ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES for DVM Students
Clinical Year 2021-2022
vetmed.vt.edu
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**Section 1: Introduction**

**Section 1.1 2021-2022 DVM Clinical Program and Policy Manual Introduction**

The online Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine DVM Program Handbook and Policy Manual is a guide to current policies, standards, procedures, and resources which govern students in the DVM program at VMCM. In addition, students participating in the clinical program are subject to policies established by both the VMCM and Virginia Tech.

Every effort is made to ensure the information contained in this online handbook is accurate and current. The VMCM reserves the right to make changes and revisions in the applicable regulations, procedures, policies, requirements, and other information contained on the website at any time without notice. The online version itself, however, (as opposed to a hardcopy or PDF summary), governs.

For questions regarding the DVM Clinical Year Program Handbook and Policy Manual, please contact Dr. Jaque Pelzer in the Office of Academic Affairs.

**Section 1.2 College Mission Statement**

The mission of this college is to protect and enhance animal, human, and environmental health and welfare through:

- The education of a diverse population of professional, post-graduate, and undergraduate students in preparation for careers in the broad areas of veterinary medicine, biomedical sciences, and public health;
- The creation, dissemination, and application of new medical and public health knowledge via discovery, publication, education, and engagement;
- Provision of excellent and compassionate clinical service to animals, animal owners, and producers in Virginia, Maryland, and the surrounding region.

**Principles of Community**

Virginia Tech is a public land-grant university, committed to teaching and learning, research, and outreach to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world community. Learning from the experiences that shape Virginia Tech as an institution, we acknowledge those aspects of our legacy that reflected bias and exclusion. Therefore, we adopt and practice the following principles as fundamental to our ongoing efforts to increase access and inclusion and to create a community that nurtures learning and growth for all of its members:

- **We affirm** the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain a climate for work and learning based on mutual respect and understanding.
- **We affirm** the right of each person to express thoughts and opinions freely. We encourage open expression within a climate of civility, sensitivity, and mutual respect.
- **We affirm** the value of human diversity because it enriches our lives and the University. We acknowledge and respect our differences while affirming our common humanity.
- **We reject** all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. We take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues.
through education, training, and interaction with others.

- **We pledge** our collective commitment to these principles in the spirit of the Virginia Tech motto of Ut Prosim (*That I May Serve*).

**Section 1.3 AVMA COE Accreditation**

The college is fully accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association’s Council of Education (AVMA COE). The last AVMA COE site visit was in 2014 and the next visit is scheduled for 2021.

The accreditation process involves a very comprehensive and detailed examination of a college’s programs and the accreditation team conducts an extensive site visit in which they rigorously inspect and evaluate the physical plant and facilities, budgets, operations, and policies. They also conduct extensive interviews with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and university administrators in order to ascertain their perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of the college’s programs.

**Section 2: Welcome**

**Section 2.1 Welcome to Clinical Learning**

Clinical learning is just that, the time to start bringing it all together. The didactic phase provided you the basic knowledge, skills, and attributes you will need to begin to make clinical decisions and has helped you develop the clinical reasoning skills necessary to make those decisions.

During your clinical learning you begin to make the transition from the classroom to practice. The key to this is “now is the time for real world learning.” The time, energy and motivation you put into your clinical learning will make all the difference in your future grounding as a veterinarian. You are not practicing medicine but rather learning about the science and the art of medicine from a real-world mentor.

You will have a variety of clinical settings, client/patient populations and cultures to learn from. You will be able to examine, communicate with, offer advice to, and with your mentors, begin to make critical decisions about caring for your patients. Now is the time to bring it all together. This includes clinical reasoning skills, your ability to collect and assess data and finally your clinical management of your patients. You will always be supervised by your mentors for they have the final word regarding the care of patients and are training you in the art and science of medicine.

Your mentors are faculty and preceptors who come from a variety of educational institutions with varied clinical experiences and they will have different expectations for your continued success. This is the mentorship of veterinary medicine. It is now up to you to learn—every day and every way you observe and participate in every way you can.
Section 2.2 Contact Information for the Office of Academic Affairs

Phone: 540-231-4090 or 540-231-3924
Email: acadaff@vt.edu

Visit the Office of Academic Affairs contact page on the DVM program website for current, complete information.

Academic Affairs Administration

- Dr. Jennie Hodgson, Associate Dean for Professional Programs, jennieh@vt.edu
- Dr. Jacque Pelzer, Director of Admissions and Student Support, jpelzer@vt.edu
- Shane Ryan, Director of Assessment, smryan@vt.edu

Academic Affairs Support

- Angela Webb, Office Manager and Academic Programs and Event Coordinator, awwebb@vt.edu
- Carli Dotson, First Teaching Time Specialist, cdotson1@vt.edu
- Alison Elward, Associate Director of Veterinary Educational Messaging, elwarda@vt.edu
- Kathy Farley, Second Teaching Time Specialist, kfarley@vt.edu
- Erin Hale, Clinical Year Support Specialist, emhale@vt.edu
- Patricia Hughes, Office Assistant, tish50@vt.edu
- Dr. Jay Kyle, Associate Director of Student Success, jkyle@vt.edu
- David Sampson, Educational Technologies Specialist, dasamps1@vt.edu
- Shelby Stegall, Admissions Coordinator, dvmadmit@vt.edu

Multidiscipline Laboratories (MDL)

- Melanie "Mel" Kegley, MDL Manager, kegleym@vt.edu
- Andrea Collins, Lab Specialist, anmoore1@vt.edu
- Jeffrey Estienne, Lab Specialist, jeff0311@vt.edu
- Kim Garnett, Lab Specialist, kimber5@vt.edu
- Sarah Grace Kenley, Lab Specialist, skkenley@vt.edu
- Mary Nickle, Lab Specialist Senior, mnickle@vt.edu

Section 2.3 Clerkship Leader Contact Information

Visit the Clerkship Syllabi page on the college Intranet and view the syllabus for the clerkship leader contact information.
Section 2.4 Overview of Clinical Year
Students are required to adhere to the following policies and procedures at all times while on clerkships.

Section 2.4.1 Clinical Year Support Personnel
The Director of Admissions and Student Support and the Clinical Year Support person are the initial point of contact for matters pertaining to clinical education. The VMCVM Clinical Year Support person is available to students in person, via email, or by telephone during regular College business hours. The Clinical Year Support person and can be reached via email (see Academic Affairs Contacts) phone message (540) 231-1735, or by contacting acadaff@vt.edu.

Section 2.4.2 Communication
Students are responsible for:
- Becoming aware of all information disseminated by both the College and University
- Complying with all College and University stated policies
- Checking email daily:
  - Formal communication from the Office of Academic Affairs is delivered through the University email (Outlook). As such, students are required to read and respond to all communications via their official Virginia Tech email address. Recurrent failures to comply can lead to referral to the Professional Code of Conduct Committee for review.
  - Complying with privacy policies, including client-veterinary relationships, medical records and FERPA

The Office of Academic Affairs will only communicate directly with the veterinary student (e.g. no spouses, parents, etc.)

Students are obligated at all times to ensure that the College and University is in possession of current contact information, including current/permanent mailing address and phone numbers. Any change in this information should be immediately updated via HokieSpa.

Section 2.4.3 Registration
The Clinical Year Support person will register all clinical year students. Students are responsible for reviewing their registration to make sure the correct clerkship is recorded. If there is discrepancy, they should contact the Clinical Year Support person. Registration does not exclude students from submitting external documentation. All external documentation needs to be submitted in the clerkship databases for approval. Under no circumstances should students register themselves for clerkships.

Section 2.4.4 Rotation Descriptions
The clinical year curriculum consists of 5 three-week rotations during the summer immediately following spring semester of second year and 12 three-week rotations beginning fall semester prior to graduation. All students are required to successfully complete 7 core rotations and any track requirements specific to a selected track. Each student will have the opportunity to participate in electives determined by the track, which most also be passed to fulfill graduation requirements.

There are three types of rotations, internal, preceptorships, or electives. Participation policies may differ dependent on the rotation.
1. **Internal rotations** are to be completed within the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH). These rotations may fulfill either core, track or elective requirements.

2. **Preceptorships** are external track requirements and may be completed at any approved facility and will fulfill either track or elective requirements.

3. **Electives** may be completed internally (VTH) or at an approved external facility with a preceptor.

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### Section 2.5 Clinical Rotations Dress Code and Supply List

The following policy was developed to delineate guidelines regarding professional attire for any clinical encounter. Additional guidelines of our VTH services or preceptorship shall be observed. Students are expected to inquire prior to wearing any questionable items. Individual services will provide detailed information prior to participation. You may wish to purchase additional apparel, as students are required to have a clean set of scrubs, coveralls, polo shirt, khakis white lab coat and clinician jackets at all times.

All students are required to practice daily healthy hygiene which includes clean skin, hair and teeth. Regular use of deodorant/antiperspirants. Makeup should not be distracting and cologne/perfume should not be worn in the clinical environment.

Violations of the Dress Code will be referred to the Professional Code of Conduct Committee.

#### Section 2.5.1 Student Identification

While performing duties related to participation on clinical rotations, all students must clearly identify themselves as a veterinary student by wearing a nametag and the College issued identification badge. Misrepresentation of oneself as a licensed veterinarian is illegal, unethical and subject to disciplinary action. Should the VMCVM identification badge be lost or broken, the student should replace immediately. A charge may apply in this instance.

#### Section 2.5.2 Small Animal Services Appropriate Attire

All small animal services require interaction with clients. Students are to practice good hygiene and present themselves in a professional manner. All clothes should be clean and presentable. Business casual is required. In addition, and depending on the small animal service, the additional clothing is required. Students should be aware of each hospital’s or assigned area’s policies.

- Clinicians Jacket (class color)
- Clean white coat
- Scrubs should be clean, in good repair and presentable (class color)
- Men’s shirts must have collars
- Ties are optional
- Women should wear flat shoes or small heels
- All shoes must be closed toed
- Nametag is to be worn at all times

#### Section 2.5.3 Equine Services Appropriate Attire

All equine services require interaction with clients. In addition, there is a safety
consideration when working with large animals.
- Polo shirt any color except for maroon or orange
- Khaki pants
- Hiking boots or other sturdy boot to protect the foot

**Section 2.5.4 Production Management Medicine Appropriate Attire**
PMM requires interaction with clients. In addition, there is a safety consideration with working with production animals.
- Blue coveralls, green is not allowed. Students must have clothes on under the coveralls. Jeans or appropriate shorts are acceptable.
- Sturdy shoes which rubber boots can slip over to maintain biosecurity.

**Section 2.5.5 Diagnostic Services Appropriate Attire**
Students on this service may be exposed to actual or potential biologic hazards. Therefore, please follow the guidelines dictated by the service.

**Necropsy/Laboratory Services**
- Closed-toed shoes
- Street clothing should be covered by a clinician’s jacket during sample analysis, sample retrieval/delivery or in the necropsy clean area
- Clinician jackets worn in the testing area must be removed before exiting the laboratory areas
- Blue coveralls and boors must be worn on the necropsy floor

**Radiology**
- Professional attire covered by clinician’s jacket
- Closed-toe shoes

**Section 2.5.6 Clinical Supplies**
Most supplies needed during clinical rotations should have been purchased during the pre-clinical year curriculum.
- Nametags
- Stethoscope
- Watch with second-hand capability
- Thermometer
- Penlight
- Bandage scissors
- Hemostats
- Reflex hammer
- Hoof pick

**Section 2.6 Program Educational Objectives, Competencies and Outcomes**
A graduate of the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine must exemplify the ethics, values, and behaviors of a veterinary professional. As such, the graduate must consistently demonstrate compassion, respect, honesty, integrity, accountability, altruism, prudence, and commitment to excellence in all professional and personal responsibilities. The graduate is expected to apply these behaviors in all of the following competencies:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVMA COE Core Competency</th>
<th>VMCVM Student Learning Outcome (SLO)</th>
<th>SLO Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Patient Diagnosis (Problem Solving Skills)</td>
<td>SLO 1: Examination Skill</td>
<td>The student is able to conduct a physical examination in a systematic manner and able to identify major significant abnormalities most (&gt;75%) of the time. The student is able to consistently distinguish normal from abnormal findings.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO 2: Problem Solving / Assessment Skill</td>
<td>The student is able to assess available information to construct appropriately prioritized differential diagnosis and can independently develop an effective treatment plan in most (&gt;75%) cases.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO 3: Diagnostic Imaging Assessment and Interpretation Skills</td>
<td>Assessments of diagnostic images are performed in a systematic manner and the student identified most (&gt;75%) clinically relevant findings. Diagnostic conclusions are accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO 4: Diagnostic Necropsy Skills and Acumen</td>
<td>The student can correctly interpret lab data and relate these to health status in the patient most (&gt;75%) of the time. The student can perform basic necropsy identifying major and minor organ system components. The student can identify gross abnormality over 75% of time. The student has working knowledge of basic anatomy and always performs a safe necropsy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Treatment Planning including Referral when Indicated</td>
<td>SLO 5: Knowledge Base and Treatment Planning</td>
<td>The student has complete knowledge of the pathophysiology required to understand common problems. The student can develop and diagnostic and therapeutic plan that leads to a correct diagnosis and acceptable treatment plan in over 75% of cases.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SLO 6: Herd Health Management/ Preventive Care</td>
<td>The student has a complete knowledge of agricultural practices taking into account climatic, topographic, and economic constraints when making treatment, facility, nutritional or other recommendations. The student recognizes and takes into consideration</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>the constraints of farm clients when making recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 7: Laboratory animal, zoo/wildlife or heard health management, preventive care or welfare</td>
<td></td>
<td>The student has a complete knowledge of laboratory animal, zoo/conservation and/or agricultural practices, taking into account environmental, welfare, regulatory and economic considerations when making treatment, facility, nutritional, or other recommendations. Recognizes and accounts for constraints of animal facility manager or clients when making recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anesthesia and Pain Management, Patient Welfare</td>
<td>SLO 8: Patient Care/ Pain Management</td>
<td>Student is conscientious and timely regarding animal care and welfare. Formulates plans independent of the instructor and is prepared to discuss these at least 75% of the time. Follows plan approved by instructor. Consistently demonstrates compassion for animals and volunteers to help with treatment of other animals. Applies principles of pain management. Able to accurately calculate doses. Awareness and proper application of animal welfare principles and standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 9: Anesthetic Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>The student can formulate an appropriate anesthetic/analgesic regime in most (&gt;75%) of cases. The student can recognize problems during an anesthetic procedure and request assistance when appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 10: Pre-anesthetic Evaluation/Problem Solving (anesthesia rotation only)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The student has complete knowledge of pathophysiology required to understand common problems. Student can develop a diagnostic and therapeutic plan that leads to a correct diagnosis, and acceptable treatment plan in over 75% of cases.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>SLO 11: Anesthetic Case Preparation (anesthesia rotation only)</td>
<td>Minimal assistance required to choose, set-up and use equipment and monitors. Calculations are rarely inaccurate.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SLO 12: Anesthetic Management (anesthesia rotation only)</td>
<td>Is able to monitor anesthetic depth and physiologic function and is able to respond appropriately to these during &gt;75% of anesthetic events. Is able to recognize problems during an anesthetic procedure and formulate appropriate diagnostic and some therapeutic interventions for these problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Surgery Skills, Experience and Case Management</td>
<td>SLO 13: Surgical Skills and Acumen</td>
<td>The student can prepare a patient for surgery. The student is prepared for surgery with a good understanding of the risk/benefits of different procedures. The student demonstrates a general understanding of the anatomy of the procedure. The student participates willing in the procedure, providing retraction, instrumentation, or other tasks as needed. The student demonstrates good handling skills, needing only experience to progress in surgical dexterity. The student consistently practices aseptic technique and can appropriately apply a bandage with limited direction.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO 14: Non-surgical Medical Skills</td>
<td>The student adequately performs most (&gt;75%) of technical tasks with direction. Minimal stress is cased to the patient during medical procedures. The student is knowledgeable about the procedure and is well organized. The student handles animals in a manner that safeguards the safety of both the animal and personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency and Intensive Care</td>
<td>SLO 15: Emergency and Intensive Care</td>
<td>The student is able to effectively evaluate critical cases and recommend appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic interventions most (&gt;75%) of the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Health Promotion, Disease Prevention, Biosecurity, Zoonosis and Food Safety</td>
<td>SLO 16: Emergency Management</td>
<td>The student is able to complete most emergency procedural skills. The student can effectively triage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion, Disease Prevention, Biosecurity, Zoonosis and Food Safety</td>
<td>SLO 17: Biosafety</td>
<td>Demonstrates basic emergency/disaster management skills. Able to discuss and demonstrate understanding of disaster management terminology, Incident Command System, disaster preparedness assessment, risk communications, and all hazards approach. The student adheres to all biosafety and medical safety protocols and procedures on a routine basis. The student demonstrates an accurate knowledge of both zoonotic and non-zoonotic disease prevention and control measures. The student handles contaminated tissues and carcasses appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion, Disease Prevention, Biosecurity, Zoonosis and Food Safety</td>
<td>SLO 18: Zoonotic Disease Prevention and Control</td>
<td>Understands the basic principles of zoonotic disease prevention and control measures. Applies correct safety measures to minimize risk of transmission of disease to humans from animals or the reverse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion, Disease Prevention, Biosecurity, Zoonosis and Food Safety</td>
<td>SLO 19: Food Safety and Security</td>
<td>The student possesses basic knowledge of food safety risks, safeguards, food safety processes, prevention, and control measures. Able to discuss basic HACCP principles and food safety issues. Can differentiate food safety and security. Has basic understanding of Food Safety and Security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion, Disease Prevention, Biosecurity, Zoonosis and Food Safety</td>
<td>SLO 20: One Health</td>
<td>The student possesses basic knowledge of One Health concepts and issues. Can identify multiple relationships between animal health and human and environmental health. Understands some roles and responsibilities of One Health stakeholders. Possesses basic</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>knowledge of key global drivers/issues and the role of the veterinarian.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Communications and Ethical Conduct</td>
<td>SLO 21: Oral communication skills with clients and general public</td>
<td>The student establishes rapport and can effectively elicit the chief concern through the use of open-ended questions in most (&gt;75%) of the time. The student is able to use active listening skills to encourage the client to describe the problem and tell their story. The student is able to deeply explore the problem to elicit relevant information. The student is able to interpret both verbal and non-verbal cues. The student asks for questions. The student is able to appropriately organize and summarize information for the client. The student always demonstrates compassion and empathy for the clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO 22: Oral communication skills with paraprofessionals, colleagues, and instructors</td>
<td>Communication is timely, accurate, and relevant using correct terminology at least 75% of the time. Histories and examination findings are thorough, organized, and precise. Requests for help or changes in the schedule are communicated in a respectful manner demonstrating an understanding for the needs of others. Case presentations demonstrate a clear understanding of all relevant problems and how they relate to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO 23: Written communication skills:</td>
<td>Records are complete and provide adequate detail in most cases (&gt;75%). The terminology uses are accurate and the records are completed in a timely manner. Spelling and grammatical errors are rare. Laboratory samples are accurately labeled.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Initiative and Ethics</td>
<td>SLO 24: Initiative and Ethics</td>
<td>The student fulfills duties and shows good interest in learning over 75% of the time. The student is self-motivated to acquire knowledge and skills. The student is usually well prepared, willingly helps colleagues, and demonstrated compassion for animals and integrity. Always dresses in a professional manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis of New Information Relevant to Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>SLO 25: Self-education skills as demonstrated in oral and written communications</td>
<td>The student independently identifies information sources most of the time. Is able to evaluate and critique resources with occasional deficiencies in application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 26: Scientific Knowledge and Interpretative Skills</td>
<td>Student has working scientific knowledge to apply to conduct evidence-based decision making and link science to basic operational activities and policy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Competency - Alternative Careers in Public or Corporate Medicine</td>
<td>SLO 27: Mission, Roles and Responsibilities</td>
<td>Student has basic understanding of the mission, roles and responsibilities of the organization. Can describe and generally differentiate between mission of organization and other entities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 28: Stakeholders and Key Partners</td>
<td>Student has basic understanding of stakeholders and key partners of the organization. Generally, considers perspectives of and impacts on others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 29: Governance, Law, Regulation and Policies</td>
<td>Student has basic awareness of applicable laws, regulations, and policy governing or affecting the organization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2.7 Clerkship Participation Policies**

Clerkship schedules are made final during the fall semester immediately before the onset of the final clinical year and no additional changes will be considered, other than preceptorships or electives. Request to change a preceptorship or elective must be submitted to the Director of Admission and Student Support and can only be requested if a preceptorship form has not been submitted. Once a preceptorship form is submitted, the student is contractually bound to participate.
Section 2.7.1 Internal Clerkships

Internal clerkships or rotations may fulfill core, track or elective requirements. These rotations are scheduled based on a student’s track and pre-determined student numbers required for the day to day operation of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH). These student numbers must be maintained to provide adequate patient care. Students are not required to submit any additional paperwork prior to participation on an internal rotation. **Students are expected to be present and available for teaching and learning per their assigned clinical year schedule.**

Section 2.7.2 Duty Hours

Duty hours are determined solely at the discretion of the clerkship and must be followed without exception. Hours may require overnights, weekends and/or holidays.

At some point during clinical rotations, students will cover emergency duty. You must be able to report to the VTH within 20 minutes of receiving a page and/or phone call. This has implications on where one resides during their clinical rotations. Students living outside the 20-minute radius do not receive any special accommodation or excuses for not reporting for emergencies.

Participation policies vary from service to service and are dependent on patient care. All rotations begin at 8 am on the Monday of the new block. Unless directed otherwise by the clerkship leader, all patients will be transferred at that time as well.

There are **primary patient care rotations**, which require students to provide patient care and participate in ICU/emergency shifts. These services require 7 days/week participation regardless of case load and individual case responsibility. Student participation is determined by each of the individual services and the expectations will be presented during block orientation. The following services fall under this category:

- Small Animal Medicine (SAM)
- Large Animal Medicine & Surgery (LAMS)
- Small Animal Surgery, both soft tissue and orthopedics (SAS-ST, SAS-Ortho)
- Community Practice
- Cardiology
- Ophthalmology
- Neurology
- Oncology

Students scheduled for primary patient care rotations must be present to transfer their patient at 8 am on the Monday immediately following the rotation, regardless of the next scheduled rotation. The exception to this policy is if a student is scheduled for the Equine Medical Center (EMC) in Leesburg, VA. Please notify your clerkship leader if this is the case so that you can be released from the rotation on Sunday. For all other external rotations, student may seek approval for a travel day. Please see [Travel Days](#) for further information.

All other services have varied schedules, but do not require 7 days/week participation.
Clerkship leaders dictate emergency and ICU duty schedules. Responsibilities vary from service to service. Students will receive detailed information during the clerkship orientation at the beginning of each rotation.

Section 2.7.3 Student Rest Periods
Student work hours during clinical rotations should enable them to participate and learn while also providing time for rest. Every clerkship should provide a supportive educational environment with a commitment to patient safety and student well-being. Accomplishment of the core clinical objectives should be feasible within the designated time frame of the rotation.

Using the below policies as a framework, students should advocate for themselves to maintain physical and mental well-being. The following protocols regarding DVM Student Duty Hours for clinical clerkships are to be applied in the VMCVM Teaching Hospitals:

1. Adequate time for rest and recovery should be provided. Any student on-site for 18 consecutive hours or more must be given a minimum consecutive ten-hour break between shifts.

2. If combined time away from clinics does not equal greater than 8 consecutive hours, then adequate time for rest and recovery must be provided.

3. Students must be provided with one day in seven free from all clinical responsibilities, averaged over the course of the length of the rotation. This should include on-site and on-call duties, as well as mandatory in-class time. Excused absences and personal days will be counted as free day(s). Total free days cannot exceed three (3) working days total over the course of the clerkship and the time off will be agreed upon by the clerkship leader or clinician on duty.

4. On-call shifts must occur no more frequently than one shift in three days, averaged over the course of the length of the rotation.

Footnotes:

a. On-site = any work done within the veterinary facility or field in connection to the rotation and away from the student’s home.

b. On-call = student is no longer on-site, however is available to work by being contacted by rotation leaders to report to on-site duty.

c. It is not the responsibility of faculty or staff to monitor student hours.

d. Students may ask faculty/staff if the policy can be applied, but can also opt to stay longer if they wish

Section 2.7.4 Preceptorships
Preceptorships are external experiences designed to provide experiences within a workplace-based setting. All preceptors, or those responsible for evaluation, must be a DVM or other higher degree dependent on the preceptorship.
The equine, food animal, mixed animal and public/corporate tracks all have required preceptorships.

Students are expected to adhere to each site’s (internal and external) scheduling protocols and procedures. Some sites require more than forty hours per week and may include working holidays, overnights and/or weekends. **Students are expected to be present and available for teaching and learning per their assigned clinical year schedule.**

Students are permitted to split one rotation into either a one week/two week or three, one-week experiences. If you are participating in an external track requirement, you may split the rotation, but all three weeks must fulfill the requirement. For example, if you are required to do a mixed animal practice, you may split the rotation, but all three weeks must be within a mixed animal practice setting. Students may not split any internal rotation to fulfill a requirement. If you are splitting an elective rotation, there are no guidelines regarding what focus area you immerse yourself in during the three weeks.

Students may not participate more than six (6) weeks at an external facility.

Laws, regulations and policies that govern the practice of veterinary medicine vary from state to state. Students should not have the expectation they will receive hands on experiences without first discussing the limitations of the preceptorship. Students are not permitted to participate on a clerkship with a family member or personal friend. The close personal relationship places the integrity of the grade in question. Family members include, but are not limited to, parents (biological or adopted), aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, cousins or spouses.

Students will make their own arrangements for transportation to and lodging near clinical facilities. The College does not provide for the cost of transportation or lodging. Travel arrangements are the sole responsibility of the student. Students are not considered agents or employees of the College and therefore are not insured for any accidents or mishaps that may occur during travel as a part of a student’s academic program. Students are responsible for all out-of-pocket expenses associated with clinical education, such as transportation, housing, meals, professional attire, laboratory feeds, additional background checks, etc. A signed preceptor agreement (MOU) is required no later than 3 weeks prior to the start of a preceptorship.

**Section 2.7.5 Electives**

All tracks have the opportunity to participate in elective rotations, in which a student may participate in any veterinary experience they would prefer. This may include internal rotations if there is availability. Electives are required for graduation and a student must receive a passing grade.

Students are expected to adhere to each site’s (internal and external) scheduling protocols and procedures. Some sites require more than forty hours per week and may include working holidays, overnights and/or weekends. **Students are expected to be present and available for teaching and learning per their assigned clinical year schedule.**
Laws, regulations and policies that govern the practice of veterinary medicine vary from state to state. Students should not have the expectation they will receive hands on experiences without first discussing the limitations of the preceptorship.

Students will make their own arrangements for transportation to and lodging near clinical facilities. The College does not provide for the cost of transportation or lodging. Travel arrangements are the sole responsibility of the student. Students are not considered agents or employees of the College and therefore are not insured for any accidents or mishaps that may occur during travel as a part of a student’s academic program. Students are responsible for all out-of-pocket expenses associated with clinical education, such as transportation, housing, meals, professional attire, laboratory feeds, additional background checks, etc.

Section 2.7.6 Other College of Veterinary Medicine (Other CVM)
Students have the option of rotating on clerkships at other Colleges of Veterinary Medicine to fulfill track requirements. Students should communicate directly with the institution in which they are seeking participation. Other CVMs may require additional documentation, which the Office of Academic Affairs will provide upon request. There are some CVMs that require students to pay tuition or other fees to participate. These fees are the student’s responsibility. A signed preceptor agreement (MOU) is not required for an external designated as CVM.

Section 2.7.7 International Clerkships
International experiences are an option of the student meets all of the requirements. Students interested in an international rotation should contact the Clinical Education Coordinator to receive full information and requirements to apply for an international rotation. The process can take several months, so please plan ahead.

Section 2.7.8 Cancelling/Changing a Clerkship
Clerkship schedules are made final during the fall semester immediately before the onset of the first or last clinical year and no additional changes will be considered, other than preceptorships or electives. Request to change a preceptorship or elective must be submitted to the Clinical Education Coordinator and can only be requested if a preceptorship form has not been submitted. Once a preceptorship form is submitted, the student is contractually bound to participate. Students may not participate at the same facility more than twice, including internal clerkships.

If it becomes necessary to cancel or change a clerkship, all requests must be received 60 days prior to the start date. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and approval is not guaranteed. Students are required to attend the scheduled clerkship if requests to change or cancel are received after the deadline or denied. For consideration, please email the Clinical Education Coordinator. If preceptor information needs to be updated through the clerkship database please contact the Clinical Year Support person.

Section 2.8 Program Organizing and Approval of Preceptorships and Electives
All students have access to the Clerkship Portal on the Intranet which may be used to identify facilities and/or experiences in which students have participated in. However, students may seek approval for opportunities not listed.
After identifying the experience, students should reach out to the preceptor via email using the body of the email as the cover letter and attaching a CV or resume. Additionally, on the clerkship database homepage there is a preceptorship welcome packet that the student is responsible for sharing with the preceptor in advance of starting the rotation.

Upon confirmation, the student will follow the below process for approval for both preceptorships and electives, with the exception of the PC Core rotation. Instructions for the PC rotation can be found below.

Section 2.8.1 Public Corporate Preceptorships and Electives
Public Corporate rotation information can be entered through the Public Corporate database (separate from the external clerkship database). See image below:

The student will enter public corporate preceptorship information in advance of the 3-week deadline. The student will need to submit objectives for the public corporate rotation, as well as allow for a planning period with the Public Corporate faculty. Public Corporate preceptorships also need to be submitted in the regular external clerkship database. This information can be copied and pasted between clerkship databases. Any questions regarding the public corporate clerkship database should be directed to Dr. Cassidy Rist or Dr. Valerie Ragan.

Section 2.8.2 External Preceptorships
Please see the appendix for instructions on how to create and upload documents needed for any external preceptorship. As a note, any external rotation needs to have an external request created at least 3 weeks prior to the start of the clerkship. All preceptorship signed documentation must be uploaded no later than 3 weeks prior to the start of the clerkship. Additionally, a public corporate external rotation must be submitted in both the PC clerkship database as well as the external clerkship database.

Section 2.8.3 Malpractice Liability for Veterinary Students
The VMCVM assumes the financial responsibility for medical malpractice liability incurred by registered veterinary medical students when participating in any clinical activities as part of their formal clinical education at the VMCVM or other associated clinical facilities. However, it is mandatory that students be protected at all external facilities. Therefore, all students are required to carry AVMA-PLIT as added protection.

Section 2.9 Clerkship Attendance Policies and Procedures
The VTH has a dual mission of education and service. For this reason, it is necessary for the hospital to provide instruction and service on a daily, 24-hour basis. Student
participation is mandatory. There may be certain days, usually university holidays, during which the VTH may be closed, except for emergency or patient care requirements.

Section 2.9.1 Personal Leave
All personal leave requests must be submitted through the Clerkship Portal on the VMCVM Intranet. Please See appendix 7.4 for step by step instructions on how to submit an absence request. This request will be reviewed and either approved or denied by both the Clerkship Leader and/or the Clinical Education Coordinator.

Approval of any leave is not guaranteed and students should not book travel arrangements prior to receiving approval.

Failure to report leave or failure to report for clinical duty is considered abandonment of duties and unprofessional conduct, which will be reported to the Professional Code of Conduct Committee. In addition, this behavior may result in automatic failure of the rotation.

All students should verify policies regarding time off with the Office of Academic Affairs. Clerkships have the authority to schedule any student for holiday duty as University breaks and/or holidays DO NOT apply during clinical training.

Regardless of the reason, students may not miss more than 3 days on any rotation. Missing time on a clinical rotation may have an impact on the clinician’s ability to effectively evaluate a student’s level of competency. However, serious situations do occur during clinical year which may result in absences longer than the three-day maximum. These cases will be addressed on an individual basis, all with the goal of keeping the student on track for graduation.

Missing more than 3 days on a rotation may have the following consequences dependent on the reason for absence:
- An incomplete for the rotation and the student will work with the Director of Admissions and Student Support to determine plans to make-up time missed
- Failure of the rotation

Classification of Personal Leave during clinical year:

Clinical students have the following opportunities to take time off during clinical rotations:
- Personal Days: Five personal days are provided, which can be used over the entire 17 rotations (Summer, Fall & Spring)
- Vacation: One week of vacation during the holiday block
- Excused absences
- Travel Days
- NAVLE Test Date
- Job Interviews

Section 2.9.2 Personal Days/Anticipated Absences from Clerkships
It is mandatory students participate on a daily basis. However, there may be times when a student has a personal commitment they must attend to. In this case, a student may request a personal day. Personal days are granted to students to use for
personal or professional reasons. Students have a total of five personal days to use over the entire 17 rotations (Summer, Fall & Spring).

**Students may not miss more than 3 days** and therefore, personal days will not be approved if exceeding the three-day maximum. Weekends are considered work days on the primary patient care rotations. Personal days would need to be used for anytime taken on a weekend on these rotations.

Students may not request less than 1 day. Personal days will **NOT** be refunded after it has been used. All emergency/ICU and receiving schedules are created based on personal day requests. Not having a patient or ICU/emergency duty is not a reason to “refund” a personal day because the student was not scheduled to receive or be responsible for patient care. Personal day “refunds” will only be approved if the student does not take the day off.

Request for a personal day which falls on the first Monday of a rotation will not be approved.

Personal days should not be accumulated to use at the end of the clinical year. Personal days will not be granted during the last rotation of the senior year, unless there are special circumstances approved by both the Office of Academic Affairs and the Clerkship Leader.

Using personal days to complete other clerkships is not an option and the request will be denied.

**Section 2.9.3 Approval process for personal days**

- Personal days must be requested **at least 10 days** in advance of the first day of the clerkship in which the personal day will be taken. There is no exception to this and the request will be denied if deadlines are not met.
- Personal day requests are submitted through the clerkship portal.
- Personal days will be reviewed by both the Clerkship Leader and the Director of Admissions and Student Support and will be informed once approved.
- Once approval is granted, the Clinical Year Support person will notify the student of their approved/denied personal leave. Additionally, the Clinical Year Support person will reach out to students if any clarifying information is needed before a decision can be made.
- After the Clinical Year Support person has notified the student of the personal day decision the personal leave will appear in the student’s One45 profile.
- Once a personal day has been approved and appears in the student’s One45 profile it is at this time the student can confirm their travel/personal day plans.

**Section 2.9.4 Vacation**

During the December/January rotation, students will be permitted to take a one-week vacation either during the December 25th window, or New Year’s window. Students will need to coordinate with their block mates when deciding on which holiday week
to request, which will be organized by the Director of Admissions and Student Support. The clerkship leader will approve all requests dependent on the impact on the service.

Section 2.9.5 Excused Absences
Excused absences may be necessary during the clinical year. What classifies as an excused absence and the approval process are outlined below. Please note that the excused absence policy is very different than the pre-clinical policy. Please see appendix 7.4 for instructions on uploading medical documentation.

Excused absences will be granted from clerkships for the following reasons:
- Physical or mental/emotional illness that is personal or involves a member of an immediate family member (spouse [including defacto relationship], children [including stepchildren], parents [including stepparents and parents-in-law], siblings [including stepsiblings and siblings-in-law], grandparents [including step-grandparents and grandparent-in-law], legal guardians).
- Personal illness, which must be documented with a note from a health care provider.
- Death in the immediate family (as defined above).
- Religious and ethnic holidays recognized by the University.
- Other serious unavoidable circumstances beyond the student’s control (these circumstances may include a motor vehicle accident, military requirements, etc., but exclude heavy traffic, oversleeping, etc.).

Section 2.9.6 Approval process for Excused Absences
Any advanced notice of an excused absence is appreciated, but might not be possible. Students should notify the Clerkship Leader and the Office of Academic Affairs as soon as possible, regardless of reason for the excused absence.

If a student requires an excused absence from a clerkship on the basis of illness, they should immediately contact the clerkship leader and the Director of Admissions and Student Support. This may be done via email, Doc Halo or phone call. In addition, approval of an excused absence involving illness of the student will only be granted if the student provides a statement from a health care provider indicating that the student has/had illness at the time of the absence. This documentation must be submitted as soon as possible and should include when the student is allowed back on the clinic floor. Documentation dated after the date of absence will not be accepted and the excused absence will not be approved. If documentation is not submitted, the absence will be considered unexcused.

All excused absence requests must be submitted through the clerkship portal. Documentation of illness can be uploaded on this site as well. Chronic absenteeism may be cause for disciplinary action.

Excused absences for routine monitoring of chronic illness or mental wellness visits will be considered upon consultation with the Director of Admissions and Student Support. Upon approval, these can be regular excused absences throughout the clinical year.

Section 2.9.7 Travel Days
Clinical year students participate in numerous external experiences, which may require
Travel. Travel day requests will be approved:

- Only for those students scheduled on any in-house rotations which immediately precede an external rotation,
- Only if the travel is of significant distance (e.g. California versus Roanoke, VA),
- Only granted for Sunday and Monday. This requires students to begin the external experience on Tuesday, rather than Monday. If students need additional travel time (e.g. international travel), personal days will need to be requested, but will only be approved for the external rotation, not the in-house rotation.

Students must submit the travel day request through the Clerkship Portal at least 10 days prior to the onset of the clerkship. Travel days are not needed for all other rotations (e.g. if a student is scheduled for an external which is a short drive away or if scheduled for an internal rotation). The responsibility to request the travel days falls on the student. The exception to this policy is travel to the Equine Medical Center. A student is required to let the service know they need to travel to EMC on Sunday evening so they can report first thing Monday morning in Leesburg.

Section 2.9.8 NAVLE Test Date
Students are provided an excused absence to sit for the NAVLE. There is a specific process for requesting a test date, which is explained below.

The Office of Academic Affairs will send the ICVA a list of VMCVM students who will be sitting for the NAVLE exam in that academic year. If a student needs an academic standing letter to apply for licensure in a certain state they may email the Office of Academic Affairs at acadaff@vt.edu.

Students will communicate with their block mates regarding potential NAVLE days as some rotations allow only one student may be away from the rotation for NAVLE testing at a time.

Once a student has coordinated with block mates to prevent any conflict the student will wait for the testing window application to open. When the application opens the student will submit for a testing ticket. The student is not limited to a specific testing center. Upon receipt of the testing ticket confirmation the student will submit a NAVLE day absence request through the clerkship absence portal on the intranet. Once a NAVLE day has been approved by the clerkship leader the student will be notified through the dvmclerkships@vt.edu email and the date will show on the student’s One45 Vacation/Leave tab. In addition, the request will be approved on the intranet.

If a student has an accommodation, they will be provided two days to sit for the NAVLE.

Clerkship leaders will not approve personal days during the testing period. Please plan accordingly.

Section 2.9.9 Job Interviews
In an effort to assist students with securing employment after graduation, job interviews can be approved as an excused absence with the following documentation:

All requests for job interviews need to be submitted as soon as possible, but we realize that 10 days prior to the start of a rotation may not be possible. The request must be submitted through the clerkship portal and documentation shared with the
Students may request a total of three excused absences to be used specifically for job interviews over the course of the final clinical year. No more than 3 days may be used for each of the requested excused absences and documentation in the form of an official correspondence from the facility in which the student is interviewing, must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs prior to the interview. The documentation must include the dates of the interview and contact information of the person you are interviewing with. We prefer an official letter from the facility, but an email will be considered. **Excused absences for job interviews will not be approved without this documentation in place.** Each job interview will count towards one excused absence. In other words, you cannot request 3 days to interview at three different facilities under one excused absence.

As much advanced notice should be given when requesting an excused absence for a job interview, although we understand it is a bit out of your control. All excused absences must be requested through the clerkship portal on the intranet and you must upload your documentation.

The student is responsible for reorganizing any ICU, emergency or patient care duty and needs to communicate this with clients, clerkship leaders and/or LVTs. If you do not cover your responsibilities, you will be at risk for failing the rotation, as patient care is the top priority. In addition, if you received low marks during a mid-block evaluation, you may be in jeopardy of failing the rotation if you request a total of three days away. The remaining time of a rotation should be used to demonstrate improvement within the areas of concern.

**Section 2.9.10 Unexcused Absences**
Failure to document the reason for an absence may result in the following, and is dependent on the situation:
- Use of a personal day
- Failure of the rotation based on unprofessional behavior

Failure to report an absence or report for clinical duty is considered abandonment of duties and unprofessional conduct, which will be reported to the Professional Code of Conduct Committee.

**Section 2.9.11 Weather Closures & Holidays:**
If Virginia Tech or a clerkship site should close due to inclement weather or any reason, it does NOT necessarily excuse a student from their clerkship. Student will need to contact the clerkship leader or preceptor in such an occasion to clarify the expectations for that day. Do not assume you have the day off.

**Section 2.10 Specification of Requirements for Graduation**

**Section 2.10.1 Satisfaction of Academic Requirements**
The requirements for the DVM degree are established by the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine Curriculum Committee in alignment with the requirements of the Council of Education and the American Veterinary Medical
Section 2.10.2 Grading Policies and Procedures
To graduate, students must satisfy all academic requirements, as outlined here.

Clinical Education Performance Measures
There are three measures of performance during the clinical rotations, all of which are required to fulfill graduation requirements. These three measures are:

1. meeting performance standards for passing all clerkships,
2. meeting longitudinal performance standards for AVMA core competencies across all clerkships, and
3. achieving mastery of a set number of technical skills across all clerkships. To graduate, students must satisfy all academic requirements, as outlined here. Each student must successfully complete and receive credit for all clerkships to qualify for graduation.

End-of-Clerkship Performance Scores and Assessment Requirements
At the end of each clerkship, students will be evaluated on their overall performance with an evaluation rubric that includes approx. 7-15 performance metrics (criterion). A student must earn a performance score of a 2 (developing competency) or above, on each criterion within the clerkship evaluation rubric to pass a clerkship.

In addition to the performance scores, some clerkships (e.g. Diagnostic Services) may have additional assessment requirements which students must successfully complete to pass the rotation. These additional assessments are outlined in the clerkship syllabi and further information will be provided at the beginning of the rotation. If a student fails the additional assessment requirements, but receives a 2 or above in all performance measures on the End-of-Clerkship evaluation, the student will receive an incomplete and be given one additional opportunity to repeat the assessment. The clerkship leader and student will agree upon a time to repeat the assessment. If the student does not successfully pass the second assessment, the student will fail the rotation. No changes to a student’s schedule will be made to accommodate the repeating of a rotation, regardless of the impact it has on financial or living arrangements.

At the end of each three-week rotation, students will receive an on-line evaluation of their performance. These evaluations will be available on One45 for review. Although faculty are strongly encouraged to provide feedback, they are not mandated to provide mid-block evaluations unless they believe a student is struggling and in danger of failing. Students are encouraged to seek feedback over the course of the three weeks.

Clerkship grades will be reported to the Registrar as pass/fail. Class Rank at the end of the second and third year will not be impacted by clerkship performance. The clerkship leader has final determination of successful completion of a rotation. All evaluations are available online for review.

Section 2.10.3 Longitudinal Assessment
Longitudinal AVMA Core Competency Averages
Performance scores from each clerkship evaluation will be tracked longitudinally across all
clerkships and all scores that relate to one of the AVMA core competencies will be averaged. Students must receive an average score of 2.5 or higher in each of the AVMA core competencies, to fulfill graduation requirements.

Students who have been evaluated 7 or more times in a competency and have failed to reach an average score of 2.5 at the end of all required clinical blocks, must repeat one block within their track that will allow adequate evaluation of the deficient competency. The block to be repeated will be determined by the Office of Academic Affairs. A minimum score of 3 (Minimum Day One Competency) must be achieved in the area of deficiency. If this score is not achieved the student will have failed the clinical year and be required to petition for readmission.

The Standards Committee will decide, upon consultation with the student, the student's instructors, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, if reinstatement is offered and if so, will define in writing specific conditions for reinstatement. The student must agree in writing to the terms of the agreement in order to be re-instated, and the Office of Academic Affairs will maintain a file of the agreement.

**Technical Skills Requirement**

In addition to passing each individual clerkship and attaining minimal competency scores in each major AVMA domain, students must complete at least 90 of the core technical skills and receive a developing score of 2 or higher. Requests for skill evaluation must be initiated within 72 hours of performance. This is accomplished by sending requests through One45 to the appropriate supervising faculty, house officer or staff (each skill in One45 is coded to indicate who is authorized to formally evaluate the skill). Evaluations will be returned to your folder on One45 and it is important to regularly check your competency levels as well as comments. A skill will only count towards the minimum number of required skills if the evaluator scores the observation as a 2 or higher on a 4-point scale: (1) lacking, (2) developing, (3) day-1 ready, (4) exceeding.

Failure to meet the required 90 will result in ineligibility to graduate and necessitate continuing with the clinical year until the required number of skills is successfully complete. Duplicate clinical skills do not count toward the minimal number of 90 skills that must be completed. A student may apply for reinstatement by written petition to the Standards Committee if this requirement is not met prior to graduation.

**Section 2.10.4 Failure to meet performance measures**

**First Clinical Teaching Time**

A student must pass 4 out of the 5 scheduled clerkships (track, core, or elective) at the beginning of their third year, to progress to the second (2nd) teaching time.

- If a student fails one clerkship, they may continue clinical rotations. The failed clerkship must be repeated either three weeks prior to the onset of the final clinical year, or three weeks after the end of the final clinical year. The student may progress to the second (2nd) teaching time, regardless of when the failed clerkship will be repeated.

- If a student fails two (2) clerkships, they will be dismissed from the program. At this time, the student has two options:
  1. Appeal the clerkship grade (see process under “Grade Appeal”)
  2. Apply for reinstatement by written petition to the Standards Committee (see process under “Applying for Reinstatement”)
In either case, the student may progress to the second (2nd) teaching time until final academic progression decisions have been made.

Final Clinical Year
If a student fails one rotation (core, track or elective) during the second clinical teaching time, and they have not failed any previous rotation, the student will repeat the clerkship at the end of the clinical year. This will require an additional three weeks of participation. Participation in the graduation ceremony will be permitted. Diplomas will be awarded upon successful completion of the failed rotation.

A student failing two (2) clerkships (track, core, or elective), for any of the following reasons, will be dismissed from the program:
- Regardless of whether one of the failures has been previously repeated
- Failing the same clerkship twice
- Failing either during the first or second clinical time

Once a student has been dismissed from the program, they have two options:
- The student may appeal the clerkship grade(s) (see process under “Grade Appeal”) or;
- Apply for reinstatement by written petition to the Standards Committee. (See process under “Applying for Reinstatement”)

Section 2.10.5 Grade of Incomplete
A grade of incomplete (I) is assigned when a student is unable, for health or other non-academic reasons, to complete the clerkship requirements. Missing more than three days in one clerkship rotation could constitute a grade of incomplete (I).

Section 2.10.6 Student Evaluation Completion Requirements
Receiving substantive, representative feedback from students about our required veterinary professional program curriculum and instructors is crucial in helping the VMCVM to understand program strengths and weaknesses and identify opportunities to improve the educational experience for future generation of students. In addition, learning to give and receive feedback is an integral part of developing professional skills students will need as future veterinarians. Students are required to complete both a clerkship and faculty evaluation form prior to release of clerkship grades.

Section 2.11 Grade Appeals

Section 2.11.1 Appeal of a Final Clerkship Grade
This procedure has been approved by the College of Veterinary Medicine to supplement the Virginia Tech Policy Statement on Grade Appeal Procedure (Policy Memorandum No. 38), as well as the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs.

Assignment of a grade in a clerkship is the sole prerogative of the instructor(s). Faculty should adhere to principles of fairness and clear communication with respect to the assignments of grades. In particular, this includes:
- Consistent treatment of all students in the clerkship
- Clear criteria, communicated directly to the students via the clerkship syllabus, about the basis on which performance is evaluated and grades are assigned,
- Grading based on established criteria (in print and/or on VT/VMCVM websites) and not on personal conduct or opinions unrelated to academic standards,
• Timely return of graded work to the student,
• Where appropriate (e.g., where there is more than one assessment task), sufficient feedback through the grading process for the student to improve performance on future assignments/testing,
• Attention to fair and reasonable measures of course content and student performance.

Based on VT Policy Statement No. 38, there are up to three levels of appeal of a final course grade. For the DVM curriculum, the Department/Division level of appeal will be provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

The student is responsible for initiating levels 1 and 2 of written appeal (Instructor and Associate Dean). If a level 2 appeal is denied, the appeal is automatically forwarded to the Dean as a level 3 appeal. The person responsible at each level of appeal will provide the student with written notification of the decision and where appropriate, a copy will be sent to the Course Leader. If a grade change is made at any level, the person responsible will send written notification to the Academic Affairs Office Manager, and the student’s academic record will be updated after verifying with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs.

**Section 2.11.2 Level 1 Grade Appeal: Instructor Assigning the Grade**
Within 10 working days of written notification of the final course grade, a student may file a written grade appeal to the instructor assigning the grade if the student believes the grade was calculated incorrectly, was not assigned in accordance with established criteria, or was assigned in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

**Section 2.11.3 Level 2 Grade Appeal: Associate Dean**
Within 10 working days of written notification of the level 1 appeal, the student may file a second level of appeal to the Associate Dean, who will refer the request to the Standards Committee. If the Standards Committee has already rendered judgment on the student pertaining to dismissal or reinstatement in the same semester as the course for which the grade being appealed, the Associate Dean will form an ad hoc committee consisting of four faculty not providing instruction or assessment in the course/clerkship being appealed. Either committee’s responsibility is to ascertain whether the grading standards were clearly stated in the syllabus, the grade was assigned in accordance with established criteria, and assigned in a fair manner consistent with performance of required work and assessment of other students in the course. Either committee is advisory to the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean has the prerogative to send the appeal back to the Committee for additional fact finding on the issues raised by the student or Committee in the appeal.

**Section 2.11.4 Level 3 Grade Appeal: Dean**
If a level 2 appeal is denied, the Associate Dean automatically forwards the levels 1 and 2 material to the Dean unless directed otherwise by the student appealing the grade. The student may forward to the Dean a response to the level 2 report within 21 calendar days of receipt of the report. The purpose of the third level of appeal is to ascertain whether appropriate due process has been followed in the first two levels of appeal. The Dean has the prerogative to send the appeal back to the Committee for additional fact finding on the issues raised by the student or Committee in the appeal. The Dean’s decision is final.
Section 2.11.5 Appeal of a Grade that has Resulted in Dismissal
If the grade(s) being appealed has (have) resulted in dismissal from the DVM program, the student is not permitted to continue in the program. If the appeal is denied and a student is dismissed, tuition refunds will follow university policies and procedures.

Section 2.11.6 Guidelines for Readmission after Voluntary or Involuntary Withdrawal
Students may leave (withdraw) from the professional DVM program due to voluntary resignation, or be dismissed due to academic failure (see Standards for Academic Progress), or unacceptable behavior (see Professional Standards). In accordance with university policies, voluntary resignation from the professional program can be made at any time with the permission of the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. It requires a written letter to the Associate Dean outlining the reasons for resignation, as well as completion of the Student Resignation/Withdrawal Form available at the Office or Academic Affairs. The completed form will be submitted to the VT Registrar’s Office by the Office of Academic Affairs. Students that are dismissed on academic or professional grounds will have a Withdrawal Form submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Re-admission into the professional DVM program will not be automatic but will be contingent on satisfactory demonstration that the reasons for resignation have been addressed. Academic probation or more stringent academic standards may be a condition of readmission after voluntary resignation.

A student who resigns voluntarily for personal reasons, or who is dismissed from the program by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs for academic failure or unacceptable behavior, has the right to apply for reinstatement by written petition to the Associated Dean and Standards Committee.

In consideration of all readmission requests, the Standards Committee may consult with appropriate individuals that could include the student, the student’s instructors, counselors, and other responsible parties, and will recommend to the Associate Dean if reinstatement should be offered and if additional steps for remediation are needed. If reinstatement is offered by the Associate Dean, the conditions will be defined and presented to the student in writing. Each agreement will be customized for the specific case and will be structured to support the student and protect the interests of fellow students and the University. This agreement will be signed by the student and will remain in the student’s file in the Academic Affairs Office.

Petitions for readmission after a second or subsequent dismissal will be considered, but will be granted only in cases involving extraordinary extenuating circumstances where convincing evidence is presented that all barriers to successful completion of the program have been eliminated.

Section 3: Clinical DVM Student Health and Safety

Section 3.1 Student Participation in Clinical Activities Involving Personal Risk
The Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine has long had the policy that veterinary students learn to be veterinarians by participating in the care of patients...
under faculty supervision. There is an inherent and assumed risk working within the veterinary profession. While every effort will be made to provide appropriate training and safeguards for students so that these risks are minimized, they cannot be totally eliminated. Students assume all financial responsibility for any medical bills incurred as a result of injury while participating on any clinical rotation.

Students are required to participate in patient care as one of their fundamental responsibilities during their veterinary education. Students are expected at all times to follow universal safety precautions in order to safeguard their own health and safety. Under certain rare and extenuating circumstances where the risk to the student significantly outweighs either the educational benefit to the student or the health-care benefit to the patient, a supervising faculty member may suggest that a student be exempted from, or a student may ask permission from the supervising faculty to be excused from participation in certain aspects of patient care.

Section 3.2 Health Insurance
Mandatory Veterinary Student Health and Accident Insurance
The veterinary profession has a variety of inherent risks such as animal bites, kicks, cuts, accidental injections, etc. In the interest of student health, in fairness to external preceptors providing training for students, and to protect veterinary students and families from excessive medical bills in case of an accident or injury, the college has implemented a policy of mandatory health and accident insurance coverage for all veterinary medicine students. The university does not recommend specific policies or insurers, however minimum insurance policy requirements have been established to ensure minimum standards are met by all insurers. Students have three options regarding full medical insurance coverage:

1. Purchase a group plan offered by the university to cover hospitalization or medical treatment received apart from the Schiffert Health Center.
2. Arrange with parents/family to be included in their plan.
3. Purchase insurance from another company with adequate coverage.

Proof of Insurance Requirement for Non-University Group Plan Holders
Students who opt for a plan other than the university group plan must submit a Proof of Insurance Form to provide documentation of a current alternative insurance plan meeting minimum requirements to the Student Medical Insurance Office.

Decisions about whether alternative insurance meets the university's requirements are made by the Student Medical Insurance Office. More information can be found here.

Note: Non-compliance will result in a "hold" being placed on a student's university record.

Section 3.3 VMCVM Required Immunizations
In addition to the immunizations required by the University, there are two required by the College: Rabies and Tetanus
**Rabies Vaccinations**
Rabies is a zoonotic disease that is almost invariably fatal once clinical signs appear. Humans are well-protected against clinical rabies by vaccination. Veterinarians and veterinary students are within the high-risk group as designated by the Center for Disease (CDC) and must receive pre-exposure vaccination to work with live animals in our professional program. Virginia is considered an endemic rabies area by the CDC and therefore puts all of our students in the frequent risk category.

It is the policy of the VMCVM to provide the best protection for its students against serious health hazards. Therefore, rabies vaccination is required. The current recommended pre-exposure immunization protocol consists of an initial series of vaccination. Please see the CDC Rabies Vaccination Guidelines [here](#).

Documentation of vaccination must be provided to the Office of Academic Affairs which will be stored in your student record. Two years after the initial pre-exposure immunization series, each student will be required to have a rabies titer performed. The Center of Disease Control (CDC) rabies titer recommendation is a titer above 0.5 IU/ml by the Rapid Fluorescent Foci Inhibition Test (RFFIT). Those who have insufficient levels of antibodies for protection must receive a booster vaccination and provide the Office of Academic Affairs with documentation of the booster.

You will be notified by the Office of Academic Affairs as to when you are due for a rabies titer and will be given one month to provide documentation of the titer. Failure to provide the documentation will result in the inability to work with any live animals.

The student is financially responsible for both pre-exposure vaccination and titer.

**Tetanus**
Students are required to have a tetanus vaccination within the past 10 years. A student will not be permitted to progress through the program unless there is documentation of a current tetanus vaccination on file.

You will be notified by the Office of Academic Affairs as to when you are due for a tetanus vaccination and will be given one month to provide documentation. Failure to provide the documentation will result in the inability to work with any live animals.

**Section 3.4 Reporting Student Injuries and Accidents**
There is an assumed risk associated with a veterinary training program and working with animals. All areas of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital have access to the accident reporting form. This form is located on the intranet under Health & Safety. The form can be accessed [here](#). All accident report forms will need to be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs (acadaff@vt.edu).
Section 4: Student Health Services

Section 4.1 Schiffert Student Health Center
The Student Health Center hours are 8 am-5 pm Monday, Tuesday, and Friday and 9 am-5 pm on Wednesday and Thursday. The Medical Clinic remains open through the lunch hour on weekdays and is also open on Saturdays during the academic year from 9 am to 12 noon. Due to reduced staffing on Saturdays, services are usually limited to students with acute rather than long-term problems. The Women's Clinic and the Allergy/Immunization Clinic are open during Health Center hours Monday through Friday, are closed from noon to 1 pm for lunch, and have no Saturday hours.

All clinics see students by appointment. Appointments for the Medical Clinic can be made by calling 540 231-6444; the Women's Clinic at 540 231-6569; or Allergy/Immunization at 540 231-7621. Usually a large selection of same-day appointment times is available on any given day for early (before 9 am) callers.

If a student has an immediate problem that cannot wait until the next available appointment they should tell the appointment receptionist that they need to be seen now. Their call will be transferred to the triage nurse to discuss the problem and to make an immediate appointment if indicated according to our triage protocols.

It is appropriate to identify one's self as a veterinary medicine student if available appointment times do not fit available open times during the day to see if some workable accommodation can be found. If a student has a health-related question or problem after hours we do have an after-hours nurse advice line. The nurse can review the problem with the student and make recommendations regarding care (go to the ER, go to an urgent care center, call the Health Center for an appointment tomorrow, try this over the counter medication, etc.). If the student carries the Virginia Tech Health Insurance policy there is less out of pocket expense if the student is referred to an outside medical facility after-hours by the advice nurse.

Students should be aware that the Health Services Fee paid to the University does not constitute medical insurance. This fee only provides for any minor care provided by the Student Health Services staff.

Section 4.2 Counseling Services
There are counselors from Cook Counseling Center available within the college room 237-A which is located in the hallway down from the Academic Affairs Office. Please check with the Office of Academic Affairs for information regarding hours of availability.

A student may request time away from the rotation to keep regularly scheduled appointments either with a counselor within the college or at Cook Counseling Center. Please submit a standing letter of the need for regular appointments to the Office of Academic Affairs. In addition, the student should submit an excused absence request through the Clerkship Portal.
### Section 5: Administrative Information

#### Section 5.1 Administrative Requests
There will be multiple occasions when students will be requested to respond to administrative deadlines for items such as rabies information, NAVLEs, graduation, scholarships, and awards. These deadlines are firm and are necessary for the college and university to function effectively. Time spent following up on students who do not respond means time not available to assist students with other requests.

An enrollment “hold” will be placed on any student who does not respond to the deadline, and an email sent to the student. Failure to take care of the circumstances that led to the hold within 24 hours will result in dismissal from the clerkship until the hold is taken care of by the student. Depending on the clerkship and clerkship leader, nonattendance may lead to inability to complete the requirements of the clerkship. Repeated non-responders will have other sanctions decided on an individual basis.

#### Section 5.2 Letters of Attendance
Letters documenting attendance and anticipated graduation date are often required for external opportunities/scholarships/licensure, etc. Students request letters through the Office of Academic Affairs, even if the Dean’s signature is required. Please contact acadaff@vt.edu.

#### Section 5.3 Notices and E-mail
The Office of Academic Affairs uses e-mail as the sole means to contact students. It is imperative that you check your e-mail frequently to avoid missing important announcements or efforts to contact you personally.
Section 5.4 Financial Aid
It is the responsibility of the student to meet all deadlines established by the Financial Aid Office and submit all necessary documentation. The Financial Aid Office can be contacted through gradaid@vt.edu. Please visit the Financial Aid Office website for more information here.

Section 5.5 Scholarships
In the fall semester each year, students will have the opportunity to apply for scholarship awards. Additionally, there are scholarships awarded during the clinical year, which the clinical faculty will make nominations for. An announcement regarding scholarships will be sent out from the Office of Academic Affairs and will be distributed to all students enrolled in the DVM curriculum.

Section 5.6 Enrollment Holds
“Holds” or “Blocks” can be placed on a student’s account for a variety of reasons by both the University and the Office of Academic Affairs. Examples are parking tickets, library fees and non-submission of required clerkship forms. These holds will impede registration for clerkships and grade postings. The student is responsible for resolving the issues leading up to the hold within a 36-hour period.

Because of liability issues, a student with a “block” (on enrollment, etc.), is not permitted to participate in any clerkships. Students will be notified in a timely manner of any holds on their account by the Office of Academic Affairs so that these may be rectified in order to for the student to continue.

Section 5.7 NAVLE
All NAVLE information is released late spring at the beginning of the clinical year. Our office does not have any advanced information until that date. You will receive an email with specific instructions to follow. Students with documented learning disabilities will need to contact NBVME directly for further information. Once your accommodation has been approved, please inform your clerkship leader that you require two days off from the rotation to take the NAVLEs, and provide documentation of your approved accommodation to the Office of Academic Affairs.

It is the responsibility of the student to meet all NBVME deadlines, as the Office of Academic Affairs cannot add students to a testing roster.

The Office of Academic Affairs will help with any documentation that is required for the NAVLE. Please see Letters of Attendance for further information.

Section 5.8 State Licensure
When registering for the North American Licensing Exam, students have the opportunity to select one state for licensing. However, a student may wish to pursue licensing in more than one state. The Office of Academic Affairs maintains information for Virginia and Maryland State licensing requirements only. Students should contact individual state health professional licensing boards for further information. The Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine website can be accessed here. The Maryland Board of Veterinary Medicine website can be accessed here. Additionally, for any student wishing to pursue licensing outside of Virginia or Maryland State licensing requirements can be found here on the AVMA website.
Section 5.9 Notary
The Office of Academic Affairs can provide notary services for students with the proper documentation by appointment only. Please email acadaff@vt.edu for further information.

Section 6: VMCVM and University Policies

Section 6.1 FERPA Waiver
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Schools must have written permission, in the form of the FERPA Waiver, in order to release any information from a student’s education record. This means that anytime you ask for a letter of recommendation from a faculty member or need a letter of good academic standing, or other information about your academic performance, you will need to have a FERPA waiver on file. If you choose to sign a waiver allowing anyone to view your records, you need to understand the implication of that decision.

Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. You must submit a request to the university within a reasonable period of time, that the school not disclose directory information about you.

Section 6.2 Proper Use of Electronic Media
Posting of material relating to any client, patient, teaching or research animal in any form to any public/social networking site is strictly forbidden and will be considered a violation of the Professional Code of Conduct. Students are required to maintain and respect client and patient confidentiality as well as respecting the dignity of all animals and their owners whether by photography, video or written word.

All materials (such as Mp3 recordings, class notes/handouts, videos, slide preparations, etc.) posted on Scholar and other VMCVM educational resources are solely for the use of our students for educational purposes. They should not be copied or distributed to anyone outside of the VMCVM without the prior written approval of the author/instructor.

Numerous social networking sites are used by veterinary students. As professional students, you are encouraged to “think before you post” to these sites. These sites are available to the public for many years, and posting inappropriate personal material may be harmful to your professional goals, your veterinary career, or the reputation of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Section 6.3 Visitors and tours
The facility is a hospital and client owned animals must be the priority. All tours and/or visitors must be approved by the Director of Admissions and Student Support.
There are areas within the hospital where visitors are not allowed and all tours should be restricted to the major hallways. Special attention should be given when entering the large animal barn as to not disturb horses.

Additionally, family members, especially children, are not allowed in the restricted areas of the VTH. These restricted areas include anywhere animals are examined, housed and treated. All laboratory and diagnostic imaging areas are restricted.

Section 6.4 Motor Vehicles and Parking
Students will comply with all University rules and regulations pertaining to registration and operation of motor vehicles. In order to park on campus, students must purchase the appropriate parking permit through VT Parking and Transportation each academic year. All vehicles, motorcycles, and motor scooters on campus are required to be registered with Parking and Transportation. Vehicles parked on property that receives service from Parking and Transportation are required to display a parking permit (government vehicles excluded). For more information please visit the Parking and Transportation website.

Section 6.5 Pet Animals
College regulations prohibit students bringing pet animals into college buildings except for attendance at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, in which case all policies and procedures pertaining to client-owned animals will apply. On rare occasions, student-owned animals may be used in specific courses or student club/organization events, but these will be approved by the Associate Dean for Professional Programs. At these times pets will be restricted to the places and activities as outlined in the course syllabus or the request for usage of College facilities e.g., MDL labs.

Pets should not be tied in the vicinity of entrances or walkways to buildings. Owners of uncontrolled pets found in any of these areas will be asked to remove the pet.

Section 6.6 Service Animals
The College adheres to the policies regarding Service Animals developed by Virginia Tech’s Division of Student Affairs, Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Their Guidelines on Service Animals can be found here.

Requests for service animals will be processed by SSD, who will work with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and the Director of Admissions and Student Support to specifically define the accommodations in the pre-clinical and clinical programs on a case-by-case basis.

Section 6.7 Electronic and Printed Materials
Students should be aware of the VT policy on copyright (policy 1300). Furthermore, most materials generated by faculty for their courses (e.g., lecture notes/handouts, power point slides, images, videos, Mp3 recordings, materials placed on Canvas or other sites containing course material e.g., YouTube, etc.) are solely for the use of DVM students for educational purposes. They are considered copyright of the College and the University and cannot be reproduced or distributed unless express written permission has been obtained from the author or member of faculty involved.
Students are also encouraged to read the College’s Information Technology Policies and Procedures, which are available on the College Intranet. Additionally, the link is provided here for you: [https://intranet.vetmed.vt.edu/InformationTechnology/PoliciesProcedures](https://intranet.vetmed.vt.edu/InformationTechnology/PoliciesProcedures). As a note you may need to log in to the intranet and copy this link into your browser for access.

**Section 7: Appendix**

**Section 7.1 Hospital Map**
Visit the college Intranet and find the VTH Services Map (PDF) under the “Veterinary Teaching Hospital” heading.

**Section 7.2 Accessing Prefilled Preceptor Agreement for External Clerkship**
Step 1: Access Clerkship Database through Intranet. Click View My External Clerkships.

![View My External Clerkships](image1.png)

Step 2: Click on External Details

![External Details](image2.png)

Step 3: Click green Download Prefilled Agreement Form. This form automatically populates with the external information the student has entered in to the external clerkship request.
Section 7.3 Uploading a signed Preceptor Agreement

Step 1: Access Clerkship Database through Intranet. Click View My External Clerkships.

Step 2: Click on External Details

Step 3: Edit External. Click on Choose File. Find signed agreement and upload. Click Save once uploaded.
Step 4: Wait for Director of Admissions and Student Support approval, who will sign the document virtually.

*Signed document must be uploaded 3 weeks prior to start of clerkship*

Section 7.4 Creating an Absence Request
Step 1: Access Clerkship Database through Intranet. Click Create New Clerkship Absence Request.

Step 2: Populate Absence Information. Please be reminded if you are asking for only 1 day your start date and end date are the same day. Ex: Start Date: 1/1/2021, End Date: 1/1/2021 Shows you are asking for one day.
Step 3: Medical Documentation. If you have medical documentation to submit for an excused absence, edit request. Click on Choose File. Find signed agreement and upload. Click Save once uploaded.
### Section 7.5 Class of 2022 & 2023 Clinical Year Calendar

**Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine**  
**Class of 2022 & 2023 Summer Clinical Rotations - VTH Board Approved**  
**Summer 2021**

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*May 31, 2021 is a university holiday, and the VTH will operate on an emergency schedule. Please contact the clerkship leader regarding clinic coverage.*

**Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine**  
**Class of 2022 Final Clinical Year Calendar - VTH Board Approved**

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### Section 7.6 Blank One45 Evaluation Form

Please see an example One45 evaluation form [here](#). Please note each rotation may have a different evaluation form, but all should follow this format.