

RELAZIONE DI APERTURA DEL DIRETTORE SULLA SCUOLA DI SCIENZE MEDICHE VETERINARIE / FACOLTÀ DI MEDICINA VETERINARIA

Ladies and gentlemen, kind members of EAEVE team, Rector, colleagues and, my students, good morning and welcome in Matelica to everybody.

I would like to thank all of you for your presence today for this special appointment that got us emotively involved in EAEVE evaluation necessary for our School in order to achieve European standard needed to form a veterinary surgeon recognizable in the European context.

For this purpose, since November 2008 the School established an internal Commission in order to prepare and edit the Self Evaluating Report. The School Council decided that the members of this commission had to be the younger persons of the Teaching Staff because young are notably the more determined and enthusiastic part of the society.

I will try to synthesize some main point, I believe of special interest, from an historical perspective to illustrate the path we have taken up to achieve the goal of fulfilling the criteria for the European recognition.

The School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Camerino was founded in 1826 during Papal States under the pontificate of Leone XII that aimed to unify the State regulations. At the beginning the veterinary studies were established within the Faculty of Human Medicine and defined as School of Low Veterinary Medicine. After the unification of Italy the veterinary studies were restructured according to a common plan.

The so called "Regulation Mamiani" of December 1860 recognized as Higher Schools of Veterinary Medicine only the schools of Turin, Milan and Naples (Royal decree of September 1861). The Veterinary School of Camerino, and all the other Schools, kept such a denomination until 1882 when it was changed into Higher School of Veterinary Medicine and aggregated to the free University of Camerino. In 1928 the degree course in Veterinary Medicine of the University of Camerino became a full course and in 1930 it was provided with its own statute as the other Higher Schools of Veterinary Medicine. The Royal Decree of 1933 set a common curriculum for all the Italian Schools of Veterinary Medicine and changed them from 1934 into Faculties of Veterinary Medicine aggregated to the universities. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Camerino was suppressed in 1958 and thirty years later was established again by law decree in May 1989. A short time later the Faculty was moved to Matelica, a small town near Camerino.

At present the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, recently changed into School of Veterinary Medical Sciences - Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (SVMS-FVM) in 2009. It is a specific and unique educational institution within the Marche Region and thus particularly watchful to the territory's needs. The School is located in a very nice area, at mid-mountain level and the country has an economic tissue mixed with small to medium farms and agricultural and zootechnic resources till today based on small to medium farms. The human population of the region is about 1,600,000 people and the regional Gross Domestic Product is of about 39 billions of Euros.

The farm animal population is constituted by about 74,000 cattle, 194,000 sheep, 7,600 goats, 88,000 swine, 384,000 rabbits, 5,410,000 poultry, and 1,360 horses.

Pet population is composed of 212,000 dogs; the stray animal issue is less important than in other regions of Italy thanks the anti-stray dogs campaign developed by municipal or community kennels.

716 Veterinarian surgeons work in Marche and the ratio between them and Regional Gross Domestic Product is about of 18.36; from this point of view the ranking of Italian region shows that Marche have a good position in respect to assure a sufficient income.

From the past to the present, I would like to highlight the radical physical changes the School of Veterinary Medical Sciences underwent in the last two years. The structures now appear well

RELAZIONE DI APERTURA DEL DIRETTORE SULLA SCUOLA DI SCIENZE MEDICHE VETERINARIE / FACOLTÀ DI MEDICINA VETERINARIA

harmonized especially from a functional point of view. The teaching block holds two buildings that have been recently reorganized, the classrooms provided with modern audiovisual equipments, the anatomy museum with numerous skeletons of various species, the new library provided with computers, the microscope room, the new computer room and an open space for students with a cafeteria not yet started. Another building part of the teaching block holds the microbiology and infectious diseases labs.

The central block is composed of two buildings. The “San Sollecito” is a XIVth century building which has functioned for centuries as a human general hospital. Is now the main location of the School and it houses the Director office, some staff offices, the administrative offices, the Chemistry and Morphology and Morphopathology labs. Almost the entire ground floor is used for clinical activities: clinical pathology lab, surgery unit, digital radiology, physiotherapy-rehabilitation unit.

Closed and in conjunction with San Sollecito building there is the new division building. Renovated in 2010 it was the municipal kindergarten. It houses most of the facilities of the Small Animal Clinical Division of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital including emergency room, general and specialistic examination rooms, the “Diagnostic Unit” (Computerized Tomography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging, endoscopy, ultrasonography), small animal hospitalization unit, the intensive care room and the dog and cat infectious disease isolation units. The two building host computers available for the students and for interactive teaching. Finally, close to the central block there is a dissection room for solely anatomy practice activities.

The Block 2 comprises the Large Animal Clinical Division with the large animal radiology room, the large animal surgical section, a padded box for induction and recovery from anaesthesia and the main consulting room. These rooms are equipped with facilities for didactic purposes, stalls for horses, cows and small ruminant hospitalization and a completely separated unit for isolation of infected large animals. In the reproduction section there are two boxes for horses, a lecture room and a reproduction laboratory.

The new block 4 represented by the Teaching Slaughterhouse is close to the Large Animal Clinical Division and it includes a modern food inspection room and a modern necropsy room. Both rooms are predisposed with a computer system for the video recording and the video transmission in classroom.

One of the most relevant focus is the change of Teaching Organization. Since the coming in force of the Ministerial Decree n°270, 2004 which renewed the veterinary curriculum, the School of Veterinary Medical Sciences immediately started changing the old curriculum into the new. These changes, still in progress, are well documented in the Self Evaluation Report and will be completed in the Academic Year 2012-13.

The main organisational changes are also consequences of the previous EAEVE visit which in 2000 reported the Category 1 deficiencies that I can summarize as insufficient to largely insufficient practice in anatomy, clinical and necropsy from one side, and scarcity of premises and equipment for structured hands-on practical teaching of students on the other side. I would like, therefore, to draw attention to some of the most important changes that the School Council has proposed, in respect to the existing laws, for the further steps of Ministerial approval, and on the basis of the reported advices by the Internal Commission for the EAEVE evaluation.

Briefly, what has it been done to fill the above reported deficiencies?

We have:

- Increased the University Learning Credits for Tirocinio (practical activity in specific field fixed by laws) which today includes anatomic pathology with special emphasis to necropsy; practice that is reported in online calendar a year before the start of Academic activities;
- Increased training especially in anatomy to hands-on dissection by students of fresh or chilled material and work with prepared specimens of both companion and production animal species.
- Activated the “intensive weeks” and the on farm clinical activities; these last have been carried out by enrolled contract professors;
- finally, practice is carried out by splitting up the students in small groups to make to the hand-on learning much more effectiveness.

We have been able to program a great part of practice thanks to many agreements with a lot of farms, horse’s stables and fisheries, and with mountain communities or voluntary associations which manage kennels (as it is shown in slide).

The supervised practical activities needed to acquire the day-one skills are certified by the way of personal log-book that each student has to fill out for the admission to the final degree examination. Our new policy was applied also for the post-graduate activities in both the specialization school in animal health and the second level master in diagnostic imaging of the cat and dog with great appreciation by the stakeholders.

Finally, I must point out *a latere* that the Degree Course in Veterinary Medicine of the School of Medical Sciences is certified according the standard ISO 9001 from the French certification company AFAQ.

Institutional funding

As it is well known, the Ministry of Instruction, University and Research provides the financial maintenance of all Universities with an institutional fund, called Ordinary Financing Fund (OFF) which is used to cover salary and operating costs, teaching activities and for general expenses.

Specific research funds allocated to the Schools derive from:

PUBLIC:

- MIUR (Relevant National Interest Project, FIRB); Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policies,
- FAR (Research Fund of University of Camerino)
- National Research Council (NRC), and the European Union
- ZooPhilactic Institute
- Marche Region

PRIVATE:

- · Private enterprises (factories)
- · External services (clinical and diagnostic services, food and feed analyses)

I would like to highlight to the resources obtained from external services that testify the capacity of the School to acquire autonomous incomes. For example a relevant interest comes from drug and medical companies in collaborating with us thanks our competence in the veterinary research field.

The second one shows the large amount of stakeholders represented in Marche region as elsewhere in Italy by citizen, institutions, and veterinary surgeons, that attest an high grade of confidence in our skills. These incomes therefore allowed the School to make investment in more advanced instruments such as: Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Computed Tomography, Digital Radiology,

RELAZIONE DI APERTURA DEL DIRETTORE SULLA SCUOLA DI SCIENZE MEDICHE VETERINARIE / FACOLTÀ DI MEDICINA VETERINARIA

Autostainer, Immunostainer and so on, which are all very useful tools in research, but also in theoretical teaching and practical training for the students.

Another important focus is the Internationalization activities

In order to contribute to achieve the vision of creating an European Higher Education Area, UNICAM has activated the initiatives of students and teachers exchange programme as the Life-Long Programme / Erasmus Programme.

Now I am pleased to express my appreciation to the Rector Prof. Esposito, who has been among the promoters of this process (we should remember that UNICAM adheres to the chart of Bologna process) and his “European Thinking” puts him as chair of the Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility of the European Community.

The internationalization activities of the School of Veterinary Medical Sciences, the first one to undertake this initiative at the UNICAM, have thus taken shape to facilitate Erasmus mobility. As well known, this one includes two types of student mobility:

- for Studies (SMS)
- for Placement (SMP)

Another possibility to undertake internationalization activities is represented by the C.U.I.A Consortium. (“*Italian-Argentinean University Consortium*”) which is a project presented to the MIUR by the UNIVERSITY of CAMERINO. By means of this program, many exchanges between the UNICAM and the Argentinean Universities have been activated.

All of these results have been obtained thanks to the different Institution concerned; first of all the town of Matelica, the municipality, in spite of the current difficult economic conditions, financed the School with over 3 millions Euros for the “New Division”, the inspection room, the necropsy room and the teaching slaughterhouse. The Marche Region, which financed the School through 8 grants for veterinary surgeons to be involved in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital for a total amount of 200,000 Euros.

The University of Camerino funded 200,000 Euros for the adjustment costs related to the facilities; other main sponsors are the Province of Macerata who paid for part of the cages for SACD as well as the Local Land Caretaker Association and local and national banks which also gave economic support.

Other different companies such as cattle, sheep, pig, poultry and fish farmers and animal based food companies represent important person concerned by means of which the School has been able to establish relationships with the local productive tissue.

I believe that the interest for the Veterinary School has increased in the last two year as the result of the agreements stipulated with the following organization, for example:

- the Local Land Caretaker Association (Comunità Montana “Monti Azzurri”) for kennel health care program and for student’s practical activity during “*Tirocinio*”.
- the Marche Region, regional health service and the Zooprophyllactic Experimental Institute of Marche and Umbria for student teaching activities, for continuing education and for common research program.

I have also noticed a greater interest both from veterinary surgeon of the Public Health Service and veterinary practitioner. I believe they have a good opinion of our School in providing high quality education.

Anyway, I have also to say more about the person concerned because many of them are all the persons, the national and international drug and medical device companies that address to us for health services or for scientific collaborations. I would like to remind some of these companies such as: Novartis, Merial, Esaote, Bayer, Candioli and Mercury whom delegates I hope will join us Thursday.

RELAZIONE DI APERTURA DEL DIRETTORE SULLA SCUOLA DI SCIENZE MEDICHE VETERINARIE / FACOLTÀ DI MEDICINA VETERINARIA

Coming to the end I would like to highlight the objectives that in my opinion could be useful if not strategic for the School.

- One of the main target is to increase the human resources that would be assigned to the more lacking areas as well as to the scientific areas developing research much more. To reach this objective the school must apply the meritocratic criterion based on the young researchers scientific quality. This criterion would be the better guarantee for sustainability of the School and the consideration increase of entire Veterinary Medicine.
- For teaching activities we must increase the utilities such as the didactic material online, and the library consistency at student disposal; furthermore will be important to maintain the many subscribed agreements which are good tool for practice and in the same time they represent an excellent opportunity to have a real work experience. Another aspect of possible interest for the internationalization activities of the School of Veterinary Medical Sciences is the activation in the future of courses in english language in order to increase the person interested especially in perspective of an International job.
- Extra-University incomes are fundamental in pursuing the goal of growth and reinforce the School; as we have seen in slide before, it is possible when the School by means of own services creates a strong relationship with the different stakeholders as mentioned in advance. This kind of incomes could in part be used also to ameliorate the research with the aim to have more possibility to get the UE funds; from this point of view the recognition of the School in the international scientific community is indispensable.
- The School must increase its relationship with the territory especially in the specific field of Public Veterinary Medicine for animal health and food safety to create the necessary condition to obtain the political recognition of its role in the Health Regional Service. On the side of relationship between the School's Veterinary Teaching Hospital and practicing veterinarians, I believe very interesting if they look at our structure as a referral institution as it occurs in Human Medicine.
- I consider also high profitable to establish a group of young veterinarians, granted by the Marche Regional fund for professional training, which could find out in School VTH a kind of professional start up. In the same time the School could employ young veterinarians as resources in screening, diagnostic and therapeutic activities as it occurs in Human Hospitals.

I believe that All of previously said could improve imagine, function and role of the School of Veterinary Medical Sciences that I am proud to direct.

Thank you for your attention

Prof. Giacomo Renzoni
Director

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