

# AMERICAN BOARD OF VETERINARY OPHTHALMOLOGY

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## American Board of Veterinary Ophthalmology (ABVO) Annual Report, 2020

### Annual Credentialing Summary

Thirty-seven (37) Examination Applications were approved; nineteen (19) were first-time applicants (with 69 supporting Supervising Diplomate forms) and eighteen (18) were repeat applicants. There were potential repeat applicants that did not, or chose not to, submit a form and payment by the January 15 deadline. One of those candidates had reached the end of the first cycle of allowed attempts.

The Image Recognition (IR) and Multiple Choice (MC) parts of the 2020 ABVO Certifying Examination were administered remotely on July 27 - 28, 2020. The exam testing platform was ExamSoft®, the same platform used by ABVO for the past three years. In-person administration was not possible because of the pandemic. Virtual proctoring through Exam Monitor® was used for both the IR and MC parts of the examination to minimize the likelihood of cheating. Each candidate's face, voice, and keystrokes were recorded for the entire duration of the testing session.

The Examination Committee met remotely to score the IR part July 27-30, 2020. The MC part was machine scored by our statistical consultant, Dr. Rob Malinowski, who has assisted with standard setting and administration of the examination for the past three years.

Exam Monitor® flagged suspicious events in recordings of the testing sessions from July 27-28, 2020. Drs. Binder, Holt and Lassaline reviewed flagged events and none were confirmed as suspicious.

Twenty-four candidates took the IR part on July 27, 2020. There were 19 new and 5 repeat candidates. Twenty of 24 (83.3%) passed. Thirty-two candidates took the MC part on July 28, 2020. There were 19 new and 13 repeat candidates. Twenty five of 32 (78.1%) passed. Pass rate for repeat candidates was 5/5 (100%) for IR and 13/13 (100%) for MC. Pass rate for new candidates was 15/19 (78.9%) for IR and 12/19 (63.1%) for MC.

Eight repeat candidates who passed the IR and/or MC on July 27-28, 2020 had previously passed both parts of the practical, and thus these eight were conferred ACVO Diplomate status.

Due to limitations imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic, administration of the Practical portion of the 2020 certifying examination remains to be accomplished and the EC is working tirelessly to achieve this in a timely manner. (See below.)

A breakdown of exam performance by exam section and candidate type is provided in the following table.

	<b>Portion of the Exam</b>	<b># Taking Exam</b>	<b># Passing Exam</b>	<b>% Successful</b>
First-time Candidates	Written (Multiple Choice, MC)	19	12/19	63.1%
	Image Recognition	19	15/19	78.9%
	Practical	TBD		TBD
Repeat Candidates	Written	13	13/13	100%
	Image Recognition	5	5	100%
	Practical	TBD	TBD	TBD

### **ABVO Policy Changes and Activities, 2019-2020**

**Credentials Committee:** During the application period (November 15, 2019 through January 15, 2020) the Credentials Committee reviewed and approved 37 Exam Applications for the 2020 exam cycle (19 first-time applicants in addition to 18 repeat applicants).

A total of twenty-seven (27) Provisional Resident Applications were reviewed and accepted for residencies starting in 2020. However, one (1) program was canceled due to pandemic-related matters. For a current list of all ABVO-approved residency programs, please visit [https://member.abvo.us/residents\\_list\\_embed](https://member.abvo.us/residents_list_embed).

While no credentialing policy changes were made in 2020, the committee proposed the following items be considered for future examinations:

- 1) Force Majeure: In the event that the American Board of Veterinary Ophthalmology (ABVO) determine that the ABVO Certifying Examination is inadvisable, illegal, or impossible to administer due to, without limitation, epidemics, pandemics, civil or military disturbances, acts of war or terrorism, nuclear catastrophes, natural disasters or acts of God, wide-spread interruptions of communications, utilities, and/or computers services (software and/or hardware), or other occurrences beyond reasonable control, the ABVO and Committees may decide to pause the five-year examination cycle and re-start the subsequent year that an ABVO Certifying Examination is administered.
- 2) In April 2020, the ABVO board presented a policy change limiting the number of attempts that an applicant is allowed in order to pass the ABVO Certifying Examination (see statement below). After polling and a period of public comment of the ACVO membership, this proposed change was viewed positively 80 % approved). **This change is planned to take effect for the 2022 exam, which corresponds to the November 2021 through January 2022 Credentials application window.**
  - The ABVO Certifying Examination candidates must pass all exam sections within five (5) consecutive years of a candidate completing an ABVO-approved residency training program. If a candidate fails to pass all sections of the ABVO Certifying Examination within five (5) consecutive years after residency completion, the candidate must then seek re-training through an ABVO-approved residency.

**Residency Committee:** The ABVO RC continues overseeing 70+ residency training programs (RTPs).

There were 20 residents finishing in 2020; 25 residents finishing in 2021 (6 four-year programs and 19 three-year programs), 28 residents finishing in 2022 (3 four-year programs and 25 three-year programs); 26 programs (2 four-year programs approved and 24 three-year programs) are approved for 2023 completion; for a 2024 completion date there are 14 three year programs and 1 four-year program approved so far; and for a 2025 completion date there is 1 four year-program approved so far.

Due to the difficulties associated with COVID, proposed new surgery and case minimums that had been planned were suspended for residents finishing in 2021. The door was left open to adjust minimums for future residents. This will be reviewed in light of the status of residents at the 6-month evaluations January 6, 2021.

Further, roll out of the new application deadlines Aug 15 was not entirely smooth, due to difficulties in reliably communicating with the entire college. COVID made the early deadline very difficult to hit and the committee plans to batch other with other applications and help those who couldn't make the August 15th deadline.

**Probation:** One program was placed on increased monitoring after a full program review was performed following a complaint after dismissal of a resident. The program has been asked to ensure reports and reviews are completed on time, and RTP personnel were instructed to complete training in interpersonal relationships and conflict resolution. The program has complied, and training for interpersonal relationships has been completed satisfactorily and reported to the committee.

Supervising Diplomates definitions and mentor guidelines have been further refined to better capture the role of Supervising Diplomates in all aspects of residency training. Details regarding these requirements are listed on the ABVO Residency Training Application Form available at [www.ABVO.US](http://www.ABVO.US).

**Examination Committee:** The Image Recognition (IR) and Multiple Choice (MC) parts of the 2020 ABVO Certifying Examination (Written/Multiple Choice) were administered remotely on July 27 - 28, 2020. (See above.) The committee had planned to conduct the Practical Examination component in December, 2020, but restrictions continued at North Carolina State University (NCSU) over the COVID pandemic made that impossible. Presently the Practical is still scheduled to occur in early 2021 with provisions to keep all candidates and examiners as safe as possible during this crisis. Instead of candidates travelling to one of four locations, the plan is that candidates now be assigned to a testing location **in the State** (or country) in which they currently reside and details regarding remote and onsite grading and proctoring are in the works. Candidates will be notified of their specific location and test date as soon as the final details are worked out

Unsuccessful candidates for the Practical will be allowed to apply and take the 2021 examination without penalty since the Credentials application deadline of January 15, 2021 will have passed. Candidates that failed the Written (Multiple Choice) and/or Image Recognition (IR) portions of the 2020 Certifying examination are reminded that they are required to resubmit credentials between November 15, 2020 and January 15, 2021. See the ABVO website ([www.ABVO.US](http://www.ABVO.US)) for additional details.

**Maintenance of Certification (MOC):** Compliance with MOC is mandatory for all ACVO Diplomates certified during and after 2015. Persons obtaining their ACVO Diplomate status prior to 2015 are encouraged but not required to participate.

The MOC committee is preparing for the 2021 cycle as it is the first cycle for mandatory applicants. Applications will be due by January 31, 2021. Using a computer random number generator, 10% of the applicants will be randomly selected for auditing which is still in process.

**Approved changes in policies and/or procedures:**

The ABVO approved the MOC committee's request that the Purdue University Diversity and Inclusion certification, <https://www.vet.purdue.edu/humancenteredvetmed/overview.php>, be included for MOC. Diplomates would receive 6 credits/hour for this certification.

Full details of the MOC policies are available in the ABVO Policies and Procedures document available on the ABVO website ([www.ABVO.US](http://www.ABVO.US)).

**Appeals Committee:** The ABVO Appeals Committee did not receive any appeals for review. A detailed description of the current appeals process is available in the ABVO Policies and Procedures document available on the ABVO website ([www.ABVO.US](http://www.ABVO.US)).

**Diplomate meeting with ABVO board and chairs:** The annual meeting was held following the ACVO Members meeting on October 23, 2020. Thanks to all who attended. As always, the ABVO encourages ACVO Diplomates with questions or feedback related to our credentialing programs and committees to contact the Board at any time.

**ABVO Website:** The ABVO continues to maintain its website [www.ABVO.US](http://www.ABVO.US) and it was recently updated. Here, ACVO Diplomates, prospective residents, residents in training, and members of the public can access all ABVO documents, including its Charter from the ACVO, Policies and Procedures, all resident and program application materials, policy statements, certification requirements, maintenance of certification requirements, a list of all ACVO Diplomates, and important credentialing deadlines. The ABVO Board acknowledges the excellent work of Stacey Daniel and the ABVO/ACVO Office staff, and the ABVO Credentials, Residency, Examination, Appeals and Maintenance of Certification Committees in maintaining and updating the ABVO website. We are especially indebted to all for their hard work during the COVID pandemic.

**ABVO Elections and board items:** At its Fall 2020 meeting, the ABVO will welcomed Dr. Ralph Hamor to his 4-year term on the ABVO Board and we bid farewell and thank you Dr. Ellison Bentley as she has finished her term on the Board. Please look for a call for nominations and a subsequent election between May and June of 2021. The Board thanks Mr. Kyle Denomme for his continued dedicated service as the ABVO's public member.

Submitted by,

The ABVO Board

Drs. Bob Munger (Chair), Susan Nelms, Steve Hollingsworth, Ralph Hamor, and Mr. Kyle Denomme (Public Member)