Problem Oriented Approach to Shelter Animal Behavior and Welfare
VME 6812 (revised 2018)
3 credits
University of Florida Distance Education Graduate Program in Shelter Medicine

Instructor(s):

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Course Description

Concepts related to shelter behavior programs; evaluation of quality of shelter behavior programs; and implementation of changes to promote shelter animal behavior and welfare.

Course Content

This course, which is intended for shelter medical and behavior staff, will focus on using a problem-oriented approach to identification, diagnosis, and treatment of behavior problems in shelter dogs and cats. Important concepts related to shelter animal behavior and welfare are explored including: behavior and welfare assessment, behavior modification and management, psychopharmacology, and behavior and welfare plan development for sheltered pets. This course builds upon the concepts taught in VME 6813 Behavioral Health for Shelter Dogs and Cats.

Course Prerequisites

1. Completion of VME 6813 Behavioral Health for Shelter Dogs and Cats
2. Requires a minimum of 6 enrolled students for the course to run.

Co-Requisites
3. Have ready access to shelter dogs or cats to work on cases.
4. Be associated with the medical or behavioral health-care teams at an animal shelter or veterinary clinic. (Course is recommended for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, behavior professionals and others who will be expected to diagnose behavioral problems and then prescribe and monitor the effects of behavior medications and treatment plans.)
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Course Website

Course Objectives:

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

1. Compare different types of animal shelters and the resources available to them, including shelter veterinarians, behaviorists and trainers.
2. Objectively describe canine and feline body language.
3. Accurately interpret canine and feline behaviors and motivations.
4. Assess the impact of housing and environment on behavior and welfare.
5. Discuss available methods and tools for behavior and quality-of-life assessment.
6. Determine strategies to improve individual and population behavioral health and welfare.
7. Collect and interpret behavioral data.
8. Identify underlying animal learning theory in behavioral modification techniques.
9. Select appropriate psychopharmacological interventions for shelter animal behavior problems.
10. Develop a shelter animal behavior and welfare diagnostic and treatment plan using the problem-oriented approach.

Materials and Supplies Fees

Required Textbooks and Software

1. REQUIRED TEXTS: (available through Course Reserves)
    ● *ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters.* Association of Shelter Veterinarians. 2010. (available for free download at: http://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf

    ● *Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff.* Weiss, Mohan-Gibbons, and Zawistowski. John Wiley Blackwell, 2015. (available through online course reserves)

2. RECOMMENDED TEXTS:
    ● *Behavior Problems of the Dog and Cat, Third Edition.* Landsberg, Hunthausen, Ackerman. Saunders, 2012.

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

4. **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.)](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2059). 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.)](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1542).

5. **Other requirements**: Access to a local animal shelter or rescue organization for observation of shelter animal behavior and welfare. Students will visit this shelter, interview a staff member, capture video of animal behavior, and write a field visit report.

Course Schedule

Module/Weeks	Topics/Concepts	Activities/Assignments
1.Introduction (1 week)	Course Overview and Introduction/Expectations Problem-Oriented Approach	Readings Recorded Lecture Quiz Discussion
2. Shelters and Behaviorists (2 weeks)	Credentials of behaviorists and trainers Role of shelter vet in behavior and welfare Variation of shelters	Readings Recorded Lecture Live Office Hours Field Visit and Interview Discussion Reflection
3. Canine and Feline Communication (1 week)	Objective description of body language Body language interpretation	Readings Recorded Lecture Quiz Discussion Live Office Hours Objective Observations (Part 1 of Course Project)
4. Behavioral Welfare in the	Shelter animal welfare	Readings

Shelter (1 week)	Impact of housing and environment on behavior Stress reduction strategies	Recorded Lecture Discussion Reflection
5. Assessing Behavior---Collecting a Behavior Database (2 weeks)	Information collection Behavior assessments Quality of Life (QOL) assessments Problem Lists Outcome Decision-making	Readings Recorded Lecture Live Office Hours Problem List (Part 2 of Course Project) Discussion
6. Principles of Behavior Modification (1 weeks)	Animal Learning Behavioral Modification Techniques	Readings Recorded Lecture Quiz Discussion Reflection
7. Psychopharmacology for Shelter Pets (1 week)	Psychopharmaceutical indications and contraindications Medical protocols for specific behavior problems Monitoring in the shelter	Readings Recorded Lectures Quiz Live Office Hours Treatment Plan (Part 3 of Course Project) Discussion
8. Behavior Problems in Sheltered Pets: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment (4 weeks)	Capacity for behavioral care Problem-oriented approach to diagnosis and treatment Specific behavior problems and recommended therapies	Readings Recorded Lecture Final Course Project Peer Reviews Live Chats with Behaviorists Instructor Evaluation Post-course survey

Evaluation of Grades

Additional information on the University of Florida Grades and Grading Policies may be found at:
http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Assignment	Weight	Grading Criteria
Discussion posts	20%	Discussion Rubric
Quizzes	10%	Answer Key
Reflections	5%	Reflection Rubric
Assignments (field visit + portions of course project)	40%	Accuracy, clarity, concision, depth and breadth, and writing mechanics.
Final project and peer reviews	25%	Accuracy, clarity, concision, depth and breadth, and writing mechanics.

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.

GRADING SCALE

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93 -100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.67
87 - 89	B+	3.33
83 – 86	B	3.00

80- 82	B-	2.67
77 - 79	C+	2.33
73– 76	C	2.00
70 - 72	C-	1.67
67 - 69	D+	1.33
63 - 66	D	1.00
60 - 62	D-	0.67
0 - 59	E	0.00

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 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.
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> **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