

University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine Syllabus

I. Course Information

Number:	VEM 5321
Course title:	Integrating Veterinary Medicine with Shelter Systems
Department:	Small Animal Clinical Sciences
Course credit:	3 credit hours

II. Instructor and Support Services Information

Title	Name	Contact Information
Course Coordinator	Dr. Julie Levy, DVM, PhD, DACVIM, DABVP (shelter medicine practice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Office location & office hours: VS-12, by appointment– Phone: (352) 273-8722– Email: levyjk@ufl.edu
Course Faculty	Cynda Crawford, DVM, PhD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Office location & office hours: VS-13, by appointment– Office: (352) 273-8723– Email: crawfordc@ufl.edu
Course Faculty	Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, DACVIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Office location & office hours: Online by appointment– Email: griffb@ufl.edu
Course Faculty	Sarah Kirk, DVM, MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Office location & office hours: Online by appointment– Email: sarahkkirk@ufl.edu
Student Services Coordinator	Chrissy Sedgley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Office location & office hours: VS-3, by appointment– Office: 352-294-4757– Email: csedgley@ufl.edu
Technology Help	UF Help Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Web: http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/– Walk-in: HUB 132– Phone: (352) 392-HELP (4357)– Email: helpdesk@ufl.edu
E-library/Course Reserves help	Paul McDonough, UF Library West	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Email: paulmcd@uflib.ufl.edu

III. Course Description

Course Goals: Educational Goals of the Course

Understand the critical role played by veterinarians in protecting the health and welfare of sheltered dogs and cats, and develop population wellness and management practices that optimize their wellbeing and best outcomes.

Course Objectives

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

1. Use the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters as a guide for the practice of veterinary medicine in a shelter environment.
2. Develop population wellness and management practices that optimize animal wellbeing and best outcomes for homeless and sheltered animals.
3. Employ evidence-based medicine and best practices to respond to common health threats, animal welfare issues, and animal abuse.
4. Understand recent trends, issues, and epidemiology related to animal homelessness, and identify rational strategies to address these.
5. Apply key concepts crucial to the practice of Shelter Medicine, including the Five Freedoms, Fear Free principles, capacity for care, high quality high volume spay-neuter, and One Health.
6. Monitor employment opportunities for veterinarians in shelters, compare the training and experience needed for success in such positions, and identify factors associated with career satisfaction.
7. Use communication and leadership skills in interactions with shelter personnel and peers.

Course Outline

This course is delivered online through UF e-Learning (Canvas) using an interactive digital “textbook” divided into nine Modules. Each Module includes interactive activities, readings, recordings, group discussions, and assignments to deepen student understanding as well as assess achievement. Faculty and teaching assistants are available as resources throughout the course.

Module 1: Introduction to Shelter Standards of Care

Students will explore the critical role played by veterinarians to protect the health and welfare of sheltered dogs and cats. Students will join a community of shelter medicine connections to follow trends in the field and to start a lifelong professional network.

Module 2: The Case of the Sick Puppies

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario that focuses on infectious diseases common to animal shelters. Students will use the ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care to prepare a plan of action for use in a shelter to prevent spread of infectious diseases.

Module 3: The Case of the Embedded Collar

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario that focuses on recognizing and responding to suspected cases of animal cruelty or neglect. Students will learn about the role of the veterinarian when examining animals presented as potential victims of a crime.

Module 4: The Case of the Barking Dog

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario that focuses on common behavior and welfare problems in shelters. Students will describe the emotional impact of the shelter environment on the behavioral health of animals and identify the veterinarian's role in shelter animal behavioral wellness and adoption. Students will complete online Fear Free Certification and reflect on how shelters can reduce fear, anxiety, and stress for animals in their care.

Module 5: The Case of the Snotty Cats

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario that focuses on the influence housing, sanitation practices, and environmental stress have on health and welfare of shelter animals. Students will practice using the ASV Guidelines, Five Freedoms, AVMA Welfare Principles, and Fear Free Principles as benchmarks for assessing whether basic welfare needs are met for sheltered animals.

Module 6: The Case of the Overwhelmed Shelter

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario to discover how data-driven population management strategies are critical for helping shelters to understand and stay within their capacity for care. Students will investigate the importance of standard methods for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data from shelters. And students will investigate how daily monitoring of animal health and welfare can reduce average length-of-stay in shelters and thereby increase the life-saving capacity of shelters.

Module 7: Get to Know a Shelter

Students will explore the history of animal sheltering in the United States and their roles and missions. They will consider the terminology used by different types of sheltering operations today and the processes shelters use to adapt to evolving standards of care and community expectations over time. Students will perform an in-depth profile of a shelter of their choice based on information gathered online and an on-site visit. At the conclusion of the visit, they will analyze the shelter's operations and its role in the community. Finally, students will develop practical recommendations to align operations with best practices.

Module 8: The Case of the Spay-Neuter Skeptic

Students will explore a case-based scenario that focuses on the role of high-quality, high-volume spay-neuter (HQHVSN) in modern animal welfare. They will consider the controversies surrounding subsidized spay-neuter efforts, health impacts of sterilization, and quality of care in spay-neuter clinics. Students will evaluate the role of pediatric spay-neuter, targeted spay-neuter, and community cat management on reducing shelter intake. They will also identify and apply current standards of care for a variety of spay-neuter clinic settings, including traditional, mobile, remote, and MASH style clinics. Finally, students will explore strategies for protecting the physical and emotional health of both patients and staff in the spay-neuter clinic.

Module 9: The Role of the Shelter Veterinarian

Students will explore the vast diversity of opportunities that a career in Shelter Medicine can span. This includes time-honored roles in spay-neuter and the care of animals in shelters to an expanding focus on welfare, rehabilitation, forensics, shelter management, public health, and community outreach. Students will investigate current employment opportunities, avenues for advanced training, and strategies for personal wellness in this challenging, yet rewarding field.

IV. Course Materials

Required texts

- Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters
- Shelter Care Checklists: Putting ASV Guidelines into Action
- Both publications are available at no cost at [ASPCA](#)
- Other required reading material is provided within the course lessons.

Recommended/ Reference texts

- Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff, 2nd ed, Lila Miller and Stephen Zawistowski, eds. Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.
- Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters. Lila Miller, Kate Hurley, eds. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Additional Resources/Equipment

The Shelter Medicine Student Services office in VS-3 has an extensive library of textbooks available to students.

V. Evaluation/ Grading/ Testing

Grading Scale

Each module has a series of graded assignments, generally consisting of a readiness quiz, commentary on a recorded presentation, project, discussion, and self-reflective statement. Specific assignment requirements can be found in Canvas. Final course grades are determined by the default grading scale in Canvas.

Due dates

Due dates are provided on the course calendar in Canvas. Students may work ahead of schedule to complete assignments before the due date, but must meet assignment submission deadlines. Assignments submitted after the due dates will be awarded only half credit. Deadline extensions may be requested prior to assignment deadlines for specific unavoidable reasons such as travel, illness, or emergencies.

Student Evaluation of Instruction

Instructor evaluations should be completed at the end of each semester and are a vital part of the University! Evaluations take only a few minutes and can be completed [online](#).

VI. Administrative Policies

See the [UF Student Handbook](#) for more information.

Remediation

The CVM Academic Advancement Committee reviews the academic performance of all students who receive a failing grade in a course, GPA falls below 2.0, receive “unsatisfactory” grade in criteria (including “readiness to practice”) or who is currently on probation. The committee will meet with the student and their advisor and decide on appropriate action for the student (including, but not limited to, probation or continuation of probation, repeat of semester or full year, dismissal). Full description of these policies can be in Student Services section of Student Handbook.

Attendance

Excused absences for religious holidays and family/personal emergencies must be reported to OSI/instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Honesty

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.” To review the student honor code please visit [the Dean of Students Office](#).

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.

Professional Behavior

The College of Veterinary Medicine expects all students to be professional in their interactions with patients, colleagues, faculty, and staff and to exhibit caring and compassionate attitudes. These and other qualities will be evaluated during patient contacts and in other relevant settings by both faculty and peers. Behavior of a veterinary student reflects on a student's qualification and potential to become a competent veterinarian. Attitudes or behaviors inconsistent with compassionate care; refusal by, or inability of, the student to participate constructively in learning or patient care; derogatory attitudes or inappropriate behaviors directed at clients, patients, peers, faculty or staff; misuse of written or electronic patient records (e.g., accession of patient information without valid reason) substance abuse; failure to disclose pertinent information on a criminal background check; or other unprofessional conduct can be grounds for dismissal.

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.

Student Safety

- Safety & Security Department: 352-294-4444 (immediate assistance 24/7).
- University Policy Department: 392-1111; 911 for emergencies
- On-site counseling services: [Counseling and Wellness Center](#); 392-1575.
- Staff members in OSI are also readily available for those who need immediate assistance.

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

VII. Other information:

Technology Requirements

- A desktop or laptop computer with high-speed internet access and multiple browsers other than Internet Explorer (Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari). Apple iOS and tablets might not be completely compatible with e-learning at this time. Mobile apps do exist for accessing distance learning technologies however, these mobile applications may have some limitations compared to the desktop versions.
- Students must have Microsoft Office software installed and have basic skills for using Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Students with a GatorLink ID have free access to Lynda.com for training and are able to download discounted/free software from the [GatorCloud](#).
- We use the Canvas email to communicate about course-related issues. This is more likely to result to better communication with your classmates, the TAs, instructors, and facilitators than emailing us personally. Using Canvas for course communications also helps us remain compliant with the student privacy FERPA regulations.