

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR ALTERNATIVE-ROUTE TRAINING AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THERIOGENOLOGISTS

The Mentorship Program

The Mentorship Program is designed to assist veterinary practitioners seeking diplomate status in the American College of Theriogenologists (ACT). These individuals have not completed a formal residency or graduate-training program, and so have not had the benefit of a structured approach to a comprehensive review of the discipline of theriogenology. The Mentorship Program provides a supervised course of structured study to these individuals. Each person seeking to become eligible to take the ACT Certifying Examination by the alternative route should have a single designated mentor of record who will be responsible for guiding him/her through the course of study. The role of the mentor will be to help the potential candidate define a proposed course of study to be conducted over a two-year period. The course of study must be pre-approved by the Executive Board of the ACT. Once the Board has approved the program, the mentor will direct the potential candidate toward information sources and materials to be studied. The mentor will monitor the progress of each individual under his/her supervision. The mentor will be available to answer questions and help the potential candidate assimilate the more difficult material. The mentor's encouragement and practical experience will help keep the potential candidate motivated to achieve his/her goal. This is a demanding route to certification by the ACT, because interested individuals have additional responsibilities to their practices or industry. Mentors must meet with those under their supervision frequently to ensure that they are progressing in their outlined course of study. Finally, the mentor provides one of the written recommendations to the Executive Board for the potential candidate when he/she applies to take the Certifying Examination. In this final recommendation, the mentor evaluates the progress the individual has made in preparing for the Certifying Examination.

Qualities of a Mentor

The mentor must have a general comprehensive understanding of theriogenology in order for the Mentorship Program to function successfully. The mentor of record can and should direct the potential candidate to other Diplomates of the College for assistance in areas in which the mentor may be less knowledgeable. It is imperative that mentors have access to full-service libraries to supply the necessary references and information to candidates. A mentor must allot time to meet with a potential candidate on a regular basis, to keep attention focused on the study material, and to provide the necessary stimulation and encouragement. The ACT wants individuals preparing for the Certifying Examination to understand the information being reviewed, not just memorize it. The mentor must be honest and forthright with the potential candidate. If time commitment factors or job obligations disrupt the mentor's responsibilities to this individual, then he/she must be informed immediately and another mentor selected.

Procedures

1. Identify a mentor and prepare a proposed two-year course of study.
2. Submit an application for the Mentorship Program to be received by the

candidate stay on track. If the mentor were at a university, these would also serve as good times to review materials not easily available to the candidate, such as slides or journal articles.

Sample Mentorship Program

The following is an example, with some minor modifications, of a mentorship program that was devised by a successful alternative-route candidate who, in turn, became a mentor for another potential candidate. This should in no way be construed to be superior to other programs that might be devised, nor is it being endorsed by the ACT as an all-inclusive list of topics that should be covered. The mentor should remember that the program must fit his/her own work schedule. Consequently, topics might best be pursued in different orders for individual mentors to accommodate their teaching/clinical schedules. In addition, an outline of a course of study is only the beginning of a successful program. Ongoing dialogue, whether in-person or by phone or e-mail, between the mentor and the potential candidate about current topics, journal articles, continuing education opportunities, and other theriogenology-related issues will be important for the success of the program.

Sample Mentorship Program

October 1 to December 31

Normal female reproductive anatomy
Normal male reproductive anatomy
Reproductive physiology of the female
Spermatogenesis
Bovine theriogenology topics

January 1 to March 31

Andrology
Reproductive pathology
Cytogenetics
Fertilization
Equine theriogenology topics

April 1 to June 30

Pregnancy wastage
Female infertility
Urogenital surgery
Equine uterine biopsy
Small ruminant theriogenology topics

July 1 to September 30

Reproductive anomalies
Reproductive management technologies
Reproductive pharmacology
Nutrition as it pertains to reproduction

Canine and feline theriogenology topics

October 1 to December 31

Obstetrics

Pregnancy diagnosis and maternal recognition of pregnancy

Embryology and teratology

Parturition

Dystocia

Swine theriogenology topics

January 1 to March 31

Artificial insemination

Embryo transfer

Other assisted reproductive technologies (IVF, nuclear transfer, etc.)

Review of current literature

Physiology of gestation

Exotic and lab animal theriogenology topics

April 1 to June 30

Review of current literature

Estrus synchronization

Abortion

Avian and aquatic animal theriogenology topics

Reproductive toxicology

July 1 to Examination Date

Review of topics

Review of current literature

For Additional Information

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