

Strategic Vision 2030

Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine
Healing Animals. Helping Humans. Changing Lives.



Introduction

As Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine approaches its 50th year, we look ahead to the challenges that the veterinary profession, animal populations, and society face. Conceived as a meeting place for those concerned with the health of animals and people, Cummings School launched with an innovative approach to education and a commitment to engagement with the communities we serve. Throughout its history, Cummings School has looked beyond its Massachusetts and New England roots to help solve global problems that continue to challenge us.

Cummings School can and must play a role in understanding the complex interactions of animals, people, and the environment. Animals and humans share diseases, disease agents, and environments. Spiraling costs of veterinary and human medical care, climate change and emerging disease, loss of wildlife habitat, antimicrobial resistance, global pandemics linked to zoonotic diseases, and many other health challenges require collaborative solutions. As veterinarians, scientists, public health experts, researchers, and educators, we need to work together with local and global communities to find and implement solutions. We must be active and engaged partners in One Health.

The veterinary profession faces its own specific challenges. There is a shortage of veterinarians and veterinary technicians, creating additional stresses for animal health care providers and concerns from animal owners. Economic and other societal barriers to entry into the veterinary profession and access to veterinary care must be reduced or overcome for the profession to thrive and society to benefit.

Veterinarians need to remain leaders in animal health and veterinary care. As a School, we need to make discoveries, create innovations, and provide outstanding education to those who will provide the advanced veterinary care and health solutions that animals deserve. The clinical practice of veterinary medicine needs to be professionally and economically rewarding. We must continue to advance veterinary medicine and make available the highest level of clinical care and health expertise expected by those whose animals are central to their lives, as companions or as their source of livelihood. And yet, as a profession, we have a responsibility to ensure access to care for underserved animal and human populations.

Navigating the road to health and ensuring access to health care will be challenging. The solutions are neither obvious nor easy. Solutions must be found and applied through the lens of social justice—for people, for animals, and for the world. Veterinary schools are unique in that they are the one educational institution focused on the health of animals and people. We need to graduate veterinarians who have the world perspective, cultural competencies, necessary veterinary skills and knowledge, and life skills to succeed in a world that needs them now more than ever.

The Cummings School Strategic Vision 2030 helps us set a course to educate the leaders and doers of tomorrow in veterinary medicine and in One Health, while contributing to the solutions that will advance animal and human health in a changing world. This plan commits us to pursuing our education, research, clinical care, and social justice missions while serving Massachusetts, New England, and global society. Our vision compels us to work together with colleagues in human health, environmental sciences, policy, social sciences, and other areas as we adapt to, protect, and shape our world.

We hope you will join us as we seek solutions to the complex problems facing veterinary medicine, animal health, human health, and the environment that we share.



Building Our Plan

In building a new strategic vision for Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, we first revitalized and reaffirmed our mission. We asked ourselves what was important about Cummings School. Clarifying our mission lays the foundation for building and measuring success.

We asked our community and our stakeholders about their core values and their commitments. These are the fundamental principles that describe how we conduct ourselves when accomplishing our mission and pursuing our vision.

Through surveys, focus groups, discussions, and several rounds of feedback engaging hundreds of participants, we identified the core values and the mission that are our foundation. We clarified the vision that represents the pinnacle of our efforts. Looking ahead to 2030, we asked ourselves what high-level goals we had to pursue to make this vision a reality. These strategic goals will guide our strategic and operational decisions, help us to define the space where we can make a difference, and establish our priorities. Our strategic priorities and our tactics will evolve over the next decade, but we will remain true to our core values, we will continue to deliver on our mission, and we will pursue our vision with a constancy that leads us to heal animals, help people, and change lives.



Thank you to everyone who participated in the surveys, focus groups, planning discussions, and thought meetings that led to the concepts in this plan.

The Strategic Vision Steering Committee

Liz Byrnes
 Armelle de Laforcade
 Michael Santasieri
 Michael Kowaleski
 Cheryl London
 Phyllis Mann
 Patrick Skelly
 Rebekah Strasburger
 Alastair Cribb

- Strategic Vision Steering Committee
- Surveys
- Focus groups: faculty, staff, students
- Feedback surveys
- Feedback discussions
- Stakeholder input
- Facilitated discussions
- Feedback on drafts
- Final feedback phase
- Town hall, student groups, Faculty Council, Board of Advisors, Faculty Meeting, Executive Faculty Board



OUR MISSION

The Mission of Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine is to serve Massachusetts, New England and beyond by

- **Providing outstanding veterinary and graduate education that prepares students to excel in diverse careers.**
- **Developing and delivering innovative, state-of-the-art veterinary care for domestic and wild animals.**
- **Discovering and applying new knowledge and innovations that help achieve health and well-being for all species.**
- **Fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community and profession.**

In 1978, Tufts University and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts took a leap of faith and founded school of veterinary medicine. With a prescient vision of One Health and building on the foundations of comparative medicine and One Medicine, Tufts University led the way and was joined by the Commonwealth, leading to what we know today as Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University.

Our mission acknowledges our bond with and our commitment to Massachusetts and New England. We proudly acknowledge our northeast roots and the support of the Commonwealth that allows us to offer in-state opportunities for students from Massachusetts. We recognize the responsibility and the unique opportunities associated with being located in the life sciences hub of the United States, and our role in fulfilling the needs for veterinary and animal health scientists to support the industry. We acknowledge and embrace our responsibilities to global health and to society, and we work to ensure our impact reaches far beyond our region. We recognize the importance of community outreach to educate around veterinary medicine, provide needed services, and to be a presence in the community.

We are an institution of higher learning. Central to our mission is the education of veterinary students, graduate students, and advanced clinical trainees, providing them individually and collectively with the knowledge to care for and serve the domestic and wild animals with which we share the world. The diverse careers that our students pursue and the critical societal roles they fulfill are made possible by the outstanding education they receive.

Our research mission is founded on comparative medicine and builds on the connection between animal health, human health, and the environments they share. Through the provision of compassionate veterinary care, the power of comparative medicine, the promise of translational science, the benefit of human-animal interactions, and the strength of partnerships and collaborations at the core of One Health, our mission includes discovering and applying new knowledge and innovations to help achieve health and well-being for all species.

We are a veterinary school, committed to developing and delivering innovative veterinary care that supports our learning and research missions. As we forge ahead with clinical and preventive health care innovations for animals that were only dreams when Cummings School was founded, many consider veterinary medicine to be at risk of becoming exclusive and exclusionary. It is part of our mission, therefore, to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community at Cummings School and across the veterinary profession.





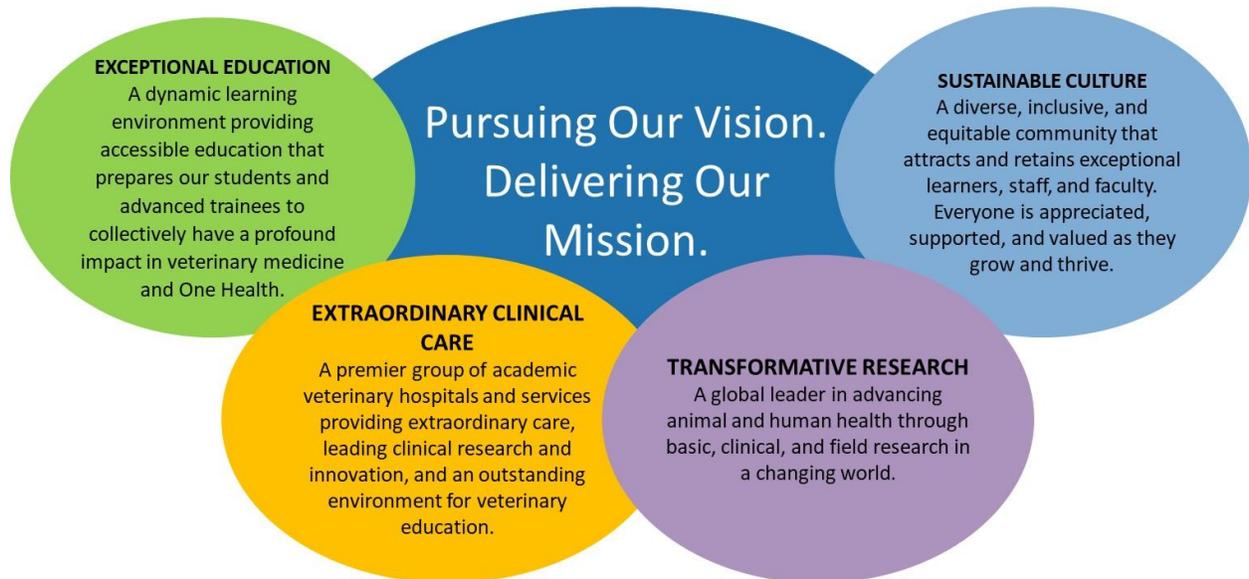
OUR VISION

Together we advance the health and well-being of animals and people in our changing world.

Advancing the health and well-being of animals and people is a collaborative effort. At Cummings School, we are stronger by working together—faculty, students, and staff. We work with our stakeholders and the other communities that are key to achieving health for animals, people, and the environment. Our vision is not just to educate students, but to help them develop the skills, knowledge, and connections they need to make a difference. Our vision is not just to make discoveries and create innovations, but to apply them to the cause of advancing the health and well-being of individuals, groups, and populations. Our vision commits us to recognizing, responding, and caring for the changing ecosystems and environments in our world. We must continually advance how we educate, provide clinical care, seek solutions, take responsibility for the environment that surrounds us, and create change. Working together with our partners, we will help determine the critical advances needed to achieve health and well-being for humans, animals, and the environment. This includes a commitment to being sustainable in our operations. Our graduates, staff, faculty, and partners are dedicated to **healing animals, helping humans, and changing lives** through education, research, clinical care, and service missions.



OUR STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2030



Our strategic goals will guide our priorities and shape our decisions. They describe where we want to be by 2030, as we pursue our vision. They are the bar against which we will measure our progress. And they challenge us to find the way. We will establish and pursue strategic priorities that align with our goals. Our priorities and tactics will be flexible, changing as opportunities arise and our strengths and needs evolve, and they will continually be assessed and adjusted.

On the following pages you will learn more about our aspirations, our plans to achieve these goals, and our initial priorities. From these, we will be able to assess our results. We will celebrate our successes. We will be informed by our failures. And we will be responsive to the changing world around us.



EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION

A dynamic learning environment providing accessible education that prepares our students and advanced trainees to collectively have a profound impact in veterinary medicine and One Health.

Education is at the heart of Cummings School. As an institution of higher education and learning, we are committed to creating a dynamic learning environment where all students and advanced trainees acquire the knowledge, confidence, competence, creativity, and professional skills to have a positive impact in veterinary medicine and One Health. Our School is shaped by our physical presence on the Grafton campus, the creativity of our faculty, staff, and learners, and our commitment to the people, the animals, and the environment that are part of us.

A dynamic learning environment is accessible to students with different learning styles, facilitates collaboration and exchange of ideas, provides knowledge and experiential learning, supports students from different backgrounds, and is welcoming to all. We seek diversity, inclusiveness, and a sense of belonging for all members of our community. We recognize all our students as valued individuals who have the right to an excellent and equitable education.

We will continue to strive toward reducing the student debt load and to find means to make Cummings School accessible to those with financial need. We will have broad, welcoming admission processes that select excellent students who will benefit the most from our programs. We embrace sound, evidence-based pedagogy while being innovative and incorporating the latest technological advances.

Our graduates will have the skills, competence, and knowledge to excel, whether in clinical practice, research, education, industry, government, service to society, or academia. Regardless of their career pathways, graduates will understand and apply their skills to the broader good of animal and human health. They must also have the professional skills and the citizenship mindset to have an impact. The ability to embrace and serve diversity in all its forms is foundational to having a profound, collective impact in a community, a state, a country, or the world.



Initial Strategic Priorities

All programs

- Embrace and develop innovative curricula and ways of teaching by encouraging and supporting faculty and staff to develop themselves as innovative educators, and by ensuring we have the faculty and staff necessary to support our programs.
- Support the students to create the environment and atmosphere so that they contribute to and lead their own education and personal and professional development.
- A dynamic learning culture that supports and protects the mental health of our students.
- Create new teaching and congregation spaces that allow us to teach and learn the way we want, and that facilitate spontaneous, collaborative interactions critical to personal and educational growth.
 - Expand DVM teaching spaces to accommodate class size expansion to a minimum of 125 students per year within three years, while planning for continued growth.
 - Create new graduate student spaces to support current and expanded graduate programs.
 - Complete the Multipurpose Teaching and Simulation Laboratory, including small- and large-animal areas, and create new, leading simulation teaching programs.
- Facilitate network-building through collaborations with corporations and regional academic institutions.
- Seek additional niche opportunities to expand educational programs that build on our strengths and fulfill regional and societal needs in life sciences, veterinary nursing and technology, comparative medicine, animal health, and veterinary medicine.

DVM Program

- Create and deliver a redesigned, outcomes-based DVM curriculum that is distinguished by its comprehensive foundation in veterinary medicine, its competency- and outcomes-based educational approach, its ability to accommodate different learning and teaching styles, its support of student wellness, and its student-centered curriculum. The program will prepare students to pursue the range of careers available to veterinarians; provide them with the perspectives, reasoning skills, professional skills, and cultural understanding to succeed; and ensure they are confident to enter clinical practice on graduation.
- Expand our primary health care learning programs.

Advanced Clinical Training Programs

- Strengthen our internship and residency programs across Cummings School to provide a supportive educational training environment that imparts the knowledge, clinical expertise, professional and life skills needed for our advanced clinical trainees to excel in their chosen career pathway.



- Formalize and expand the educational component of our advanced clinical training programs to better prepare graduates for diverse careers in clinical practice, industry, or academia.

Graduate Programs

- Expand our master's program offerings through integration and expansion under a new administrative structure, such as a Graduate Department or School of Comparative and Translational Health Sciences. This department will deliver a suite of programs that provides career-oriented educational opportunities for 150 students a year, supports the regional life sciences and veterinary industries, and provides the resources to support our research and PhD graduate programs.
- Create a vibrant environment for the training of graduate students and clinician-scientists that drives expansion of the local research enterprise and supports growth of the veterinary biomedical workforce.
- Expand our PhD training opportunities to accommodate at least 25 students per year by 2030, including the creation of a robust, three-year post-residency PhD program.



EXTRAORDINARY CLINICAL CARE

A premier group of academic veterinary hospitals and clinics, providing extraordinary care, leading clinical research and innovation, and an outstanding environment for veterinary education.

The academic veterinary hospitals and clinics of Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine are foundational to our educational and research missions. Extraordinary clinical care is built on the excellence of our faculty and staff, the application of evidence-based medicine, the advancements of clinical and translational research, and the creation and adoption of innovations in clinical and preventive care and diagnostic sciences. To continue to be a premier group of academic hospitals and clinics, we must have a compassionate, kind, and professional environment that supports learning and advances the profession. Through continuing investments in infrastructure, equipment, and the recruitment and retention of skilled and experienced clinicians and support staff, we can provide the extraordinary care, health advice, and support that our clients expect, while advancing our research and education missions.

We are committed to performing innovative clinical research that broadens our understanding of animal disease processes and therapies to treat them, and leads to translational research that furthers our One Health initiatives. Our academic clinical programs, from herd health to primary care to cutting-edge specialty care, will continue to provide an outstanding environment for veterinary education that prepares our students and advanced trainees for the diverse career options in clinical care, research, agriculture, and beyond.

Initial Strategic Priorities

- Develop educational programs and career progression opportunities to expand and enhance our veterinary nursing staff and support the veterinary profession in Massachusetts and New England.
- Ensure that our equipment and technological infrastructure is sustainable and founded on the most current capabilities.



- Restructure the management of the FHSA and HLA and create better integration across our clinics and hospitals.
- Create a new DVM student-learning–centered primary care health center that helps us deliver the full spectrum of clinical care education and incorporates the following:
 - Urgent and acute care clinic that provides care to the region, while fulfilling the need for enhanced general veterinary practice learning for our DVM students.
 - Wellness and primary care services for companion animals of faculty, staff, and students in an education-centered model (primary care wellness services will not be provided to the general public).
 - Expanded facilities for the Luke and Lily Lerner Spay/Neuter Clinic to facilitate training of DVM students.
- Build a new, state-of-the-future specialty small-animal hospital that creates centers of clinical excellences and provides the efficiencies and infrastructure to ensure sustainability and success.
- Establish a research, teaching, and clinical care vision for the Hospital for Large Animals and related services that will expand our leadership position amongst academic veterinary centers.
- Expand and enhance diagnostic laboratory services that support our delivery of clinical care, research, and education.
- Seek solutions to improve access across the full spectrum of veterinary care and range of client demographics. We will expand access to veterinary care to the communities we serve, while providing unique learning experiences that provide our graduates with the skills and tools to recognize and address unique needs of vulnerable animals and communities. This includes a physical expansion of Tufts at Tech and continued support of community-based medicine programs.
- Expand our capacity to support the clinical trials and translational research that lead to extraordinary clinical care.
- Ensure that Tufts Veterinary Field Service remains the leading farm animal veterinary practice in New England by supporting regional agriculture and providing a comprehensive educational experience in farm animal practice that incorporates new tools and opportunities.
- Ensure that Tufts Wildlife Clinic remains the leading provider of wildlife clinical care in New England through its work with a broad base of stakeholders and uses knowledge gained through integrated research to improve the health of wildlife across New England and globally.



TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH

A global leader in advancing animal and human health through basic, clinical, and field research in a changing world.

Research at Cummings School strives to advance animal and human health through comparative biomedical research, clinical and translational research, and exploration of the health factors at the intersection of humans, animals, and environments.

By embracing our unique position as a leader in comparative medicine, translational science, and One Health, we will promote multidisciplinary research that drives academic, corporate, and governmental collaborations. Engaging with regional, national, and international partners will help accelerate the pace of scientific discovery and the translation of new knowledge into cutting-edge treatments, diagnostics, and solutions to the complex health problems facing animal and human populations. These endeavors will be strengthened by a supportive and inclusive environment that allows for the unfettered flow of ideas, welcoming the differing perspectives and novel research approaches that emerge from diverse, creative communities that are responsive to the rapidly evolving challenges of a changing world.

Intersecting with our strategic goals of creating dynamic learning environments and academic hospitals and clinics that support our teaching and research missions, we also need to create the research spaces and infrastructure that will facilitate transformative research and allow us to grow our research enterprise to have a global impact.

Initial Strategic Priorities

- Support research and scholarship excellence wherever it occurs.
- Recognize and support research in strategic priority areas:
 - Infectious Disease and Global Health
 - Clinical and Translational Research
 - Cardiovascular Health
 - Comparative and Translational Oncology
 - Neurosciences and Mental Health



- Animals, Humans, and Societal Impact
 - Human-Animal Interactions
 - Conservation Medicine
 - Animals and Public Policy
- Establish five endowed professorships that allow us to increase depth, expertise, and diversity in research priority areas.
- Establish sustainable business models for existing shared research resources such as the New England Regional Biosafety Laboratory, the Comparative Pathology and Genomics Shared Resources, the Clinical Research Shared Resources, and the Division of Animal Resources. This will serve as a model to enhance shared research services that support activities across the full range of biomedical and health research.
- Create or renovate new research space to accommodate expanding research programs.
- Facilitate internal sharing and collaboration, and enhance regional collaborations.
 - Create new, shared, flexible research space that enhances collaboration and research success.
 - Expand partnerships with corporations and regional academic institutions.
 - Create programming that enhances collaborations and breaks down silos.
- Expand our PhD programs and funding to support 25–50 students, including a robust, three-year post-residency PhD program. This effort will be combined with efforts to attract a diverse cohort of graduate students.



SUSTAINABLE CULTURE

A diverse, equitable, and inclusive community that attracts and retains exceptional faculty, staff, and students. Everyone is appreciated, supported, and valued as they grow and thrive.

Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine is only as strong as its faculty, staff, and students. We will build a work and learning environment that supports mental health and well-being, and is responsive to our community, collectively and as individuals. We will embrace and celebrate differences; champion diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging; foster openness to new ideas; create opportunities for growth at all levels; and empower every member of our community. We will consistently practice collegial, supportive, and appreciative communications. Our leaders will demonstrate transparency and consistency, and our faculty, staff, and students will practice collaboration and mentorship. Our faculty, staff, and students will enjoy a robust, modern infrastructure and work together to reduce our environmental impact. Our educational programs will not create undue financial burdens for our students and will launch them in successful, rewarding careers. We will celebrate our people and successes, and become an even more inclusive, vibrant, and supportive community that is a highly desirable destination for faculty, staff, and students.

Initial Strategic Priorities

- Continue to develop and sustain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture that provides a sense of belonging and supports our students and employees fully. This will be achieved, in part, through incorporating education for faculty and staff into our professional development programming, and embedding education into our curricula.
- Create a stronger foothold in organized veterinary medicine with the majority of our students, faculty and eligible staff active members of the American Veterinary Medical Associations, the Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association, and the Massachusetts Veterinary Association, and/or the Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association, with the goal of giving our diverse veterinary community a larger voice in issues that face the profession.
- Double our DVM student financial aid budget in five years and seek other ways to reduce student debt.



- Strengthen and expand our mental health and ability support services and our capacity to support a diverse student population.
- Revise our student recruitment and admission processes and policies to enhance all forms of diversity and increase the excellence of students in our programs.
- Create a faculty development program based on well-defined policies and procedures that supports career development and empowers faculty to grow and succeed.
- Develop clear career pathways and development programs for staff to encourage personal growth.
- Reorganize and restructure our hospital and clinic operations so that we achieve our goal of extraordinary clinical care and fiscal sustainability, while creating a work environment that is supportive, facilitates an appropriate work-life balance, and attracts the best faculty and staff to pursue our educational, research, and clinical care missions.
- Develop and enact a culture of environmental sustainability that reduces our environmental footprint, including a commitment to Tufts' net-zero carbon plan.
- Develop a sustainable financial plan for success.
- Create a financial model that supports competitive, market-responsive, and performance-based compensation packages.
- Expand our ability to tell our story and celebrate our accomplishments.
- Enhance transparency and consistency in decision-making and processes.

