1978

Editorial: Comments on New Admissions Process

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Editorial

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Comments on New Admissions Process

Editors:

I was interested in the article on the new admissions process for veterinary students written by Dr. A. E. Ledet, and appearing in Issue no. 2, 1978 of the ISU Veterinarian. This is a comprehensive guideline and as such is a valuable tool, but I have some questions.

Our veterinary colleges bear a heavy responsibility to the public and to the profession, hence the importance of the admissions process. My contacts with young graduates indicates that their training in the science of veterinary medicine is generally excellent. As an illustration, at the last meeting of our state association we were discussing requiring continuing education credits as a prerequisite for relicensure. One member said, “The best continuing education is to employ a sharp recent graduate.”

We should graduate men and women who are competent, but who are also good human beings—interested in patients and their owners, and with absolute integrity.

During my years on the Board of Directors, and as President of our state association, most of the complaints against practitioners proved to be due primarily to misunderstandings as a result of poor communication between the veterinarian and the client.

We should beware of “professionalism!” By that I mean an attitude of superiority on the part of the veterinarian. An attitude which precludes close contact with the clients. An attitude which does not foster confidence and trust on the part of the clients.

It seems to me that there is too much emphasis on grade point averages and not enough on motivation. A young man or woman who has had an ambition to be a veterinarian from an early age, who has had a close relationship with a local veterinarian, and who has done menial work in a veterinary establishment and therefore knows the advantages and the disadvantages of pursuing a veterinary career, would seem to me to be worthy of serious consideration as an applicant even though the applicants’ grade point average is not the highest. I fully realize that it would be a mistake to admit anyone not able to carry the work load, but motivation is a powerful incentive to produce.

Now something that cannot be put into guidelines, but which is of overriding importance, is the character of the applicant. There are many temptations in practice for those with a greed for money or other character defects. The seriousness of a case can be magnified to justify a higher fee. A more costly treatment procedure can be selected than is really required. A patient needing specialized treatment may not be referred. The list is endless. . . .

Character is so subjective that it requires constant observation of a person’s actions and reactions in order to reach a valid conclusion.

While the new admissions process is a reasonable and a workable guide, it will be administered by people. I am confident that the admissions committee will consider the subjective criteria I have outlined.

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