

Christian Veterinary Fellowship

Student Manual



Christ's love expressed through veterinary medicine.

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 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
- Take notes at meetings
- 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.

Other Officer Options:

- Some schools have such positions as Historians, Missions Chair, and Social Organizer as well. Two other new roles we recommend considering are a Delegate for each class/year, and Real Life Real Impact Coordinator (especially if your group will be hosting RLRI this school year.)

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 **Abounding Love** from Philippians 1:9.
 - Get to know the CVM family and study God's love in its many facets and what that means for how you love others.
 - Includes 10 2-page studies, each on a different passage about love, with discussion questions for your group, and short bios about each author.
- In years past, we provided the **Campus ALPHA** Bible study video series on a flash drive and **A Discipleship Journey** DVDs, workbook, and leader guide for your CVF group. If a video series sounds like a good fit for your group ask your past CVF president to pass on these resources to you.
- There are a number of Bible studies online on the CVM Student Resources page (<http://www.cvmusa.org/resources/students/bible-studies/>) 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.
- 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).
- Your group can get also 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. Some that have been used by other CVF groups are **Not a Fan** by Kyle Idleman, **Ephesians** by Mark Driscoll, **Storyline** by Donald Miller, and **Guardrails** by Andy Stanley. Try to get members involved in leading, as it empowers their spiritual growth and increases their commitment to your CVF.
- Many schools have found it helpful to have separate **Men's** and **Women's** studies, creating smaller more intimate groups, and encouraging vulnerability.

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 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.
- Pray before tests: You’ll be surprised how many new faces will get involved with this CVF activity, *everyone* can use some prayer before exams.
- Weekly Praise and Worship Night

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, encourage, 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 CVM Animal Impact (www.cvmusa.org/AnimalImpact) which supports field staff 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 or Operation Christmas Child.
- 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 Inspirational Emails: Think of short, inspiring quotes, text, and Bible verses to send out weekly to encourage your group.
- 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.
- CVF Banner and Brochures : CVM Brochures and Banner are available to CVF groups for open house, 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. Banners 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.
- Special Meal: Consider preparing a meal for those who have to work in the school hospital on special days like Thanksgiving or Christmas. Or put out free coffee, hot chocolate, and tea during final exam week.

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 veterinary professionals who can speak to your group, ask your Region Rep for such a list. 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
- Long-term Missions
- 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 supporting your adopted field staff member. Below are some examples of what has worked for other clubs:

- The Animal Impact program 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. (www.cvmusa.org/animalimpact)
- 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
- Petting Zoo
- 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, Cookbook Sale
- Selling T-shirts, postcards, surgery caps, cat toys/grass, homemade Christmas cards, fair-trade merchandise, Christmas ornaments
- Work at a Thrift Store together with other CVF members
- Have a local church provide lunch for your CVF meetings and ask everyone who attends to donate a dollar.
- Doggy Day – Wash people’s cars and dogs, throw in nail trims and ear cleanings for value added service.

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, 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. Contact the short-term Missions Coordinator at (shortterm@cvmusa.org) for a list of short-term trips specially suited for student groups. CVM also offers online student accounts where support money for trips can be deposited and directed toward your trip. Support can be raised for these trips through family, friends, your local church and other organizations.
- International Apprenticeships: CVM’s Missions Apprenticeship 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 4-6 weeks serving with a CVM fieldworker. A matching program exists through CVM to provide financial assistance. Applications are due October 1st, more information can be found on the CVM website: (<http://www.cvmusa.org/students/opportunities/apprenticeship/>).
- Support missions by participating in the Animal Impact program. (www.cvmusa.org/animalimpact).

- 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 on campus such as the pre-vet club or Christian Medical Dental Association. 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
- Fall Festival
- Pumpkin Carving
- Bowling
- Movie nights
- Potlucks/Game nights (Faculty Reps and Student Ministry Advocates love to host you.)
- 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
- Church and Chicken
- Graduation Party
- 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 session. 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 weekend student retreats at various veterinary schools early during the spring semester. Each year these conferences rotate through schools within each geographic region of the U.S. These conferences are organized by CVM and the area

Region Rep with help from the host CVF group and faculty advisor. A typical weekend includes speakers, devotionals, praise and worship, and time for fellowship. Check the website (<http://www.cvmusa.org/students/real-life-real-impact/>) 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 (<http://www.cvmusa.org/students/opportunities/externships/>). There are over 40 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 veterinary professionals like yourself! We offer a series of seminars for US workplace ministry, 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 graduating students.
- **Christian Veterinary Fellowship Facebook Page:** Join the CVF Facebook page to connect with other students from around the US and Canada as well as glean useful ideas about what other groups are doing and what's going on with CVM!

Christian Veterinary Mission (CVM)

Started more than 35 years ago by Dr. Leroy Dorminy, CVM is an international, interdenominational, non-profit organization that challenges, empowers, and facilitates veterinary professionals to serve others through their profession, living out their Christian faith. We work to change lives and communities by improving the care of livestock and other animals around the world. 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 9,000 US veterinary professionals and students involved in the organization. Since its inception in 1976, more than 85 veterinarians have served long-term in over 600 combined years of long-term mission service and more than 4,000 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 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.