



Humane Euthanasia Practices for Animal Shelters

VME 6817

3 credits

University of Florida Distance Education Graduate Program in Shelter Medicine

Instructor:

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Course Description

This course will serve to establish best practices for students interested in coaching shelters in humane euthanasia. Prerequisites would be that you have access to an animal shelter where you can observe and discuss euthanasia practices during the course. Registration for this course is departmentally-controlled to ensure that each student will be prepared to complete the requirements of the course. 3 credit course.

Course Content

This course will provide an overview of shelter euthanasia from a management/organizational perspective. The intent is to train individuals responsible for oversight of euthanasia in shelters so that this process is managed with foresight and empathy. Students will assess a shelter and evaluate euthanasia practices including a clear mission statement regarding euthanasia, the existence of a written euthanasia procedure or policy document and whether a written procedure document exists for euthanasia. Additionally students should be familiar with federal and state laws that impact euthanasia and sedation including DEA compliance for controlled substances. Students will also assess the training offered to their euthanasia technicians including both lectures and practical skills. Furthermore, students will discuss objective ways to evaluate technical proficiency with a checklist for competency. By the end of the course students will develop standard operating procedure for euthanasia that they can implement in an animal shelter.

Course Prerequisites

None

Co-Requisites

Access to an animal shelter where you can observe and discuss euthanasia practices during the course. Registration for this course is departmentally-controlled to ensure that each student will be prepared to complete the requirements of the course.

Course Website

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

Course Objectives:

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

1. Use checklists of competencies to assess the proficiency of technicians who perform humane euthanasia by injection and identify deficiencies that need additional training.
2. Identify best practices for performing humane shelter animal euthanasia.
3. Know state and federal regulations that must be followed when performing euthanasia in animal shelters.
4. Debate whether owner-requested euthanasia is a feasible service for an animal shelter to offer to the public.
5. Determine the economic and emotional costs for performing euthanasia in an animal shelter.
6. Develop a standard operating procedure for euthanasia in an animal shelter that meets best practices and adheres to applicable laws and regulations.
7. Identify skills and tools needed to safely perform chemical immobilization and tranquilization of animals selected for euthanasia.
8. Discuss how shelter administration can support animal shelter staff who are at risk for compassion stress and fatigue.

Materials and Supplies Fees

Required Textbooks and Software

1. **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:** (e-versions of these materials will also be available free through online Course Reserves if you have your UF VPN open)

Miller, Lila, and Zawistowski, Stephen, Editors. (2013) Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff, Second Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Cooney, Kathleen, Chappell, Jolynn, Callan, Robert and Connally, Bruce. (2012) Veterinary Euthanasia Techniques: A Practical Guide, First Edition. Wiley Blackwell.

AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2020 Edition. (download free from this website: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Pages/Euthanasia-Guidelines.aspx>)

Euthanasia by Injection Workbook. Humane Society of the United States. (download free from this website: (<https://www.animalsheltering.org/sites/default/files/content/euthanasia-reference-manual.pdf>)

Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters (2010) Association of Shelter Veterinarians. (download free from this website: [Home](#))

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

Recommended Materials

Course Schedule

Module (# weeks)	Assignments
1: Introduction (1 week)	Introduce Yourself (25 points)
2: Mission Statements, AVMA Euthanasia Guideline (1 week)	Definitions (10 points) Quiz (31 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) Mission Statements (25 points) Euphemisms for Euthanasia (25 points)
3: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Euthanasia and Controlled Substances (1 week)	Quiz (27 points) Investigate Euthanasia Solutions at your Shelter/Clinic (25 points) Methods of Euthanasia (25 points)

<p>4: Euthanasia Decision Making (1 week)</p>	<p>Identifying Injection Sites (20 points) Quiz (16 points) Euthanasia Routes and Solutions (25 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) SOP Draft 1 (20 points)</p>
<p>5: Animal Handling, Restraint, the Euthanasia Room (1 week)</p>	<p>Quiz (34 points) Ideal Euthanasia Room (10 points) Methods of Restraint (25 points) Euthanasia Area (25 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) Peer Review of SOP Draft 1 (20 points)</p>
<p>6: Verification of Death, Body Disposal, and Accidental Exposure (1 week)</p>	<p>Shelter Practices (20 points) Practice Quiz (5 points) Body Disposal (25 points) State Laws (25 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) White Paper Draft 1 (20 points)</p>
<p>7: State and Federal Laws (1 week)</p>	<p>Quiz (16 points) Registration by State (10 points) Create a Controlled Substance Page (10 points) State Laws (25 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) Peer Review of White Paper Draft 1 (20 points)</p>

8: Owner-Requested Euthanasia (1 week)	Private Practice Interview (20 points) Shelter Interview (20 points) Shelter vs Private Practice (25 points) Owner Present Euthanasia at Shelters (25 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) SOP Draft 2 (20 points)
9: Economics of Euthanasia (1 week)	Quiz (10 points) Calculate Capital Investment (10 points) Direct Costs (10 points) Overhead Costs (10 points) Costs of Euthanasia (25 points) Owner Requested Euthanasia (25 points) Peer Review of SOP Draft 2 (20 points)
10: Management's Role in Euthanasia (1 week)	Technician Training (10 points) Survey of Animal Selection Criteria (10 points) Management's Role (25 points) Staff Scheduling (25 points) Reflection Paper (20 points) Peer Review of White Paper Draft 2 (20 points)
11: Staff Training, Oversight, and Evaluation (1 week)	Training Improvements Discussion (25 points) Ideal Training Program (Draft) (20 points) Peer Review (10 points)

12: Compassion Fatigue and Stress (1 week)	Compassion Fatigue Self-Assessment (20 points) Compassion Fatigue Discussion (25 points) Combating Compassion Fatigue (25 points) SOP Draft 3 (20 points)
13: SOP and White Paper (3 weeks)	Peer Review of SOP Draft 3 (20 points) White Paper Draft 3 (20 points) Peer Review of White Paper Draft 3 (20 points) Final SOP (100 points) Final White Paper (200 points)

Evaluation of Grades

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Submit each of the following assignments as directed within each module. Student grades will be seen only by the individual student who submits his/her own assignment.

Assignment	Weight
Discussion Prompts	10%
Reflection Papers	5%
Assignments	5%

SOP	20%
White Paper	40%
Quizzes	10%
Drafts and Peer Review	10%

Grading Policy

GRADING SCALE

Percent	Grade
90 -100	A
87.0 - 89.9	A-
84.0 - 86.9	B+
81.0 – 83.9	B
78.0 - 80.9	B-
75.0 - 77.9	C+
72.0 – 74.9	C
69.0 - 71.9	C-
66.0 - 68.9	D+

63.0 - 65.9	D
60.0 - 62.9	D-
0 - 59.9	E

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>

Additional information on the University of Florida Grades and Grading Policies may be found at:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

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.a.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.a.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 support, 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>