

# INTEGRATING THE RELEVANCE OF PAIN DIAGNOSTIC TO ANIMAL WELFARE IN BRAZILIAN VETERINARY EDUCATION: AN ONLINE INTERACTIVE MINI-COURSE

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**Introduction:** Online courses can work as excellent complementary means for welfare science teaching and for its more specific aspects, such as animal pain. Some difficulties like the geographical barrier and the lack of availability of such teaching in school curricula may, this way, be decreased. Given the intense curricula of veterinary schools and the scarcity of professors trained in animal welfare, a nontraditional approach may be an alternative to educate veterinary students, reducing this critical gap in the veterinary curriculum. This study aimed to prepare and provide veterinary students with an online mini-course entitled “Introduction on the relevance of pain for animal welfare” in order to prepare veterinarians to exert the leadership expected by the public and industry regarding animal pain and welfare. **Case report:** An online learning approach was used from a holistic, multidisciplinary standpoint, including expository situations. The mini-course was divided into three modules, with the intent to assure a greater flexibility for students. The content included a variety of topics related with important concepts as pain diagnosis, pain behavioral indicators, the importance of pain to animal welfare, animal procedures that cause pain suffering, and animal sentience. The design used in the mini-course created a set of incentives, which ended up being a new way of learning these topics, allowing the students to interact with various screen elements. The mini-course material was initially developed in English, in the Power Point format, and made available in a discussion forum platform (FRONTER®, provided by Norwegian University of Life Sciences). This platform allowed all participating researchers to give their opinion and comments, and to upload didactic materials, photos and videos. Further, meetings with computer design team were made in order to transmit and explain the content information. This team, in its turn, performed the graphic design, including animation and interactive exercises, making the learning more dynamic and enjoyable. **Final**

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**considerations:** The mini-course “Introduction to the relevance of pain for animal welfare” could be an important educational resource for the veterinary community, causing a complementation of the face-to-face teaching currently offered to Brazilian veterinary students.

**Key-words:** teaching, online interactive course, animal welfare, pain.

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