

Frequently Asked Questions about the 2009 Georgia Veterinary Scholars Program

- 1. How long is the program?** The program encompasses twelve weeks from mid May to early August. However, if a scholar must miss a week of the program due to prior obligations, the scholar can start the program a week early or end it a week late if both scholar and mentor agree. Certain dates are firm and cannot be missed these dates are as follows: **1) Scholar Research Day, July 28, 2009 2) Orientation Week, scheduled May 18 – May 22, 2009, and 3) the National Veterinary Scholar Symposium, scheduled for August 6 – 9, 2009 to be held at North Carolina State University. All Summer Sciences dates to be announced.**
- 2. What are the working hours?** Each scholar must decide this with his/her mentor. This is a good question to ask during the mentor selection process. The stipend is calculated based on a regular 40-hour week. However, while some of the research projects can be completed in a usual 8 – 5 day, others involve weekend and evening work.
- 3. How do the scholars choose their research project?** After the scholars are selected, they will each be given access to WebCT to view abstracts from all the prospective mentors. The scholars read the abstracts and meet with any mentors offering projects in which they are interested. There will be a meeting where mentors will give a short presentation on their research. We also recommend that each scholar talk with others who have worked in that mentor's lab (previous scholars, their website, graduate students, etc...); past students can often provide valuable information about the type of learning environment and the relationship the scholar can expect with the prospective mentor. The scholar then ranks their top three choices of projects and turns it in to the Office of Research and Graduate Affairs. A match is carried out, and scholars and mentors are notified of the results.
- 4. What if two Scholars choose the same research project?** If two scholars list the same first choice, the higher ranked applicant will get their first choice, and the next will get their second or third choice. In our experience, the great majority of scholars match with their first choice research project and mentor.
- 5. Are Scholars required to attend program meetings and field trips?** Scholars are **required to attend the program meetings held every other week and strongly encouraged to attend field trips.** If a scholar can not make it to a field trip they need to contact the directors at least one week in advance with an acceptable excuse. Mentors are welcome at both program meetings and field trips as well. The program meetings take place every other week for one hour and allow scholars to compare notes, provide progress reports and get updated on program housekeeping issues. Meeting absences or lateness should be arranged with the directors ahead of time (at least 1 full day in advance of the seminar).
- 6. Are scholars required to present their research?** Scholars are required to present their research at the College-wide Scholar Research Day (July 28, 2009). In addition, each scholar is **required to attend and present a poster at the National Merck-Merial Symposium, usually held the first weekend in August.** Travel expenses to attend the Symposium will be supplied by the program, but scholars will be responsible for paying for their hotel stay and will be reimbursed once they have completed the program evaluation and exit letter, once this has been completed Mrs. Farmer will make arrangements for you to be reimbursed for your hotel stay – please give her your receipt.
- 7. What is Summer Science?** *Summer Science* is a journal club that meets about every two weeks at a faculty member's home to discuss scientific journal articles relevant to veterinary researchers. This is open to the entire veterinary college community.
- 8. How are scholars paid?** Merck and NIH scholars are paid a monthly stipend (over \$400 weekly). Checks are distributed by the Office of Research and Graduate Affairs. The first check is usually disbursed in mid-May. Taxes are not withheld from these checks and the individual will be responsible for paying taxes. Individual labs are not responsible for providing scholar salary during the program. Please note that housing is not included in the stipend and will be the responsibility of the scholar.
- 9. Who is responsible for training the scholars in hazardous materials and lab safety?** It is the responsibility of the mentor to ensure that the scholar receives their hazardous material and lab safety training before starting work. Since every lab is different and has different hazardous materials, it is best that the scholars get their training from people who are trained to work in that laboratory.
- 10. Whom should I talk to if I have a problem?** You are always welcome to contact the faculty administrator, Dr. Harry Dickerson (hwd@uga.edu), Director Dr. Susan Sanchez (ssanchez@uga.edu), or the faculty co-directors, Dr. Chris King (cking@uga.edu), or Dr. Amelia Woolums (awoolums@uga.edu) or Mrs. Melissa Farmer. For more information on the program please visit our website at <http://www.veterinaryscholar.org/>