



TO: Professional Practice Committee

FROM: Sarah S. Benson *Sarah S. Benson*

SUBJECT: Proposed Repeal and Addition of New Sections 52.11 and 62.1 of the Regulations of the Commissioner Related to the Registration of Curricula and Professional Study in Veterinary Medicine

DATE: November 2, 2023

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Don M. P. Belmont*

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Should the Board of Regents repeal and add new sections 52.11 and 62.1 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education relating to the registration of curricula and professional study in veterinary medicine?

Reason for Consideration

Review of policy.

Proposed Handling

The proposed amendment will be presented to the Professional Practice Committee for discussion at the November 2023 meeting of the Board of Regents. A copy of the proposed rule is included (Attachment A).

Procedural History

A Notice of Proposed Rule Making will be published in the State Register on November 29, 2023, for a 60-day public comment period. Supporting materials for the proposed amendment are available upon request from the Secretary to the Board of Regents.

Background Information

Like many other states, New York is experiencing a critical shortage of veterinarians, especially in rural communities. These proposed amendments to sections 52.11 and 62.1

of the Commissioner's regulations are intended to meet workforce challenges without sacrificing educational quality by aligning requirements to programmatic accreditation standards that allow multiple program pathways to earning a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine.

To qualify for a license as a veterinarian, Education Law §6704(2) requires that applicants obtain sufficient education, including a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine in accordance with Commissioner's regulations. Section 62.1 of Commissioner's regulations currently requires applicants for licensure to provide evidence of completion of 60 semester hours of pre-professional postsecondary education satisfactory to the Department, and completion of a curriculum of not less than four academic years in a veterinary medical program registered by the department or accredited or approved by an acceptable accrediting organization.

Contemporary global practice in veterinary education, as reflected in the standards of the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education (AVMA-COE), currently provides for more variation in program scope and duration than is currently afforded by section 62.1. For example, the AVMA-COE accredits some 5-year professional international programs leading to a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine, where students enter the program directly from high school. This is similar to many internationally educated physicians who are licensed by virtue of having completed a five-year professional medical education program. Other programs accredited by the AVMA-COE have moved to a three-year program model leading to the doctoral degree in veterinary medicine. In each of these examples, study that constitutes pre-professional education under existing regulation is either embedded in a professional program (in the case of the 5-year program) or reviewed by the institution as an admissions requirement (in the case of the 3-year program). Revising section 62.1 to better align with program accreditation standards will remove barriers to licensure as a veterinarian in New York State for otherwise qualified applicants.

Section 52.11 of the Commissioner's regulations sets forth the requirements for the registration of a programs leading to licensure in veterinary medicine as follows:

Admission requirements to a college of veterinary medicine shall include the following pre-professional education: 60 semester hours of college study including courses in general chemistry, organic chemistry, and biology or zoology.

This language is in need of technical revision because current practice and contemporary programmatic accreditation standards provide multiple pathways to admission to professional study that are not limited to 60 credits of preprofessional education.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed new section 52.11 of the Commissioner's regulations establishes that curricula registered as leading to the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine shall meet accreditation standards from an acceptable accrediting organization as defined in the updated section 62.1(a).

The proposed new section 62.1 of the Commissioner's regulations requires that applicants for licensure present evidence of either:

- (1) a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine from a professional veterinary medical education program registered by the Department or accredited by an acceptable accrediting organization, or
- (2) the equivalent completion of combined prerequisite and professional study that the Department determines to be comparable to a registered or accredited program.

Related Regents Items

Not applicable.

Timetable for Implementation

It is anticipated that the proposed rule will be presented to the Board of Regents for adoption at the March 2024 Regents meeting, after publication of the proposed amendment in the State Register and expiration of the 60-day public comment period required under the State Administrative Procedure Act. If adopted at the March meeting, the proposed rule will become effective on March 27, 2024.

AMENDMENT TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Pursuant to sections 207, 6504, 6506, 6507, and 6704 of the New York Education Law.

1. Section 52.11 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education is REPEALED, and a new section 52.11 is added to read as follows:

52.11. Veterinary Medicine

The prerequisite and professional study leading to the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree shall meet accreditation standards from an acceptable accrediting organization as defined in subdivision (a) of section 62.1 of this Subchapter.

2. Section 62.1 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education is REPEALED, and new section 62.1 is added to read as follows:

62.1. Professional Study of Veterinary Medicine

(a) As used in this section, acceptable accrediting organization shall mean an organization accepted by the department as a reliable authority for the purpose of accreditation of veterinary medical programs at the post-secondary level, applying its criteria for granting accreditation or approval in a fair, consistent, and non-discriminatory manner, such as an agency recognized for these purposes by the United States Department of Education.

(b) To meet the professional education requirement for licensure in this State, the applicant shall present evidence of either:

(1) a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine from a professional veterinary medical education program registered by the department or accredited by an acceptable accrediting organization; or

(2) a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine, or the equivalent as determined by the department, and completion of combined prerequisite and professional study that the department determines to be comparable to a registered or accredited program.