

VEM5381 Shelter Animal Physical Health

SEMESTER: FALL 2025

CREDIT HOURS: 3 CREDIT HOUR

GRADING SYSTEM: A-E

GRADING

PHASE:

III

Course Coordinator

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Office Hours: By appointment only.

Course Description

Students analyze and apply evidence-based guidelines and protocols that protect and enhance shelter animal physical health and well-being. This includes best practices and strategies for preventive healthcare and infection control, diagnosis and treatment of common medical conditions and zoonotic diseases, diagnosis and treatment of common contagious infectious diseases, management of disease outbreaks, and integration of shelter and community healthcare programs for at-risk pets to promote pet retention in homes. Students develop skill in modifying and adapting best practice protocols and strategies based on available resources in the shelter and community. Students also develop and practice communication and leadership skills that promote a collaborative partnership of shelter medical and management teams for healthcare programs.

Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand evidence-based guidelines for standards of care in animal shelters and the role of shelter veterinarians in protecting and enhancing shelter animal physical health and well-being.
2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the shelter medical team and their integration with the shelter management team.
3. Use communication and leadership skills to promote a collaborative approach to shelter animal healthcare that includes shelter medical and management teams and community resources.

4. Analyze and apply evidence-based guidelines for preventive healthcare policies, protocols, and procedures that promote shelter animal wellness using available resources in the shelter and community.
5. Analyze and apply evidence-based healthcare protocols for common medical conditions in shelter animals using available resources in the shelter and community.
6. Analyze and apply evidence-based healthcare protocols for common contagious infectious diseases and zoonotic diseases in shelter animals using available resources in the shelter and community.
7. Formulate policies and protocols for management and prevention of disease outbreaks in the shelter using strategies that maximize life-saving.
8. Describe how shelter and community programs can collaborate to provide healthcare for at-risk pets in the community and divert their entry into shelters.
9. Use communication and leadership skills to respectfully discuss shelter healthcare issues and protocols with peers and instructors, including provision and solicitation of constructive feedback and reflection on personal experiences and actions.

Clinical Competencies

Students practice the following clinical competencies during this course:

1. Clinical Decision-Making Skills (CBVE 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)
2. Fundamental Patient/Preventive Healthcare Skills (CBVE 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3)
3. Fundamental Scientific Knowledge/One Health (CBVE 4.1, 4.2, 8.2, 8.3, 9.1, 9.2, UF 11.1, UF 11.2, UF 11.3)
4. Professional Skills: Communication/Emotional Intelligence/Ethics/Maturity (CBVE 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 9.3, CBVEXUF1.4)

Course Schedule

In Fall 2025, the course will be open August 11, 2025 to December 11, 2025.

This course is delivered online through UF e-Learning (Canvas) using an interactive digital textbook divided into six Modules. Each Module includes interactive activities, readings, recordings, discussions, and assignments to deepen student understanding as well as assess achievement. The Module learning content and assignments are available in an asynchronous format. Faculty and facilitators are available as resources throughout the course. There are no formal online office hours but students are invited to contact the faculty instructors through the Canvas email system. Please refer to Canvas for updates and announcements to any changes to this schedule.

***There will be a REQUIRED in-person discussion on Monday 9/12/25 from 1:00 to 2:50 and on Monday 11/3/25 from 10:30-12:20 pm.**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Module</i>	<i>Faculty</i>	<i>SLO # Above</i>	<i>Instructional Hours</i>
Start 8/11/25	Module 1: Integration of Shelter Medical and	Crawford	1,2,3,9	6

	Management Teams for a Collaborative Healthcare Program			
	Module 2: Preventive Healthcare and Health Surveillance	Crawford	1,3,4,9	6
	Module 3: Healthcare Practices for Common Medical Conditions in Shelters	Crawford	1,3,5,9	6
	Module 4: Healthcare Practices for Common Contagious Infectious Diseases	Crawford	1,3,6,9	9
	Module 5: Management and Prevention of Disease Outbreaks	Crawford	1,3,7,9	9
	Module 6: Integration of Shelter and Community Healthcare Programs for At-Risk Pets	Crawford	1,3,8,9	6
End 12/11/25	Course Wrap Up	Crawford	N/A	
		Total		42

Required Textbooks and/or Course Materials

- 2022 Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters
- Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines Checklist of Key Statements
- Additional required reading material is provided within the course modules

Recommended Textbooks and/or Course Materials

- Resources are provided throughout the course to supplement the required materials.

Methods of Evaluation

Each module has a series of graded projects, generally consisting of analyzing practices and creating protocols or action steps for case-based scenarios and discussions. Two modules (Modules 2, 5) include a graded required in-person discussion session. Specific assignment requirements are in Canvas.

Grades will be calculated based on the following:

Item	Weight
Module Projects	75 %
Module Discussions	15 %
In-Person Group Discussions	10 %
Total	100 %

Grading Scheme

Course grades will be assigned based on the following grading scheme. This grading scale is **final**.

Letter	Scale
A	100.00 – 94.00
A-	93.99 – 90.00
B+	89.99 – 87.00
B	86.99 – 84.00
B-	83.99 – 80.00
C+	79.99 – 77.00
C	76.99 – 74.00
C-	73.99 – 70.00
D+	69.99 – 67.00
Letter	Scale
D	66.99 – 64.00
D-	63.99 – 61.00
E	60.99 – 0

Course Policies

Due Dates

Due dates for assignments are provided in the Canvas home page for each module, the Assignments section in the Canvas course menu, and the course calendar in Canvas. Since the learning content and assignments are available in an asynchronous format, 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 a maximum of half credit. Deadline extensions may be requested prior to assignment deadlines for specific unavoidable reasons such as travel, illness, or emergencies.

Technology Requirements

Students will need access to 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 results in better communication with classmates, instructors, and facilitators than personal emails via Outlook. Using Canvas for course communications also helps us remain compliant with the student privacy FERPA regulations.

Curriculum Policies

DVM curriculum policies are consistently held and reinforced across all DVM courses. Please visit the DVM webpage and review the curriculum policies listed within the [Online Student Handbook](#).

Community Respect

The University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine strives to cultivate an atmosphere of respect, empathy, and open-mindedness within an exceptional community of students, faculty, and staff. It is our intent that students from varied backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of this course, and that the viewpoint of students brought to this course be considered a resource, strength, and benefit.

We intend to present materials and activities that are respectful to all. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let us know ways to improve the course's effectiveness for you personally or for other students or student groups.

If any of our course meetings conflict with any of your religious events or practices, an excused absence will be provided when requested using the standard UF CVM Absence Request Form process as detailed in the <https://education.vetmed.ufl.edu/dvm-curriculum/absence-request/>

If you feel that you have experienced or witnessed any bias/treatment that falls short of these expectations, you may submit a report through the [UF CVM Student Mistreatment Report](#).

Students with Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting www.disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. **Students in UF Health Sciences programs should be mindful that unique course accommodations may not be applicable in a clinical, fieldwork or practicum setting. Thus, planning a semester in advance with the DRC Health Sciences Learning Specialist is highly encouraged.** Our learning specialist is Beth Roland and can be contacted at the following email address: DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu.

The DRC is located on the main UF campus. ASA (Office for Academic and Student Affairs) works closely with the DRC to ensure student accommodations are met in the classroom and during exams. Melissa Pett in ASA assists in coordinating exams and meeting recommended disability-related requirements for students with accommodations (sbarot@ufl.edu).

Course and Instructor Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Student Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

When authorized by the course director, students may use AI technologies in the completion of coursework as long as they cite all such use by naming the technology and how it was employed. Students assume full responsibility for all content, including errors and omissions. Assistive technology authorized as part of an accommodation for a disability is always permitted.

Course instructors may adjust limitations on AI technology use and must communicate any limitations to students sufficiently in advance of the assignment due date. Failure to cite the use of AI technology or disregarding specific course limitations is considered academic misconduct. **The use of AI on assignments, essays/reflection papers, exams, and quizzes when prohibited by course or college instructions is considered cheating** and students are violating the UF Regulations 4.040 [Student Honor Code](#) and [Student Conduct Code](#).

It is important to note that many generative AI models (e.g., ChatGPT, ChatSonic, Google Bard, etc.) place any information that they are provided with into the public domain. When using such tools, students must therefore ensure that the tools are **never provided with confidential information**. For the avoidance of doubt, the use of such tools is prohibited for generating any confidential communications, including, but not limited to, communications relating to patient records, clients, students, and intellectual property. Students are also reminded that they should always review the terms and conditions of any third-party software being used (e.g., proof reading tools) to ensure that any data the tools are provided with are appropriately protected. Students should always verify information and sources generated by AI tools. AI has inherent bias and has been known to generate false information and to cite non-existent sources. Also, because AI-generated text mines people's intellectual property without appropriate credit, this raises ethical concerns.

It is not acceptable for students to use generative AI for reflective writing, as by its very nature, the process of reflective writing demands that the individual actively engages in the writing process. Delegating this to a natural language processing algorithm may produce convincing outputs, but does not demonstrate development in an individual's professional practice.

Appendix A: Faculty Lecturers

Dr. Cynda Crawford

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