# COS Vet Assisting Advisory Committee

# Meeting Minutes

## March 29, 2019

1. Committee Members:

Dr. Kenneth Fiser, Lone Oak Large Animal Clinic

Dr. Rich Heers, Cross Street Animal Clinic

Dr. Matthew Sumners, Tulare River Veterinary Services

1. Faculty members/Administrator present

Kim Pitigliano, Russell McKeith, Louann Waldner

1. Summary of Discussion

Kim Pitigliano and Russell McKeith presented a list of courses proposed for COS Veterinary Assisting certificate within the Animal Science department. Louann Waldner, Provost and Dean over Ag presented the challenges with the past Veterinary Technician program such as getting enough students through the classes that resulted in very low enrolled courses to get students to completion.

The veterinarians stressed the importance of students getting hands on skills working with animals. Additionally, students need to complete coursework in both Animal Science and specific courses in animal handling, anatomy and physiology, how a vet office operates, animal production and companion animals.

Dr. Waldner presented the conversations she and the faculty have had with the new Animal Science faculty member, Dr. Allison Vander Plaats who has been a practicing veterinarian in the Turlock area. Although, Dr. Vander Plaats has not yet started, she has reviewed the sequence of courses and, based on her experience in industry, agreed that Veterinary Assisting was a logical certificate. She articulated that she could introduce the skills outlined by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America who has an “Essential Skills Checklist for Veterinary Assisting programs.”

The veterinarians thought a Veterinary Assisting program was the appropriate level of certificate now. Some of the discussion revolved around employment and how many local veterinarians will hire Veterinary Technicians versus Vet Assistants because of the expected pay difference. The veterinarians discussed that they would train their new employees (students completing a Veterinary Assisting Certificate) the skills necessary for their job, but the fundamental introduction to animal handling, basic office practices would make them much more employable and valuable.

1. Recommendation/Action steps

Committee members recommend the following:

* Faculty should launch VT 216: Vet Office Practices, so it could be taught in the Spring 2020 semester.
* A Veterinary Assisting certificate, as outlined (utilizing courses in Animal Science and Veterinary Technology course), should be launched.

Submitted by: Russell McKeith