CANDIDATE PREPARATION INFORMATION

2019 ACVIM SAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION

This document is provided to help you prepare for the specialty exam in Small Animal Internal Medicine in June 2019. Please review it carefully and thoroughly!

Below, you'll find general information regarding:

- Exam structure
- Exam schedule (date, time, and location)
- Exam scoring
- Use of foreign language (translational) dictionaries
- ADA requests for special accommodation
- General sphere of knowledge distribution for multiple choice sections (i.e., question blueprint)
- Tips on preparation for the exam (including suggested reading list)

STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION

The Specialty Exam in Small Animal Internal Medicine consists of three major sections:

1. Written - 5 sets of questions (referred to as “essays”), each set on a different topic
2. Medical Literature - 100 multiple choice questions
3. Case Materials - 150 multiple choice questions total
   a. Patient Management (image and laboratory data based) - 75 questions
   b. Knowledge and Problem-solving Skills (not image-based) - 75 questions

SCHEDULE OF AND ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION

There are two absolute requirements for candidates sitting any ACVIM exam:

1). All candidates must show a valid picture ID when signing in at the exam.
2). All candidates must show an ACVIM receipt as proof of exam fee payment when signing in at the exam. If you have lost or misplaced your receipt, please visit your candidate dashboard, click the “Transaction History” link, and then reprint the applicable receipt (paid invoice).

You will not be admitted to the testing room without showing these two items.

NOTE: Cell phones, PDSs, cameras, and any other electronic devices should not be brought into the exam room. If you choose to bring them into the room despite that bolded, italicized request not to, they must be turned off, labeled with your name, and placed at a designated location away from the exam tables, as directed by ACVIM staff and/or exam proctors. Such storage will be done at your own risk. If your device makes noise during the exam administration, you will promptly be asked to turn in your testing materials and leave the room.
*Please be in the exam room 15 minutes prior to the start of the exam*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>ROOM/LOCATION</th>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, June 2, 2019</td>
<td>Small Animal Written</td>
<td>Sheraton Grand Phoenix Phoenix, AZ Room: TBD</td>
<td>8:00 am - 12:00 pm (4 hours duration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Animal Case Materials/ Knowledge and Problem-Solving</td>
<td>Sheraton Grand Phoenix Phoenix, AZ Room: TBD</td>
<td>2:00 pm – 6:00 pm (4 hours duration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, June 3, 2019</td>
<td>Small Animal Medical Literature</td>
<td>Sheraton Grand Phoenix Phoenix, AZ Room: TBD</td>
<td>8:00 am - 12:00 pm (4 hours duration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Animal Case Materials/ Patient Management</td>
<td>Sheraton Grand Phoenix Phoenix, AZ Room: TBD</td>
<td>2:00 pm – 6:00 pm (4 hours duration)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any answers indicated in test booklet will NOT be accepted in lieu of a completed scan sheet.

Each section of this exam will be administered at the posted time and place only. The exam administrators try to ensure each candidate is taking the correct section(s) of the exam, but ultimately it’s each candidate’s own responsibility to report on time to the appropriate session(s). **No make-up exams or exams at other sites will be considered.**

**SCORING OF THE EXAMINATION**

A candidate must pass each section of the specialty exam in order to pass the specialty exam as a whole. In a given year, all candidates have the potential to pass this exam. Pass points are determined for each section based on what would be expected from a minimally-qualified candidate, based on exam assessment by a Rating Committee composed of SAIM Diplomates, and **not** on the basis of a curve of all candidates’ performance. Candidates who do not pass all exam sections need only to retake the sections they failed, in subsequent years.

**Section 1: Written**

Each of the five essays of the written section is independently graded by two members of the SAIM Specialty Exam Committee who have participated in the construction of the questions and optimal responses. The two independent grades are averaged; essays are re-graded if a significant (>5 points) discrepancy between the two grades occurs. Each essay question and its key are also rated by additional SAIM Diplomates. Each essay question is worth 100 points. A candidate must earn at least 300 total points, and also must pass at least 3/5 essays (≥ 60 points = pass) to successfully complete this section of the exam.

**Section 2: Medical Literature**

The Small Animal Medical Literature questions are evaluated by SAIM Diplomates who assist in determination of the pass point.

**Section 3: Case Materials/Patient Management**
Section 4: Case Materials/Knowledge and Problem-solving Skills

The Small Animal Case Materials consists of two sections: Knowledge and Problem-solving Skills, and Patient Management. These multiple choice questions are evaluated by SAIM Diplomates who assist in determination of the pass point. In a change from previous years, these sections will be scored individually, will have distinct pass points, and will be passed/failed individually. Consequently failure of one section of Case Materials will necessitate retaking of only the failed section, not both sections.

USE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TRANSLATIONAL) DICTIONARIES

Candidates for whom English is a second language are permitted to use a foreign language (translational) dictionary during the exam, provided that they request this by filling out the dictionary request form at the time that they submit their exam registration documents (February 1). They will then be contacted by the ACVIM staff to arrange for an appropriate dictionary to be purchased for use in the exam on their behalf. The dictionary will be made available for them to use during the exam in June, and must be returned to the exam proctors at the conclusion of each test subsection. Candidates must refrain from writing in these dictionaries; hand-written notes may be considered grounds for dismissal from the remaining sections of the exam as evidence of cheating. Candidates are not allowed to bring their own dictionaries for use during the exam.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE ACVIM SAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION

The ACVIM complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2008 (the “ADA”). Candidates needing special accommodation must complete the ADA request form and return it with the exam registration form by the registration deadline (February 1). If accommodation is not requested in advance, ACVIM cannot guarantee the availability of accommodation on–site. It is critical that the contact information provided be current and, if any changes in contact information occur after registering for the exam that ACVIM be made aware of those changes.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION TOPIC DISTRIBUTION

(Approximate percentage of items across the major spheres of knowledge)

Every effort will be made to ensure the following percentages remain accurate for the exam as presented to the candidates; however, due to item performance, some very slight fluctuation in this blueprint may result due to final review and assessment of specific questions following scoring and psychometric analysis of results.

SECTION 1: MEDICAL LITERATURE (SAIM 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System/Sphere of Knowledge</th>
<th>Percentage of Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular</td>
<td>5-7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dermatology</td>
<td>1-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology/Statistics</td>
<td>1-2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Preparación para el Examen

### Escritura

El candidato será dado 5 ensayos distintos, cada uno con preguntas relacionadas a diferentes aspectos de un tema determinado. Los ensayos se construyen como una serie de respuestas cortas, listas, tablas a llenar, etc., en lugar de preguntas que requieran respuestas escritas largas. Los temas pueden ser extraídos de cualquier de los campos de conocimiento cubiertos por el plan de examen. Las preguntas pueden cubrir patofisiología; características de la enfermedad, tratamiento, y prevención; examen diagnóstico; agentes farmacológicos, y cualquier otro aspecto del tema con el que un especialista en medicina interna mínimamente calificado se espera que esté familiarizado. La interpretación de imágenes también puede incluirse en esta sección. Para esta sección solo, la puntuación...
point is pre-determined: each topic is worth 100 points and the pass point for each topic is 60 points. To pass this section, at least 3 out of the 5 topics must be passed with 60 or more points each and at least 300 total points must be accumulated across the 5 topics. All candidates should complete all 5 essays. Even if a given essay is failed, the points attained will be important in reaching the 300 point minimum required to pass the section.

Medical Literature
This section examines the candidate’s knowledge and understanding of the recent (approximately prior 5 years) peer-reviewed veterinary medical literature and current textbook-based information relevant to small animal internal medicine. Medical Literature consists of 100 multiple choice questions; each question is comparatively short (1-2 sentences) and will not contain images or tables of laboratory data.

Case Materials: Patient Management and Knowledge & Problem-solving Skills
This section is designed to test the clinical competency of the candidate through case-based multiple choice questions. The section contains 150 multiple choice questions (2 parts with 75 questions each), related to the diagnostic testing, therapy, diagnosis, and/or prognosis associated with a described clinical case. Some questions will contain only physical exam or laboratory data for analysis by the candidate. The majority of the questions in Patient Management will contain images that give information relevant to the case. The images may include (but are not limited to) photographs of physical exam findings or specific lesions, photomicrographs of cytology slides, endoscopic images, and radiographic, ultrasonographic, or advanced imaging views of the abdomen, thorax, head, or musculoskeletal system.

The candidate is not expected to be expert in cytology or diagnostic imaging, and images are selected with this in mind; however, the candidate should be prepared to assess microscopic findings and images that an internist might encounter in a typical clinical setting. All of the images used in this section will be available to each candidate in a booklet provided with the testing materials and/or on an image-viewing electronic device (most often a laptop computer). The candidate will be directed in the text of the questions to view specific images. Recommendations for preparation can’t be made beyond the clinical experience gained from participation in a residency program, and by reviewing the recommended medical literature as it pertains to all aspects of case management.

General Comments on Exam Preparation
The exam committee has the prerogative to alter exam content and questions each year to any degree they collectively deem appropriate, varying from no changes to complete replacement. Exam modifications are based chiefly on psychometric assessment of each question's performance and appearance of important new information in the literature. In a typical year, approximately 25-35% of the content will be completely new, 25-35% will be modified, and 25-35% will remain essentially unchanged from the prior year.

The exam as a whole will emphasize information taken from current veterinary literature, including journals, textbooks, and select electronic resources. Information may be drawn from current human literature, but only if relevant to small animal internal medicine. A systematic review of current veterinary textbooks, and articles from relevant, refereed journals is the recommended study focus. We can’t define conclusively the body of knowledge needed to pass this exam. Please note that although exam emphasis is on recently (within the past 5 years) published literature, this is not an absolute constraint. Seminal papers published more than 5 years ago may still provide valid testing points, as (less commonly) may landmark or relevant review papers from the human literature.

The following study resource list should be used as a guideline, only.
Textbooks (most recent edition, unless otherwise indicated)
Ettinger and Feldman: Textbook of Veterinary Internal Medicine
Kirk: Current Veterinary Therapy (last 2 editions)
Feldman and Nelson: Canine and Feline Endocrinology, 4th edition for endocrinology, 3rd edition for reproduction chapters only
Willard or Stockham/Scott: Clinical Pathology
Washabau and Day: Canine and Feline Gastroenterology
Guyton or Ganong: Physiology
DiBartola: Fluid, Electrolyte, and Acid-Base Disorders in Small Animal Practice
Rose: Clinical Physiology of Acid-Base and Electrolyte Disorders, 5th edition
West's Respiratory Physiology: The Essentials, 10th edition
Halliwell, Roitt, or Tizard: Immunology
DeLahunta, Oliver and Lorenz, or Dewey: Neurology
Tilley, Fox Ware, or Kittleson: Cardiology/ECG interpretation
Vander’s Renal Physiology, 8th edition: Renal physiology
Boothe: Small Animal Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics
Greene or Sykes: Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat
Little: August’s Consultations in Feline Internal Medicine, Volume 7
Withrow and MacEwan’s Small Animal Clinical Oncology, 5th edition
Bartges and Polzin: Nephrology and Urology of Small Animals
Plumb’s Veterinary Drug Handbook (Plumb)

Journals (articles relevant to small animal internal medicine)
*Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association
*Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine
*Veterinary Clinics of North America (Small Animal) (internal medicine-related volumes)
*Journal of Small Animal Practice
*Journal of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care
*Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery
Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association
American Journal of Veterinary Research
Veterinary Journal (formerly British Veterinary Journal)
eClinPath (http://www.eclinpath.com)
CAPC (Companion Animal Parasite Council - https://capcvet.org)

Particularly pertinent and important articles from the following may be used for exam topics
New England Journal of Medicine
Veterinary journals of other specialty colleges
PLOS One (https://journals.plos.org/plosone/)
BMC Vet Research (https://bmcvetres.biomedcentral.com)
Frontiers in Veterinary Science
Veterinary Record

*The large majority of literature-based test items will be drawn from asterisked journals.
Question material that clearly address the diagnosis or management of diseases routinely encountered by small animal internal medicine specialists may be drawn from articles published in the official journals of other specialty colleges, as well as (very occasionally) from the human medical literature. The committee suggests, however, that you limit your review of the human literature to two areas: 1) general concepts in physiology/pathophysiology, and 2) major review articles found in the New England Journal of Medicine. Material unique to human medicine will not be used.

If you have further questions once you have reviewed the information in this letter, you may contact any of the committee members below for further clarification. Please preferentially use email for correspondence since this ensures an appropriate record can be maintained.

Small Animal Internal Medicine Specialty Exam Committee members:

- Julie Fischer, Veterinary Specialty Hospital of San Diego, Chair
  (jfischer@ethosvet.com)
- James Whitehead, BluePearl Veterinary Specialists, Co-chair
  (james.whitehead@bluepearlvet.com)
- Julia Veir, Colorado State University
  (julia.veir@colostate.edu)
- Katie Tolbert, University of Tennessee
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- Frederic Gaschen, Lousiana State University
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  (cohnl@missouri.edu)
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- Kelly Monaghan, Aspen Meadow Veterinary Specialists
  (kellymonaghan@gmail.com)

We wish the best of luck to each of you, and we’ll see you in Phoenix in June!

Julie R. Fischer, DVM, DACVIM
SAIM Exam Committee Chair, 2018-2019