Integrating Veterinary Medicine with Shelter Systems

VME 6810 all sections

3 credits

University of Florida Distance Education Graduate Program in Shelter Medicine

Instructors:
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Course Description

Gain an understanding and appreciation of the critical role played by shelter professionals in protecting the health and welfare of sheltered dogs and cats, and establish a foundation of knowledge and expertise in shelter medicine.

Course Content

This course presents an overview of all aspects of animal shelters. Students learn to use the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters as a guide to best practices in the shelter. They explore common infectious diseases, behavioral problems, and examples of animal cruelty presented to animal shelters in order to understand the shelter's role in managing such issues. Students are introduced to the variety of career opportunities available within animal shelters including leadership roles. Students also review the scientific literature pertaining to High Quality, High-Volume Spay Neuter which is practiced in animal shelters.

Course Pre-requisites/Co-Requisites
None (However, it is highly recommended that students take this course prior to taking other online courses offered by the Graduate Program in Shelter Medicine.)

Course Website

https://onlinesheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/

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. Use reliable medical information to support best practices within an animal shelter.
3. Recognize common infectious diseases, behavioral problems, and examples of animal cruelty or neglect presented to animal shelters and describe the shelter veterinarian's role in responding to such issues.
4. Explain the scope of issues related to animal homelessness and interpret recent trends surrounding those issues.
5. Compare and contrast sheltering methods and assess each method for how well it addresses the "Five Freedoms" of animal welfare.
6. Monitor employment opportunities that exist in shelters and compare the training and experience needed for success in such positions.
7. Explain key concepts involved with the practice of Shelter Medicine such as: sanitation, preventive health care, disease outbreak management, behavioral assessments, stress control, population management, cruelty investigations, and high-quality/high-volume sterilization and outline plans for addressing each concept.
8. Use communication and leadership skills to instruct classmates and to offer feedback to classmates.

Materials and Supplies Fees
None

Required Textbooks and Software
(all are available online through Course Reserves)

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. *Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff, Second Edition*, Lila Miller and Stephen Zawistowski (editors), Blackwell Publishing, 2013.
2. *ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*
   Download a copy from the Association of Shelter Veterinarians website at

http://www.sheltervet.org/

3. *Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters, Second Edition,* Miller, Janeczko, and Hurley, Editors. Wilery Blackwell, 2021.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Other required and recommended readings will be posted in e-learning and Course Reserves to download and review without charge.

Required Technology:

Computer with reliable, high speed internet access; your preferred web browser; video player with ability to play MP4 videos; speakers and/or headphones and working sound; PDF reader. For more information on hardware and software necessary to run Canvas, visit https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2059 (Links to an external site.). Canvas offers mobile applications for both Apple (Links to an external site.) and Android (Links to an external site.) products. These apps may be downloaded in the respective app stores. Depending on the device and your equipment, not all Canvas features may be available on the app at this time. For more information on Canvas apps, visit https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1542 (Links to an external site.).

Course Schedule

Module 1: Introduction

Students will 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. Students will also learn to review the scientific literature.

Module 2: Case of 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 the spread of infectious diseases.

Module 3:   Case of 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 and what is expected if they are called to testify as an expert witness during a trial.

Module 4: Case of Misbehaving Dog

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario that focuses on common behavior and welfare issues presented to shelters.   They will explore how shelters might prevent or modify problem behaviors; and what limitations shelters might have for treating such problems.

Module 5: Case of Snotty Cats

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario that focuses on the influence stress has on adoptions, length of stay, and incidence of infectious diseases for cats in animal shelters. Students will practice using the Five Freedoms as a benchmark for assessing whether basic animal welfare needs have been met for sheltered animals. In addition, students will investigate options for interventions that can be used to reduce stress within the shelter environment.

Module 6: Length of Stay

Students will explore a case-based learning scenario to discover how data-driven population management can increase live-release-rates from animal shelters. 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 explore how the mission of a shelter is affected by public perception. Students also investigate whether a shelter's mission influences its capacity for care.

Module 8: Shelter Sleuth: The Role of a Shelter Professional

Students will explore careers in Shelter Medicine , investigate employment opportunities, and explore risks for compassion fatigue.

Module 9: Spay Neuter U

Students will investigate the role of high-quality/high-volume sterilization surgeries in modern sheltering. Students learn about surgical techniques shown to improve surgical outcomes and consider the controversies surrounding high-quality high-volume spay/neuter efforts.

Module 10: Project Presentations

A final project about an infectious disease, veterinary forensic case, or shelter behavior/welfare problem will be submitted and shared with the class to review.   Students are expected to review the recorded projects, handouts, transcripts, and references produced by their classmates.

OVERVIEW OF FINAL PROJECTS:

In this course you complete a project where you will become the class expert about a particular topic and then teach your classmates about that topic. This project can be about either a shelter infectious disease, a veterinary forensics case, or a shelter animal behavior or welfare issue. This project will be due at the start of Module 10 and will consist of several parts. Once submitted, you and your classmates will be assigned to critically review one another's work.

Please note this is a "high-value" assignment worth up to 100 points total of your final grade. Therefore, you should put considerable effort into the preparation of the project and pace yourself to complete it during the semester. Don't procrastinate and try to do this project at the last minute! There are NO extensions for this project. Late submissions for this project will NOT be accepted.

You will learn more detail about each possible topic, including the grading rubric specific to that topic, at the end of Module 4. At that time you will be asked to review the details and submit your preferred topic selection for consideration. Your instructor(s) will advise you whether your topic was approved for your project (based on trying to achieve as much diversity as possible for the semester).

- *Infectious Disease Projects:* If you select this project, you will prepare an original 10-minute recorded presentation and a two-page handout about one infectious disease common to shelters. A list of suggested topics and project details are given in Module 2. Resources are available through the Lessons, UF Library, and Course Reserves. Each presentation will teach the rest of the class about the diagnosis, treatment options, prevention, and management of the disease in the shelter setting. Handouts will serve as an informational tool for shelter staff and volunteers to learn about the selected infectious disease within the shelter setting.
- *Veterinary Forensic Case Project*: If you select this project, you will prepare an original 10-minute recorded presentation and a two-page fictionalized Case Report Summary about an animal cruelty/neglect case that might be presented to a shelter. Cases will be selected from online legal websites and a template for the Case Report Summary is given in Module 3. Resources are available through the Lessons, UF Library, and Course Reserves. Presentations will review the types of medical evidence that should be gathered by the shelter veterinarian and humane investigators to document such a case of cruelty or neglect. Case Report Summaries will serve as basic protocols for examining and documenting findings for commonly presented veterinary forensic cases.
- *Shelter Behavior/Welfare Issues Project:* If you select this project, you will prepare an original 10-minute recorded presentation and a two-page handout about a common shelter behavior or welfare problem. Each project will teach the rest of the class how the shelter veterinarian might best diagnose, prevent, treat, and/or manage the problem within the resources of an animal shelter. Resources are provided within the Lessons, UF Library, and Course Reserves. Handouts that will be useful as educational materials for adopters and staff about preventing and managing shelter animal behavior and welfare problems.

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade/% Score

A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77

C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
E	59 -0

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:
http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Students are responsible for meeting all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Plagiarism (as defined by the UF Student Honor Code) will not be tolerated. Be sure to cite your sources and references and attribute any verbatim quotations included in your submissions and posts.

UF Maples Center for Forensic Medicine Code of Conduct and Professionalism (our Department)

Instructional Policy:
This course is part of the distance education program at the University of Florida. Instead of the traditional lecture format, the medium for communication between course instructors, teaching assistants and students will be via Canvas e-learning. (http://elearning.ufl.edu)

Attendance: Students must participate in the online discussions, and are required to visit the course e-learning daily for important updates and announcements.
Additional information regarding attendance/absences can be found at:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Class Participation: Students are expected to constructively join in online discussions with appropriate preparation, to post interesting and relevant information on the class bulletin board, and to interact professionally with their classmates.

Performance Expectations: Students are expected to produce quality work of a standard comparable to any graduate level didactic course. Bulletin postings 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.

Due Dates and Late Submissions: Pay close attention to the due dates posted in e-learning on your personal Dashboard and the Canvas Calendar for each assignment. Late submissions are eligible for up to 50% of the available points for each assignment.

This course is designed for working professionals like yourself. So we understand that sometimes life gets in the way of our best plans for juggling work, home, and school. If you anticipate you will likely miss a due date, request an extension in advance of the due date by sending an email through the Canvas Inbox to your instructors that explains the reason you need more time and when you expect to submit the work. Please title these posts clearly with "REQUEST EXTENSION FOR ASSIGNMENT 6A" (or whatever you need). Please avoid overuse of this option as it interferes with your classmate's ability to complete their own assignments.

NOTE: We honor most, but not all, requests for extensions.

Grade Changes: Grades will be changed only when a grading error has been made. If you think an error has been made, you should email the instructor as soon as possible. Your entire assignment will then be re-graded.

Incomplete grades: Under special circumstances, if a student is unable to finish a course before the end of the semester we may be able to assign an incomplete grade. An incomplete grade is a non-punitive grade assigned at the discretion of the course instructor. In this course an incomplete grade may be assigned if 1/3rd or more of the course assignments have been completed and if the student has remained in communication with TA's and instructors throughout the course, or has made an effort to request an incomplete grade. If an incomplete grade is assigned, outstanding assignments must be completed by the end of the next semester. If the assignments are not completed in this time you will be assigned a grade based on the completed assignments.

Students Requiring Accommodations
Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course 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 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 ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy
UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use
All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected 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. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy
There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see:
http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html

Campus Resources:
Health and Wellness
U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or http://www.police.ufl.edu/.

Academic Resources

**E-learning technical suppor*t*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. https://www.crc.ufl.edu/.

Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/.

Student Complaints Campus*:* https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf.

On-Line Students Complaints*:* http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process