Shelter Animal Behavior and Welfare

I. Course information

Course Number: VEM 5320/VME 6812/VME 6934

Course Title: Shelter Animal Behavior and Welfare

Course credit: 3 Graduate Credit Hours

II. General information

Online Course Coordinator: Terry Spencer, DVM, MEd

Office location & office hours:
- Online by email within e-learning. Please allow 48 hours for reply.
- VS-18D on-campus
- Contact Julia Alber and/or Ryan Alber for Online Student Support Services

Office phone number: 352-294-4757

Email: sheltermedicine.online@vetmed.ufl.edu

Online Course Instructors:
- Lead Instructor: Sheila D’Arpino, DVM, DACVB
- Co-Instructors: Sara Bennett, DVM, MS, DACVB; Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVIM

- Contact instructors by email within the e-learning.
- Please allow 48 hours for a response.
- Office Hours will be posted by announcement and offered in the Chat Room or via the Adobe Connect tool within e-learning

Online Course Teaching Assistant: Mary Mould, RVT, MEd

Website: Use GatorLink ID to login at: https://lss.at.ufl.edu

For more information about Shelter Medicine courses visit: http://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu

Last updated 2/3/2014
III. Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. **Compare differences in intake/outcome policies** among various sheltering models.
2. **Classify the advantages and disadvantages of using various behavioral resources** available to shelters.
3. **Lead daily behavioral rounds** and make population decisions to maximize both behavioral health and life saving efforts.
4. **Assess welfare of individual animals** as well as the general population within the shelter.
5. **Evaluate housing conditions** of sheltered animals.
6. **Design protocols that maximize behavioral health** and minimize risk to physical health.
7. **Compare the reliability, validity, and standardization of available behavioral assessments** and understand the advantages and limitations of such assessments.
8. **Know how to use available behavioral information** to make appropriate placement decisions within various sheltering models.
9. **Compare several behavioral modification techniques** and determine whether the technique(s) are humane and whether the techniques are likely to be effective.
10. **Use basic principles of psychopharmacology** to design a medication protocol for a sheltered animal and monitor its effectiveness.
11. **Diagnose common behavior problems**, create an appropriate treatment plan, and prescribe/monitor appropriate medications for problems such as: jumpy or mouthy dogs, separation anxiety, fearfulness, interspecies aggression, aggression toward people or other species, inappropriate elimination, urine marking, kennel stress and furniture scratching.

**Course Delivery:**
This course will be taught entirely online within the UF academic calendar for the spring semester. The course will be delivered using the UF centrally supported learning management system, SAKAI. Students must have a Gator Link ID to access this e-learning site at the following link:

- [https://lss.at.ufl.edu/](https://lss.at.ufl.edu/)

Last updated 2/3/2014
Which objectives do the assignments meet?

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IV. Prerequisites

Students should be currently enrolled in a professional veterinary medicine program leading to a DVM or VMD degree; or should already hold a DVM or VMD degree. Equivalent degree programs from international veterinary medical schools are acceptable.

V. Course Materials

Required Resources:


Last updated 2/3/2014
3. **ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters**
   Download a copy from the following website:
   
   http://www.sheltervet.org/about/shelter-standards/

4. Rent two recorded television broadcasts from internet providers:
   a. **Dog Whisperer season 9, episode 12: Cesar’s Worst Bite** (available from iTunes)
   b. **My Cat from Hell season 2, episode 1: Terrorizing my Clients** (available from Amazon)

5. Various readings available on UF’s Electronic Reserves, accessible at https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu and within e-learning Course Reserves area.

### Technology Requirements:

1. High-speed internet access, a desktop or laptop computer, and multiple internet browsers (Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Safari). Apple iOS and mobile devices (tablets) are not completely compatible with e-learning.
2. A working headset with microphone to participate in optional live chats in Adobe Connect webinar tool.
3. Microsoft Office Software installed and basic skills for using Word and Excel. Students with a UF GatorLink ID have free access to Lynda.com for training and are able to download discounted software from the UF Computing Help Desk (UF Software Services).

### Recommended Additional Resources (Optional):


### VI. Tentative Course Outline & Schedule:

Content will be delivered within chapters that are conceptually grouped. Some chapters, due to the complexity of the content, will be longer than other chapters. Assignments will be given during each chapter and due by the completion of the chapter on a designated date. The course will be completed within a semester time frame.

Last updated 2/3/2014
Chapters will include a combination of readings, recordings, webinars, group discussions, and/or student research projects. Experts in Shelter Medicine will be available as resources to students by use of asynchronous and/or live chats.

Chapter 1: Course Overview

Students will also practice using e-learning tools, introduce themselves to their classmates, and complete a pre-course quiz that reviews the structure and expectations for this course.

Assignments for Chapter 1:
- Assignment 1A: Say Hello in a VoiceThread (2 points)
- Assignment 1B: Self-Quiz Completion Code (1 point)

Chapter 2: Shelters and Behaviorists

Students will learn about various credentials for trainers and behaviorists. Students will also learn about various sheltering models.

Required Readings for Chapter 2:
BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine
- Chapter 23- Managing and rehoming the rescue dog and cat.

ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters
- Introduction
- Background
- How to Use This Document

Assignments for Chapter 2:
- Assignment 2: Review a shelter and identify regional behavior resources for this shelter (4 points)

Chapter 3: Daily Rounds and Welfare Assessments

Students will learn how to implement a daily behavior rounds and use the information to improve the welfare of both individual animals and the shelter population.

Required Readings for Chapter 3:
BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine
- Chapter 3- Basic requirements for good behavioural health and welfare in dogs
- Chapter 4- Basic requirements for good behavioural health and welfare in cats
Course Syllabus

- **Chapter 13** - Stress in veterinary behavioural medicine.  
  *Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff, Second Edition*
- **Chapter 7** - Quality of life, stress, and emotional pain in shelter animals
- **Chapter 9** – Canine Care in the Animal Shelter, pages 115-118 and 133-139
- **Chapter 10** – Feline Care in the Animal Shelter, pages 145-148 and 172-180
- **Chapter 34** - Behavioral enrichment

**ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters**

- Mental Health and Physical Well-being: Monitoring and Daily Rounds AND Populations Well-being
- Behavioral Health and Mental Well-being: Considerations on Intake, In-Shelter Care
- Group Housing
- Animal Housing

**Assignments for Chapter 3:**
- Assignment 3A: Virtual Rounds (5 points)
- Assignment 3B: Population Rounds (5 points)

**Chapter 4: Behavior Evaluations**

Students will learn why reliability, validity, and standardization are important concepts to consider when using behavior evaluations to make placement decisions for sheltered animals. Students will learn how to use behavior assessment information to make outcome decisions.

**Required Readings for Chapter 4:**
- *Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff, Second Edition*
  - **Chapter 33** - Behavioral Evaluation, Adoption, and Follow-up
- *ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*
  - Behavioral Health and Mental Well-being: Behavior Evaluations
  - Public Health: Animal-Related Injuries

**Assignments for Chapter 4:**
- Assignment 4A: Compare Behavior Assessment Tools (5 points)
- Assignment 4B: Make Outcome Decisions-Case Review Pathway Planning (5 points)

**Chapter 5: Behavior Modification**

Students will learn about behavioral modification techniques such as; positive and negative punishment, positive and negative reinforcement, classical and operant...
conditioning, and desensitization. Students will explore the advantages, disadvantages, and welfare considerations for such techniques.

**Required Readings for Chapter 5:**

*BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine*
- Chapter 5- Training and learning protocols

*ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*
- Behavioral Health and Mental Well-being: Behavioral Modification

Four Papers available in Course Reserves
- **American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior**, “How to Choose a Trainer”

**Required Rentals to View:**
Rent two recorded television broadcasts from internet providers:
- **Dog Whisperer season 9, episode 12**: Cesar’s Worst Bite (available from iTunes)
- **My Cat from Hell season 2, episode 1**: Terrorizing my Clients (available from Amazon)

**Assignments for Chapter 5:**
- Assignment 5: Analyze Training Techniques from Popular Media (6 points)

**Chapter 6: Psychopharmaceuticals**

Students will learn the indications and contraindications for various psychopharmaceuticals, select appropriate medical protocols for specific behavioral problems, and describe how to monitor the effectiveness of such prescriptions.

**Required Readings for Chapter 6:**

*BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine*
- Chapter 21- Pharmacology and pheromone therapy

*Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff, Second Edition*
- Chapter 36- Behavioral pharmacotherapy in the animal shelter

**Assignments for Chapter 6:**
- Assignment 6: Decide when to use psychopharmaceuticals (6 points)
Chapter 7: Part One: Diagnosis & Treatment of Behavior Problems

Students will learn how to diagnose behavior problems common to sheltered dogs and make an appropriate treatment plan to improve the chances for live-release of the animal from the shelter. Students will learn about specific behavior problems and currently recommended therapies to modify such behaviors and improve outcomes.

**Required Readings for Chapter 7:**
BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine
- Chapter 8 - Management problems in dogs
- Chapter 10 - House soiling by dogs.

**Assignments for Chapter 7:**
- Assignment 7: Minute Paper (5 points)

Chapter 8: Part Two: Diagnosis & Treatment of Behavior Problems

Students will learn how to diagnose behavior problems common to sheltered cats and make an appropriate treatment plan to improve the chances for live-release of a sheltered cat. Students will learn about specific behavior problems and currently recommended therapies intended to modify such behaviors and improve outcomes.

**Required Readings for Chapter 8:**
BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine
- Chapter 14 - Separation-related problems in dogs and cats
- Chapter 16 - Situational sensitivities
- Chapter 17 - Aggression toward familiar people and animals
- Chapter 19 - Aggression toward unfamiliar people and animals
- Chapter 20 - Repetitive and compulsive behavior in dogs and cats.

**Assignments for Chapter 8:**
- Assignment 8: Minute Paper (5 points)

Chapter 9: Diagnosis & Treatment of Feline Problem Behaviors

**Required Readings for Chapter 9:**
BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine
- Chapter 9 - Management problems in cats
- Chapter 11 - House soiling in cats
- Chapter 19 - Aggression in cats
- Chapter 20 - Repetitive and compulsive behaviors in dogs and cats.

Last updated 2/3/2014
Assignments for Chapter 9:
● Assignment 9: Minute Paper (5 points)

Chapter 10: Placement of Pets with Behavior Problems
Students will learn about assessing a shelter’s capacity to treat, manage, and re-home pets with problem behaviors. Students will learn how to diagnose behavior problems common to sheltered dogs and make an appropriate treatment plan to improve the chances for live-release of the animal from the shelter. Students will learn about specific behavior problems and currently recommended therapies to modify such behaviors and improve outcomes.

Required Readings for Chapter 10:
None

Assignments for Chapter 10:
● Assignment 10: Minute Paper (6 points)

Chapter 11: Final Project and Peer-Reviews
Students will view recorded presentations and participate in a virtual discussion of the presentations. Students will also complete a post-course survey.

Assignments for Chapter 11:
● Assignment 11A: Case Report Behavior Modification and Treatment Plan for Shelter Pet IN VOICETHREAD (30 points)
● Assignment 11B: Peer-Review 5 Projects of Classmates (10 points)
VII. Evaluation/ Grading/Testing

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VIII. Administrative Policies:

For more information on UF Graduate School policies related to grades, attendance, student conduct, and academic honesty please visit the Graduate School.

Honesty Policy
All students registered at the University of Florida have agreed to comply with the following statement: “I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.” In addition, on all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my
honor I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” Review the Student Conduct and Honor Code.

**Plagiarism** includes any attempt to take credit for another person’s work. This includes quoting directly from a paper, book, or website, without crediting the source. Sources should be noted, a link to the website added, or quotation marks placed around the material and attributed, even during online discussions. However, the instructor expects more than simply cutting and pasting in this graduate-level course. Students are expected to review, evaluate and comment on material they research, rather than simply copying relevant material. Work will be graded accordingly.

**Student Evaluation of Instruction**
Evaluations are performed electronically at the end of the course. To evaluate the instructor, visit the GatorRater Online Faculty Evaluation site.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office, Disability Resource Center at 352-392-8565. Students may also apply on-line for accommodations. For more information, see the Disability Resource Center.

The Disability Resource Center will provide a letter to the student who must then meet with the course instructor to discuss the required accommodations. Once notification is complete, the instructor can work with the Disability Resource Center to provide the requested accommodations. To ensure that necessary accommodations are provided in a timely manner, it would expedite this process if any student who might need an accommodation would notify the course coordinator during registration.

**Software Use**
All faculty, staff and students of the University are required to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

**UF Counseling and Wellness Center**
Many resources are available for students who need help with stress-related problems or emergencies. Assistance is available both by appointment and after hours by calling 352-392-1575 or visiting the UF Counseling and Wellness Center.

**Grade Changes**
Grades will be changed only when a grading error has been made.

Last updated 2/3/2014
Communication with Instructors
The preferred method for communication between students and the course instructors and teaching assistants is by Mail within e-learning. Please allow 48 hours for a response. Do NOT use the e-learning Discussions board to communicate about hardware problems, grades, or other personal matters.

Attendance
Lessons within this course can include a combination of asynchronous self-paced activities and synchronous activities that require attendance at specific times. Students are expected to visit the course website daily to check for important updates and announcements about due dates and scheduled times for synchronous activities. Instructors monitor participation in discussion boards and other activities within the SAKAI learning management system.

Class Participation
Students are expected to constructively and professionally participate in online discussions and while completing both individual and group projects. Students are also expected to contribute interesting and relevant information during the discussions, chats, and group projects. All interactions between classmates and/or faculty must be polite and professionally conducted. Shouting (using all capital letters), use of profanity or insulting language, or plagiarism will not be permitted. However, avoid clogging the discussion boards with short responses such as, “Good Job” or “Thanks” or “Me Too” as such postings contribute little to the discussion.

Performance Expectations
Successful students report they spend between 6 to 10 hours working on course activities each week. Students are expected to produce quality work of a standard comparable to any graduate-level didactic course. Postings, assignment submissions, and discussions must be legible, constructive and appropriate. Students are required to think for themselves and will be expected to complete assignments that require the application of logic and reasoning skills when the answer may not be found in a book or the course notes. Factual information should be documented and referenced during discussions and within assignments.

Make-Up Work, Late Assignments, and Due Dates
Students are expected to complete assignments according to the due dates given within the course and posted on the course calendar within e-learning. In most cases, students will be given the flexibility to progress through the lessons at their own pace. However, once a due date is passed, there will be no opportunity for make-up or late submissions.

Last updated 2/3/2014
It is imperative that students plan for completion of the course within the term calendar and sign into the course daily to check for announcements and updates. Students might have other work and personal commitments. However, because online courses offer so much flexibility, students are expected to make every effort to meet course deadlines. Instructors monitor the discussion boards and track student participation. Because students have email access to both their classmates and instructors within e-learning, there is ample opportunity to clarify instructions and prevent misunderstandings about expectations and due dates.

If a student experiences a situation that is beyond their control and there is a possibility they will not meet a due date, the student should immediately notify the instructor and course coordinator to explain the situation. This includes any technical issues that must be addressed by the UF Help Desk. If such an issue prevents a student from submitting an assignment by the due date, the student will be expected to produce a UF Help Desk Ticket to document efforts were made to correct the problem in a timely manner prior to the due date.

**Important Dates/Deadlines to Withdraw**
Consult the UF Academic Calendar for details on key dates for dropping or withdrawing from this course and any tuition penalties that apply.

Consult the course calendar within e-learning for important dates and deadlines that pertain to this course.