



Scribbling for Success

Penned by the Deanery

Welcome Note

Welcome to the June Issue of the newsletter. It has been another interesting period that has passed, with a major outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease at the largest feedlot in the country. The Biosecurity Hub, to which the Faculty is also a member, also recently held their very successful summit with the Minister of Agriculture in attendance for an entire day. The Minister's message was extremely important as he highlighted the need for strengthened biosecurity in the country. The Minister also announced that he has given permission to vaccinate against avian influenza, which represents a major shift from a previous non-vaccination policy.

Internationally, we also see major shifts in geopolitical stability, which may have a major impact on us. An important happening was the successful SA trade visit to the White House (The non-televised portions), for which the Minister also provided feedback at the summit. A new trade agreement is currently in discussion, and there is a possibility of the country still staying with AGOA, which will be a major win for exports.

Another interesting internal discussion that arose was the need for the 10% levy on laboratory income. For those unfamiliar with Faculty finances, the laboratories are considered a UP business unit, and they need to contribute towards operations (IT, Software, HR, Building Maintenance, utilities, etc), which is substantial: It costs R50 million to keep the campus operational. Also, important to note is that the figure is relatively low as the OVAH contributes 20% of income to overheads, while grants contribute up to 15% of overheads. For projects registered via E@UP, the overheads are typically accounted for at 35%. So, the simple answer to the question is that we all collectively need to contribute towards the successful operations of campus activities.

Our Faculty

- ❖ Planning a new recruitment video
- ❖ VetView goes live
- ❖ 53% of academic staff hold a PhD



Within the Box

★ **Biosecurity Initiatives:** As mentioned above, the summit was a major success with industry, academia and government all collectively contributing within the discussion groups, on ways to improve biosecurity in the country. As a Faculty, we have also been asked to play a bigger role in scientific discussions aimed at disease control. **It was heartening to see how our staff raised their hands** to participate in post-summit discussions on avian influenza and FMD.

★ **SAVC:** A gentle reminder to all staff who need to register with the SAVC to check that your maintenance fee is paid.

★ **Choose-UP Day:** Choose-UP Day has been scheduled for the 16th of August. Marketing will be reaching out to Departments to set up a programme for the morning. This is an **extremely important day for our recruitment**, to ensure that provisionally admitted students finally register with the University.

★ **Staff Recruitment:** Welcome to our new staff who have joined us in the last three months. We trust that you'll enjoy your stay at the Faculty. Also, **a big thanks to our locum staff**, who are assisting us as we move forward in filling vacant positions.

★ **Performance Management:** A friendly reminder to all staff, to complete your mid-year review.

"Even when life places you on a short leash, let your determination lead you to boundless opportunities. Like a dog who greets every challenge with unwavering loyalty and courage, face life's obstacles head-on. knowing they're just markers on the trail to your dreams."

**Faculty of
Veterinary Science**

Fakuleitit Veeartsenykunde
Lefapha la Disaense tša Bongakadiruiwa

Outside the Box

- ★ **QQR Preparation:** We are getting very close to the Faculty's Quinquennial Quality Review (QQR), which is scheduled for October 2025.
- ★ **VetView:** It is finally here. Despite the trepidation of implementing a new client management system, everything ran smoothly. Many thanks to the local and international team members who contributed to this mammoth undertaking. *It was a beast that only a top veterinary hospital could manage so easily.* It is now onto the next step as we move all billing laboratories onto VetView, as our only billing platform.
- ★ **Curriculum Review:** The Faculty has started a process to review our curriculum for both the nursing and veterinary programmes. *A number of small changes should be coming into effect in the next 6 months for the betterment of the programme.* The new year will see the introduction of more animal practical exposure at OTAU with the new VCP 301 module.



Imploding the Box



★ **Enhancing Communication:** The management team had a chance to hold a strategic session to look at our *culture as an organisation*, following smaller discussions within DVTD and PCS. Following this discussion, we would like to be *a Faculty that is open to discussion and debate*. As we move forward, we will be reaching out to find out how we can create these safe spaces where we are open to having discussions without criticism, and equally *be open to others having a different opinion*.

★ **Our Identity:** Another discussion, the management team led at the culture discussion, was a discussion on our identity as a veterinary school under very unique circumstances. The diagram on the next page was the summary that came out of the discussion from our strategic consultant, to best capture what we do and what we stand for around *“Animal Health Matters”*.

- ★ **Staff Matters:** We also engaged/met with the faculty animal caretakers and laboratory assistants to discuss challenges around *career opportunities and progression*. Team champions have been tasked with identifying potential development opportunities for further discussion.
- ★ **Artificial Intelligence Developments:** An interesting discussion is happening globally as *AI systems get smarter* and move from text generation to more advanced tasks. It now seems that AI can replicate many job functions and automate processes previously thought to be only doable by a physical person. Have you given any thoughts on how AI can be used to better what we do? If you have any thoughts, please share them with us.

Questions

Drop The One (aka Neo) a question and we'll make sure we answer. Don't be afraid to challenge us, give us direction or suggest strategies to take the Faculty forward: neo.mashitisho@up.ac.za

**Faculty of
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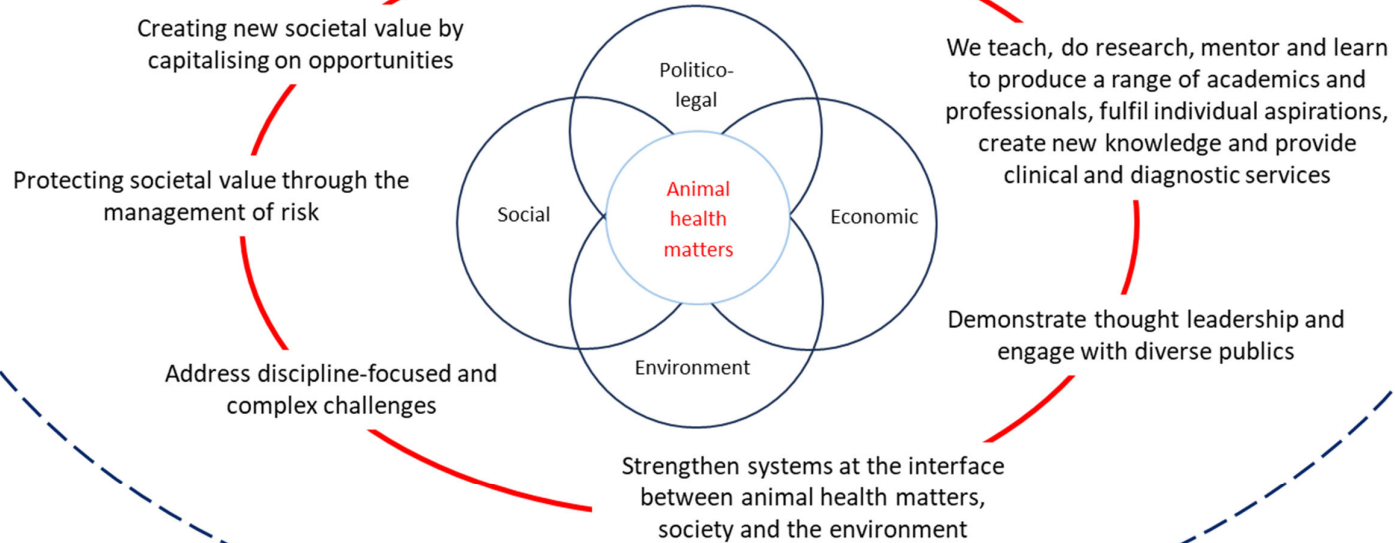
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Holistic animal and public health and well-being

A mix of scientists in the veterinary world:
Basic and applied, clinician, nursing,
technology and professional



Integrated approach across
the intra- to transdisciplinary
spectrum



Advancing the human condition and sustainable development in South Africa, the African continent and the world.