportunities are available throughout the year to go anywhere, and can be from 1-4 weeks in length. Many CVF groups go every year, sometimes twice or more a year! While winter and spring break trips are generally set up by request from the student group in the summer to early fall, student trips for the summer must be selected and confirmed with CVM by December 1, with the first non-refundable deposit due by January 1. Check the CVM student page (<http://www.cvmusa.org/Students/ShortTerm>) for current short-term opportunities. CVM also offers online student accounts where support money for trips can be deposited and directed towards your trip. Support can be raised for these trips through family, friends, through your local church and other organizations
- **Preceptorship:** CVM's Missions Preceptorship Program is an opportunity available to veterinary students in their 3rd or 4th year of veterinary school (or a graduate within 3 months of graduation) who sense a call to long term/career missions. This is a minimum of 4 weeks serving with a CVM fieldworker. A matching program exists through CVM to provide financial assistance. Applications and more information can be found on the CVM website (<http://www.cvmusa.org/MissionsPreceptorship>).
- Support missions by selecting an item from the Gift Guide www.cvmusa.org/giftguide and raising support.
- Don't forget to **Adopt a Field Staff Member!** It's an awesome way to learn more about missions (by receiving their regular prayer letters), and get involved through prayer, support, care packages, notes of encouragement, and a short-term visit to bless them.

Social Activities

Social activities are a wonderful way to build community within the CVF club, and can also be a method of outreach to other students. *1 John 4:12 (NIV), "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."* You can partner with other clubs at the graduate/medical school. Here are some ideas for social events:

- Field trips to a CVM affiliated veterinarian. This can be a rich time of relationship building within the group and with doctors who can mentor and support your CVF
- Movie nights
- Potlucks/game nights
- Christmas caroling or Christmas party
- A running group, walking group, or work-out group

- Ice cream social
- Super Bowl party
- Events with other local churches or ministries
- Potluck or BBQ at the CVF faculty adviser's home
- Be creative!

CVM-related Activities

CVM is here as a resource for your fellowship. *2 Thessalonians 1:3 (NIV)*, "We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing."

- Veterinary Conferences: At every major veterinary conference, CVM has a booth to introduce the ministry of CVM to a wider audience and to connect to Christian doctors, techs, and students attending the conference. You will be encouraged when you stop by the booth, plus be an encouragement to others, and learn more of what is happening in the ministry at that time. Often, there are one to two CVM gatherings at each conference: A morning breakfast and/or an evening fellowship. If you are attending any of these conferences, please stop by the booth and ask when/where they will be occurring.
- Real Life/Real Impact: These are student-led weekend conferences at various veterinary schools during the spring semester each year. Each year these conferences rotate through a set of schools within a geographical region of the U.S. These conferences are put together by the host CVF group and faculty sponsor. A typical weekend includes speakers, devotionals, praise and worship, and time for fellowship. Check the website (<http://www.cvmusa.org/RLRI>) to find dates, locations and to register. Start challenging your CVF group early to plan ahead for this awesome weekend!
- Externships: Externship opportunities with Christian practitioners in the US can be found on the CVM webpage by going to Students/Externships. There are about 30 practices listed and more are being added, so check back often!
- CVM Shortcourse: Preceding CVC Central in August every year, enjoy two full days of fellowship and learning together with other veterinarians like yourself! We offer a series of seminars for US vets in practice, for those involved in, or desiring to become involved with short-term, cross-cultural service here and abroad, and for those considering long-term mission service overseas.
- CVM's Online Job Database: The CVM website (www.cvmusa.org/jobs) is regularly updated with new employment opportunities in veterinary practices across the country. This is a great resource for 4th year and graduated students.

Christian Veterinary Mission (CVM)

Christian Veterinary Mission (CVM) seeks to help veterinarians serve others and live out their Christian faith through their profession. We work to change lives and communities by improving the care of livestock and other animals. Started more than 35 years ago by Dr. Leroy Dorminy, CVM is an international, interdenominational, non-profit organization that challenges, empowers and facilitates veterinarians to serve others through their profession, living out their Christian faith. CVM provides education, resources and encouragement for those who desire to minister through service, prayer, relationship building, and modeling Christ's love.

CVM is based in Seattle, Washington and has over 4,000 US veterinarians and veterinary students involved in the organization. Since its inception in 1976, more than 85 veterinarians have served long-term in over 325 combined years of long-term mission service and more than 3000 short-term veterinary volunteers have served in supporting long-term missions. They have shared the love of Christ by teaching and training farmers about basic animal health care, as well as through direct ministering of the gospel of Jesus Christ. CVM also serves to challenge veterinarians to workplace ministry, fellowship and sharing at professional meeting and local ministry groups. CVM staff and volunteers also serve to encourage CVF student groups at over 34 universities through leadership development, retreat weekends, networking and short-term mission opportunities.

This manual serves to provide a compilation of ideas and guidelines that can be used to help organize and facilitate a CVF chapter. CVM and your CVM Region Rep are always available as resources for your CVF group.